

# GLOBE in MOTION

Miroslava  
Hlinčíková

Martina<sup>Eds.</sup>  
Sekulová

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## Multiple Shades of Migration: Regional Perspectives

Reviewers:

Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Alexandra Bitušíková, PhD  
(Department of Social Studies and Ethnology,  
Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University  
in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia)  
Mgr. Ing. Miloslav Bahna, PhD  
(Institute of Sociology, Slovak Academy of  
Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia)

Authors:

© Rafael Ahlskog, Martina Bolečeková,  
Martina Chrančoková, Zsolt Gál, Miroslava  
Hlinčíková, Pär Nyman, Barbora Olejárová,  
Mădălina Rogoz, Martina Sekulová, Michal  
Smrek, Gabriel Weibl, 2019

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# Multiple Shades of Migration: Regional Perspectives

## CONTRIBUTORS

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● **Rafael Ahlskog**

Department of Government, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

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● **Martina Bolečková**

Matej Bel University, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations, Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic

---

● **Martina Chrančoková**

Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

---

● **Zsolt Gál**

Department of Politology, Faculty of Art, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

---

● **Miroslava Hlinčíková**

Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

---

● **Pär Nyman**

Department of Government, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

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---

● **Barbora Olejárová**

Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

---

● **Mădălina Rogoz**

International Centre for Migration Policy Development, Vienna, Austria

---

● **Martina Sekulová**

Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

---

● **Michal Smrek**

Department of Government, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

---

● **Gabriel Weibl**

Institute for Forecasting, Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

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Migration is an important component of contemporary societies. Along with the growing extent of migration and its diversity across the globe, the need to understand the phenomena and the subsequent importance of the scientific examination of migration increases too. The publication *Globe in Motion 2. Multiple Shades of Migration: Regional Perspectives* reacts to the changing realities and presents the contemporary scientific enquiry on migration from several interdisciplinary perspectives in the field of public policy, political, social and psychological sciences, social anthropology and economy. The book focuses mainly on the Central and Eastern European region and Slovakia in particular, and offers readers the academic perspectives of scientists and experts from different disciplines and institutional backgrounds. Although the overall target of the book is narrowed regionally, the papers provide a regional focus in a wider international context in addition to the Slovak perspective. The aim of the book is to enrich the discussion on the complexity of migration and reinforce constructive thinking about it.

This book follows up on the earlier volume *Globe in Motion. Patterns of International Migration: Similarities and Differences* (Divinský & Zachar Podolinská, Eds., 2018), published at the end of 2018. All of the papers were collected at the same time, however, due their extent and diversity, we chose to publish them as a separate volume with a narrowed thematic focus. All of the papers in the second volume have been collected in 2018 by Boris Divinský; the editorial comments and reviews were prepared in spring 2019 by Martina Sekulová and Miroslava Hlinčíková and two external reviewers.

The publication *Globe in Motion 2. Multiple Shades of Migration: Regional Perspectives* has been published as the outcome of a project supported by the European Union within the Interreg scheme DRIM – Danube Region Information Platform for Economic Integration of Migrants. The DRIM project was implemented by a consortium of eighteen organisations from nine countries – the eight Danube Compass countries as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. DRIM's objective

was to enhance the capacity of public institutions for promoting migrants' economic integration, which was understood as fair access to employment, work and skills enhancement. DRIM aimed to achieve its objectives through improved information sharing by public institutions in response to the needs of migrants.

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● **Miroslava Hlinčíková and Martina Sekulová, June 2019, Bratislava**

# Executive Summary

**01 HLINČÍKOVÁ, Miroslava and SEKULOVÁ, Martina**  
**Editorial: The Challenges of the Changing Reality**

Migration has become one of the most significant social processes globally and the issues related to migration, integration or accommodation of migrants in host societies are the focus of agendas of public institutions, non-governmental organisations or policies. Notwithstanding, due to the acceleration of societal, demographic, economic, developmental and environmental changes, migration will most likely increase continuously and so will also its diversity.

Introductory paper of two editors describes the main aim of the book: to offer the findings of contemporary scientific enquiries which react to contemporary challenges such as 'migration crisis', increasing diversity, the effects of migration and new forms of migration or mobility. It aims at shedding light on the recent developments in relation to migration and mobility in the European context and its respective effects on the migration studies. At the same time, it endeavours to bridge the chapters published in this volume mainly with a regional focus on Central and Eastern Europe, including its recent migration developments and contemporary contexts, complexities, natural and regional specifics, as well as contemporary theories and research findings.

**02 BOLEČEKOVÁ, Martina and OLEJÁROVÁ, Barbora**  
**The Securitisation of Migration in the Slovak Republic**

Migration, like any other process involving human beings and their social

interactions, brings about many benefits and disadvantages to all aggrieved subjects. Interestingly, the same impact of migration can be perceived in a different way depending on the point of view of the subject (person or institution) who evaluates; and we should not forget that migration processes are very complex and it is not easy, sometimes even not possible, to separate one single effect of migration from all others. In the text, the authors look closely on the migration-security nexus mainly from the security studies perspective.

With an aim to determine which types of migration pose (real or perceived) security risks (in general, and in Slovakia), the authors analyse the reflection on current immigration flows in the official strategic documents on the Slovak security policy and the reactions of state representatives to migration. They subsequently compare the data with public perceptions. They compare three sectors: the field of transnational organised crime, terrorism, and internal criminal activities related to migration; and demonstrate the potential and real security threats posed by migrants. In order to make a relevant conclusion on mutual correlations between migration and security, the authors analysed the particular security areas as defined by the Copenhagen School of Thoughts, and distinguished between legal and irregular migrants. They also analysed the ways of preventing the securitisation of the topic in the public discourse and its misuse by the media and extreme political groups and, on the other hand, how to get prepared for the potential security threats.

**03 AHLKOG, Rafael and NYMAN, Pär and SMREK, Michal**  
**The Fiscal Effects of EU Migration to Slovakia**

Almost since the inception of the European Union, free internal movement of people has been one of the cornerstones of European integration. The right to move, live and work freely in any Member State is a widely used right. This type of migration has implications for public finances in the countries people move to. Yet, surprisingly little is known about these fiscal effects.

The authors present in their contribution calculations and discuss the fiscal effects of EU immigrants in Slovakia. Two different types of EU immigrant categories are compared: those who were born in another EU Member State, and those who are citizens of another EU Member State. They came to the conclusion that the fiscal effects of EU immigration in Slovakia are roughly zero. It means that EU immigrants in Slovakia are neither net fiscal costs nor contributors. The comparison with similar neighbouring economies such as the Czech Republic and Hungary, however, gives a hint for the unused potential fiscal benefits that Slovakia could derive from EU immigration. EU immigrants to Slovakia end up in lower paid labour markets compared to native Slovaks, while the opposite is true about Hungary and Czech Republic. Slovakia thus appears to attract mainly low-skilled EU migration. There is no inherent reason why Slovakia could not attract the type of European labour that would provide fiscal benefits and therefore give more room for investments in public services (or tax cuts), which its neighbours appear to do successfully.

**04 ROGOZ, Mădălina and SEKULOVÁ, Martina**  
**Meeting the Care Needs in Sending Countries as a Result of Care Mobility: Examples from Romania and Slovakia**

Unmet care needs – the tension between demand and supply – is one of the most important challenges of contemporary modern societies. The main differentiating aspect of care work mobility compared to other types of labour mobility relates to its nature as a female-dominated area. As the cultural framework of care attributes main caring responsibilities to women, care mobility directly affects family care capacities in countries of origin. Within this framework, even though women eventually become breadwinners, they remain responsible for family care in their respective countries of origin.

The paper is based on the qualitative research by two authors, Mădălina Rogoz and Martina Sekulova. Through the example of Romanian and Slovak caregivers working abroad – particularly in Austria and Italy – this paper analyses the linkages between strategies to address the care needs in mobile workers' families residing in sending countries, care workers' mobility patterns and relevant public policies in their respective countries of origin. In addition, the contribution describes the unmet care needs within families which result particularly from care worker's mobility in specific commuting patterns. The authors chose the example of Romanian and Slovak care workers, since their mobility to Austria, and to a certain extent to

Italy, represents specific patterns of transnational care circulation.

The text demonstrates that care-workers' mobility is influenced by the needs of families in the sending countries, as well as by care-related systems in countries of origin. It suggests that the reorganisation of family care is, in addition to cultural values and social norms, influenced by the availability and affordability of institutional care services, particularly for childcare and elderly care.

**05 CHRANČOKOVÁ, Martina**  
**The Tacit Knowledge of Slovak Migrants**

The contribution discusses different types of knowledge gained from migration experience among various types of migrants – those who are migrants and living abroad, mainly students and economic migrants, and those who have returned after previous migration. The goal is to explain the multiple divisions of knowledge with a focus on tacit knowledge and how it relates to the actual knowledge of Slovak respondents. The author focused on the tacit knowledge that Slovak migrants gained by living abroad. At the same time, this knowledge became an integral part of their identities. The main aim of this paper is to capture and describe the experiences and skills of Slovak respondents.

The economic, social and financial politics of European countries should support brain transfer and circulation. Although migration itself reduces the rate of unemployment

in Slovakia, the greatest risk is the brain drain. People who stay abroad currently represent Slovakia's human capital. Thanks to extensive migration, this Slovak human capital is voluntarily lost. However, from the general life perspective, knowledge transfer should be seen positively. This knowledge gets transferred from place to place through people (brain circulation). In this regard, the worldwide human capital becomes richer.

**06 GÁL, Zsolt**  
**The Fiscal Balance of Immigration in the Light of the EU's Refugee Crisis**

Population ageing in high-income countries has been an ongoing issue for decades now and all projections predict that it is going to continue in the future. When looking for measures to mitigate the ageing-related fiscal burden, efforts to improve the demographic situation itself are logically given priority. In theory, this might be achieved through increased fertility and/or immigration. Immigration could be part of the solution to the fiscal problems of ageing societies, but at the same time, part of the problem. Immigration can contribute to the alleviation of the ageing-related fiscal burden only when its fiscal balance is positive, i.e. if immigrants pay more to the public budgets than they receive.

There are two main aims in this contribution. First, to identify the most important factors influencing the fiscal effects of immigration by reviewing the existing empirical literature. Secondly, by considering these factors to emphasise the possible fiscal effects of the recent refugee flows to the European Union.

The author identifies in the text the most important factors influencing the fiscal effects of immigration in the context of the refugee crisis in the European Union. It offers interesting conclusions regarding the factors influencing the fiscal effects of immigration and the specific characteristics of refugee populations in connection with these factors. He challenges the view on migration as a solution to the ageing population in Europe in case it is not followed by other political actions.

**07 WEIBL, Gabriel**  
**Risk, Uncertainty and the Role of Serendipity in International Student Mobility**

The role of serendipity that triggers mobility measures is a scarcely researched topic and often overlooked in the studies of mobility and migration. However, serendipity considered as a good luck, fortuitous events or chance, played a role in the mobility event of many international students. This contribution represents an in-depth empirical study on the interplay of serendipity in mobility and migration among students who studied at three different international locations (the UK, the Czech Republic and New Zealand). While serendipity is broadly understood as an unplanned occasion, it may occur in the time pre-departure planning and the preparation period of a particular mobility or migration.

The author identifies instances of serendipity within the study trajectories of students and events which led to them and assesses the likelihood of serendipity triggering or contributing

to the decisions of individuals to study abroad. This paper aims to identify those instances of serendipity that contributed to the decisions of international students to study abroad, and sought to trace serendipity throughout the entire mobility cycle, including their experiences in the host country and return home. The methodological approach relies predominantly on the grounded theory of enquiry, induced with the few available references and definitions of serendipity.

# ❶ Editorial: The Challenges of the Changing Reality

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## INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the book has been to present the findings of contemporary scientific enquiries mainly from the Central and Eastern European region which react to contemporary challenges such as 'migration crisis', increasing diversity, the effects of migration and new forms of migration or mobility. Migration has become one of the most significant social processes globally and the issues related to migration, integration or accommodation of migrants in host societies are the focus of agendas of public institutions, non-governmental organisations or policies. Notwithstanding, due to the acceleration of societal, demographic, economic, developmental and environmental changes, migration will most likely increase continuously and so will also its diversity. International migration has multiple social, cultural, economic, political and ethical dimensions, which raises questions that need to be rethought in order to understand the full complexity of the phenomena. With a narrowed focus on migration among the diverse actors, the importance of scientific enquiry in the area increases and scholars must cope with the changing nature and extent of migration and mobility flows.

While the proportion of migrants within the global population has remained stable over the last decade, the total number of migrating people constantly increases. Migrants held a 2.8% share with 155 million people globally in 2000 and attained 3.3% with 244 million people in 2015 (UN DESA, 2017, p. 13). Even more relevant is that recent scientific examination shows that migration is becoming more diverse with new emerging complexities (Crul, 2016;

Grzymala-Kazłowska & Phillimore, 2018; Steve Vertovec, 2007). In order to capture migration in a constantly changing reality, it is necessary to reconceptualise the approaches towards migration and new methodologies (Arrango, 2000; Grzymala-Kazłowska & Phillimore, 2018).

This introduction aims at shedding light on the recent developments in relation to migration and mobility in the European context and its respective effects on the migration studies. At the same time, it endeavours to bridge the chapters published in this volume mainly with a regional focus on Central and Eastern Europe, including its recent migration developments and contemporary contexts, complexities, natural and regional specifics, as well as contemporary theories and research findings.

### 1. NEW FACE OF MOBILITY AND MIGRATION IN EUROPE

In recent years, migration flows have been changing fast – this is especially due to the acceleration of societal and environmental changes, as well as civil and transnational conflicts – to name a few. We may use Adrian Favell's metaphor that migration has gained a 'New Face' (Favell, 2008). A decade ago, in the European context, the academic enquiry touched upon the understanding of migration associated with the last EU enlargement processes.<sup>1</sup> Scholarly debates have attempted to empirically

<sup>1</sup> In May 2004, ten countries joined the EU (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia); in January 2007, it was Bulgaria and Romania; and finally, in July 2013, Croatia, read more at: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/from-6-to-28-members\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/from-6-to-28-members_en) (accessed on 10 April 2019).

and theoretically grasp the specific features of circular migration contrary to the earlier paradigms and concepts rooted in the permanent settlement of migrants in new countries, as well as the processes of their integration into the new society. 'European citizens, old and new, can move freely against a wider, transnational horizon that encourages temporary and circular migration trends, and demands neither long-term settlement nor naturalisation in the country of work' (Favell, 2008, p. 706). Circularity, temporary migration and mobility movements including free movement within the EU and across EU borders represented a new challenge (Triandafyllidou, 2013). The freedom for circulation made borders less important, especially for those with a stable legal status in the EU and those coming from visa-free countries (Morokvasic, 2013). People have started to increasingly cross the borders and participate in mobility and migration in order to improve their social, political and economic conditions or acquire new skills and knowledge.

In a close interconnection, there is a need to look beyond the framework of national states and abandon a static view on migration as a one-way movement from one location to another. Migration commonly has more directions, it is open-ended or flexible and, on the contrary, less likely definitive, permanent or unidirectional. 'International circuits of migration are no longer bi-polar and most of them develop as multi-local transnational networks of movement... Such networks, once established, serve as facilitators of new waves of migration, of return, again moving on and re-returning' (Conway & Potter, 2009, p. 1).

The attention of scientific research has been drawn to the phenomenon of double and/or multiple belonging, transnational links and the ties of migrants in social spaces across the borders, referred to as transnationalism (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Vertovec, 2009). Scholars have elaborated a large number of related conceptualisations such as diaspora, transnational social fields (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004), transnational family practises (Zechner, 2008), transnationalising inequalities (Amelina, 2017) or transnational habitus (Nedelcu, 2012; Zechner, 2017). Within this context, processes related to population ageing, welfare state restructuring, changing policies in the field of long-term care, increasing care deficits in families or global and regional inequalities have led to an emergence of feminised migratory streams, either in the form of circulatory cross-border mobilities or longer-span migration across the national borders, and not exceptionally even continents. In order to grasp these processes, scholars developed concepts such as the transnationalisation of care practises or global care chains, which critically contribute to understanding the changing nature of migration (Hochschild, 2000; Yeates, 2012). Mădălina Rogoz and Martina Sekulová (Chapter 03) discuss in their contribution the circular mobility of caregivers from Romania and Slovakia, in which they focus on the role of the care regime in sending countries and the need for care in their families in mobility pattern. The paper demonstrates that transnational short-term mobility is influenced by family care needs in countries of origin, which in turn are influenced by the formal/informal organisation of elderly and child-care services in these countries.

An important fragment in the picture of contemporary European mobilities and migration is return migration (Conway & Potter, 2009; Vathi & King, 2017), may it be due to the return of first-generation migrants after their retirement, individual migration projects or unsuccessful migration. As time passes by along with economic, political and social changes, or the reaching of goals or aims of the individual migration project,<sup>2</sup> many migrants and mobile commuters return to their origin countries. Growing return migration is related to economic development in the European region, and is also due to other factors such as political reasons, i.e. Brexit. The shape and face of contemporary migration has affected external factors as well, the most important among them being the so called 'migration crisis'. Gabriel Weibl (Chapter 06) and Martina Chrančoková (Chapter 04) focus in this volume on the migration and mobility of students and economic migrants, including returnees, and explore the gains from this experience.

## 2. POLITICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT – MIGRATION AS AN AGENDA

Europe's 'migration crisis', which started in 2015, when more than one million persons from the Middle East and North Africa crossed European borders with the aim of applying for international protection due to war conflicts and poverty (European Parliament, 2017), significantly challenged society as a whole, as well

as academia. Migration has become an agenda of highest importance on European and national levels and changed the discourse and narrative of migration. It was even a 'turning point' in the perception of migration in Europe (Karasová & Baláž, 2018).

The migration crisis challenged not only the European asylum system, public policies and solidarity, but also academic migration studies – how to study and understand migration, how to contextualise it and, last but not least, how to bring research findings closer to people in order to influence the narrative. In the last few years, Europe has seen nationalisation and populism tendencies and the rising popularity of far-right parties; some countries turned their attention to securitisation and protection of their sovereignty instead of opening themselves to migration and integration. The discourse and the narrative on refugees in Europe have changed across Europe with an increasing tendency to perceive migrants as a security threat or through the optic of economisation (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017). The paper written by Barbora Olejárová and Martina Bolečeková (Chapter 01), which uses an example of Slovakia, focuses on the processes of securitisation at the level of the national state and policy-driven implementation of the securitisation measures as a response to changing migration in Europe. At the same time, the chapter critically evaluates these developments, particularly the context of Slovakia.

The legal status of migrants matters significantly, since it determines their rights and access to various services

and aspects of society such as employment, social security, education etc. As Crawley and Skleparis point out, the migration crisis brought 'categorical fetishism' since the refugee and economic migrant categories are closely tied to the legitimacy of moving across borders and the entitlement to international protection (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018). Immigration authorities recognise two main categories of migrants: refugees and economic migrants who have, according to international definitions, distinctive reasons for leaving their home country, different social situations, positions and integration needs upon arrival to the receiving society. Refugees are forced to flee in order to save their lives, preserve freedoms due to conflict and human rights violations, environmental catastrophes or poverty and a lack of life prospects (Bürkin, Huddleston & Chindea, 2013). International institutions, such as the UN Refugee Agency, recommend that refugees should be disentangled from legal migrants in order to ensure their proper protection (Bürkin et al., 2013, p. 10). In practice, the border line between the categories might be blurred and thus the dichotomy of forced/voluntary migration is also problematic within and beyond academia (Erdal & Oeppen, 2017). Debates on migration are related to the challenges of ageing European populations, demand for a skilled labour force, an effort to attract the 'best brains', but we also witness 'brain drain' and loss of human capital – the departure of young and skilled people abroad (Kucharczyk & Mesežnikov, 2018). Zsolt Gál (Chapter 05) analyses the fiscal effects of migration on the receiving society. According to his analysis, mi-

gration is not a solution to demographic problems, but it may contribute to the alleviation of their fiscal consequences. In Chapter 02, authors Pär Nyman, Rafael Ahlskog and Michal Smrek investigate the fiscal effects of migration on Slovakia and conclude that people residing in Slovakia, but born in another EU Member State (or are alternatively citizens of another EU Member State), pay roughly as much in taxes and social security contributions as they receive in benefits and other expenses.

Migration has become increasingly evaluated in economised contexts, not only in order to differentiate between the categories of migrants, but also in the evaluative context – calculating whether migration brings more benefits or expenses to the receiving society. However, the economic considerations of migration have limits. As Joaquín Arrango sums up, 'almost everything can be translated into costs and benefits, even a value in monetary terms can be attached to it, but the price of such effort may often be the practical irrelevance, which is close to tautology, of finding that people move to enhance their well-being' (Arrango, 2000, p. 286). The shift in the perception of migration, which was caused by a rising number of globally displaced persons, obscured the benefits of migration from debates and public reflections (UN DESA, 2017, p. 3).

Migrants represent a diverse group far beyond the simple categorisation based on their ethnicity, nationality or legal status. Recent scientific debates in the field of migration studies increasingly seek the development of new concepts under the conditions of super-diversification. In the

<sup>2</sup> For example, improved economic and social situation, skills and knowledge acquired through migration, improved conditions in the home country, the needs of the family members left behind to name a few.

migratory experience, gender, class, education, social capital or age also play an important role. Super-diversity calls for recognition of factors beyond ethnicity and the country of origin, which plays a major role in migrant settlement and social relations (Vertovec, 2007). The perspective therefore offers an important tool for better understanding and management of migrant accommodation (Crul, 2016) of a diverse migration population.

Integration or accommodation of migrants in host societies is in the centre of policy makers and practitioners who currently work with different migrant populations. As a concept, the integration or accommodation of migrants may have diverse meanings, however, it most commonly covers a slow and continuous inclusion to a receiving society, to its particular components, institutions, to its 'core', and affects both the established community and the newcomers (Korac, 2003; Sekulová & Gyarášová, 2009). The growing diversity of the migrant population presents challenges to practitioners as well, who manage integration processes through policies. Even though the increasing diversity and complexity of migration is a global phenomenon, new local challenges arise as global tensions are played out at local levels. Individual migration projects or the integration process upon arrival take place in a specific national context, under regional conditions and on local levels. Political factors are also influential, since governments strictly regulate the conditions of entry and entitlement of migrants to participate in society.

Migration is closely linked to the process of integration, with particular national

legislation and policies that establish the tools and facilitate integration. The main focus of this volume is regional; in addition to Central and Eastern European countries, Slovakia is in the centre of the authors' scientific examination.

### 3. IS SLOVAKIA STILL MORE A COUNTRY OF EMIGRATION?

Since the accession of Slovakia to the European Union in 2004, many Slovak citizens (including many young people and people in their productive age) have left the country and begun to study or work abroad. Unfortunately, we do not have precise data on the number of Slovaks living abroad (temporarily or permanently), but analysts estimate that approximately 10 per cent of Slovak citizens in their productive age are abroad (Karasová & Baláž, 2018; *Počet pracujúcich cudzincov...*, 2019). The total number of Slovaks migrating within the EU grew almost three-fold in the period of 2001–2013, from 100,000 to 300,000 (Karasová & Baláž, 2018, p. 23). In 2018, migrants aged 25–34 accounted for one quarter of all migrants, but the proportion of migrants aged 55+ grew to 14.4%. Although a relatively high number of Slovak citizens have migrated for various reasons and with different motivations, Slovakia is no longer exclusively a country of emigration.

Issues related to migration and integration were marginal in terms of public interest or political focus. Since 2015 and the arrival of refugees to Europe, this topic has become 'an arena of sharp political contestation' (Kucharczyk & Mesežnikov, 2018, p. 9) and anti-migration rhetoric. It heavily emerged in the

public discourse and largely lacked a balanced dialogue. The fear of migrants (especially Muslims) within the population has been rising, despite the number of migrants living in Slovakia has remained very low.

It is important to note that the Slovak legislation and policies do not recognise the term 'migrant' or 'migrant population'. Official documents or legislation, including statistics, utilise the term foreigner. According to the law, a foreigner is anyone who is not a citizen of Slovakia. However, the term migrant has wider employability and allows for the tracking of the second generation of the migrant population as well. The term 'recognised refugee' includes persons with granted asylum or subsidiary protection. Asylum is granted to a foreigner who is persecuted in his/her country of origin for diverse reasons such as race, ethnicity, religion or political opinion (NIEM, 2017).

Between December 2017 and December 2018, the total number of foreigners in the country grew from 104,451 to 121,264 (+16%), which makes up approximately 2.2% of the population (*Statistical Overview 2018*). According to police records, the number of foreigners in Slovakia doubled in the course of six years. In 2018, third-country nationals represented more than half of the migrants – 65,381, while the number of EU nationals reached 5,883 people. Most third-country nationals had a temporary residence permit (48,316), 17,050 persons had a permanent residence permit, and 15 had a tolerated stay permit. The largest numbers of foreigners in Slovakia are from neighbouring countries, and they are linked to Slovakia mostly through work, family and social

relations. In December 2018, the most numerous EU nationals were from the Czech Republic (10,970), Hungary (8,503), Romania (7,420) and Poland (5,872); third-country nationals were from the Ukraine (24,913), Serbia (14,208), Russia (4,698) and Vietnam (4,008) (*Statistical Overview 2018*). This growth was mainly due to economic needs as third-country nationals have been increasingly hired by Slovak employers to fill the industry needs. This can be observed also from the point of view of the purpose of their stay. The purpose of residence of most third-country nationals is employment – the number of people with this type of residence doubled from 7,272 in 2017 to 15,387 in 2018 (*Statistical Overview 2018*; *Zamestnávanie cudzincov...*, 2018).

Compared to other EU countries, Slovakia has not been touched by the so-called refugee crisis of 2015 (Bargerová, 2016). From the overall number, out of 58,811 applications since 1993, asylum was granted only to 854 persons and another 746 persons were granted subsidiary protection as another form of international protection. For instance, in 2018, 178 persons applied for asylum in Slovakia, most often from Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Azerbaijan and Iran, but only five of them were granted asylum (*Statistical Overview 2018*).

### 4. NO EXPERIENCE BUT...

Even though the share of migrants in the Slovak society is rather low, the anti-refugee rhetoric and rise of xenophobic populists are present. According to a study conducted by the Czech NGO People in Need, 'the hate-speech against immigrants has a cyclic nature – it is very



hard to determine who is dominant in the media-politicians-society triangle and what are the particular motives of each group' (Smoleňová, 2017). Sociologists Vera Messing and Bence Ságvári used the data from twenty European countries to explore the relationship among attitudes to immigration and other social factors. According to them, there is a strong correlation between the number of migrants living in the country and the attitudes towards them: 'People are fearful in countries where the basic fabric of society is damaged, where people do not trust each other or the state's institutions, and where social cohesion and solidarity are weak' (Messing & Ságvári, 2018, p. 29). The recent 'migration crisis' of 2015 has shown that Slovakia tends to focus more on securitisation and the protection of sovereignty instead of opening itself to migration and integration (Chudžíková, 2016; Mesežnikov & Bútorová, 2018).

People very often think about migration in connection with social problems. In general, they are afraid of the diversity of people, different cultures, lack of jobs, social tensions etc., but we cannot stop migration and mobility of people; it is growing and shall continue to do so in the future.

The authors of this book have looked closely at the different aspects of migration and sought to contribute to current discussions through their observations, research findings and new angles and views of migration. The message from them is that due to changing realities, migration must be reconsidered, reconstructed and studied in new and innovative ways.

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## ② Securitization of Migration in the Slovak Republic

25

## INTRODUCTION

Migration, like any other process involving human beings and their social interactions, brings about many benefits and disadvantages to all aggrieved subjects. Interestingly, the same impact of migration can be perceived in a different way depending on the point of view of the subject (person or institution) who evaluates; and we should not forget that migration processes are very complex and it is not easy, sometimes even not possible, to separate one single effect of migration from all others. The impacts of migration processes can be revealed in all spheres of societies and lives of migrants – social, cultural, economic, political, and in the area of security. It is necessary to distinguish between at least two basic levels of analysis in the case of evaluation of migration's benefits and risks – the macro level<sup>1</sup> and the micro level<sup>2</sup> (Massey et. al., 2005).

For the purpose of this study, we use migration terminology with respect to the definitions of the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2011). In the Slovak context, the term migrant is used for the entire foreign population (without Slovak citizenship) present in Slovakia, including legal migrants, refugees (people with granted asylum), irregular migrants, foreigners from the EU Member States, as well as third-country migrants.

The foreign-born population (people born outside the Slovak Republic who acquired Slovak citizenship later by naturalisation or other secondary forms of obtaining citizenship) will not be taken into consideration regarding the short history of the state (established in 1993); a strict naturalisation policy of Slovakia and, hence, low numbers of foreign-born population with Slovak citizenship in Slovakia (OECD, 2018).

To deal with the complexity of migration processes, we distinguish between voluntary and forced and legal/regular and illegal/irregular migration. We prefer to use the terms 'irregular migration' and 'irregular migrants' (because of a rather negative connotation of the terms 'illegal migration' and 'illegal migrant'), except when we quote an author or an institution – in such cases we use the original form. To briefly introduce the migration profile of the Slovak Republic, we can state that it is still not seen as an immigration country.<sup>3</sup> However, when viewed in the global and European context, the impacts of international migration influence life in Slovakia significantly. In terms of historical migratory flows, the Slovak Republic had previous experience with labour emigration in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and with restrictions of the free movement of persons in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the migration profile of the country has

been changing continuously over the last decades from an almost exclusively emigration country to a transit country or final destination for migrants. This is caused – among other things – mainly by Slovakia's membership in the European Union (EU).

Currently, in line with the global and regional trends, labour migration predominates over other migration movements in Slovakia. This is true for both directions, including emigration of Slovak citizens looking for work abroad, as well as for the immigration of foreign workers to the Slovak Republic (MISR, 2018a). Furthermore, and once more in line with global and regional trends, the Slovak Republic is affected by the issue of forced migration. Yet in this case, the movement takes place only in one direction, i.e. into the Slovak territory, which relates to the fact that Slovakia is in principle, a safe and democratic country. However, the numbers of asylum seekers or people searching for any other form of international

protection are much lower in Slovakia compared to other EU Member States.<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of the proportional representation of voluntary – mostly regular labour migrants<sup>5</sup> and forced migrants in the total number of foreigners in Slovakia, both groups are lately being given increased attention in different contexts. In the aftermath of the so-called European migration crisis that hit the EU in 2014 and culminated one year later, migration became not only the topic of lively discussions of the Slovak public, but also an important subject of high-level political debates. Paradoxically, in our opinion, the range and intensity of the attention paid by the public to this topic was quite considerably affected by the increased media coverage and unusual political engagement in the migration related agenda. The range and significance of the migration policy decisions adopted in this period even affected the foreign policy of the country and we can thus speak of certain conjunction of the migration policy and foreign policy of the state (Bolečková & Olejárová, 2017). Nowadays, after de-escalation of the European migration crisis and the stabilisation of numbers of people approaching Europe, the focal point of the migration policy of Slovakia moved to the issue of labour immigration from third countries due to the lack of specific type of workforce in the Slovak economy. Recently,<sup>6</sup> the *Strategy on Labour Mobility*

<sup>1</sup> The effects of migration processes in countries receiving immigrants, but also in countries of origin and transit countries, as well as impacts in regional and global sense. However, in this chapter we will focus our research mainly on the impact of migration on the receiving countries.

<sup>2</sup> Migrants, their families and communities.

<sup>3</sup> The numbers of foreign nationals in Slovakia are rather low. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, in 2016 only Latvia had a lower inflow of foreign migrants than Slovakia among OECD countries (OECD, 2018a). According to the International Organization for Migration, the share of foreign nationals in Slovakia is currently 1.9%; on the other hand, the numbers are slowly but continuously increasing (IOM, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> Slovakia experienced the largest numbers of asylum applications at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, shortly before EU integration. The peak was reached in 2004 with 11,395 asylum applications. In 2018, only 178 asylum applications were submitted (MISR, 2018c). The low numbers of asylum applications in Slovakia are caused by two main factors. First of all, the geographic position of the country, which is not located on the main migration routes of the people coming from the Middle East and Africa to Europe. Second of all, the lack of historical experience with migration compared to Western European countries, which results in the fact that asylum seekers do not choose Slovakia as their final destination and prefer countries with larger minority groups of people from the same country they come from or countries where their relatives already live. The possible third factor which impacts the number of submitted applications can also be that there is generally a low number of granted asylums in Slovakia (Cuprik, 2017), and therefore asylum seekers choose countries with a higher probability of finding refuge when possible.

<sup>5</sup> The term 'labour migrants' is preferred rather than 'economic migrants' because the scope of economic migration is broader than in the case of labour migration – economic benefits are not only connected to labour activity.

<sup>6</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

of *Foreigners in the Slovak Republic* was adopted by the Slovak government in line with these trends and needs (MLSAFSR, 2018).

Besides the trends in migration flows, the migration policy of the Slovak Republic has mainly been influenced by its membership in the EU, and the influence of EU law and institutions is still clearly present. All strategic documents and laws concerning the migration policy in Slovakia have been adopted in accordance with democratic principles and international commitments. Nevertheless, the practice of the Slovak migration policy cannot be characterised as 'migration-friendly'. The main aim of any migration policy, both on the national level and on the level of the regional integration blocks, should be striving for multiplication of the positive effects of migration and, at the same time, prevention of the potential risks related to this phenomenon. Such an approach assumes the ability to objectively analyse the course of migration processes and eventually foresee their impact on all aspects of society from the short-term and medium-term horizon (and preferably on a long-term basis). One of the fundamental steps in reaching the above-mentioned goal of multiplying the positive and preventing negative effects of migration is the identification of potential migration related risks. In order to achieve that, the study of the migration-security nexus is a crucial part of any research in the field of migration, and the relation between migration and security is also the main topic of the current chapter.

The migration-security nexus can be approached from various directions, e.g. according to Huysmans and Squire, from a security studies perspective and from a migration studies perspective, while both fields are complex and multi-faceted (Huysmans & Squire, 2009). In this chapter, we approach the migration-security nexus mainly from a security studies perspective. When comparing current theoretical approaches to the research of security, one of the most important is the theory of social constructivism which is based on the assumption that the behaviour of participants of security is a very strong social construct and stresses the power of ideas (Ušiak, 2011).

The starting point of our research is to offer a theoretical framework in the field of security, specifically definitions of security risks and threats. Research on security risks and security threats can be based on different schools of theoretical thoughts in international relations. The limited scope of this study does not create enough space to analyse all of them. In this regard, we will incline to the definitions that represent the prevailing direction in theoretical understanding of both terms. Migration is a global process that can have an uncountable number of forms and it is important to distinguish which particular form of migration might cause potential security concerns (Koser, 2011). With an aim to determine which types of migration pose (real or perceived) security risks (in general, and in Slovakia), we analyse the reflexion of current immigration flows in the official strategic documents of the Slovak security policy. The reflexion of migration flows is also a natural part of state

representatives' statements. To reveal possible occurrence of securitisation, we also pay attention to the reactions of state representatives towards migration. To provide additional facts to the discussion, we try to scrutinise selected areas of the migration-security nexus in Slovakia and compare the data with public perceptions. From the myriad of horizontal sectors outlined by the Copenhagen school of thoughts, we deeply analyse three of them to manifest any potential and real security threats of migrants: in the field of transnational organised crime, terrorism and internal criminal activities related to migration. This is important on one hand in order to prevent the securitisation of the topic in the public and its misuse by the media and extreme political groups and, on the other hand, to be prepared for the potential security threats in cases where the speech acts which connect migration with security threats will be confirmed as valid. In the conclusion, we point to which effects the securitisation of migration might have in the receiving countries.

## 1. MIGRATION AND SECURITY – THEORETICAL PERCEPTION

Security is generally understood as 'the state of social, natural, technical, technological system or other system that – under certain internal and external circumstances – enables fulfilling of given functions and their development on behalf of man and society' (Šimák, 2006, p. 8). The traditional approach to security within security studies understands 'threat' as a situation where the state is endangered – especially its territory and/

or population, by another state (Lasicová, 2006). Thus, the traditional approach in an analysis of international relations would place migration as a security problem in the background. However, the traditional definition of security which refers to direct armed clashes of two belligerents is insufficient in the modern world. For the analysis of the migration-security nexus, we would like to point to the importance of the Copenhagen school that lies within the horizontal division of the security between the narrow – mostly military comprehension of security and the wider concept perceiving security as a phenomenon involving not only military, but also political, economic, environmental and societal sectors of security. The vertical division of security elaborated by the Copenhagen school develops the area of referential objects of security studies – it is not only the state itself, but also an individual, society, supranational entity or mankind as a whole that can be treated an object of security studies. (Lasicová, 2006; Huysmans & Squire, 2009; Ušiak & Nečas, 2011). Academics, therefore, reflect the migration-security nexus in correlations to state sovereignty, as well as human security.<sup>7</sup> The other important feature of the new way of thinking about security is the concept of securitisation.

<sup>7</sup> The first important (and currently most widely used) definition of human security appeared in 1994 in the *Human Development Report* of the UN Development Programme. However, this definition of human security is considered to be too indefinite and vague and some researchers (Paris, 2001) propose to narrow the content of the human security only to those areas of security studies which are primarily concerned with non-military threats to the security of society, groups and individuals as opposed to those approaches to security, which focus on the protection of the state from the external threats.



Securitisation is most commonly defined, and also understood in this chapter, as presentation (by means of a speech act, language, interpretation or perception) of a certain topic by the securitisation actor (an individual, organisation, state, media, political parties etc.) as a societal or existential threat to a particular reference object, which requires immediate adoption of certain measures and emergency solutions (by means of legislative or financial measures) for their removal (Lasicová & Ušiak, 2012). This concept is the result of the objective and subjective perception of security based on evaluation and review of security risks and threats by the particular subjects.<sup>8</sup>

Škvrnda (2002, p. 82) defines the term risk as a phenomenon related to the worries that certain activity of a subject can cause damage, loss or result in unfavourable consequences, whereby we can speak of a risk only if the consequences are indeterminate, i.e. they can occur but they are not inevitable or unavoidable. The risk is therefore nothing more than the possibility that an unfavourable event undermined by the present-day cause would appear in the future (in some cases, it is possible to express the degree of probability that a certain occurrence will happen). According to Škvrnda, the starting point for analysing security risk (as a type of social risk) is the anthropocentric view of society – security is a basic human need. Within the anthropocentric framework, the author outlines four

levels of security: individual level, level of groups, level of states, and international level (Škvrnda, 2002). Brauch states that 'the 'risk' concept has been employed in many natural and social science disciplines as a concept that is also widely used by policy-makers to justify specific policy goals and programmes' (Brauch, 2011, p. 79). Many researchers in the field of security studies (Nečas & Ušiak, 2010; Hofreiter, 2009; Lasicová, 2006) treat risk as a potential jeopardy to the subject's security, as well as a potential security threat. The explanation of the term security threat is therefore based on the definition of risk: whereas the risk represents a potential danger which can occur at a certain point in the future, the threat effects immediately, i.e. the threat can be defined as activated risk (Šimák, 2006).

The other term that needs to be explained is security challenge (Hreha, 2018). Challenge is a clearly identified stimulus from the security environment (from different sectors of security), which should have been responded in the short-term perspective by appropriate measures. A challenge can be the aggregate of multiple security risks and threats which act simultaneously, for example, as a result of regional and global changes (Brauch 2011, Lasicová & Ušiak, 2012). In this sense, we prefer to use the term security challenge in connection to migration, rather than security risk or security threat.

The most commonly cited risks connected to migration movements include violation of borders, burden to the health-care system, education and social-security system, housing; health hazard; crime; increased unemployment

rate of the receiving country's citizens due to more workforce available on the labour market; deflation of salaries; endangerment of the native language, culture and values of the host countries; as well as cross-border problems, especially human trafficking and terrorism (Thomson, 2013). Divinský (2016) presumes that security problems are mainly connected to illegal migration, as the factor of illegality brings about many features, activities and processes unfavourable to the transit/host countries and their population, as well as to migrants themselves. The most serious migration-related security problems regarding transit/host countries include: uncontrollable crossing of state borders by migrants and their unauthorised entry into states' sovereign territories; activities of organised (criminal) groups of smugglers – human smuggling; other attendant forms of cross-border crime; unauthorised and unregistered stays and movements of migrants within the state's territory; illegal labour activities of migrants, including their illegal employment, tax avoidance and involvement in the shadow economy; forgery or illegal manipulation with travel and identification documents, residence or work-related documents and permits; different security threats, a hindered fight against terrorism and protection of the state; deepening social, ethnic, religious and political tension in the society, radicalisation of society and potential violent clashes; rising demands on economic, technical, personal and the administrative part of illegal migration management, border protection and

the labour market (Divinský, 2016, p. 6). Migration-related security problems regarding migrants themselves, their families and communities stemming from their illegal entry, movement, stay and employment include: various complications and risks on the migration route (medical, security, climate-related); increased risk due to the activities of human smugglers and traffickers; financial and professional undervaluation or even abuse of illegal migrants on the labour market by employers in the host country; excessive mental load stemming from the worries over disclosure, detention or expulsion; limited access to basic rights and services, which are normally available to legal migrants; minimal opportunities to participate in programmes for the protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people in the state; higher incidence of xenophobic behaviour, prejudice and intolerance in the majority population; more difficult integration of illegal migrants into the new society; lacking lack of awareness of the possibilities for legalisation of their stay and employment in the host country (Divinský, 2016, p. 7).

Undoubtedly, migration movements or their side-effects and consequences can pose security risks for different subjects. Yet, on the other hand, these phenomena quite often become objects of securitisation. In general, the perception of migration as a security threat without providing any scientific evidence, i.e. securitisation of migration, has reflected a rising tendency over the last few years. The potential reasons for this occurrence may be

<sup>8</sup> Nečas and Ušiak distinguish between the following phases of securitisation processes: 1. Pre-securitisation, 2. Informative, 3. Pre-crisis (escalation), 4. Crisis (acute), 5. Chronical, and 6. Stabilisation (Nečas & Ušiak, 2010, p. 78). For the process of securitisation of migration see also Bourbeau, 2011.



identified because the security agenda has become interconnected with various aspects of politics (widening of the concept of security); the number of migrants and especially irregular migrants has increased;<sup>9</sup> migration (mostly irregular migration) has begun to be connected with the 'war against terrorism' and other transnational threats (Wohlfeld, 2014, pp. 72–73).

Migration is a complex phenomenon affecting all aspects of human society. For this reason, the identification of security risks and security threats in general, but also the identification of security risks and security threats directly connected to migration movements constitutes a relevant part of fundamental strategic documents of national security policies. Therefore, the following part of the text will analyse the latest *Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic*, as well as a proposal for a new security strategy aiming to identify whether these documents reflect the current human movements in Slovakia, including present-day issues related to migration in the country, and what is the official attitude of the state's representatives towards migration in terms of security.

<sup>9</sup> Rising numbers of irregular migrants are caused by a general increase of mobility in the world, which results from the globalisation of the world and modernisation of transportation and communication technologies; but also from the restrictions of legal migration possibilities. On the other hand, the push factors driving migrants out of their home countries became more visible over the last decades, too. These include, among others, discrepancies between labour market demands and supply; severe abuse of human rights in the home countries; newly emerged conflicts in the world, etc. (Wohlfeld, 2014, p. 67).

## 2. MIGRATION IN SLOVAK STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS VS. POLICY REACTIONS DURING THE CRISIS

The numbers of migrants and refugees in Slovakia have always been generally low compared to other EU Member States and this situation did not change even after the outbreak of the migration crisis in 2014. Slovakia was ranked 25<sup>th</sup> out of 28 EU countries regarding the number of asylum applications in the EU in 2015.<sup>10</sup> 330 persons applied for asylum in Slovakia including 149 resettled asylum seekers from Iraq (MISR, 2018c).<sup>11</sup> According to the survey conducted in 2016, 47.7% of the respondents expressed their fear of refugees' arrival to Slovakia, compared to 70% in 2015 (Bahna & Klobucký, 2016). The Slovak public opinion on the issue can also be illustrated by the Eurobarometer 83 survey from May 2015 (European Commission, 2015) and the Eurobarometer 85 from May 2016 (European Commission, 2016). Migration was indirectly included in two Eurobarometer questions:

1. *What do you think are the two most important issues facing our country at the moment?*

<sup>10</sup> On the other side of the chart were countries that had the most asylum applications in 2015: Germany (441,800), Hungary (174,400), Sweden (156,100), Austria (85,500), Italy (83,200) and France (70,600) respectively (Eurostat, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> In 2015, the Slovak Republic invited a group of 149 Christians from Iraq to stay permanently in Slovakia. Their integration process was coordinated in cooperation with the civil society organisation Pokoj a dobro (Peace and Good). After one year, around two-thirds of all refugees from Iraq still remained in Slovakia, while the others returned home to safe areas (Mikušovič, 2016).

2. *What do you think are the two most important issues facing the EU at the moment?*

Whereas in the spring 2015, only 4% of the Slovak citizens responded 'migration' to the first question and 35% of them to the second question – in May 2016, this percentage rose to 17% in the first case and 59% in the second case (European Commission, 2016). The increased numbers certainly reflected the escalation of irregular migrants coming to the European Union in the second half of 2015, when the migration crisis reached its peak.<sup>12</sup> In April 2018,<sup>13</sup> the European Commission published the results of a special Eurobarometer survey on *Integration of immigrants in the European Union* containing responses concerning the general perception of immigrants and personal experiences with them, as well as successful integration stories and the roles various actors can play in this process. For 54% of the respondents in Slovakia, immigration from third countries was still perceived as a problem.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, only 15% of respondents answered correctly to the question on how many immigrants from third countries currently live in Slovakia (European Commission, 2018).

With respect to the intensity of migration flows in the Slovak territory, migration

<sup>12</sup> The Frontex agency detected 978,338 irregular border crossings in the EU over the last quarter of 2015, which is ten times more than over the last quarter of 2014 with 79,819 irregular border crossing (Frontex, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> Fieldwork was conducted in October 2017.

<sup>14</sup> The EU28 average was 38% (European Commission, 2018).

has become an unusually debated topic in the country over the last few years, not only among the Slovak public, but also on the political level, and the country has caught the attention of the entire EU following the highly negative attitude of Slovak political leaders towards migration. The 'official' position of the Slovak Republic towards the 'migration crisis in 2015' can be defined by two attitudes: first, support of voluntary relocations and, second, rejection of the quota system.<sup>15</sup> This step significantly contributed to the change of perception of the Slovak Republic abroad as a country that neither wants to accept refugees, nor is willing to express solidarity with other EU Member States.<sup>16</sup> Despite the fact that Slovak politicians refused mandatory quotas, they emphasised their readiness to help 'according to our own possibilities'. Most politicians based their argumentation on the 'security concerns'. Androvičová (2015) points out that the security aspect had dominated migration discussions in the Slovak Republic even before the outbreak of the migration crisis. The key conceptual documents in the area of migration policy – *Migration Policy of the*

<sup>15</sup> Slovakia (under the then one-party government of SMER) reacted by filing a lawsuit for annulment to the Court of Justice (case C-643/15), challenging the legality of the Asylum-Seekers Relocation Decision of 22 September 2015, establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece. Hungary joined the Slovak action three months later. Process at the CJEU started on 10 May 2017. On 6 September that year, the Court has rejected a challenge by Hungary and Slovakia.

<sup>16</sup> Unlike in the case of Hungary and Poland, which refuse to take any migrants under the relocation mechanism, Slovakia was aware of its legal obligations under the EU law and relocated 16 migrants from Greece by March 2018, despite political refusal of the Decision (EU) 2015/1601 (European Commission, 2017).

*Slovak Republic: Perspective until the Year 2020* (2011) and *Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic* (2014), although containing certain aspects of securitisation, are still rather positive towards migration. When comparing the *Manifestos of the Slovak Government*,<sup>17</sup> the topic of migration is becoming the issue of concern only after the power takeover of the Robert Fico Government in 2016, i.e. after the March 2016 general elections.<sup>18</sup> The 2012 Fico Government's Manifesto does not include any single mention of migration. This implies an impact of the migration crisis on the perception of migration in Slovakia and on the attitudes of the Slovak representatives towards migration. *The 2016 Manifesto of the Slovak Government* mentions migration several times, in particular (Government Office SR, 2018):

- The Slovak Republic is aware of the belt of persisting instability along the EU bor-

der, which gives rise to mass migration and international terrorism as one of the most acute external challenges.

- The government is prepared to support constructive solutions to the unprecedented migration crisis, while respecting the specificities and capabilities of individual Member States.
- The government will actively support the implementation of the European Security Agenda 2015–2020, focusing in particular on illegal and uncontrollable migration.
- The government will further intensify its fight against trafficking in human beings.
- The government will strengthen its cooperation with the European Union in securing the external borders of the Schengen area.
- One of the priorities of the Slovak Republic's presidency of the Council of the European Union is to support a swift build-up of the necessary personnel and technical capacities for the new European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

As the main strategic document of the country, *The Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic* is also concerned with migration despite the fact that it was adopted on 27 September 2005. Migration is mentioned among the factors influencing the security environment (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, p. 4); it is treated as a phenomenon accompanying regional conflicts (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, p. 5); and also connected to organised crime (*Security strategy...*, 2005, pp. 5–6). Illegal and uncontrolled migration

is indicated explicitly as a 'threat to Europe'. At the same time, the rise in intolerance, which is 'an obstacle to the fulfilment of the needs of legal migration itself', is referred to in this context (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, p. 6). Illegal migration is also mentioned in the text as a consequence of the growing economic imbalance in the world, which is a source of tension and instability and contributes to the emergence of security threats (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, p. 6). Labour migration can pose a threat to culture and identity of the population (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, p. 7); on the other hand, the document points out to the fact, that the social system is negatively affected by negative demographic development, and immigration is a significant factor that contributes to balancing the state's demographic structure (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, p. 7). Further to the above, the Slovak Republic declares that it will take measures to reduce illegal and uncontrollable migration, eliminate migrant smuggling and conduct activities against organised crime. To fight illegal migration, organised crime and the spread of terrorism to Europe, it will also contribute to activities aimed at overcoming economic stagnation and poverty (*Security Strategy...*, 2005, pp. 13–15).

In accordance with the 2016 Manifesto, the Slovak Government approved the draft of the new Security Strategy document (on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017), yet it needs to be approved by the Parliament of the Slovak Republic – the National Council – to come into force.<sup>19</sup> According to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Ivan Korčok, the main reason for updating the document is due to the deterioration of

the security environment that Slovakia needs to reflect, including the presence of new hybrid threats (TASR, 2017). The document defines the security interests of the Slovak Republic and, in addition to the characteristics of the security environment, it includes the listing of security risks and threats. Migration is for the first time explicitly mentioned in the updated document in the characteristics of the security environment, particularly in relation to the Euro-Atlantic area, whose security and stability 'was disrupted by the sharp increase in illegal, uncontrollable migration from the regions of the Middle East, Asia and Africa' (*Security Strategy...*, 2017, p. 7). The draft enumerates other factors as well that increase the risk of illegal, uncontrollable migration, such as poor socio-economic conditions, population growth, the continuation and spread of conflicts and instability,<sup>20</sup> or the impact of climate change in these regions. Thus, for the first time, certain types of migration flows – illegal and uncontrollable – are described as a threat to the security of the Slovak Republic, as well as for the cohesion and stability of the European Union and the functioning of the Schengen system. The reason is that 'it activates domestic extremist clusters, increases populism and intolerance, helps to promote extremist movements in a political struggle, is a breeding ground for organised crime benefiting

<sup>17</sup> Manifestos traditionally articulate the priorities of newly formed government in Slovakia and therefore can predict the government's orientation in dealing with the crucial issues of state's functioning.

<sup>18</sup> In 2016 elections, the migration crisis was (mis)used as a political campaign tool by most political parties and their representatives. All relevant political parties in Slovakia shared very similar attitudes towards asylum seekers and the solution to the migration crisis. In our previous analysis, we identified several proposals for the crisis solution common for most Slovak political parties: protection of the EU external borders; refusal of the EU obligatory quotas on migrants; creation of detention facilities outside of the EU territory, which should concentrate migrants heading to the EU in order to review their asylum request, assort them into groups and redistribute successful asylum seekers to EU receiving countries; stabilisation of the situation in the home countries of migrants, especially in Syria, Libya and Iraq; precise selection of asylum seekers and economic migrants who are not eligible for refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection or any other form of protection in the EU.

<sup>19</sup> The new Security Strategy will create a framework for drafting other conceptual documents on security, including the new Defence Strategy of the Slovak Republic.

<sup>20</sup> Crises and conflicts, and particularly failing states, are identified as the causes of increased migratory movements, including forced migration, also in the next part of the document (*Security Strategy...*, 2017, p. 7).

from human trafficking and smuggling, causes contradictions between EU Member States and jeopardises the functioning of the Schengen system' (*Security Strategy...*, 2017, p. 7). Another undesirable effect of migration movements, the combination of the financial, economic and migration crisis in relation to the internal security of the state, as indicated in the document, is the decline in trust in national, European and transatlantic values, principles and institutions among the population. At the same time, it undermines the building of a positive relationship between citizens and states. In addition, migration is seen in connection with foreign (terrorist) fighters<sup>21</sup> who pose a new security threat. A potential security threat also lies in the possibility of infiltration by persons sympathising with radical and terrorist organisations.

In the context of security policies, in addition to the security environment, the Strategy refers to a commitment to adopt measures against illegal uncontrollable migration and smuggling; support a sustainable migration and asylum policy of the EU; enforce sustainable solutions in the field of migration in accordance with the possibilities of particular Member States; actively promote the policy of returns to the third countries; protect external EU borders; participate in removing the causes of illegal migration in the source countries of migrants, and seek to increase funding of development aid – all this by means of international cooperation (*Security Strategy...*, 2017, p. 16).

<sup>21</sup> Citizens of EU Member States (including Slovakia) fighting abroad and subsequently returning home or to third countries where they can continue in extremist and violent crime.

Last but not least, the changed intensity of migration flows was reflected in the priorities of the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the EU, beginning on 1 July 2016.<sup>22</sup> Although migration, refugees or border protection were absent in the political discourse in 2014, even though Slovakia is located next to EU external borders, it turned into one of the most fundamental issues of the Slovak Presidency in 2016. It is clearly visible from the public, political and media discourse, and even recent analyses (Chudžíková, 2016; Mesežnikov, 2016) that the Slovak Republic orientates itself more towards the protection of national interest<sup>23</sup> and securitisation than opening to migration and integration. This context does not contribute positively to the promotion of migration and integration mainstreaming.

### 3. SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF MIGRATION IN SLOVAKIA – SELECTED CASES

The current situation and development of the migration flows significantly impacts the public perception of migration as a security threat. However, it is questionable to what extent the public opinion is influenced by the international reality and what is the

<sup>22</sup> The Slovak Presidency had four priorities: an economically strong Europe; a modern single market; sustainable migration and asylum policies; a globally engaged Europe. In the field of migration, the Slovak Presidency strived to '...encourage the Union to develop more sustainable migration and asylum policies...' because '...the current migration crisis is putting enormous pressure on the EU's external borders and on the asylum systems of the Member States' (*Priority slovenského predsedníctva*, 2016).

<sup>23</sup> Even applied measures, e.g. based on the recently adopted Strategy on Labour Mobility of Foreigners in the Slovak Republic, which opens the possibility of further re-assessment in the future 'in accordance with the needs of the country'.

impact the official political statements of parliamentary representatives, which to date, have been highly negative since the outbreak of the crisis. Based on available data, we are able to follow the developments in the area of criminality, transnational organised crime and international terrorism in Slovakia to reveal consequential interconnection to migration flows.

#### 3.1. Migration and criminality

Increased criminality and the commitment of crimes such as thefts, rapes, robberies or even murders by migrants in the receiving countries is an argument used in the process of securitisation of migration and widespread belief. International scholars reflect on two different theories that interpret the nexus of migration and intrastate criminality. Firstly, the insufficient integration of migrants in the receiving countries (language education, unemployment) might result in feelings of isolation, worsened living standards and increased tendency to commit crimes (Nunziata, 2012). Similarly, adherence to the old traditions of migrants (e.g. position of women in society), which might be illegal in the receiving country, could cause a higher criminal rate for international migrants. Secondly, an alternative theory considers migrants as being less prone to illegal activities compared to the domestic population since they are aware of the consequences of their criminal activities, such as the risk of losing the refugee status or legal working and residence permit in the case of legal migrants, or apprehension and expulsion in the case of irregular migrants (Nunziata, 2012).

The validity of both theories can be tested by analysing statistical data on migration and criminality in the Slovak Republic from 2004, when Slovakia joined the EU, until 2017.

The Slovak Intelligence Service (SIS) reports increasing criminality of foreigners as one of the problems in 2017 (SIS, 2018). However, this statement is neither explained in detail nor documented by numbers. Empirical evidence proves rather the opposite. Even though the number of legal migrants in the Slovak Republic was constantly raising (Table 1) from 22,108 legal migrants in 2004 to 93,247 in 2016, the number of prosecuted foreigners and suspects (last column) was almost constant (MISR, 2018a, 2018b). This implies that migration does not contribute to increased criminality in Slovakia significantly.<sup>24</sup> When we do not take into account the fact that the number of foreigners has increased, the criminality of foreigners in Slovakia has been steadily rising since 2013, while the highest increase – around 10% was recorded between 2015 and 2016; between 2016 and 2017, the increase was less than 5%. Furthermore, the reason for the higher crime rate among foreigners compared to the domestic population may be the different age structure. With regard to the prevailing labour immigration in Slovakia, we assume a lower share of children and seniors among the foreign population

<sup>24</sup> Illegal crossings of the state border and illegal stays in the territory of the Slovak Republic constitute a violation of Act No. 404/2011 Coll. on Residence of Foreigners, i.e. are not considered criminal offences; while human smuggling and trafficking in human beings are punished under Act No. 300/2005 Coll. Criminal Code.

Table 1 Migration and criminality statistics in the Slovak Republic (2004–2017)

	Legal migrants*	Illegal migrants**	Refugees & subsidiary protection holders	Prosecuted persons & suspects (citizens and foreigners)	Prosecuted persons & suspects (foreigners)
2004	22,108	2,612	15	57,154	899
2005	25,635	2,871	25	58,770	1,061
2006	32,153	3,491	8	52,962	1,334
2007	41,214	3,356	14/646	53,233	1,524
2008	52,706	1,321	22/273	52,574	1,174
2009	58,322	1,174	14/165	56,265	1,156
2010	62,584	961	15/104	53,310	1,079
2011	66,191	829	91/47	54,304	1,152
2012	67,877	821	32/153	54,469	1,258
2013	71,649	693	15/49	54,824	1,132
2014	76,715	1,064	14/41	51,047	1,186
2015	84,787	2,313	41/24	46,427	1,208
2016	93,247	1,962	167/12	43,350	1,330
2017	104,451	2,458	29/25	42,926	1,392

Source: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, 2018a, 2018b.  
\* Number of valid residence permits, to 31. 12. 2017, absolute numbers. \*\* Illegal stays on the territory of the Slovak Republic.

compared to the domestic population, while we suppose a higher share of criminal activities among working-age population.

From the perspective of nationality, most crimes in the period 2006–2017 (Table 1) were committed by migrants from neighbouring countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Ukraine (MISR, 2018a, 2018b). At the same time, these countries constitute the highest share among

foreigners in Slovakia. When it comes to third-country nationals, their share in the total crimes committed in Slovakia is marginal and did not rise even after the outbreak of the European migration crisis. For example, the number of criminal acts committed by Iraqis in 2004 was three. In 2016, after Slovakia granted asylum to 149 Assyrian Christians from Iraq, no major increase of crimes occurred. The number of criminal acts committed by Iraqis was four (MISR, 2018a, 2018b).

3.2. Migration and the transnational organised crime

According to Interpol, transnational organised crime is defined as different types of criminal activities spanning several countries. These activities may include trafficking in humans, illicit goods, weapons and drugs, armed robbery, counterfeiting and money laundering (Interpol, 2015). However, there is no universal legal document on the global, European<sup>25</sup> or national level that contains a comprehensive list of all activities that fall under the definition of organised crime. Slovakia is not located along the long-used migration routes in Europe. The branch of the Balkan route crosses the Slovak territory; however, it is not utilised by asylum seekers from the Middle East and North Africa frequently. They avoid the Slovak territory by crossing Hungary and heading to Austria instead. The other route crossing Slovakia is used by migrants from Asian countries and the Ukraine (a country outside the Schengen area and Slovakia's Eastern neighbour) (SIS, 2017).

Most criminal activities in Slovakia were committed by citizens of the Ukraine, Hungary and the Czech Republic (Table 2), regardless of the numbers of migrants from the Middle East or Africa coming to Europe. According to the SIS, the most severe migration-related activities in the field of organised crime include

human smuggling or trafficking, as well as economic criminality and drug related crime linked to the transfer of narcotics and illegal substances from Eastern European countries and the Balkans to Western Europe. Both activities are intertwined. Due to the enormous expenditures on transfer to Europe,<sup>26</sup> some migrants are forced to pay their ‘debts’ by smuggling small amounts of drugs (heroin, cocaine or methamphetamine, with precursors imported mostly from China) and sometimes also weapons and other illegal commodities to the receiving states (SIS, 2017).

3.3. Migration and international terrorism

Despite the absence of a generally accepted definition of terrorism, the EU states that a terrorist act has to fulfil objective elements as listed in the Article 1 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA on combating terrorism and subjective elements interpreted as an aim of seriously intimidating a population, unduly compelling a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation according to EU Council Decision 2002/475 of 13<sup>th</sup> June 2002.<sup>27</sup> Terrorism-related security threats in the transit and receiving

25 At the EU level, the essential document referring to organised crime is Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA.

26 Prices for smuggling of people vary from about \$500 for the transfer of one person from Morocco to Spain to more than \$15,000 for the route from some sub-Saharan states such as Niger to Italy or from China to Europe (Adal, 2014).



**Table 2** Organized crime in Slovakia as per nationality of offenders (2006–2017)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Afghanistan			1	1		1							3
Armenia	1											2	3
Bangladesh				2									2
Belarus			1										1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1												1
Bulgaria							1						1
Cameroon						1							1
Croatia					1								1
Czech Republic	3	2	1	3	1	4	2	1	2		2	6	27
Georgia	1			1									2
Guinea	1												1
Hungary		1		1	3	2	5	3	2	1	1	1	20
India	1	1	1	3	1								7
Italy					1				1	2			4
Macedonia			1			2							3
Moldavia		1			1		1						3
Pakistan			1	1				1					3
Poland				1									1
PRC							1						1
Russia		1	1	1						1			4
Serbia	1		1		1								3
Slovenia	1	1	1		1								4
Syria			1	1									2
Ukraine	3	14	1		4	3	3	4	3		11		46
Vietnam	3		1			1	1						6

Source: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, 2018b.

countries of migrants include three critical activities: (1) attacks of the ‘hit squads’ coming to Europe and attacking immediately; (2) attacks of ‘sleeping cells’, migrants living in the receiving countries for longer periods of time and attacking under specific circumstances; and (3) recruitment of foreign fighters from European countries, who are persuaded to move to Middle Eastern countries where they convert to Islam, are trained in terrorist techniques and then travel back to Europe to commit terrorist attacks in their original home countries (Kennedy, Homant & Barnes, 2008). The probability of sleeping cells attacks in Slovakia remains relatively low. The activities of hit squads might occur more likely; however, these are difficult to predict as it depends on the individual's psychological condition and his/hers short-term momentary decisions.

The SIS does not directly connect migration to the threat of terrorism in the Slovak territory and reports that the situation regarding international terrorism in Slovakia remains secure, despite successfully accomplished terrorist attacks of a mostly religious character in other EU Member States. The only direct terrorist attack on Slovak citizens mentioned by the SIS since the publication of its first report in 2011 is the one by the Taliban against Slovak members of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan in 2013. Within

this scope, Slovakia was for the first time explicitly mentioned in the jihadist propaganda on the internet (SIS, 2017). Slovakia passed new anti-terrorist legislation effective from 1 January 2016 in spite of the low prospects for becoming the target of a terrorist attack. The most significant change is an amendment to Act No. 300/2005 Coll., particularly § 491a, which deals with the participation of Slovak citizens in combat operations in the territory of another state, which can be seen as a reaction to the aforementioned threat of recruitment of foreign fighters from European countries by terrorist groups fighting for their goals.

CONCLUSION

Security aspects have become an inevitable part of the discourse on migration-related issues, in spite of the fact that ‘security questions should not be allowed to dominate the terrain of migration, but should be examined in relation to a range of political and socio-economic questions’ (Huysmans & Squire, 2009, p. 3). The chapter revealed that the evaluation of migration as a security threat is not always based on empirical facts and data. In order to make a relevant conclusion on mutual correlations between migration and security, we analysed particular sectors of security as defined by the Copenhagen school of thoughts and distinguished between legal and irregular migrants.

The selective sector-specific analysis of the migration-security nexus in Slovakia proved that raising the numbers of legal migrants coming to the Slovak

27 Council Decision (EU) 2002/475/JHA of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3AI33168> (accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018).

Republic does not result in increased intrastate criminality in the country, and this cannot be applied to irregular migrants. Furthermore, economic criminality and the transit of illegal drugs and narcotics from the Balkan countries is a more relevant threat to Slovakia compared to the smuggling of Middle Eastern migrants through the Slovak territory towards Western Europe. Although most experts agree that it is not possible to prove a direct connection between migration and terrorism, organised crime, endangerment to human life or health, assumptions and prejudices often prevail over reality. These may result in the establishment of new policies and diverse restrictive measures targeted against the supposed threat, which can eventually negatively influence the human security of migrants themselves.

In the current situation, due to the demographic situation, ongoing emigration and the lack of qualified labour force, there is no doubt that Slovakia needs immigrants as well. By means of various migration policy instruments, the Slovak government regulates who will enter the country based on the numbers, qualifications, and even cultural backgrounds of immigrants. In our opinion, migration policies should be devoted, in addition to being instruments of immigrant's integration, also to fieldwork oriented on receiving communities. As our analysis showed, the rhetoric can spread a negative picture of immigration, even though there is no evidence regarding its negative influence, which deepens the hostile attitude towards immigrants in Slovakia.

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# ③ The Fiscal Effects of EU Migration to Slovakia

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Rafael Ahlskog,  
Pär Nyman and  
Michal Smrek



## INTRODUCTION

Almost since the inception of the European Union, free internal movement of people has been one of the cornerstones of European integration. The right to move, live and work freely in any Member State is also a right that is widely used – around 13 million Europeans are residing in an EU country other than their country of birth. This type of migration has implications for public finances in the countries that people move to: an inflow of people from the rest of the Union will be associated with both contributions, such as tax revenues, as well as costs, in the form of transfers and public services. However, surprisingly little is known about these fiscal effects.

In Slovakia, there has been an increasingly polarised debate on issues related to immigration in recent years. Since the onset of the 2015 EU migration crisis, the question of what Slovakia's migration policy towards refugees and migrants from outside the Union should be monopolised the political discourse and became the dominant political issue in the run up to the 2016 general election. Slovakia is consistently one of the least generous EU countries in terms of how many asylums are granted per year and remains generally closed to migration from non-EU countries (Eurostat, 2018). None of the major political parties openly supports the relocation of any refugees from the EU countries that have been most severely affected by the inflow of migrants.

To avoid facing sanctions, Slovakia reluctantly agreed to accept mere 100 refugees on the condition that they are of

Christian faith – still violating the quota policy that mandated Slovakia to accept 1,200 refugees. Former Prime Minister Fico publicly denounced the refugees fleeing conflict and humanitarian crises in the Middle East and North Africa as 'economic migrants', and called upon the EU to adhere to the principles laid down by the Dublin Regulation.

Despite the framing of the refugee debate in economic terms, the public debate has, however, only to a very limited degree considered the possible effects of economic migration within the EU, and even less its effects on Slovak public finances – this despite the fact that more than 80% of the foreign-born population in Slovakia is born in another EU Member State (Eurostat, 2018). There has also been a lack of research on the fiscal effects of immigration to Slovakia. The only two studies that present such figures are a comparative study from the OECD (2013) and a recently published report we wrote for the REMINDER<sup>1</sup> project (Nyman & Ahlskog, 2018). However, there are many previous studies which estimate fiscal effects of immigration to other countries, especially to the US and the UK (see Rowthorn 2008 for a review of this field).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> REMINDER is a multidisciplinary consortium focused on analysing the impacts of free movement and the processes through which public narratives and public opinion about these impacts are formed.

<sup>2</sup> The number of studies is smaller if we only include those that analyse intra-European migration. Dustmann et al. (2010) and Dustmann & Frattini (2014) find that EU migrants have been a strong fiscal contribution to the UK. In a similar vein, Martinsen & Rotger (2017) estimate positive fiscal effects of EU migration to Denmark, while Joakim Ruist (2014) finds that Bulgarian and Romanian migrants in Sweden are fiscal contributors.

In this chapter, we build on the REMINDER report to present calculations and discuss the fiscal effects of EU immigrants in Slovakia. The calculations are done using a static accounting model and cover the years 2005–14. Two different types of EU immigrant categories are compared: those who were born in another EU Member State, and those who are citizens of another EU Member State. The results are straightforward and fairly unambiguous: the net effects are roughly zero. That is, EU immigrants in Slovakia are neither net fiscal costs nor contributors.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. First, we will give a brief overview of immigration to Slovakia and the characteristics of the migrant population. Second, we will describe in more detail the method we have used to calculate the fiscal impact estimates, what data we have used and how the results should be interpreted. Third, we will put the numbers for Slovakia in an international light by comparing them to other countries in the region, and to Western Europe. Fourth, we will dig a little bit deeper into what characteristics of migrant households are actually driving the estimated effects, and test reliance on some key model assumptions. Lastly, we will summarise the results and briefly explore some of their implications.

## 1. IMMIGRANTS IN SLOVAKIA

The accession of Slovakia to the European Union made it possible for EU/EEA nationals to move freely to Slovakia and seek employment, ushering a boom in migration from these countries. The number of foreign nationals living in

Slovakia has increased manifold since the year of accession, and depending on the definitions used they now amount to approximately 65,000 (OECD, 2018) or 105,000 (BBAP, 2017) individuals. Approximately half of the foreign nationals are citizens of another EU country. The largest group is Czech nationals, followed by Hungarians, Romanians, Poles and Germans (OECD 2018).

As pertains to the subject of this chapter, a number of characteristics of the migrant population are helpful to be aware of. These are, for example, countries of origin, length of stay and age profile. The total foreign-born population, including naturalised citizens, amount to 185,000 individuals (Eurostat, 2018). Most of them were born in another EU country. Importantly, almost 90,000 of those that are counted as foreign-born in the international statistics were born in the Czech Republic. Many of them are Slovaks who were born in the Western part of Czechoslovakia when it was still a federation. During that time, it was common for Slovaks to move to the Czech region for work, for university studies or to do the military service. If they gave birth before returning to Slovakia, their children would today be defined as foreign-born. It may therefore be misleading to regard all foreign-born residents of Slovakia as immigrants.

In addition to demographics, a specific group's fiscal contribution is also affected by how this group performs on the labour market. For those of working age, the employment rate is higher among EU immigrants compared to the total population, especially when immigrants are

defined as foreign citizens. In this group, the employment rate was 79%, compared to 68% for those born in another EU-country (regardless of citizenship) and 66% for the entire population (aged 15–64, 2017). However, a disproportionate share of the foreign-born EU immigrants are retirees. Even if they have contributed throughout their lives, they will cause migration to appear more costly when we define migrants based on their country of birth. This is important to keep in mind later on, and we have attempted to investigate the impact of this both by using different migrant definitions and different allocation criteria for pension expenditures.

EU immigrants in Slovakia tend to concentrate in low-qualification occupations. Plant and machine operators, assemblers and elementary occupations (as defined in the ILO classification of occupations) comprise 44% of the EU/EEA employees, compared to only 26% in the total Slovak population (Eurostat, 2018). 24% of the EU immigrants work as managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals, which is somewhat less than 31% in the native population (Eurostat, 2018).

In terms of education, the EU immigrants are better educated than the rest of the Slovak population when we define migrants based on citizenship. When we also include naturalised citizens in the migrant stock, the differences are less clear. On the one hand, there is a larger share among those born in another EU-country that lack primary education. On the other hand, it is more common for EU immigrants to have attained a tertiary education (Eurostat, 2018).

2. METHOD, DATA AND INTERPRETATION

The goal of this chapter is to give an overview of the fiscal effects of EU immigrants in Slovakia. We have calculated these effects using the dataset EU-SILC (Survey on Income and Living Conditions; European Commission, 2017), combined with data sources on annual government expenditures and revenues on a variety of areas, as well as demographic data. The Slovak respondents in EU-SILC are briefly summarised in Table 1. The microdata confirms the picture given in the previous section, with fewer foreign-born EU-migrants being of working age, and their wages being lower than those of both natives and migrants from outside the EU.

The method used to arrive at the estimates we present in this chapter is often referred to as a static, or accounting, model (Vargas-Silva, 2015).<sup>3</sup> This means that we attempt to capture the pure fiscal costs and contributions of a set of people, in this case EU immigrants, in a given year. Contributions are added up, and associated costs are subtracted, yielding a simple net figure of how much a given household affects the public budget, broadly construed. Costs include both transfers and the provision of public services, while contributions come mainly in the form of taxes and social security payments. To get a sense of whether the calculated effects are large or small, they can be expressed

3 What follows is a very condensed description of the method employed. A comprehensive technical description can be found in the full REMINDER report (Nyman & Ahlskog, 2018).

Table 1 Slovak respondents in EU-SILC 2005–2014

	Households	Household size	Working age	Wage income
Total population	52,666	2.85	62.4%	8,081
Citizens of other EU country	267	2.61	66.4%	6,789
Non-EU Citizens	61	3.14	63.1%	11,021
Born in other EU country	1,540	2.74	58.5%	7,415
Born outside EU	203	3.45	66.3%	12,553

Source: Table by R. Ahlskog, P. Nyman & M. Smrek.  
Note that the rotating panel in EU-SILC means that the same household can appear up to four times in the data. Working age is here defined as being between 20 and 64 years old. Wage income is the average individual annual gross wage income in euro, including those who do not work. A household is included in the migrant categories whenever at least one of the household members fulfills the relevant criteria. All averages in the table are weighted with the respect to the share of migrants in the household.

as a share of GDP, and also compared between migrants and natives.

We have divided the total government's expenditures into five items: benefits (*ben*), congestible public goods (*cpg*), non-congestible public goods (*npg*), pensions (*pen*), and demographically modelled expenditures (*dem*). Benefits include all kinds of social benefits except pensions. Congestible public goods are government services that increase in cost as the total population increases. Typical examples are parks, roads and fire protection. By non-congestible public goods we mean government services that can be extended to the migrant population at virtually no extra cost, such as defence and central administration. Demographically modelled expenditures are government services where we have modelled the cost on demographic characteristics like sex and age. These include health care expenditures, old-age benefits and costs for schooling and education. The government revenues are divided into

the following items: capital taxes (*cap*), consumption taxes (*con*), income taxes (*inc*), sales (*sal*) and social security contributions (*ssc*). We believe most of these categories are self-explanatory and we refer to Nyman and Ahlskog (2018) for a more detailed description.

For each category within both expenditures and revenues, we use a top-down approach where we take the known totals from the government accounts and allocate these expenditures or revenues to natives and immigrants based on the available EU-SILC data. The allocation criteria we use are presented in Table 2. For example, when we estimate the consumption taxes paid by EU immigrants, we take the government's total revenue from consumption taxes and multiply it with the immigrants' share of the total disposable income of all Slovak residents, effectively assuming that natives and immigrants consume the same share of their household income. Some public services can be provided to the migrant population at virtually no

Table 2 Categorisation of revenues and expenditures

Category	% of GDP	Allocation criteria
Revenues		
Consumption taxes (con)	10.6	Disposable income
Taxes on income and wealth (inc)	3.4	Income tax + wealth tax
Capital and corporate taxes (cap)	2.8	Pro-rata
Social security contributions (ssc)	12.5	Wages
Sales (sal)	3.4	Pro-rata
Other revenue (oth)	3.6	Zero marginal revenue
Expenditures		
Benefits (ben)	6.6	Benefits
Pensions (pen1 and pen2)	6.8	Pensions (pen1) and wages (pen2)
Non-congestible public goods (npg)	5.8	Zero marginal cost
Demographically modelled expenditures (dem)	10.6	See below
Congestible public goods (cpg)	10.6	Pro-rata
Demographically modelled expenditures		
Primary education (pri)	1.5	Only age 3–10
Secondary education (sec)	0.7	Only age 11–18
Post-secondary and tertiary education (ter)	0.5	Only age 19–29
Old-age (old)	0.3	Only age 65+
Health (hlt)	6.6	Age intervals
Police and prisons (pol)	1.0	Sex and age (peak at 18)

Source: Table by R. Ahlskog, P. Nyman & M. Smrek.

extra cost, and some revenues do not increase with population size. These budget posts, which include defence and central administration (Dustmann & Frattini, 2014), are included in our categories *non-congestible public goods* and *other revenue*. Following Rowthorn's (2008) recommendation, we assume that these aggregates are unaffected by migration.

Furthermore, defining who should count as an EU immigrant requires a bit of elaboration. We test and compare two different definitions here. First, we look at all people residing in Slovakia, but who were born in a current EU Member State *other* than Slovakia. It is important to keep in mind that this also includes people who migrated *before* the free movement of the EU was instated (or even before the EU in its current form existed). Thus, as mentioned above, a large portion of EU immigrants in Slovakia are Czechs. It also means that a substantial part of people thus included are actually Slovak citizens. Second, we therefore also present estimates where EU-migrants are defined as all Slovak residents who have a non-Slovak, but European, citizenship. These two different definitions speak to slightly different questions. Since rules for obtaining citizenship differ between countries, the first definition provides better comparability between countries. On the other hand, the second definition is more relevant if we are interested in assessing the impact on Slovak public finances on free movement in the EU. Henceforth, we will refer to these (partially overlapping) groups of immigrants as foreign-born vs. foreign-citizen EU immigrants.<sup>4</sup>

Because the model is static rather than dynamic, there are several types of effects, mainly indirect, that are not captured in the estimates. For example, possible external labour market effects, such as effects on employment of natives, are not captured. The economic literature on labour market effects of immigration illuminates two counteracting tendencies: on the one hand, migrants might compete with native workers and therefore negatively affect the employment rate and wages for natives (Borjas, 2003). On the other hand, low-skilled immigration may enable natives to take up more productive and well-paid positions (Card, 2009; D'Amuri & Peri, 2014; Foged & Peri, 2016). A broad research consensus is lacking, but a reasonable assumption is that such effects are small and tend to cancel each other out from a fiscal perspective (Blanchflower et al., 2007). This is also what has been found in most studies that focus specifically on intra-European migration (Brenke et al., 2010; Doyle et al., 2006; Hughes, 2011; Lemos & Portes, 2008; Migration Advisory Committee, 2012).

The longer life-cycle effects are not taken into account either, since the estimates are based on year-by-year snapshots. A given person might be a fiscal asset in one year and then retire, thus turning into a fiscal cost. The static approach captures the sum of these effects in a given year, that is, for those who work and

<sup>4</sup> A related issue is how to define a migrant household; given that we have already defined which person is a migrant. We have opted for a continuous rather than a dichotomous approach, whereby the household's fiscal effect is apportioned to the respective groups by the share of the adults in the household belonging to each category.

those who do not, but does not capture the fact that those who work will eventually retire, and those who are retired have previously likely been contributors. The calculated effect thus applies only to the current composition of the migrant stock, and changes to this composition (for example, if the migrant population in the future is comprised of more migrants of working age) will also affect future net fiscal effects of the migrant population.

Finally, the estimated effects are purely fiscal in the sense that they involve direct transactions between the public sector and the individual (or household). We do not measure other economic effects, such as increased profitability of firms or reduced consumer prices.

There are several possible error sources associated with the kind of method we employ – apart from simple sampling error, the assumptions involved in assigning associated costs and contributions are by necessity simplified. The main take-away from this fact is that the precise estimates in themselves should be taken with a grain of salt. The major point is that they facilitate comparisons: on the one hand, we can compare countries to each other (how does Slovakia fare compared to other countries in the region?), or different groups within the country (are EU immigrants larger or smaller fiscal contributors than natives?).

As we shall see below, a particularly salient point in the case of Slovakia is precisely how to define expenditures on pensions. The EU-SILC data allow us to see how much money in pensions a given person receives. The most straightforward approach is therefore to simply

allocate the government's total pension expenditures to different groups based on how much they receive in pensions (this calculation will be referred to as *pen2*). However, we cannot see whether the received pensions were paid by the Slovak government, by some other government, or by private pension insurance. With migrants, this becomes an important issue since some of them may have worked in their home countries previously, and accrued pension benefits there. Some proportion of pensions paid to EU immigrants may therefore derive from sources other than Slovak state pensions. In particular, in lower-income countries with consumer prices that are lower than that of the migrants' home countries, this provides incentives to stay after retiring rather than moving back, since the nominal value of the pensions received can be 'stretched' longer in the host country.

A more representative way of defining pensions, then, is to allocate the Slovak state pensions paid according to market income rather than pensions received (*pen1*). The logic behind this approach is that the wages that Slovak residents earn today is a good indicator of the pension benefits that they will receive from the Slovak government when they retire, as long as pensions are in some way earnings related. Put simply, wages earned in Slovakia today translates into some level of pensions in the future. However, this muddles up the purely static accounting approach, since pensions paid to one group of people inform the assumed future pension payments to people who are currently employed. Regardless of this, we think that this approach provides a more accurate picture of allocated pension expenditures given the outlined issues.

### 3. THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

As we mentioned above, we will present results based on two different migrant definitions. The more internationally comparable perspective is to look at the groups of people who are born in a different EU Member State rather than assessing effects based on citizenship. In this section we will therefore look at the foreign-born EU immigrants.<sup>5</sup>

Figures 1–2 present the net fiscal effects of the foreign-born EU immigrants in Slovakia as compared to other European countries. In all figures, the bar for Slovakia (SK) is marked in dark grey. The figures represent two different ways of calculating the effect. Figure 1 presents the estimated fiscal contribution from all EU immigrants residing in the country. To adjust for the fact that the share of EU migrants in the population differ between countries, Figure 2 shows the estimated contribution from a number of EU immigrants that equals 1 per cent of the country's total population.

When looking at the effects of the total stock of EU migrants, we can see that the estimates range from about 1.5% of GDP in Switzerland (EU migration is a major fiscal contribution) to -0.3% of GDP in Ireland (EU migration is a minor fiscal cost). The estimated fiscal effects for Slovakia as well as most other Eastern European countries are close to zero. This is partly because these

countries tend to have small migrant populations, which limits the size of both positive and negative effects.

Comparing this to the graph where the estimates are adjusted according to the share of the population that are EU immigrants, we can see that the strong result for Switzerland was partly driven by a large EU immigrant population rather than the particularly strong positive fiscal effects per immigrant household. For Slovakia, the estimated effect is still close to zero, indicating that the public finances would neither gain nor lose from an increased number of EU migrants. However, the standard errors are quite large, so we cannot rule out that there would be a small but noteworthy effect.

There is thus no strong evidence in the data that foreign-born EU immigrants are either net contributors or net costs in Slovakia. There is, however, good reason to suspect that the net effects are worse than in most other included countries, where small to moderate positives effects can be seen. As two particularly salient points of comparison, we can look at the Czech Republic and Hungary: both of these neighbouring countries show positive fiscal effects from their foreign-born EU immigrant populations. Slovakia thus appears to be missing out on some of the possible fiscal benefits of these migrant groups.

### 4. HOUSEHOLD COMPARISONS

The result that the net effects are close to zero both in total and on a per-household basis could be observed for many different reasons. For example,

<sup>5</sup> The relative picture changes when using foreign-citizen EU immigrants instead, but the point estimates specifically for Slovakia do not (the standard errors become larger, however, since this group of people is much smaller).



Figure 1

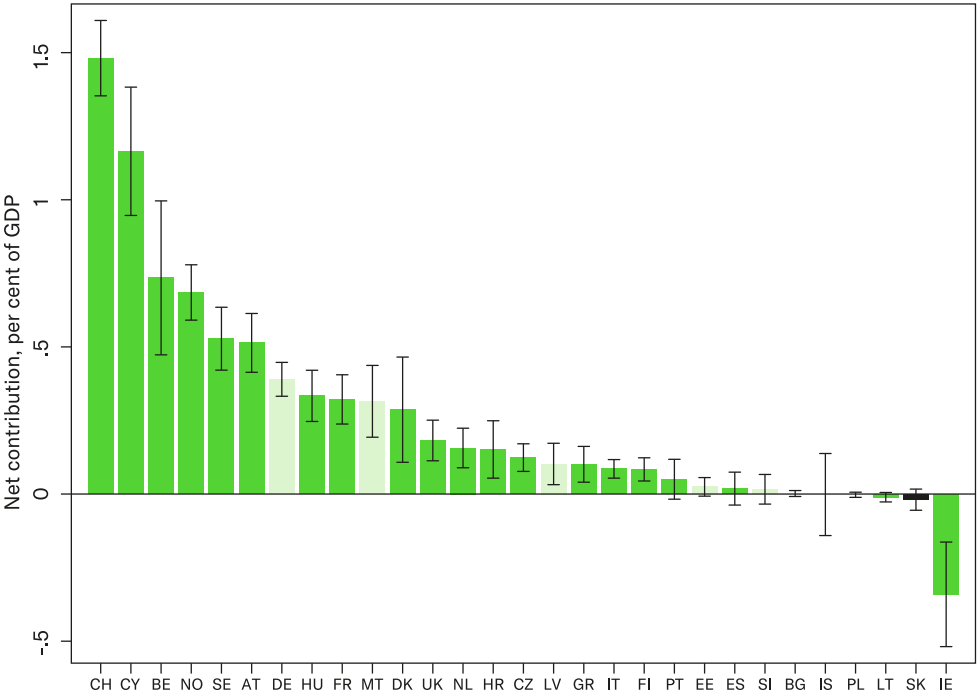
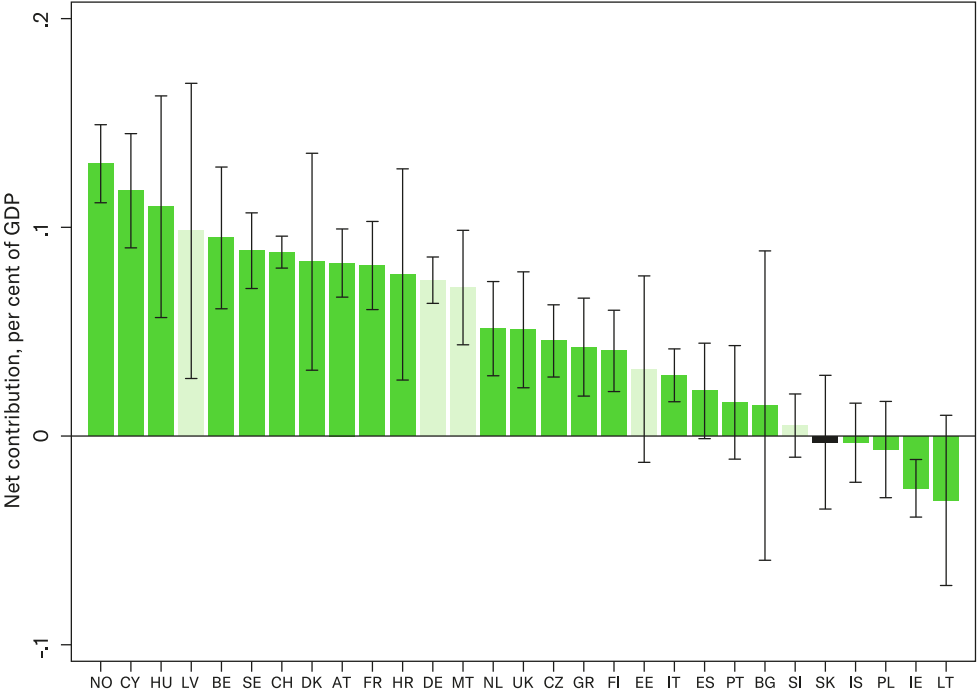


Figure 2



Source: Figures by R. Ahlskog, P. Nyman & M. Smrek

it is possible that the net contribution from migrants differ substantially from that of natives, if natives on average are major fiscal costs or contributors. This may happen when a country's budget balance is far from zero (during times of large deficits, most groups cost more than they contribute) or when a country has large expenditures on non-congestible public goods (in which case most groups tend to be fiscal contributors *on the margin*). And even if none of the groups have an effect on public finances, it is possible that this net estimate hides important details. Maybe migrants bring smaller (larger) revenues but also cost less (more) public expenditures.

In order to better understand the zero effect on the aggregate level, we will now compare an average household of EU immigrants to an average household of Slovak natives, and we will do that one budget item at a time. Since the results may ultimately depend on who we categorise as an EU immigrant, we will present analyses using both foreign-born and foreign-citizen EU immigrants.

When using the broader foreign-born criterion, we see the between-household differences shown in Figure 3. There are no substantial differences between natives and foreign-born EU immigrants: some expenditures are slightly lower, but so are social security contributions. In general, the differences are very small or practically zero. When using pension expenditures allocated by pensions receipts instead of work-income (pen2), we can see that the pension expenditures are higher than for natives. This pattern emerges because of a fundamental demographic difference between this class

of people and Slovak natives, namely on age distribution: the foreign-born EU immigrants are on average older, and thus to a larger extent depend on pensions compared to the native population. This particularly appears to apply to Czechs and Hungarians where, for example, the latter group as of 2018 had a share over the age of 64 of almost 60% (the native share in the same age category is 14%). While we cannot separate the fiscal effects based on nationality due to data limitations, this tells us that it is likely that the effects are driven mainly by retired Czechs and Hungarians, who are the largest and second largest groups of foreign-born EU immigrants. Since many, or even most, of the foreign-born EU immigrants are people one may not ordinarily think of as EU migrants whatsoever (since they are not a consequence of the free movement within the EU and may also include many who would count as naturalised or even ethnic Slovaks), a different migrant definition is required to address the consequences of current free movement policy.

In order to assess what the effects are of the type of migration that may be the result of free movement in the EU rather than population movements within the former federation, it is therefore probably more accurate to consider foreign-citizen EU immigrants: that is, those who are citizens of another EU Member State but who reside in Slovakia. When looking at this group instead, we observe the differences portrayed in Figure 4. Here, the lack of any substantial differences between natives and other EU citizens is even more striking: not even the different definition of pensions appears to matter.

Figure 3

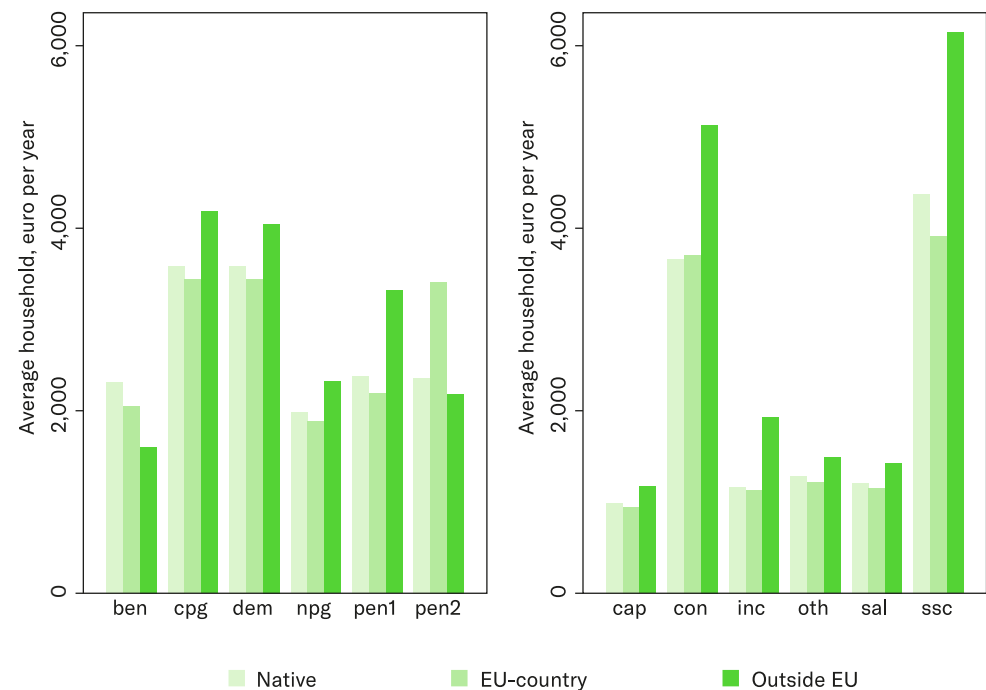
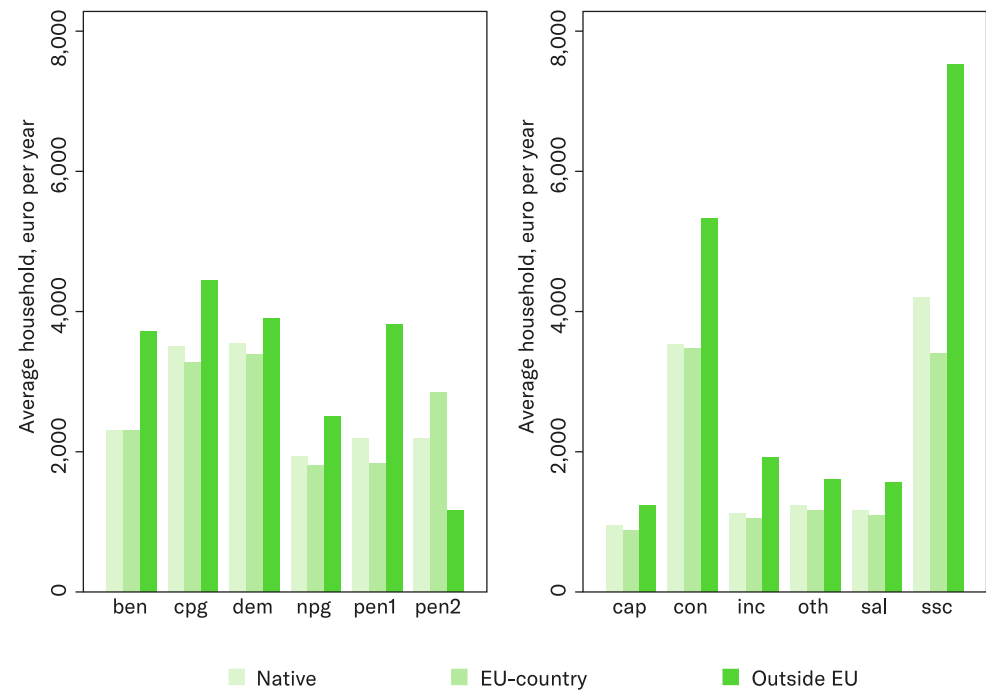


Figure 4



Source: Figures by R. Ahlskog, P. Nyman & M. Smrek

Another interesting point of comparison is between EU immigrants and non-EU immigrants. Here, we see that the pattern of costs of contributions of EU immigrants is much more similar to that of natives than that of other immigrants: the other immigrants show markedly higher contributions in the form of taxes and social security contributions and, depending on the migrant definition, also possibly higher benefit receipts. However, as was shown in Table 1, these figures are based on very few observations, and should therefore be interpreted with great care.

CONCLUSION

Summarising the results is straightforward: the fiscal effects of EU immigration in Slovakia are roughly zero. What this means is that people residing in Slovakia that are born in another EU Member State (or alternatively are citizens of another EU Member State) pay roughly as much in taxes and social security contributions as they receive in benefits and other expenses. If one wishes to interpret this in marginal terms as opposed to in total, adding more European migrants to the Slovak population, provided they are of the same character as the existing migrant population, will not affect the public finances neither positively nor negatively. The implications of this are two-fold. The bad news first: unlike in many western European countries, free movement does not, unfortunately, appear to be a substantial fiscal asset in Slovakia. This should not be a surprise, since labour migration tends to go west within the Union, where

salaries are higher. The good news is that it does not appear to cost anything either. Rather, the data indicates that EU immigrants in Slovakia are fiscally neutral. The natural conclusion to draw from this is that while a number of issues connected to migration of EU nationals to Slovakia can be discussed, the effects on the public budget should probably take a back seat to things like labour market effects or necessary infrastructure investments.

The comparison with neighbouring similar economies such as the Czech Republic and Hungary, however, gives a hint as to the unused potential fiscal benefits that Slovakia could derive from EU immigration. A deeper look at the item-specific data for neighbouring countries suggests that the different fiscal position of Slovakia is driven by income taxes and social security contributions. In brief, EU immigrants to Slovakia end up in lower paid labour markets compared to native Slovaks, while the opposite is true in Hungary and Czech Republic. Slovakia thus appears to attract mainly low-skilled EU migration. There is no inherent reason why Slovakia could not attract the type of European labour that would provide fiscal benefits and therefore give more room for investments in public services (or tax cuts), which its neighbours appear to do successfully. The precise reforms that would be required to accomplish this is a subject too large to grapple with in this chapter, but may involve a few fairly simple adjustments like simplifying registration procedures, or improving possibilities to communicate with state authorities in other European

languages than Slovak and Hungarian (for example English). The regulatory framework for internal migration and free movement that makes these things possible has been set in place since Slovakia joined the European Union, however. The major regulatory hurdles are therefore already conquered.

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## ④ Meeting the Care Needs in Sending Countries as a Result of Care Mobility: Examples from Romania and Slovakia



## INTRODUCTION

Unmet care needs – the tension between demand and supply – is one of the most important challenges of contemporary modern societies. Concepts like ‘care deficit’ (Hochschild, 1995) or ‘crisis-in-care’ (Triandafyllidou, 2013) describe care deficiencies within families and formal settings. ‘Care deficit’ is seen as a result of expanded needs for care and difficulties in contracting a matching supply (Hochschild, 1995). In high-income countries, care deficit is fuelled by demographic and social transformations, such as population ageing and changes in the household’s structure – where nuclear families no longer live with the extended family –, increasing migration – where working age family members work abroad –, restructuring of welfare programmes, as well as lower involvement of the state in the provision of care altogether (Leon, 2014).

In many Western European countries, this need is being covered through migrant care – be it citizens of other EU countries or third-country nationals. The main differentiating aspect of care work mobility compared to other types of labour mobility relates to its nature as a female-dominated area. As the cultural framework of care attributes the main caring responsibilities to women, care mobility directly affects family care capacities in countries of origin. Within this framework, even though women eventually become breadwinners, they remain responsible for family care in their respective countries of origin.

While previous studies regard care arrangements available to families

in countries of origin through public institutions as a factor contributing to ‘ways of family care-reorganisation’, less attention has been given to specific linkages between family care needs, institutional frameworks and care-workers’ mobility. The ways in which women informally re-organise family care obligations, as a result of care work migration, have been extensively researched (Bauer & Österle, 2016). Our research indicates that the reorganisation of family care is, in addition to cultural values and social norms, influenced by the availability and affordability of institutional care services, particularly for childcare and elderly care. Although there are various approaches to childcare and care for the elderly in Central and Eastern Europe, unpaid informal care (provided within families) continues to play a crucial role (Österle, 2010; Saxonberg, 2011; Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2006).

Bringing forth the example of Romanian and Slovak caregivers working abroad – particularly in Austria and Italy, this paper analyses the linkages between strategies to address the care needs of mobile workers’ families residing in sending countries, care-workers’ mobility patterns, and relevant public policies in their respective countries of origin. In addition, the paper describes the unmet care needs within families, which are a result of care-worker’s mobility in specific commuting patterns. We chose the example of Romanian and Slovak care-workers, since their mobility to Austria, and to a certain extent to Italy, represents specific patterns of transnational care circulation.

After describing the methodology employed, the paper unfolds in three main sections. The first section presents the example of Romanian and Slovak care-workers (in Austria) and the public institutional care arrangement in childcare and long-term care in these sending countries. The second section presents the care needs of families residing in sending countries, while the main caregiver is working in the field of care abroad. This section also exemplifies how (limited) existing care needs in their own families allow caregivers to perform care work abroad. Finally, the third section demonstrates how care-workers’ mobility is influenced by the needs of families in sending countries, as well as by care-related systems in countries of origin.

## 1. METHODOLOGY

This paper draws on qualitative research undertaken in the framework of the research project ‘Role of European Mobility and Its Impacts in Narratives, Debates and EU Reforms (REMINDER)’.<sup>1</sup> This research is part of a larger study within REMINDER aimed at exploring key under-researched aspects of the social and economic impacts of intra-EU mobility on Eastern European sending countries.<sup>2</sup> The fieldwork was conducted

between October 2017 and March 2018, in Romania and Slovakia respectively, focusing on perceived institutional effects of care mobility and policy responses in countries of origin. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with care-workers and/or their adult family members, where the main emphasis was on the care needs of families and the utilisation of institutional services delivered either by private or public service providers.<sup>3</sup> In Romania, nine care-workers were interviewed including one family member whose contribution was part of the ‘family case’. For the research in Slovakia, four caregivers and three family members were interviewed representing four ‘family cases’.<sup>4</sup>

For the purposes of this study, ‘care work mobility’ refers to live-in caregivers as a specific sub-category of caregivers, most often without formal education in this field. Care is understood as a range of activities and relationships that promote the

<sup>3</sup> The interviews were conducted only after the interviewee was explained the purpose of the research and signed an informed consent form for participating in the research. The interviews were anonymised by assigning a code to each interviewee. Transcripts and recorded interviews are stored in a restricted access folder at ICMPD. The methodology employed in this study, as part of the H2020 REMINDER project, was approved by the Commission of Scientific Ethics of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

<sup>4</sup> Altogether, 27 persons were interviewed in Romania and 2 provided response via email (6 interviews at national level, 13 interviews at local level, 9 care workers and one family member which included one ‘case of family’). For the research in Slovakia, 32 persons were interviewed and 4 persons provided response via email (17 responses at national level, 12 responses collected from local level institutions and four ‘cases of families’ – four caregivers and three family members). These numbers include institutional stakeholders, among which representatives of national and local level relevant institutions.

<sup>1</sup> For more details visit <https://www.reminder-project.eu/> or <http://research.icmpd.org/projects/migration-governance/reminder/>.

<sup>2</sup> The study on the institutional impacts of mobility of care-workers from Romania and Slovakia was a research activity conducted by ICMPD’s researchers within the project Role of European Mobility and its Impacts in Narratives, Debates and EU Reforms (REMINDER) coordinated by COMPAS from the University of Oxford and funded by European Commission through H2020. For more details visit <https://www.reminder-project.eu/publications/work-packages/wp6-countries-of-origin/>.

physical and emotional well-being of people who cannot perform these activities themselves (Kofman, 2012). As the duration of caregivers' stay abroad determines how care needs are being addressed by their respective families, we conceptually distinguish between migration and mobility. Following the UN definition of migration, which is a change in a person's place of residence for at least three months (UN, 1998), the paper distinguishes mobility – which implies fewer than three months' stay abroad – from migration.

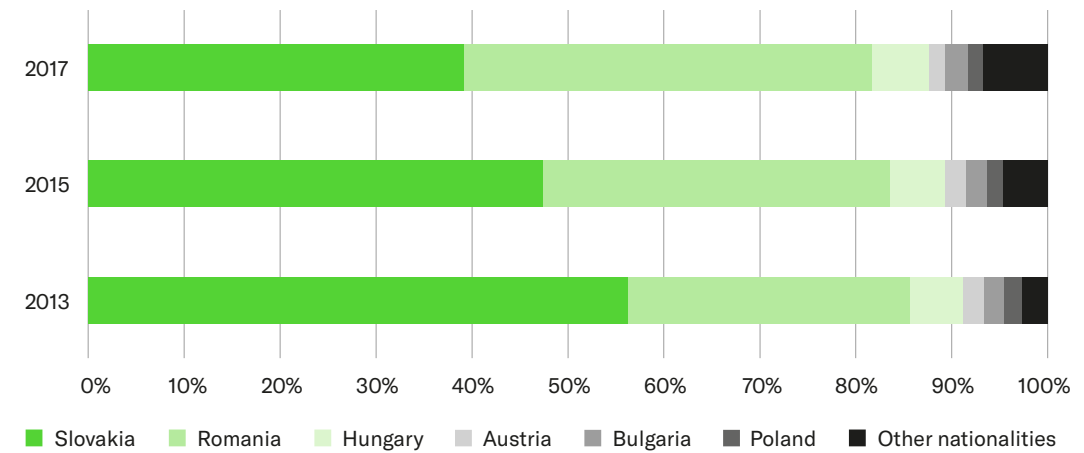
In order to study the links between mobility patterns and the care needs of care-workers' families, we took the example of Austria as a receiving country and Romania and Slovakia as examples of sending countries, since caregivers from these countries dominate the 24-hour personal care sector in Austria.<sup>5</sup> To include a variety of mobility patterns, we also interviewed caregivers in Romania who were working or have been working in Italy. While we did not go into details regarding migrant care work in Italy, testimonies of these care-workers were taken into account, particularly with regard to the care needs of their families in Romania.

<sup>5</sup> The Austrian long-term care system (Riedel and Kraus 2010; Österle 2013) includes a component of 24-hour personal home care (*24-Stunden-Betreuung*), in addition to nursing homes and mobile care arrangements offered by private companies, social NGOs or municipalities (BMASK, 2016). The 24-hour care system is a combination of traditional family-oriented care and universal cash-for-care-scheme (Winkelmann, Schmidt & Leichsenring, 2015). For 24-hour caregivers in Austria, the live-in model and rotational system of sharing jobs with other workers – after two to four weeks of work – is typical. Two legal forms of 24-hour care arrangements exist – standard employment and self-employment – where the latter covers about 99% of all 24-hour care work arrangements (Österle & Bauer, 2016). Personal care was in a shadow market zone until the 2007 legalisation (Österle & Bauer, 2016).

## 2. CARE-WORKERS FROM ROMANIA AND SLOVAKIA IN AUSTRIA

Care-workers from both Romania and Slovakia hold EU citizenship status and enjoy the right to move to other EU countries for the purpose of gainful work, be it in an employment or a self-employment contractual relationship. In both countries, economic deprivation and relatively large wage differences, compared to wages in destination countries, drive care mobility. The destinations of care migrants are determined by historical ties, spatial proximity and the 'migration industry', linking sending and receiving countries (compare Bauer & Österle, 2016). Slovak caregivers are present in Germany and Switzerland, but the spatial proximity and opportunities for rotational mobility on a bi-weekly basis make Austria the preferred option (Bahna, 2014). Romanian care mobility is more diverse in terms of destination countries (in addition to Italy, Romanian caregivers work in Spain, Germany and Austria), the length of the shifts, as well as migration time-spans. While several types of work arrangements exist, most Romanian and Slovak caregivers are self-employed in Austria. At the end of 2017, the Austrian Chamber of Commerce (*Wirtschaftskammer Österreich*, later referred as 'WKO') registered 62,670 active self-employment licenses for 24-hour personal care provision (Figure 1), out of which 42.4% (26,144 licenses) were registered by Romanians, and followed by Slovak caregivers with 24,585 licenses (39.2%). Other nationalities such as Hungarians, Austrians, Czechs or Poles registered 11,469 licenses (18.4% of the total number) (WKO, 2018).

Figure 1 Active trade licenses for personal home care according to nationalities



Source: WKO, 2018.

Care mobility towards Austria continues to grow. Despite institutionalised care services provided by the Austrian federal government, municipalities and other public actors (Riedel & Kraus, 2010), the 24-hour care model offers more marketable care options for private households and, with cash-for-care contributions, is a cost-effective and inexpensive solution – at least for middle and upper-income families.<sup>6</sup> According to the WKO register, the number of active licenses for 24-hour home care grew from 13,357 in 2008<sup>7</sup> to 62,670 in 2017 (Figure 2).

Caregivers from neighbouring countries dominate the 24-hour care sector in Austria. While they are working in Austria, the care needs of their families in coun-

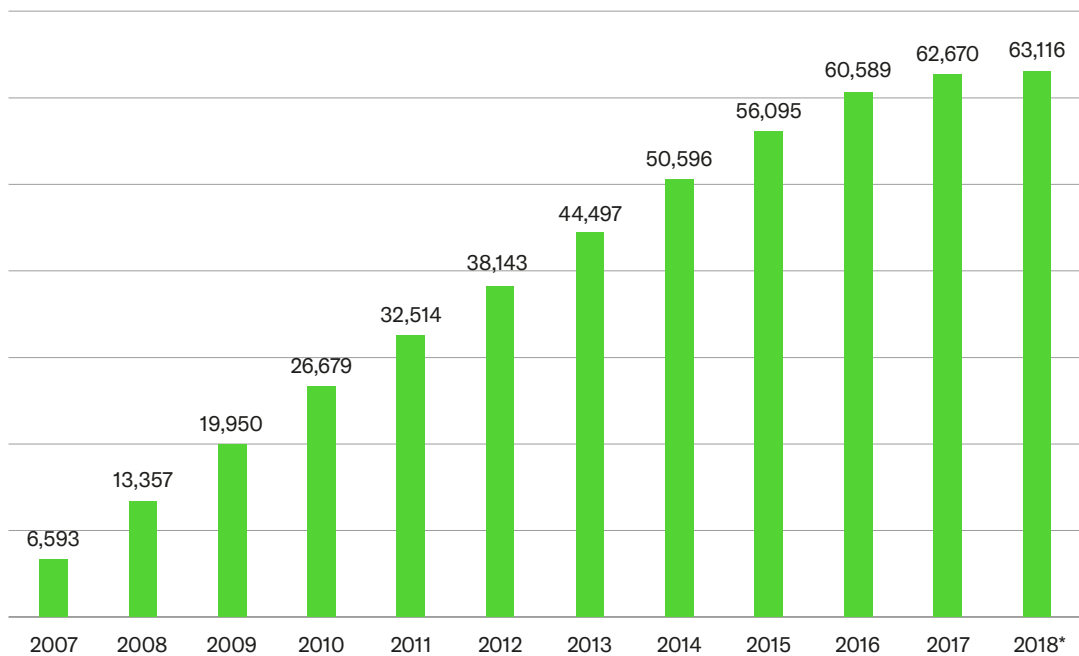
tries of origin remain, at least to a certain extent, unmet. The lack of institutional public services and the public systems' reliance on informal care put pressure on informal care provided by family members, and therefore directly influence caregivers' mobility strategies. The following section introduces the institutional frameworks in Romania and Slovakia, where informal family care plays a crucial role in meeting family care needs.

## 3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: CHILDCARE AND CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

In Romania, early childcare is supported through paid parental leave up to two years (or up to three for children with disabilities) (MMJS, 2016; Voiculescu, 2018). Public and private nurseries are available from the age of three months to the age of four years (Monitorul Oficial, 2009). According to data from the National Institute for Statistics (INS), in the

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the specifics of 24-hour personal home care in Austria and its contemporary developments see Österle & Bauer, 2012; Sekulová & Rogoz, 2019; Winkelmann, Schmidt & Leichsenring, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> First compulsory year for legal self-employment license after the 2007 legalisation.

**Figure 2** Active trade licenses for 24-hour personal care in Austria

Source: WKO, 2018.

2017–2018 school year around 8% of children aged two or younger are enrolled in a public nursery/kindergarten, while about 83% of children between three and five are enrolled in public kindergartens/pre-school services.<sup>8</sup> Research on access to early education indicates that there is a lack of policies with regard to 'children's right to early years' education' and care (Kovács, 2015).

In Slovakia, childcare in nurseries for children up to three years is available, but rather limited (Búriková, 2016). At the same time, the widely accepted social norm remains that home care is most appropriate for children under three

(Saxonberg, 2011). Publicly provided pre-school arrangements are available for children in the age category between three and the mandatory school age (six years old), whereas universal (and obligatory) access to pre-school is granted in the last year before attending compulsory education. For many, home care is a rather necessary choice due to the financial constraints of young families – despite the parental benefit – and lack of resources to pay for care in private facilities (Filadelfiová & Gerbery, 2014). As demand for public services highly exceeds the actual capacities, the availability and affordability of childcare facilities are among the current topics publicly discussed in Slovakia. The Slovak system is considered in literature as 'implicitly familiaristic', since it offers

little compensation for the loss of income incurred when a parent provides care at home (Javorník, 2014).

Both Romania and Slovakia display what was called a 'familiaristic'/individualist (Österle, 2010) long-term care system. This translates into families and individuals holding the main responsibility for care, while the state (through county-level administration and municipalities) provides basic care services and/or means-tested cash contributions. In Romania, the long-term care system aims to support the elderly and disabled persons, as well as most of those in need of medical care who are included in the formal system (Council of the European Union, 2014). Social-care community services for the elderly consist of residential- and home-based services (both permanent and temporary), day centres (Council of the European Union, 2014; Popa, 2010), as well as residential centres for medical and social care (MMJS, 2018). Social service provision falls under the responsibility of local authorities; the financing mechanism combines central and local resources, with NGOs playing an important role in the delivery of services. Private facilities have increased in recent years in response to a rising demand for long-term care. However, high fees make such services affordable only for those who are economically better-situated (Council of the European Union, 2014; Popa, 2010). Thus, long-term care in Romania is provided mainly on an informal basis. According to data from the World Health Organisation, in 2010, there were less than 200 nursing and elderly homes beds per 100,000 population in Romania, while in

Slovakia, there were around 600 nursing and elderly home beds per 100,000 population (Spasova et al., 2018).

In Slovakia, the long-term care system consists of formal care services provided by professional caregivers either in residential institutions (nursing homes, hospitals etc.) or at home (Council of the European Union, 2014; Repková, 2011; Radvanský & Lichner, 2013). Municipalities are in charge of social services, as they have the main responsibility for the provision of community social-care to the elderly. Regional-/county-level administration is responsible for residential services for the elderly, the disabled and the chronically ill. Private services are rather rare due to the low purchasing power of the social and health services' clientele (Repková, 2012). Formal care provision, both in institutional and home settings, covers around 14 % of those who need care in Slovakia (Radvanský & Dováľová, 2013). Long waiting lists for residential care are common in both Romania and Slovakia (Council of the European Union, 2014), which adds to the strain put on family-based care arrangements, since informal care relies heavily on unpaid female caregivers. Both countries offer services and/or cash contributions to persons in need of care and a (limited) wage-loss compensation for caregivers. In Romania, informal home care can be provided by the partner or relatives of the elderly dependent. The caregiver can apply to work part-time and for financial compensation from the local budget. Cash and in-kind benefits are available for those who are officially recognised as having a disability (Popa, 2010). In Slovakia, the system

<sup>8</sup> Data available on the INS website, accessible with login only.

of means-tested cash contributions is available to informal caregivers, tailored to those in a low income bracket; 82% of long-term care-workers provide care informally (Radvanský & Lichner, 2013) and only a third of these receive some financial compensation for the care provided (Radvanský & Lichner, 2013).

Across Europe, the extent of informal care provision differs significantly (Brandt, Haberkern & Szydlik, 2009; Verbakel, 2018). Previous research underlines the interlinks between the extent of informal care provision, general institutional framework and the state's involvement in responsibilities in the area of care. It is argued that formal and informal care are complementary, and thus extensive involvement of a welfare state, with more generous support, may motivate family members to provide less intensive informal care, even occasionally (Brandt, Haberkern & Szydlik, 2009). Conversely, less state involvement may lead to caregivers providing more intensive informal care (Brandt, Haberkern & Szydlik, 2009). A notable difference is the prevalence of intensive care (more than eleven hours a week). According to Verbakel (2018), in countries with generous long term care provisions, individuals are more likely to provide informal care, while the likelihood of intensive caregiving is lower. Countries with less state involvement have fewer informal caregivers, while more intensive care is being provided.

The split between informal care provision and the utilisation of institutional services is influenced, in addition to other factors, by the cultural norms and attitudes towards care. Earlier literature

on informal caregiving and culture finds that the caregiving experience differs among diverse nationalities, cultural or ethnic groups (Pharr et al., 2014). At the same time, cultural values and social norms, which influence the extent of informal care provision, interrelate with the availability and affordability of institutional services in a particular country. In Slovakia, cultural norms expect extended families to stay together and women to be responsible for family care (Bosá et al., 2009; Voľanská, 2016). Therefore, social norms are important determinants of mobility patterns, particularly when it comes to women.

#### 4. UNMET CARE NEEDS IN MIGRANT FAMILIES IN SENDING COUNTRIES

Women – the main caregivers in their families – engage in care work abroad, and this leads to family dependants being no longer cared for by their main caregiver. Situations like these have been described through the concept of 'care drain' (Hochschild, 2000). As families rely on extended informal social networks to arrange for care provision across distance (Alpes & Van Walsum, 2014), as well as to re-organise care for children or elderly family members, the responsibility of basic services and care must be redirected to other persons than the migrant family member. The literature that has highlighted the emerging care deficits within transnational families also refers to global 'care chains' (Hochschild, 2000; Yeates, 2012). The concept of the 'care chain' as 'a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring' (Hochschild, 2000), has

extensively been employed in order to explain the coping mechanisms behind the missing reproductive labour due to women's migration.

Migrants and their family members cope with care obligations across borders through diverse and flexible living arrangements. Childcare, for instance, is most commonly structured through the complex interplay of nuclear and extended family. Alpes and Van Walsum (2014) found that childcare arrangements could diverge considerably from those displayed by the nuclear family model, whereby the primary caring responsibility rests with a child's parents, most common the mother. Distinctive approaches according to migration patterns exist, i.e. whether caregivers re-organise their informal care obligations in countries of origin, or they reunify with family dependants in the receiving countries. Escriva and Skinner (2008), through the example of Peruvian women in Spain, underline the changing nature of organising family care, since after a certain time of transnational family care practices, women attempt to reunify with their children and elderly in Spain. However, our research indicates that Slovak caregivers do not want to settle in Austria, while only a few Romanian carers express their desire to bring their families to Austria.

As for the elderly, the strategies in addressing their care needs relate to organising the provision of care within the extended family or to providing for financial support to afford care outside the family. Care migrants either send remittances to siblings or other members of the extended family (who will take

over the responsibility of taking care of the elderly themselves) or pay for residential care. Alpes and Walsum (2014) show that the elderly might be also 'on the move', visiting one relative after another, or move abroad to join a child who has migrated (Alpes & Van Walsum, 2014; Escriva & Skinner, 2008). When grandparents themselves move to support migrant women to care for their children in countries of destination, literature underlines international solidarities and speaks of care 'both for and by older persons' (Ciobanu, Fokkema & Nedelcu, 2017). As this paper argues, for both child and elderly care, the ways in which care is re-organised depend, in addition to social norms, on the availability and affordability of the social services in the country of origin.

#### 5. POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF CARE MOBILITY TO CARE DEFICITS IN SENDING COUNTRIES

Care migrants circularly commute on a long-term, being 'here and there' without necessarily intending to settle in the country of work (Morokvasic, 2013). While women eventually become breadwinners, they remain responsible for the organisation of informal care in their respective families and the care reorganisation is rather temporal. Many Romanian and Slovak caregivers who work in Austria have informal family care obligations at home – towards their own children and grandchildren, parents or other older relatives. Despite working abroad, they remain, to a certain extent, responsible for family care and continue to be involved in the decision-making processes in their families (Bauer &



Österle, 2016; Sekulová, 2013). The caregivers we interviewed referred to the main care needs during their absence as related to sustaining basic services in the household and care for closest family members. The ways in which these needs are addressed, which was evident from our qualitative fieldwork, are influenced by several factors such as relationships between family members, family structure and type (e.g. nuclear family, extended family and double generational families), length of shifts abroad, as well as the spatial distance between family members' residences in the country of origin.

Earlier research demonstrates that care migrants in Austria are most commonly women in their middle and later life stages. Therefore, they have less care obligations towards their own children. However, their parents might be in need of care. In this context, according to Bauer and Österle (2016), caregivers aged 40 to 50 from Romania and Slovakia who are working in Austria have multiple obligations towards their own households and elderly family members. As for women with dependent children, this is the case of many Romanian women working abroad, including those employed in personal home care in Austria. 'Children left behind' (Pantea, 2012; Rentea & Rotărescu, 2016) is one of the most discussed and researched migration-related issues in Romania. Reports estimate that there are between 350,000 and 400,000 children who, at some point, had at least one parent working abroad (Anghel et al., 2016; Toth, Munteanu & Bleahu, 2008). A Gallup study found that while parents' migration contributed to the general well-being of children

(particularly financial), negative effects were observed with regard to the relationships in the family, as well as from a health perspective (children suffered, for instance, from depression) (Munteanu & Tudor, 2007). Among potential negative outcomes, previous studies found that children may feel rejected by those who remain responsible for caring for them in addition to being 'abandoned' by their own parents (Gheaus, 2013) and grandmothers, and children can suffer from reduced privacy (Pantea, 2012). While data on Romanian care-workers in Austria is not available,<sup>9</sup> according to Caritas Austria, Romanian care-workers have a lower average age than Slovak caregivers and therefore caring responsibilities towards their own children who continue to live in Romania are to be expected.

Among Slovak caregivers in Austria, 15% have children under 15 years old and only 2.1% have children younger than six. In 2016, the average age of a Slovak caregiver was 48 years (Bahna, 2016). In Slovakia, women with younger children are less interested in working in care work abroad, since they are expected to provide care for their own families (Bosá et al., 2009). They prefer to remain close to their families and search for alternatives of employment in Slovakia rather than work in the field of care in Austria. Labour migration or mobility is, in many families, more common among their male counterparts.

<sup>9</sup> With the exception of numbers in the registers related to self-employment licenses of Austrian institutions such WKO or Social Security Service for Entrepreneurs (SVA).

## 6. CARE NEEDS OF FAMILIES AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THEM

Care obligations towards family members are differently perceived, depending on the age of family members and their particular health condition. Our research indicates that care obligations of caregivers working abroad are rather limited. In the Slovak sample, three out of four cases we analysed have adult children and only limited care obligations towards them. Diana,<sup>10</sup> for instance, a 49-year-old caregiver, does not have care responsibilities for anyone in her family, apart from her husband who is also working abroad. Her two children, both adults, have their own lives outside the parental house. Her daughter lives hundreds of kilometres away, while her son lives with his wife in the same village with his parents-in-laws. Diana has no grandchildren. She began to work in the field of care four years ago because of financial constraints and difficulties to find paid employment as a tailor.

*'The house is empty... [My son] just got married and he is 28. [My daughter] is 27. She left home four years ago and she has [her] own life now. She works in Bratislava. And [my] husband, he is [a] whole life away in the world [economic migrant]. The children come home for a visit only if I am at home.'* (Diana, 49 years old, caregiver from Slovakia)

Irina from Romania, 36 years old, has been a care-worker in Austria since 2013. When the company she used to work for started to have problems paying

employees' salaries, she resigned and begun looking for intermediaries that could help her find a job as a care-worker abroad. Her two children – aged eight and nine – are living with her husband and parents-in-law while she is working abroad. Should her parents or parents-in-law need her to care for them, she says she would no longer work in Austria. However, as long as this is possible, she will keep her job. Her grandmother passed away last year, and in the last period of her life, the family employed a woman from the same village to take care of her. Irina is currently working in four-week shifts and is commuting with her private car. She is considering moving to Austria with her husband and two children.

Similar to earlier findings in the area, where care-workers have care obligations towards members of their own family, the re-organisation of care is as following the family ties. The husband/partner and grandparents play the most important roles in re-organising care during the absence of the main caregiver. Depending on family type – nuclear, two-generational, kin-network nearby-family care is most commonly delegated to spouses, grandparents or older children. At the same time, the delegation of care to other family members is only short term, until the caregiver returns home (Sekulová, 2013).

Women from Eastern Romania work as caregivers mainly in Italy. While they are abroad, dependent members of their families are cared for by other women in the family – their adult daughters, sisters or sisters-in-law. Alina is now 36 years old and the only daughter in a family with

<sup>10</sup> Names of care-workers have been changed.

four siblings. While her mother works in elderly care in Italy, she is taking care of her younger brother Iulian (14 years old) who moved-in with her and her family. Alina has two small children of her own. Their mother first worked in Italy when Iulian was two years old, returning home for some years to then leave again.

*‘With him now, we are three boys and a girl. That is why it came on my way [to take care of her brother]. Even when she was home, before she left, everything that had to be done: ‘Alina, could you go and do that and that?’ And I think this is why [my] mother trusted me, because she knows that the boy is fine [living at] my place.’* (Alina, 36 years old, family member of a care-worker from Romania)

Caregivers referred to the need of financial resources as one of the main actual needs of their families, where they actively contribute. Care mobility towards Austria, either from Romania or from Slovakia, is mainly economically motivated, as the wage differences between countries and limited labour market opportunities boost this mobility type (Bahna, 2014). The financial aspect is closely interrelated with family care, since remittances are spent on different care-related needs of family members. For instance, Katarína, a caregiver from Slovakia and mother of three children, spends remittances from Austria on school related expenditures such as study fees or student accommodations. Earlier literature mentions mainly family dependants as receivers of care, which must then be re-organised (Hochschild, 2000). However, our sample shows that caregivers may provide support for adult family members in financial

constraints, for instance, adult children who are currently unemployed. Helena, a 50-year-old, divorced mother of two adult sons, financially supports her older son who cannot find a stable job with a wage appropriate for his basic life needs.

*‘Now as I leave for Austria, my son does not cook, so he eats at restaurants. The money I earn for care work I spend on basic family expenditures.’* (Helena, 50 years old, caregiver from Slovakia)

Women with younger children employ diverse strategies to address family care needs. Barbora, an ex-caregiver from Slovakia, began to work in the field of care because of financial constraints. She now remembers those times as extremely difficult. Her daughter was 11 years old when she left her with her older 19-year-old brother. Although he was in charge of taking care of his sister, he was employed and therefore his sister spent a lot of time alone:

*‘[My daughter] was eleven. I must admit the truth, it was extremely difficult. [My] son was just after the school, 19 years old. He was employed here in town, but for a minimum wage. But I was satisfied that [my] daughter was [with] him at least. My husband was not at home, he worked [abroad]. But no one can replace [a] mother.’* (Barbora, 52 years old, ex-caregiver)

Barbora left care work after two years because her mother's health worsened, and also because of her daughter's depression.

Family members of care-workers can see care needs differently. In order to gain

a deeper insight into the perception of the care needs of different families, we conducted interviews with caregivers and other adult family members of these caregivers. Those non-migrant family members, who cope with families' care needs on a daily basis as well as during the absence of women, see more difficulties and different actual needs than the care-workers themselves. Katarína from Slovakia views the care needs in her family as being satisfied without difficulties and expects the active involvement of grandparents, while her husband considers care capacities within the family as rather limited.

*‘Normally, everything works without problems. We have not experienced any problems [in four years]. Regarding childcare, the grandmothers are connected, I have a good relationship with [my] mother-in-law and my mother as well, so they have been helping. Children know that if anything, they can go to either grandma or [a] grandma comes here [to check-up on them]. My husband [usually] leaves at seven and comes back at three, so there is someone there at anytime.’* (Katarína, 47 years old, caregiver from Slovakia)

Although grandparents are available, they are, at the same time, frail and in need of care themselves. The husband sees his parents as being unable to perform certain tasks such as shopping and that the care, which the grandparents may provide to children living in Slovakia, is rather limited.

*‘It is difficult when [a] wife or [a] woman leaves the family, this is the most*

*important. Regardless of whether it is for a week or two, she is away. And the family should be together... Well, our parents need lots of care. My mother is 88. Fortunately, I have [a] sister with whom she lives and cares for [my mother]. [She] does not worry about shopping for instance. But... there is a lot of other work, for instance, around the house.’* (Róbert, 50 years old, husband of a caregiver from Slovakia)

Hiring someone non-related to take care of family dependants (i.e. retired women from the same region) is rather exceptional and relates mainly to childcare. Employment of migrant caregivers from other countries – as depicted by the concept of ‘care chain’ – has not been found to be a strategy adopted by households in order to cope with care deficiencies resulting from care migration (Bauer & Österle, 2016; Búriková, 2016; Sekulová, 2013). Instead, we found that extensive family care obligations represent a constraint to mobility, and women with particular care obligations are less likely to migrate. Similarly, the 2011 and 2016 Care-workers surveys found that most care-workers from Slovakia, 96% in 2011 and 94.5% in 2016, does not have a family member who needs special assistance or care similar to the care provided in Austria (Bahna, 2016, 2018). Around 4% of caregivers declare having a commitment to intensive care for their own parents or elderly in the family. Declared limited care commitments by caregivers do not necessarily mean that the families do not face serious challenges regarding care or sustaining basic needs of the household. We argue that this perhaps indicates that care-

workers, whose family members do not face a need for special assistance, are more likely to go abroad. Moreover, if a special care need emerges, the care-workers are more likely to give up working abroad and permanently return to their home country.

In the case of care-workers from Romania and Slovakia, family care needs and the strategies employed to address them are determined by the short duration of caregivers' stays abroad, typically ranging from two to four weeks in Austria and then a similar time interval at home. This mobility pattern enables taking over a significant volume of family care responsibilities. Women from Western Romania (counties such as Timiș or Bistrița-Năsăud), working in Austria in shifts ranging from three to four weeks, can remain in charge of their main caring responsibilities at home. Similarly, Slovak women engaged in care work in Austria commute between these countries and therefore can, in principle, take over the care responsibilities in their families. Thus, temporary circular commuting contributes to the maintenance of the cultural framework according to which care is primarily a woman's responsibility.

*'[Because I return after two weeks] I take over [the] responsibility in [the] household for everything. But I must admit that my children make [an] effort to at least get the house ready before I come. They tidy up, wash the dishes, [my] daughter even irons. But it is automatically assumed that once I return home, everything lies on my shoulders. They help, but not intensively and only if I am absent.'* (Katarína, 47 years old, caregiver from Slovakia)

Circular commuting has most likely been accompanying care mobility to Austria since its beginnings, in the early 1990s, long before the 2007 legalisation of migrant 24-hour care work in Austria (Österle & Bauer, 2016). As shift-based commuting is widely accepted and one of the reasons for job satisfaction of man care-workers, particularly among Slovak caregivers (Bahna & Sekulová, 2019), we conclude that the prospect to meet their families' care needs while engaging in work abroad influenced the way in which care mobility developed in the last two decades. In addition to higher income and being an opportunity to work, the fact that commuting to work in Austria enabled them to meet the care needs in Slovakia contributed to the increasing popularity of this type of arrangement. In other words, care needs allow for this type of work and the other way around – care mobility influences the ways in which care needs at home are being addressed. We found that while the modes in which families cope with the out-migration of main caregivers vary, family care needs of Romanian and Slovak caregivers working in Austria have a substantial influence on the project of care work mobility. Changing family care needs over time (as the health situation of family dependants worsens) determines care-worker's mobility. Family needs determine the caregiver's return home in order to take over new caring responsibilities. The informal family care expectations at home, which are supported by the existing institutional frameworks, may contribute to tensions between family care and the care-worker's mobility project.

## 7. CARE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: A DETERMINANT FOR WORKING ABROAD

As in a 'familiaristic' long-term care system women are required to be main carers for dependent members of their families, women's mobility – be it for care work or other work abroad – leads to a care deficit in their respective families. Women in our research sample either started to work in the field of care abroad after their care commitments towards family dependants ended (after parents or parents-in law passed away, for instance) or they decided to return and no longer engage in the field of care abroad due to new care needs in their families.

*'When my boy got ill, I found an acquaintance [to replace me] for three weeks, [for me] to go home to [hospitalise] him for a surgery' (Lavinia, 56 years old, former Romanian care-worker in Italy). Lavinia first left to work abroad in December 2010 to replace a friend as a care-worker in a private home. She first returned to Romania in February 2011. Later, she recalls that her son made her 'swear [she] will not leave again'. She worked as a care-worker in Italy until 2015, a time during which she would come home once or twice a year. She was the sole breadwinner of the family. She would like to return to Italy to work in the field of care, but she has to take care of her husband who fell ill and is in need of a personal caregiver himself. She is now employed in Romania at a tailoring factory.*

In the sample from Slovakia, two caregivers have been providing informal

long-term care for their parents until they passed away, and only afterwards they started to work as caregivers in Austria. In spite of financial constraints – due to wage loss during the time they were providing informal home care to family members – both considered working abroad and leaving their parents without care or in residential care facilities to be unacceptable. Diana took care of her mother for five years until she passed away. For Diana, taking care of her mother was part of her duties as a daughter, even if this was a difficult time for her. She did not consider residential care services, even though her mother would have been eligible. Moreover, although her health situation was very difficult and the family felt the need for additional support, she took care of her alone without any financial support. She lives in a small village in Eastern Slovakia where local authorities do not offer sufficient social services for elderly in need of care. In addition, her own family went through financial struggles due to the loss of wages related to the length of time she was providing informal care. At the same time, she felt psychologically exhausted, tired and without any support. Once she no longer had any extensive care commitments, she decided to pursue care work in Austria.

*'After my mother passed away, I started [to work as caregiver in Austria]. I was happy that I took care of her until she passed away. But it is a very sad and difficult story which I went through. The state did not help me in anything at all. Nothing, nothing, nothing' (Diana, 49 years old, caregiver from Slovakia).*



Likewise, according to local level stakeholders we interviewed in Romania, access to long-term care services is highly bureaucratic and those to which services are addressed – the elderly – need specific support to be able to register for accessing these services. If care-workers themselves declare that a big part in their decision to return is based on the care needs of members of their families, then the absence of these care-workers from their families begins (at least from a point onwards) creating a care deficit in the family. In other words, there seems to be a tipping point in the needs of care-workers' families, which determines why care-workers stop working abroad and return to their countries of origin to care for those family members in need of care.

In both Romania and Slovakia, families and caregivers mentioned some of the main challenges they face: their financial struggles due to the unsatisfactory system of cash-benefits for the elderly and for caregivers, the lack of available home-care services, exhaustion and disappointment that the pressure of care remains on the shoulders of families etc. Most caregivers we interviewed experienced the need for institutional support with regard to care. Families we interviewed made use of public care services to different extents. Some did not utilise any services, either because these were not available, or the family was not interested in a rather unsatisfactory public support (due to cultural attitudes or low trust in institutional services). However, they all considered the long-term

care system as generally unsatisfactory and declared that they relied on the family's care resources instead of searching for institutional support.

In Romania, the predominant concentration of long-term care on the shoulders of families is the result of its general framing – a major involvement of families in informal care is expected. In Slovakia, the long-term care system lacks appropriate financial compensation for the loss of wages of those providing informal home care to family members. Diverse and accessible home-based care services are largely unavailable, and existing local-level services are under-developed, particularly in smaller municipalities. Similar to other countries in the Central and Eastern European region (Österle, 2010; Hirose & Czepulis-Rutkowska, 2016), our research indicates that Romania and Slovakia lack adequate support mechanisms for home-based care, including home visits, day-care or community-based long-term care facilities. Countries are struggling to find alternatives to family care provision, as it is unlikely that families and other informal networks will be able to maintain their provision of at least similar amounts of informal care in the future (compare Österle, 2010).

### CONCLUSION

Care migration contributes to care deficits in sending countries since care migrants are predominantly women. Families deal with the absence of the main caregiver in various ways. Provision of care is re-arranged among the closest kin such as partner, grandparents and other relatives.

The interlinkages between families' care needs, care-worker's mobility and the institutional frameworks in sending countries are two-directional. Existing care needs allow for this type of work and vice versa, so that care mobility influences the ways in which care needs at home are being addressed. Existing (limited) care needs allow caregivers to maintain transnational care work, as show through the particular case of transnational care provision from Romania and Slovakia towards Austria. The specific mobility pattern in the form of short-term commuting – 'back and forth' – enables caregivers' involvement in family care. At the same time, women with extensive care obligations are less likely to work abroad. They begin working in the care sector abroad when their families' care needs are no longer on the agenda, or they no longer work in the care sector when extensive family needs occur.

The high reliance of these families on informal care is influenced by the cultural norms according to which the provision of care is the result of intergenerational solidarity and a socially expected behaviour. Some narratives reflected upon strong social expectations. The mobile caregivers, who are also the main caregivers in their families in countries of origin, leave in order to provide paid care abroad while their families' care needs must be satisfied in different ways. As the argument goes, social construction of care and cultural values together with gaps in institutional frameworks in researched countries, affects the decisions made by mobile caregivers. The examples presented in this paper underlined that once the need for intensive care of a

family member arises, women no longer engage in care work abroad or quit the care sector altogether and return home to resume their responsibilities in caring for their own families.

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# 5 The Tacit Knowledge of Slovak Migrants

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The present trend in Europe and around the world is witnessing a higher intensity of migration in comparison to previous decades. King (2008) similarly notes that human migration in today's world perpetuates faster than ever before. Consequently, increased migration<sup>2</sup> and mobility have an impact on policies at the European Union (EU) and national levels. It also affects important technical and progressive changes in transport, culture, society, demography, and IT sectors. People have more opportunities for travelling, higher life expectations and extensive sources of information than in the past.

In addition, migration has become a daily reality for the Slovak population. The exploration of new countries or new places is most attractive to the young Slovak generation. Young people currently have more options to travel through Europe than ever before. European borders are open to its European citizens and this provides unique opportunities to enter new, unknown worlds. The knowledge gained by such exploration is something which cannot be bought, and the reasons for such migration are most often because of better work and study choices. The legal migration of Slovak citizens has predominantly been directed

towards Western Europe, which appeals to the Slovaks mainly because of a better quality of life. This migration flow has a significant influence on the economically active Slovak population or Slovak labour force, all of which were activated during Slovakia's accession to the EU in 2004.

This chapter discusses different types of knowledge gained from migration experience among different types of migrants – those who are migrants and live abroad, mainly students and economic migrants, and those who have returned after previous migration. The goal is to explain the multiple divisions of knowledge with a focus on tacit knowledge and how it relates to the actual knowledge of Slovak respondents. Our focus is on the *tacit knowledge* that Slovak migrants gained as a consequence of living abroad. At the same time, this knowledge became an integral part of their identities. The main aim of this chapter is to capture the real experiences and skills of Slovak respondents (migrants, returnees and students). These respondents lived abroad and our goal is to analyse the types of gained knowledge in order to better understand their situation. In particular, the chapter aims to empirically and theoretically contribute to a discussion on legal Slovak migration.

## 1. MIGRATION THEORIES AND THE CONTEXT OF SLOVAKIA

The main aim of the EU policy, which has a direct impact on the policies of its Member States, is to offer a single approach to all Member States in order to reach a common set of goals. Thanks to this, the EU is one of the most competitive, knowledgeable and dynamic

economies in the world. In general, world economies are influenced by their own migration policies of human capital. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines migration as 'a movement of individuals or groups of people from one geographical unit to another through administrative or political borders with the aim to settle finally or temporarily in a different place from the individual's origin' (IOM, 2014). Similarly, the United Nations (UN) defines a migrant as 'any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status, (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary, (3) what the causes for the movement are, or (4) what the length of the stay is' (UN, 2018). Meanwhile, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines a long-term migrant as a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (twelve months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure, the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival, the person will be a long-term immigrant' (OECD, 1993). For the most part, the most common reason for migration is to gain a better quality of life. There are more factors hidden behind the broad banner of *the better quality of life*. These factors influence the economies of countries. For one of the founders of migration theories, the neoclassical economist Todaro, the main reason for migration was the movement for work – labour migration (Todaro, 1980). Massey

et al. (1993) believed that the neoclassical theory was oriented on differences in the amount of wages. Hence, the main reason for migration, according to the neoclassical theory, is the maximisation of wages (Chrančoková & Smrčková, 2015).

Migration might be conceptualised from the spatial perspective as well – as either emigration or immigration. Emigration refers to the movement to a certain geographical unit.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, immigration is the movement from a certain geographical unit (Jurčová, 2005, p. 45). Other terms used are country of origin, country of transit and country of destination. At present, almost every country is considered a country of all these three options (Koser, 2007). From a time-perspective, there are more types of migration, there is short-term migration (from three to eleven months) and long-term migration (over twelve months), as well as permanent migration (IOM, 2014). Permanent migration is often connected with acquiring citizenship of the receiving country (Chrančoková, 2016a; Onufrák, 2010).

### 1.1. Migration from Slovakia

In the case of migration from Slovakia, 'the most influential factor for Slovak migrants is the high unemployment rate. More young people aged 24 to 29 leave for better job opportunities abroad than is the case for the older generations' (IFP, 2017, p. 3). The term *brain drain* is often used in connection with this type of migration. The brain drain concept

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<sup>2</sup> Nowadays, the term migration is connected to illegal human transfers between countries, which has a negative connotation for the public and therefore requires distinction between these different meanings.

<sup>3</sup> By geographical unit we mean a country (state).

is understood as a part of permanent emigration with a positive impact on the country of destination (Docquier et al., 2007). Today, brain drain is understood as part of the free labour movement interlinked with an exchange of knowledge and technologies. In the context of Slovakia, the connection between the brain drain and Slovak students was analysed by sociologist Bahna (Bahna, 2015). On the other hand, the decision of migrants to return brings a positive added value to the country of origin. These movements are called *brain circulation* (Koser, 2007) or *transfer of human capital*, as elaborated by Baláž (2010).

According to estimates, the total number of Slovaks living abroad in 2006 was approximately 220,000 to 230,000. The main reason for migration among Slovaks was employment (Divinský, 2009). Recent research by the Institute for Financial Policy of the Finance (IFP) found that 'Slovakia is going through a demographics crisis and a significant brain drain' (IFP, 2017, p. 2). According to the register of Slovak health insurance companies, the number of insured Slovak inhabitants has declined by 300,000 over the last fifteen years, which represents around 5% of the Slovak population. The most significant decline was recorded soon after Slovakia became a member of the EU. The number of insured Slovak inhabitants in the years 2004–2005 declined by 200,000. In the following years, the situation stabilised. From this time on, 15,000 Slovaks have been leaving the country each year, which is about 0.3% of the whole Slovak population (IFP, 2017, p. 1).

According to the IFP, more than one half of emigrating Slovak migrants in the last 15 years were under 30 years of age (IFP, 2017). In the years 2010 and 2013, more than one of every ten university graduates were leaving the country, which represented around 12% to 14% of all Slovak university graduates (IFP, 2017). This trend is most commonly seen among graduates of the three Slovak medical universities and of the Technical University in Košice. The highest representation consisted of migrants from the northern and eastern parts of Slovakia (IFP, 2017, p. 5).<sup>4</sup> It is interesting that 69.2% of these Slovak students moved to the Czech Republic in the period from 2008–2012. In the same period, 36.1% of mobile Czech students moved to Slovakia.

## 2. TACIT KNOWLEDGE BELONGS TO HUMAN CAPITAL

Tacit knowledge and human capital are closely interconnected. In the 1960s, Theodore Shultz (1961) was the first to coin the term human capital as something necessary to be taken into consideration, which represents all human abilities, including abilities from birth as well as all abilities gained during individual life. Those abilities which are valuable and can be enlarged are considered human capital. As human society has been evolving, the view of human capital has changed, too. Human capital is commonly understood as 'abilities, knowledge and motivation which pushes these abilities and knowledge (Becker, 1967). The OECD defines human capital

<sup>4</sup> Especially for the districts of Humenné 6.3% and Medzilaborce 5.8% in the years 2005 and 2015.

as knowledge, abilities and other characteristics of the individual, which are relevant for economic activity (OECD, 1998). There are more types of capital of the individual: altogether, human, social and organisational capital represent intellectual capital. Human capital arises from the genetic predispositions and gained knowledge and abilities. Organisational capital represents the individual's capital gained during work experience. Social capital depends on society. In addition, there is one more type of capital, that is sociological capital. There is often a misunderstanding between social, and that is sociological capital. Sociological capital depends on the family background and the parents' educational approach towards a child, this being the basis for emotional intelligence (Becker, 1967). The state is not well positioned to interfere in family processes, but the state can have a positive impact on the transport of human capital within families, e.g. by its policies and support of the family (Dobeš, 2001).

Existing literature recognises three categories of education: formal, non-formal and informal. First, Resnick (1987) distinguished between school learning and other learning. Later, Eshach (2007) argued that education is nevertheless connected to the school system. When education takes place in the in-school system, it is known as formal education. 'Non-formal learning occurs in a planned, yet highly adaptable manner in institutions, organisations, and situations beyond the spheres of formal or informal education' (Eshach, 2007, p. 173). When education takes place in the out-school system, it is known as informal education. Gerber et al. (2001,

p. 570) define informal learning as 'the sum of activities that comprise the time individuals are not in the formal classroom in the presence of a teacher'. Hence, 'informal learning applies to situations in life that come about spontaneously' (Eshach, 2007, p. 173).

Figure 1 Tacit knowledge is like riding a bicycle

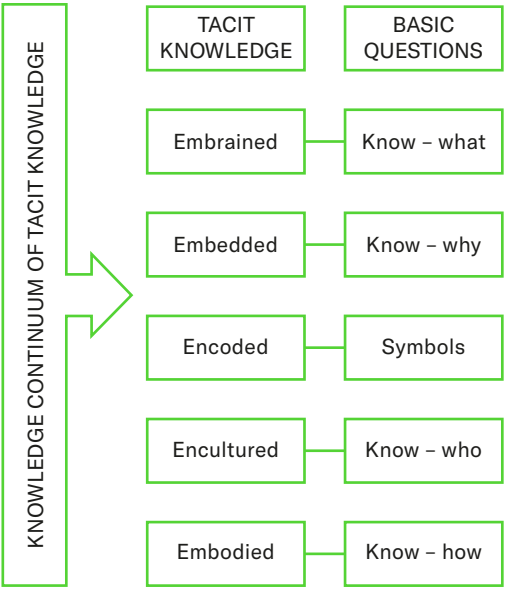


Source: shutterstock.

The literature about knowledge, skills and competences recognises two different types of knowledge – explicit and implicit (Nonaka & Von Krogh, 2009). Explicit knowledge refers to knowledge which can be expressed and quantified easily. This often takes the form of numbers, signs or symbols. In contrast, implicit knowledge is not easily expressed and quantified (Nonaka & Von Krogh, 2009). The commonly used term for implicit knowledge is also tacit knowledge. The concept of tacit knowledge was first developed by Polanyi (1958). His statement is the most famous epigram on tacit knowledge and is still commonly used: 'We know more than we can tell' (Polanyi, 1958 in Perraton & Tarrant, 2007, p. 354). Polanyi (1958) used the equation that tacit knowledge is like riding a bicycle (Figure 1).



Figure 2 Knowledge continuum of tacit knowledge



Source: Blackler (1995).

Tacit knowledge can be achieved only by personal experience (Bandura, 1977; Howells, 2000). At the same time, achieving tacit knowledge is often automatic and the learner is not aware of the process (Taylor, 2007). Every person is a carrier of tacit knowledge and this knowledge is an inseparable part of an individual's personality. Polanyi (1958) metaphorically portrayed tacit knowledge with the example of riding a bicycle, and that the main principle for learning to ride a bike is to be able to maintain balance. It cannot be explained by words, everyone must attempt it by themselves. Explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge cannot be separated from each other and together, they represent a knowledge continuum (Blackler, 2002). Blackler (2002) further identifies five types of tacit knowledge: embrained, embodied, encultured, embedded, and encoded and,

at the same time, he attributes a typical question to every tacit knowledge type (Figure 2).

Blackler (1995) introduced embrained knowledge as knowledge which depends on conceptual skills and cognitive abilities. Ryle coined it in 1949 as 'knowledge that', James in 1950 as 'knowledge about', and Lundvall and Johnson in 1994 as 'know - what': broad knowledge about facts which are very similar to information. Williams and Baláž (2008) have a similar opinion and they presented an additional idea on conceptual skills and cognitive skills - allowing for the recognition of underlying patterns and a reflection on these. Specifically, the labour market is characterised by entrepreneurial problem solving. This type of tacit knowledge is also a status, as well as power resulting from creative achievement. Embrained tacit knowledge emphasises the contributions of key individuals (Blackler, 1995).

According to Blackler (1995, p. 1024), embedded knowledge is knowledge that resides in systematic routines. Badaracco (1991) argued in this context that embedded knowledge is analysable in system terms, in the relationships between, for example, technologies, roles, formal procedures, and emergent routines. Lundvall and Johnson (1994) called this knowledge 'know - why': an understanding of scientific principles. This knowledge is understood as knowledge linked to work manuals and the organisation of work. Procedural knowledge is often considered one of these types of knowledge. They defined the sequence of different procedures required when achieving goals is impossible to codify

(Williams & Baláž, 2008; Chrančoková, 2016a, 2016b). The emphasis of embedded tacit knowledge is on collective endeavour (Blackler, 1995), such as organisational competences in real life.

Encoded knowledge is 'embedded in signs and symbols found in traditional forms, such as books, manuals, codes of practices, and websites' (Blackler, 2002, quoted in Williams & Baláž, 2008, p. 41).

Encultured knowledge refers to the process of achieving shared understandings. Cultural meaning systems are intimately related to the processes of socialisation and acculturation; such understandings are likely to depend heavily on language, and thus be socially constructed and open to negotiation (Blackler, 1995). Encultured knowledge might be assigned, according to Lundvall and Johnson (1994), to tacit knowledge, which is characterised by the question 'know - who': the density and strength of social networks. This type of knowledge helps classify migrants of different nations into different social structures. It is related to the inheritance of behavioural standards and the cultural habits of a specific country (Williams & Baláž, 2008; Chrančoková, 2016a, 2016b). Encultured tacit knowledge places emphasis on collective endeavour (Blackler, 1995). For example, this type of knowledge may include national customs, traditions, habits in particular countries, knowledge about the national culture, etc.

Embodied knowledge is, according to Blackler (1995, p. 1024), 'an oriented action and is likely to be only partly explicit'. First, Ryle (1949) coined this knowledge as knowledge 'how', James (1950)

later as knowledge of acquaintance, and Zuboff (1988) as knowledge that depends on people's physical presence, on sentient and sensory information, physical cues and face-to-face discussion, a knowledge which is acquired by doing and is rooted in specific contexts. Lundvall and Johnson (1994) called this knowledge 'know - how', specific skills ranging from artisan aptitudes to the ability of business people to assess market opportunities. The emphasis of embodied tacit knowledge is on the contributions of key individuals. For example, in real life, it is the nature and development of individual competences (Blackler, 1995).

**3. RESEARCH ON TACIT KNOWLEDGE AMONG SLOVAK MIGRANTS**

The research employed qualitative methodology. The data used was generated from personal semi-structured interviews with 52 respondents: 20 returnees,<sup>5</sup> 20 Slovak migrants who still live abroad,<sup>6</sup> and 12 Slovak students (see Table 1).

**Table 1** Sample structure of respondents

	Gender		Average age
	Male	Female	
Slovak migrants	28	24	30,5

Source: YMOBILITY project.

<sup>5</sup> Returnee is a person who lived abroad for a certain period of time and has returned to his/her country of origin.

<sup>6</sup> Respondents were from the UK, Germany and Spain.



The precondition for the respondents was to spend at least six months abroad (Germany, United Kingdom and Ireland)<sup>7</sup> and to be in a productive period of their life. The personal interviews were based on a semi-structured questionnaire. The data was generated from the YMOBILITY<sup>8</sup> project and the author's dissertation.<sup>9</sup> The semi-structured interview consisted of 20 basic questions on research about migration in Europe. For the purpose of this paper, only four of the questions were applicable to tacit knowledge. Initially, tacit knowledge was explained to the respondents with extensive time to reflect on and process the information. Later, the respondents provided examples of their own tacit knowledge gained from abroad. Finally, they evaluated the usefulness of each type of tacit knowledge (embrained, embedded, encultured, and embodied tacit knowledge) obtained on the Likert scale.<sup>10</sup> The interviews were conducted in 2016 and 2017. For selecting the respondents, the snowballing method (Coleman, 1958) was used. Each interview lasted from 60 to 75 minutes. Qualitative research is often analysed through the triangulation of respondents.

<sup>7</sup> The list of selected countries was subject to the research conditions of the YMOBILITY project (Horizon 2020). These countries were co-organisers of the project with Slovakia and we analysed the gathered data together.

<sup>8</sup> The YMOBILITY Project was an international project under Horizon 2020. The main topic of the project was maximising opportunities for individuals, labour markets and regions of the EU. The project started in March 2015 and finished in March 2018.

<sup>9</sup> The results were already published in Chrančoková, 2016b.

<sup>10</sup> Respondents evaluated tacit knowledge on the 10-level Likert scale (1 = least important to 10 = absolutely important). These values were calculated with their mean of numbers.

Triangulation is a combination of two or more different research strategies during one's research of an identical empirical unit (Denzin, 1989). The data was analysed with NVivo software.

The next part of the chapter describes the individual types of tacit knowledge with specific examples from Slovak migration, as reflected in the research. All types of tacit knowledge are analytically divided into two groups. The first group consists of embrained, embedded and encoded tacit knowledge. This group of tacit knowledge is characteristic of systems in society where people have to know how to use necessary and inevitable knowledge, for example, the education system, labour system, etc. The second group of tacit knowledge includes encultured and embodied tacit knowledge. This group also includes any knowledge connected with the cultural habits and languages of countries. Every culture has its own typical body movements and attitudes typical only of their country. More about knowledge is provided in the next section of the article.

### 3.1. Group 1: Embrained, embedded and encoded tacit knowledge

Based on the theories of tacit knowledge, embrained knowledge depends on conceptual skills and cognitive abilities. Embedded knowledge resides in systematic routines and encoded knowledge includes symbols. According to the concept of knowledge in reference to the continuum for human capital (Blackler, 2002), it is possible to determine the basic questions they pose. Embrained knowledge enquires about the 'know

what', and embedded knowledge asks about the 'know who'. Most respondents linked their skills to their working skills. Hence, reason exists for merging these types of tacit knowledge together.

Most of the respondents connected their experience from abroad with knowledge achieved in the working environment. Most of them said they had acquired new knowledge about looking for new possibilities of information. For example, Katarína (33),<sup>11</sup> who studied one year in the UK, said that she had learnt: *'a better understanding of existing knowledge and relational knowledge.'* Another respondent, Petra (29), who worked and studied in the UK for three years, commented: *'I learnt how to think in relations and use logics in debates.'* Peter (29), who worked as a manager in Ireland, said: *'I learnt a lot about life in developing countries. I've formed new opinions on development aid and work with young people there.'* For the respondents working in the positions of low skilled workers,<sup>12</sup> it was important to save money for the future. Respondents with high skills earned more upon completing their study. For example, Monika (22) who worked and later studied in Ireland, explained: *'Knowledge that money is not the most important thing. Knowledge that university education can go forward.'*

<sup>11</sup> Age of respondent. Names of respondents are anonymised.

<sup>12</sup> Typical unskilled jobs abroad are barmen, field workers, cooks, cleaners, waitresses, au pairs, housekeepers or other job positions for young people over the summer.

Students explained that they learnt to think more strategically and to express their opinions. They had a good foundation of information from formal education from the home country.<sup>13</sup> Veronika (35), who studied and worked as an administrative worker at the university in the UK, said: *'More information and, more importantly, the ways how to find the information.'* Students, as well as highly skilled migrants, gain better organisational skills and management of their work. At the workplace or on the university premises, some of the students learnt to express themselves more politely. The written communication between them and their colleagues or their supervisors (their professors) became more professional.<sup>14</sup> Zuzana (27) acquired new skills in computer literacy by using Powerpoint during her academic presentations. The respondents understood embrained and embedded very similarly. They often added embedded knowledge only to procedural knowledge, which is knowledge about efficient work planning.

Typical answers related to tacit knowledge concerned time management. The respondents expressed that through the migration experience, they learnt how to plan better and to think more systematically with less stress. They learnt how to spend money more effectively and more reasonably. One respondent Ivana (35), who returned to Slovakia and worked in Germany, in the UK and in different European countries as a scientist, explains:

<sup>13</sup> The part of the results has been evaluated in the article Chrančoková 2016a.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.: The part of the results has been evaluated in the article Chrančoková 2016a.

*'Emphasis on written expression. I consider it to be a field that I will always want to continually improve myself in. Before, I thought of it more as of a matter of talent. I've also gained an interdisciplinary approach to expert work skills.'* Then Katarína (26), who is a returnee now, previously working as a waitress and later as an administration worker and a manager, stated: *'Yes, partially. Better interconnection of individual sectors, as well as constant meetings to exchange information in the company and a constant feedback that would allow for better functioning, etc.'* The next respondent, Martina (30), expressed her own procedural knowledge: *'In [international organisation], we had specific established procedures we had to follow, which weren't easy to follow. I had to learn a lot while organising my own projects. I was over 30 and for the first time I found myself in the situation where I realised my younger colleagues have certain knowledge that I don't have. I was trying to overcome the mental barrier really fast and watch and learn what I needed from them. Since younger colleagues are usually very competitive, it was an interesting and complex process where I still had to remain authority for them. When planning complex projects, I learnt how to use new software platforms for time management.'* Similarly, Zuzana (30), who still lives abroad, studied in different countries and now works as a manager, said: *'I've been trying to enjoy life, which I learnt abroad. Small things make me happy, I try to view things positively.'*

But many respondents said that they did not learn anything new. The frequent reason was that their position remained unchanged. They did not need language

for work. Ján (35), who is a returnee from Germany and Ireland and now works as a cook, said: *'I don't know. Everything was the same as in Slovakia. I always cooked the same way.'* Also, Monika (22), a returnee from Ireland and the UK, stated: *'I came to the UK to save money, I didn't come to learn.'* These respondents belonged to the group of respondents with low skills.

As the findings show, most respondents came to the conclusion that the working procedures abroad are better organised. After their migration experience, the respondents learnt to handle more complex problems, team work and learnt better reactions to some situations. Respondents with higher education and responsibility learnt to plan better and organise people and things. Two respondents added time optimisation and complex tasks tracking into this knowledge. Few respondents linked this knowledge to self-reflective elements.

### 3.2. Group 2: Encultured and embodied tacit knowledge

Encultured knowledge belongs to cultural systems and shared meanings from processes such as socialisation and acculturation (Williams & Baláž, 2008). Encultured tacit knowledge completes the migrant's human capital in a significant way because every migrant is permanently influenced by living in the country of their choice. A migrant can use this knowledge for him/herself while living abroad, but also after returning home. Encultured knowledge acquired from a migration experience which is connected to culture, economy, politics and the social environment of the foreign country can be meas-

ured only with difficulties. However, it can be reflected in personal interviews as well. The respondents expressed that migration had brought them a different perspective on interpersonal and intercultural communication and most considered themselves as more tolerant to different cultures and diversity after the migration experience. They realised that they would not have this opportunity in Slovakia. Juraj (27), a worker who returned from Germany, said: *'I can compare two cultures and work habits now.'* Another respondent, Marcel (33), an IT technician who lives with his family in London, commented: *'Thanks to the cosmopolitan UK, I've gained higher tolerance to different cultures and a more liberal approach to many life questions.'*

Every culture has specific customs and practices that might be seen as typical to the people of that culture. Below are a few answers from respondents who assigned their reminiscences to encultured tacit knowledge. It proves that people are very aware of other cultures. Some respondents preferred the working behaviour abroad to that at home. There was more mutual respect, interpersonal behaviour and cultural correctness. Milan (22), a student who studied in the UK for seven months, commented: *'I learnt about the new culture, views and a different life-style of people living abroad. I think that a person learns to respect the diversity of people. I became more independent and, for example, I do not have any problem to travel anywhere abroad completely on my own.'* The next opinion was from Barbara (28), who lives in Ireland: *'Yes, people are friendlier. They never forget to greet you and thank you even just when getting off the bus when the driver opens the door. Nobody forgets to thank and smile.'*

*It is also common to address someone with their first name when asking for something or to say someone's name when you greet them. These were the first things that came to my mind, but there is probably more.'* Nina (25), a mother with a child who lives in Germany, reflected: *'Foreign people are more polite than in Slovakia when dealing with each other.'*

Other respondents stressed the friendliness and more equal treatment in the attitude to their senior colleagues. Others emphasised international co-operation. They evaluated the working environment between companies and the approach to customers as highly professional. Paulína (23), who studied in the UK for three years, said: *'Generally, mainly in the case of my stay in a British university environment, there is a more equal approach. Everyone is expected to contribute to the discussion, and salary and gender equality is present. Compared to the Eastern European science community, communication is more cultivated in Britain, people are open to new solutions and opinions.'* Another respondent, Rastislav (35), a returnee and IT technician, thought that *'the norms of behaviour are similar. The workplace environment in the companies and between the company and the clients was highly professional. People were definitely more pleasant, warm, full-hearted, easy going, and well disposed.'* The migrants started noticing different customs and practices after their return from abroad.

Respondents considered people abroad as nicer, warm-hearted, easy-going and positive. One respondent, Ivan (25), who studied in Ireland, expressed: *'Thanks to them, I became more tolerant to other'*

cultures, gained a more liberal attitude to some life questions.' He was more influenced by: *'multicultural food and children growing up with different people and children with different nationalities, the opportunity to taste the cuisine of the whole world and possibilities to visit theatres, galleries and museums they had never seen elsewhere. I learnt to respect people with different opinions, and I know that this is what has pushed me forward as a person. Views and habits from different cultures, the possibility to be part of something like that and, in addition, to feel safe is the feeling I would not experience at home.'* The next respondent, Timea (22), who studied in the UK for nine months, commented: *'I do not have a narrow-minded view of things and I think that now I know how things work in the world... I saw the world and experienced a different culture.'* Some migrants did not like that they were often viewed as inferior. It was linked to situations when they felt derogatorily considered as migrants from Eastern Europe.

Certainly, tacit knowledge can also be negative. Natives evaluate migrants on the basis of their country of origin. There is encultured tacit knowledge too. Some respondents expressed negative experiences as well, as they felt like being treated as inferior by their colleagues and people in a foreign country for being of Slovak nationality. For example, when they looked for jobs, some employers would not employ people from Eastern Europe at all. Juraj (28) is a worker in Ireland and he said: *'We are still inferior for natives. For natives, we are only people from Eastern Europe.'* Another respondent Martin (31), a returnee who worked in Ireland, had a similar experience: *'They*

*didn't accept me... They look at Slovakia like at Russia.'*

Language skills represent embodied tacit knowledge and are considered very important by the respondents. Research results reflect that there are diverse predispositions for learning languages. Young people from Slovakia with higher education (completion of high school or university) often travel abroad in order to improve their foreign language skills. However, they often take on low-skilled jobs (waitresses, babysitters, etc.) because they do not speak the language sufficiently. They are very aware that they have to improve their language skills, which was the main goal for many of them. Following the question 'What did you bring back from abroad?' respondents usually answered that it was language skills. For example, Jana (30), who still lives abroad and works in an international company in administration, said: *'Certainly, language knowledge. It is very different to learn a foreign language in your home country or use it every day in a foreign country.'* Many respondents expressed that they would never achieve such language proficiency if they studied foreign language in Slovakia. However, some Slovak migrants with low skills did not learn the foreign language. The main reason was that they did not want to. Their typical answer was: *'We did not have time for learning. We were living with other Slovak migrants and we didn't need language for living abroad.'*

The interviews indicate that cultural dimensions also play a role, and this is also the reason why some migrants return to Slovakia. For some women, the perspective of having a family and raise children in the home country was impor-

tant. Daniela (32) said: *'Appreciation of the family and a perspective of better opportunities after completing school in Slovakia, unlike not having higher education while living abroad.'*

Embodied knowledge is mainly related to physical activities – sentient and sensory information and physical cues. The basic question for this type of knowledge is 'knowledge how'. Research results indicate that all returnees who participated in the research considered themselves more self-confident, decisive and having more work experience than those who have never left the country. Some respondents with a return migration experience reflected upon themselves as having become a completely new person (Búriková & Miller, 2010). After their migration experience, some respondents expressed more courage and affirmed that they could now take risk and learn new knowledge and skills. Those who migrated abroad and returned to Slovakia believed that they are more experienced and have a better work ethic. They realised that, thanks to migration, they are able to judge situations that may occur in their work and personal life more clearly. Students and people with high skills learnt how the institutions abroad operate. The returnees considered Slovaks that had never tried to live abroad as people who lived in a stereotype (family, children).

Several respondents affiliated embodied knowledge with work skills. According to some, it relates to coping with stressful situations and to their feelings of self-confidence. For example, Ingrid (25) who studied in the UK and now works as a manager in an international company in Slovakia, said: *'I cannot explain how, but*

*I've learnt the ability to argue in stressful situations. In general, I'm a shy person and I'm unable to prepare myself for a job interview. But now, I automatically know what to answer and other people see me as a self-confident person.'* Another respondent, Karol (33), an IT technician in London, explained: *'After my experience abroad, I can handle stressful situations in a much better way than before.'* Some of the respondents connected the embodied knowledge with automatic usage of language skills. For instance, Ján (19), a student who studied in Ireland, explained: *'I automatically switch to English when I'm speaking with foreigners.'* For most students or researchers, this knowledge was linked to communication and presentation skills, as also Zuzana (29), a student and scientist in Slovakia, mentioned: *'I obtained presentation skills and gained higher self-confidence.'* Many respondents believed that after their return they were more assertive. Peter (35), an IT technician who returned to Slovakia two years ago, said: *'My stay gave me a better outlook and a broader life experience.'* And Roman (34) commented: *'Assertiveness, belief in oneself, I managed to live on my own abroad without any help.'*

Another perspective of returned respondents is that they gained the ability to perceive a larger picture of the world. This fact helped them deal with different situations. Lujza (22), a student, mentioned: *'For sure, I have more experience, which will be very useful in my life, better prospects and useful contacts'*. Moreover, Marek (35) explained that: *'I can keep my own ground, I am fulfilling my dreams and goals.'* All respondents agreed that the migration experience changed them in most of the cases in a positive way.



Prior to emigrating, they reacted to situations and challenges differently than now. They consider themselves to be more flexible, realistic and creative than ever before. They learnt to better process new information and critical thinking. Their values, attitudes and self-reflection have changed. This opened up many opportunities and perspectives which led them to the awareness of a different social context than before and to a changing view of reality. In addition, they felt that they became more active than before migration while living in Slovakia.

Respondents reflected on the question about the usefulness of their migration with regard to gained tacit knowledge. They had to specifically evaluate tacit knowledge for embrained, embodied, encultured and embedded tacit knowledge. The questions were open: *Can you please evaluate the usefulness of ‘tacit knowledge’ that you learnt abroad on a scale of 1 = completely unimportant and 10 = absolutely important?* Respondents were most aware of encultured tacit knowledge with the value 7.61 out of 10. As the second type they stated embodied knowledge with an average value 7.45 out of 10. The third type chosen was embrained knowledge. The least important type was embedded knowledge with an average 6.77 out of 10. Encultured knowledge was the most important obtained tacit knowledge for all respondents (see Table 2).

CONCLUSION

Tacit knowledge depends on diverse factors. First of all, it depends on genetic information, environment and surrounding people. Certain predispositions define the person's appearance and movements

Table 2 Rating of tacit knowledge from abroad

Tacit knowledge	Average total
Embrained knowledge	7.3
Embedded knowledge	6.8
Encultured knowledge	7.6
Embodied knowledge	7.5

Source: YMOBILITY project, author.

which are inherited from ancestors. These predispositions also include the learning of languages, sports and other activities. Tacit knowledge is created by direct personal experiences. The embrained, embedded, embodied, encultured and encoded tacit knowledge is gained through formal, non-formal, and informal education from in-school and out-school systems. However, tacit knowledge represents implicit knowledge. A combination of innate and gathered tacit knowledge builds one's own human capital. Every person carries this knowledge, so it is a part of the human capital in each person. Embrained and embedded knowledge are connected more with social rules and habits. Encultured and embedded knowledge are joined with people's feelings.

Typologically different respondents, those who migrate and live abroad and those who have returned after a previous migration experience, mainly gained language proficiency and improved communication skills (Chrančoková, 2016b). Respondents with an experience in higher positions acquired new or improved professional skills, such as strategic planning. Respondents who worked in low-skilled positions, for instance manual work, de-

clared that they learnt to work more systematically. Consequently, stemming from this knowledge, respondents described their confidence as increased, and their lives enriched. They evaluated their stay abroad as having changed them and their life values, thanks to their personal experiences abroad. The returnees who came back have begun to appreciate their family or family values. They have begun to spend more time with their families than they did before migration. They also perceived themselves as more sociable than people who had never migrated. Respondents described that they go more often to social and cultural events such as the cinema and theatre and have more friendships, both international and Slovak. They see themselves as accepting new things and changes as challenges. They know how to have a good time and are more open-minded. Students became more critical of themselves and became more responsible. All respondents became more open to new cultures.

The economic, social and financial politics of European countries should support brain transfer and circulation. Although migration itself reduces the rate of unemployment in Slovakia, the greatest risk is the brain drain. People who stay abroad currently represent Slovakia's human capital. Thanks to high migration, this Slovak human capital is voluntarily lost. However, from the general life perspective, the transfer in knowledge should be seen positively. This knowledge gets transferred from place to place through people (brain circulation). One positive aspect is that the tacit knowledge of Slovak respondents gained abroad contributes to enriching the Slovak culture. In this regard, the worldwide human capital becomes richer.

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# ⑥ Fiscal Balance of Immigration in the Light of the EU's Refugee Crisis

101

INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The ageing of the population in high-income countries has been an ongoing issue for decades now and all projections predict that it is going to continue in the future. According to the European Commission's latest 2018 Ageing Report, the old-age dependency ratio (people aged 65 and above relative to those aged 15 to 64) is projected to increase by 21.6 percentage points over the period of 2016–70, from 29.6% to 51.2% in the EU (European Commission, 2018, p. 4). In other words, this would imply a dramatic fall in the so-called Potential Support Ratio (PSR)<sup>2</sup>: the EU would go from having 3.3 working-age people for every person aged over 65 years to only 2 working-age persons (European Commission, 2018, p. 4). IMF staff calculations led to similar results in the case of 37 high-income countries: The old-age dependency ratio is projected to increase from 27% to 52% between 2015 and 2100 and this would increase age related expenditures (pension and healthcare) from 16.4% to 24.8% of GDP (Clements et al., 2015, p. 12).

Without various reforms, which are necessary in attempting to offset the fiscal consequences of ageing, the potential increase in age-related expenditures could place extreme pressure on public

finances in most high-income countries. When looking for measures to mitigate the ageing related fiscal burden, efforts to improve the demographic situation itself are logically given priority. In theory, this might be achieved through increased fertility and/or immigration. Increasing the fertility rate to or above the so-called replacement level (2.1 children per women) or increasing the working age population with accepting (more) migrants or a combination of the two, might ensure that old-age dependency ratios are stabilised or even improved.

However, long existing estimates show that replacement migration is not a feasible solution. The United Nations Population Division has addressed this question by estimating the need for immigrants by considering different scenarios in several high-income countries for the period between 1995 and 2050 (UN PD, 2000). In the case of countries with low (much below replacement) fertility, extraordinarily large numbers of immigrants would be needed to offset or significantly reduce the declines in the working-age population and the old-age dependency ratio (Table 1).

For example, in the case of Germany, 17.8 million immigrants would be needed to keep the total population (81.7 million) at a constant level during the period concerned; keeping the working age population stable would require accepting 25.2 million immigrants; in order to maintain an unchanged PSR, an astonishing 188.5 million (!) migrants would have to be invited. Maintaining a constant PSR would require such a large number of immigrants in all of the countries analysed that immigrants would become the majority everywhere. The reason for

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<sup>2</sup> The potential support ratio (PSR), the inverse of the old age dependency ratio, is the number of people aged 15–64 per one older person aged 65 or older.

**Table 1** The estimated number of immigrants needed to offset the decline of various populations under different scenarios in selected high-income countries (1995–2050)

	Total population (highest level without migrants in millions)	Scenario III – To maintain the total population		Scenario IV – To maintain the size of the working-age population		Scenario V – To maintain the potential support ratio (PSR)	
		Number of migrants needed (millions)	Share of migrants (% of total population)	Number of migrants needed (millions)	Share of migrants (% of total population)	Number of migrants needed (millions)	Share of migrants (% of total population)
France	61.1	1.5	2.9	5.5	11.6	93.8	68.3
Germany	81.7	17.8	28.0	25.2	36.1	188.5	80.3
Italy	57.3	12.9	29.0	12.9	38.7	119.7	79.0
UK	58.8	2.6	5.5	6.2	13.6	59.8	59.2
EU-15	372.4	47.5	16.5	79.6	25.7	700.5	74.7
USA	298.0	6.4	2.5	18.0	7.9	592.8	72.7
Japan	127.5	17.1	17.7	33.5	30.4	553.5	87.2

Source: United Nations Population Division (2000).  
Notes: All data ('number of migrants') compute and assume the migration required between 1995 and 2050 to maintain the size of the total population (column 1 and Scenario III), the working-age population (15 to 64 years, Scenario IV) and the potential support ratio (PSR – Scenario V) at the highest level it would reach in the absence of migration after 1995. PSR refers to the number of people aged 15–64 per one person aged 65 or older.

this is quite simple: although immigrants are mostly young at the time of their arrival, they also get older and eventually become pensioners. Therefore, in low fertility countries, a continuous wave of newly arriving immigrants is necessary in order to maintain a constant PSR.

Table 1 illustrates how immigration alone is unable to solve the demographic problems. The main argument here, however, is that it might contribute to alleviating their fiscal consequences. In other words, immigration along with other measures might mitigate an increase in the age-related fiscal burden of high-income countries. Thus, the above-mentioned policies, which are trying to change underlying demographics (incentives to increase fertility, greater

net migration) together with raising labour force participation and measurements that contain growth in age-related spending (health care and pensions system reforms) could create a mix of policies tailored to the needs of individual countries in addressing the fiscal effects of ageing (Clements et al., 2015, pp. 14–21). Various international organisations have been arguing in favour of such a mixture of policies for a relatively long time. For example, a 2004 IMF report stated that 'a broad mix of measures is likely to be needed to address the consequences of demographic change as the size of the reforms that would be needed in any single area are sufficiently large that they would be politically and economically difficult to achieve' (IMF, 2004, p. 157).<sup>3</sup>

To conclude, immigration could be part of the solution to the fiscal problems of ageing societies, but at the same time, part of the problem as well. Immigration can contribute to alleviating the ageing-related fiscal burden only when its fiscal balance is positive, i.e. if immigrants pay more into public budgets than they receive from them. If this is the case, in other words, immigrants 'paying their way', then immigrants are net fiscal contributors too, and thus it is possible to discuss the transfer of wealth from immigrants to natives. If public expenditure related to immigrants is higher than revenues paid and generated by them, the fiscal impact would therefore be negative, making immigration the cause of a net fiscal burden. The transfer also works in reverse. Immigrants would thus be contributing to a worsening of the fiscal problems of Western welfare states as a consequence of demographic changes, rather than being a solution to these problems.

There are two main aims in this chapter. First, to identify the most important factors influencing the fiscal effects of immigration by reviewing the existing empirical literature. Secondly, by considering these factors to emphasise the possible fiscal effects of the recent refugee flows to the European Union. The structure of the chapter takes the following form: first part starts with reviewing the international empirical literature and

describes the types and methods of the fiscal balance estimates; the chapter then looks at the most important factors influencing the fiscal effects of immigration and the specific characteristics of refugee populations regarding these factors. Finally, the chapter concludes that it is unlikely that refugees entering European states will produce a positive fiscal balance. On the contrary, the net cost for host societies accepting refugees – at least in the short and medium term – is a much more realistic forecast.

### 1. FISCAL BALANCE ESTIMATES – REVIEWING THE INTERNATIONAL EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Since the 1990s, a growing number of empirical studies have focused on the fiscal effects of immigration on high-income countries. The direct net fiscal effect of immigration on public budgets is equal to the difference between public revenues (the sum of direct and indirect taxes and contributions paid) and public expenditures related to immigrants (social benefits, welfare services and public goods provided by the government). In major host countries, the fiscal balance of the entire immigrant population usually tends to be a small share of the GDP and is around zero on average across OECD member states (OECD, 2013, p. 125). 'Most empirical studies find that the fiscal contribution of the immigrant population as a whole is quite small. The positive contribution of some migrants is largely or wholly offset by the negative contribution of others. This finding holds across a variety of countries and methodologies. Estimates of the net fiscal contribution of immigration normally lie within the range  $\pm 1$  per cent of GDP' (Rowthorn, 2008, p. 560).

<sup>3</sup> The IMF staff calculations for the period of 2000–2050 showed that when trying to stabilise the labour force to population ratio using the single area option is 'outside the range of historic experience' because it would require in low fertility countries (such as Germany, Spain, Italy, Japan or Korea) to: (1) increase labour participation rates by 15–20%; (2) raise the retirement age by 9–12 years, or (3) accept as many migrants that their share in total population will increase to 20–40% (IMF, 2004, pp. 155–157).

When dealing with fiscal balance estimates one has to note that even if they analyse immigrants in the same countries, it is not rare that they end up with different results. The reason is that researchers are faced with a number of methodological challenges: How to define immigrants and how to identify them in available datasets? Which public revenues and expenditures should be included in analyses and how should they be connected to migrants? Should only direct fiscal effects be taken into account and should indirect ones be considered as well (e.g. the effects of changing employment, wages, investment etc. on public budgets)?<sup>4</sup> Should static or dynamic accounting models be preferred? There are always good arguments for and against the various models including the definitions and datasets used and, of course, some compromises need to be made all the time. Thus, there is no 'perfect' model which takes into account all of the imaginable direct and indirect effects of immigration on public budgets, only a couple of methodological problems for researchers.

In addition, the fact that part of the research on fiscal effects is conducted by policy-focused think-tanks that more or less stand for immigration also contributes to different research results since the assumptions might be tailored to support one position over another. As described by Vargas-Silva (2013, p. 1), '... most of these organisations have a

set agenda in favour or against increased immigration. Unsurprisingly, those organisations with a favourable view of immigration tend to find that immigrants make a positive contribution to public finances, while those campaigning for reduced immigration tend to find the contrary.'

### 1.1. Types and methods of fiscal balance estimates

This part begins with a 'simple' question: who is an immigrant? Obviously, all people born abroad (as foreign citizens) are usually included here. This could be viewed as already relatively wide definition in the context of this book; however, in practice, for most fiscal balance studies it is rather a narrow one. The problem lies with the children of immigrants, especially when they are dependent and live in the same household with their parents. The problem is partially theoretical, since much of the fiscal impact immigrants have is through their children (due to public education, healthcare and welfare programmes) and not including these effects would overstate the fiscal contribution of immigrants (Nowrasteh, 2014, p. 6; Rowthorn, 2008, p. 566). On the other hand, it is partially a pure methodological problem based on data considerations. Revenues and expenditures often refer to the household level and household-based data include children of immigrants living with their parents (OECD, 2013, p. 130). Both considerations apply to the native-born children of immigrants as well, despite the fact they are *not* immigrants themselves.

The next question is even more difficult to answer. Which revenue and expenditure items should be attributed

<sup>4</sup> Estimates measuring only direct fiscal effects attributable to immigrants themselves are called 'partial equilibrium' analyses, while those taking into account indirect impacts of immigration on wages, or on labour force participation and occupational choices of the pre-existing population are called 'general equilibrium' analyses (Blau & Mackie, 2017, pp. 335–336).

to immigrants and how? The problem is mostly with those items which could not be directly attributed to certain groups or individuals like corporate income tax and indirect taxes on the revenue side (sales tax, VAT, excise taxes) and certain public services (such as public education, health and active labour market policies) and public goods on the expenditure side. The first possibility is to try to estimate these items based on the characteristics of immigrants – which are usually available from some surveys (mostly used to calculate revenues). The second possibility is to attribute these items equally across the entire population (pro rata assignment) like when the costs of public goods are divided proportionally among the population (OECD, 2013, p. 132). And finally, researchers can opt for one of the two main methodological approaches: static and dynamic models to estimate the fiscal impact. The static approach calculates the balance (cash-flow) between the taxes and contributions paid and the amount of government expenditure absorbed by a particular group of immigrants in a given period of time, typically a (fiscal) year (Rowthorn, 2008, p. 566). The chapter in this book estimating the fiscal effects of EU migration to Slovakia also uses this concept.<sup>5</sup> The dynamic approaches attempt to project the net fiscal impacts of immigrants and their descendants in the coming years and decades, and generally transform them to the net present value (NPV), i.e. the total of the future net contributions/transfers at current prices (often calculated per additional immigrant). Both approaches have major

<sup>5</sup> For more details, see chapter The fiscal effects of EU migration to Slovakia, p. 46 in this publication.

limitations. Static models can calculate only the impact of existing immigrants with their existing characteristics under existing government policies and actual economic situation (Nowrasteh, 2014, p. 16). This is problematic since everything changes over time. For example, children of immigrants could be included in static models when they are young and costly but missed out when they leave their parents' households, begin to work and pay taxes. Changing business cycles and government finances matter, too. In times of recession, high unemployment and large fiscal deficits, the estimates of fiscal balance would probably differ significantly from the results during good economic times and solid public finances. Dynamic models (e.g. OECD, 2013, pp. 137–143), unlike the static ones, allow for the estimation of changing net contributions from the immigrants in a lifecycle – usually high positive contributions during working age and high negative contributions in childhood and old age. They can include the children of immigrants during their entire lifecycle as well. But by doing so, researchers must rely on a number of assumptions they make about the future. How demographic indicators (e.g. fertility, mortality, inward and outward migration, number of children) and social and labour market indicators (education, employment, productivity, earnings etc.) are going to change? What about the future economic development (savings, pensions, investments, tax rates, government expenditure, deficit and debt)? To use the advantages of dynamic models fully, researchers have had to make underlying assumptions for decades (to cover one or two generations, lifespans) but, naturally, by each additional year

the assumptions become more and more speculative and less and less reliable.

This chapter concentrates on static fiscal balance estimates, although it includes some dynamic ones as well. Despite its limitations, the static approach is more useful when looking for immediate relief in ageing-ridden budgets. If immigration is to alleviate the ageing related burden in public finances by contributing with a positive fiscal balance, then it is better to have this positive balance 'here and now' (confirmed by a static analysis) instead of a promise that it is likely to occur in 15 to 20 years from now (considering estimates using dynamic models). Looking at the direct budget implications for a given year associated with the actual stock of the immigrant population (or the changes in the stock) is also the primary interest of decision makers (Blau & Mackie, 2017, pp. 354–355). Additionally, static estimates are easier to calculate and give a more precise picture over the actual state of affairs in a given fiscal year. Finally, in the case of refugee populations, the results of various estimates are quite uniform (as the conclusions below stress), regardless of the type of methods used.

## 1.2. Estimates from English speaking countries

A pioneering study mapping the overall fiscal impact of immigration was conducted in the late 1990s by the National Academy of Sciences on the request of the Commission on Immigration Reform appointed by the U.S. Congress (Smith & Edmonston, 1997). The results of *The New Americans* study showed that the net annual fiscal burden of immigration

considering all transfers (from natives to immigrants) at (US) state and federal levels combined was estimated to be between \$166 and \$226 per native household, so at the federal level, the fiscal burden was between \$14,77 billion and \$20,16 billion per year in 1996 (Smith & Edmonston, 1997, p. 288). However, at the same time, *The New Americans* study estimated that the net present value of the lifetime fiscal impact (combined federal, state and local) for an average new immigrant was +\$80,000 (Smith & Edmonston, 1997, pp. 350–351).

Camarota estimated that households headed by irregular immigrants imposed more than \$26.3 billion in costs on the (US) federal government<sup>6</sup> in 2002 and paid only \$16 billion in taxes, creating a net fiscal deficit of almost \$10.4 billion, or \$2,700 per irregular household (Camarota, 2004). The primary reason for this deficit was the low education levels (nearly two-thirds of irregular migrants lacking a high school degree) and resulting low incomes and tax payments of irregular immigrants. Since irregular immigrants have been excluded from most federal welfare programmes in America (see below), any relevant welfare cost associated to them seems surprising (Camarota, 2004). However, the study highlighted that many of the costs are due to their American-born children, who are awarded U.S. citizenship at birth. That is why Camarota argued that greater efforts at

<sup>6</sup> Among the largest costs identified were: Medicaid (\$2.5 billion); treatment for the uninsured (\$2.2 billion); food assistance programmes such as food stamps, WIC (Women Infants and Children program), free school lunches (\$1.9 billion); the federal prison and court systems (\$1.6 billion) and federal aid to schools (\$1.4 billion).



barring irregular immigrants from federal programmes will not reduce costs since their children (citizens) can continue to access them.

A group of researchers under the auspices of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine basically revisited *The New Americans* study in an even more comprehensive way and estimated the fiscal balance of immigration using several different scenarios and assumptions (Blau & Mackie, 2017). For 2013, they estimated that by combining federal, state and local levels the fiscal balance of the 55.5 million first generation immigrants in America and their dependent descendants was minus \$279 billion. Other groups (second and third-plus generations with dependents) also created a negative balance and, when combining all the fiscal shortfall for the entire American population, it reaches \$1,243 billion (Blau & Mackie, 2017, p. 406). This is roughly consistent with general government budget deficit figures (federal and state-and-local budgets combined) in the United States. Hence, immigrants represent a net fiscal burden in the budget, but so does the rest of the population. This is often the case in high-income countries since they mostly run budget deficits and it means that on average there should be a per capita deficit 'imposed by' every single citizen. The mere fact that the fiscal impact of immigration is negative could be quite misleading. Therefore, a comparison of the fiscal impact of immigrants with the impact generated by the native-born population or estimate of the fiscal balance for various groups within the society (immigrants and non-immigrants) is more reasonable. The research

published by the National Academies showed both above and below average deficits related to immigrants depending on the assumptions made in the accounting model (Blau & Mackie, 2017, pp. 386–397). Relatively large US defence spending matters a lot; if it is distributed pro rata, then immigrants and their dependents would 'produce' an above average fiscal burden; if it is considered as a non-congestible public good and marginal cost allocation is used (i.e. an additional immigrant is not going to increase the defence budget), then immigrants would be below the average in terms of per capita fiscal effects.<sup>7</sup>

At present, there is particularly rich literature available on fiscal balance estimates in the United Kingdom. In research done for the British Home Office, Gott and Johnston estimated that in the fiscal year 1999/2000, migrants in the UK contributed £31.2 billion in taxes and consumed £28.8 billion in benefits and state services, thereby making a net fiscal contribution of approximately £2.5 billion (Gott & Johnston, 2002). Researchers from the British Institute for Public Policy Research (later referred to as 'IPPR') compared the estimated fiscal contribution of immigrant and native-born populations during the 1999–2004 fiscal period (Sriskandarajah et al., 2005). Their analysis is a good illustration of

<sup>7</sup> When the basic scenario is applied (immigrants pay an average cost of public goods) immigrants produce an above-the-average fiscal burden. The first generation group made up 17.6% of the population, but accounted for 22.4% of the total deficit. However, when researchers assumed that immigrants pay marginal (zero) cost of (pure, non-congestible) public goods, then they account for less than 4% of the total deficit while still making up the same 17.6% of the population (Blau & Mackie, 2017, p. 407).

another important phenomenon – the fiscal balance usually changes parallel to the changes in business and budgetary cycles. The British budget went from surplus to deficit in the given period and the fiscal contribution of immigrants followed, turning from positive to negative numbers. Despite this deterioration, the relative net fiscal contribution of immigrants had been stronger than those of the UK-born in each of the years examined (Sriskandarajah et al., 2005, p. 12). Results of IPPR could be modified if the allocation of spending on services for children born to mixed families (one migrant parent and one UK-born parent) is changed and split equally between the UK-born and foreign-born groups (Vargas-Silva, 2016, p. 4). Under this modified assumption, the fiscal balance of immigrants would be negative during the whole period. Previous IPPR analysis considered the spending on these children to be part of the benefits consumed by the UK-born group.

Based on the IPPR study, Rowthorn added (or excluded) various expenditure and revenue items and found that the fiscal impact varied between -£7.3 billion and +£7.5 billion (or  $\pm 0.65$  per cent of GDP respectively) depending on the assumptions made and the business cycle (Rowthorn, 2008, pp. 572–574). In another study conducted by the Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration at University College London (CReAM), experts focused only on the so-called A8 migrants (the eight Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004, the 'Accession 8') in Britain during four consecutive fiscal years starting with 2005–2006 (Dustmann et al., 2009). The findings showed a positive contribution

of A8 migrants to public finances even though the UK had been running a budget deficit over the years concerned. This is because A8 migrants had a higher labour force participation rate, paid proportionately more in indirect taxes, and made much lower use of benefits and public services. For example, they were 60% less likely than natives to receive state benefits or tax credits, and 58% less likely to live in social housing (Dustmann et al., 2009, p. 1).<sup>8</sup>

Dustmann & Frattini (2014) also distinguished between natives, immigrants from the European Economic Area (EEA) countries and non-EEA immigrants in their research estimating fiscal effects in the UK between 1995 and 2011. Their results showed that over the 17 years period immigrants from EEA countries made a positive contribution of more than £4 billion, while those from non-EEA countries made a negative contribution of £118 billion, compared to an overall negative native (UK-born) fiscal contribution of £591 billion (equivalency in 2011). In relative terms, EEA immigrants contributed 10% more than natives and non-EEA immigrant contributions were almost 9% lower (Dustmann & Frattini, 2014, pp. 3–4).

While some British and American estimates already differentiate between various subgroups of the population and immigrants, Australia is still the only

<sup>8</sup> This was mostly the result of demographic factors: A8 migrants have been younger with fewer dependent children. However, the researchers concluded that even if A8 migrants had the same demographic characteristics of natives, they would still be 13% less likely to receive benefits and 28% less likely to live in social housing (Dustmann et al., 2009, p. 1).



country that provides estimates on the fiscal impact of immigration based on category of entry (Access Economics, 2008). This is thanks to a regularly updated unique model which estimates the fiscal impact that an additional 1,000 migrants have on the Commonwealth government budget over a period of 20 years after their arrival (see Table 3 below). This impact was estimated to be (increasingly) positive<sup>9</sup> across all visa categories, except for the Family-Parents categories (visas for the parents of the established immigrants) and the Humanitarian category.

As illustrated above, in countries like Australia, US and UK, the estimated fiscal balance of immigration is typically positive, and even if it is negative relative to the economy (as a percent of GDP), it is rather marginal. This conclusion cannot be generalised as in certain countries, notably extensive welfare states in Europe with large extra-European immigrant populations, the estimates usually result in larger minuses, especially when only non-Western or refugee populations are considered (see below).

### 1.3. Fiscal balance estimates for EU countries

The largest minus, estimated by one of the pioneering studies, was done in Sweden. It mapped the situation in the most extensive welfare state of its time, in

<sup>9</sup> In the 2008 update of the fiscal impact model, it was projected that the 159 thousand immigrants arriving in the 2006/07 fiscal year would generate (altogether) a 707 million AUD net benefit for the federal government budget in the first year of they stay, and this surplus is gradually going to build up to 1,43 billion AUD after 20 years of their arrival (Access Economics, 2008, p. 27).

Sweden (Ekberg, 1999). The study found a negative fiscal balance of immigrants at 0.9% of the Swedish GDP in 1991 and 2% in 1994. According to calculations, the fiscal effect of migration in Sweden had been positive up to about 1980. However, as the composition of migrants during the 1980s changed and their labour market situation deteriorated, the fiscal balance went to negative numbers and worsened until 1994 (Ekberg, 1999, p. 423). The changing composition means that, after 1975, the proportion of refugees and 'tied movers' (reunified family members of already admitted immigrants) increased; thus, the predominantly labour migration from European (mostly neighbouring) countries gradually transformed to a humanitarian one from the Balkans and third world countries. The deterioration of the labour market integration among immigrants culminated during the 1991–1994 economic crisis – exactly the years the estimates refer to.

The studies on Denmark resulted in similar findings. Wadensjö (2000) estimated a yearly total net negative fiscal impact of immigrants and their children on the Danish public budget between 0.4 and 0.8% of GDP in the 1990s. But this had already been the combination of slightly positive fiscal transfers (around 0.1% of GDP) from Western immigrants to the public sector and relatively large negative transfers (-0.5 to -0.9% of GDP) from immigrants from non-Western countries (Wadensjö, 2000, p. 69).<sup>10</sup> In order to explain the latter, the great

<sup>10</sup> In the analysis, EU countries (at that time, the EU-15), Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, North American countries, Australia and New Zealand were considered Western countries, all the others as non-Western ones.

importance of the poor employment situation of non-Western immigrants was highlighted. 'An important factor underlying these results may be that many of these immigrants have come to Denmark as refugees or to join family members, rather than as job related immigrants' (Wadensjö, 2000, p. 80). In a more recent analysis, Danish experts also estimated a negative fiscal impact for the entire non-Western population group (immigrants plus descendants – mostly second generation) residing in Denmark at around 1% of GDP in 2014 (Hansen et al., 2017). A study estimating the fiscal contribution of non-Western immigrants in Germany resulted in similar conclusions: the per capita contribution was -4,422 euros for first generation and -4,234 for first and second generation combined for the year 2002 (Gerdes, 2007, p. 88). An earlier study from the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis concluded that regardless of the age of entry, immigrants end up being a burden on the public budget if their social and economic characteristics correspond to those of the average non-Western resident in the Netherlands. Since most immigrants were of non-Western origin, they stated 'that immigration cannot offer a major contribution to alleviate public finances and thus to become a compensating factor for the rising costs for government due to the ageing of the population' (Roodenburg et al., 2003, p. 8).

What the previous estimates have in common is that they targeted non-Western (or mostly non-Western) immigrant populations in Nordic or West European countries with extensive welfare states and uniformly showed a negative fiscal impact. However, this is

not to say that all immigrant groups represent the net cost for public finances in Western and Northern Europe. A large cross-country estimation of the fiscal effects of migration of EU citizens within the EEA (European Economic Area) countries for the years 2004–2015 found positive results in 21 of the 29 analysed countries (Ahlskog & Nyman, 2018, p. 22). This is due to the fact that intra-EU migration is predominantly labour migration with immigrants having a more favourable age structure and typically higher employment rates than the average.

### 1.4. Fiscal balance estimates for refugee populations

Most international empirical literature focuses on all immigrants or at least broadly defined immigrant groups, and experts only rarely try to estimate the fiscal balance for such specific groups as refugees. There are only a few exceptions like the Australian fiscal impact model previously presented above. It projected that humanitarian migrants are going to produce a negative fiscal balance during the first 12 years after their arrival (Access Economics, 2008). A more recent analysis from Europe by Ruist (2015) targeted the refugee population in Sweden (immigrants who once arrived in the country as refugees or their family members) and estimated the total redistribution towards them (from the rest of the population) through the public budgets to 1.0% of Swedish GDP in 2007. Scaling this number up by the subsequent increase in the Swedish refugee population, the corresponding redistribution in 2015 was estimated at around 1.35% of GDP. 'This value thus

represents the net annual cost today of having had Europe's apparently highest per-capita rate of refugee immigration for a full thirty years. As such, it also gives an indication of what the cost would be of higher refugee immigration in the rest of Europe' (Ruist, 2015, p. 13). Holler and Schuster (2017) projected a negative net present value for additional refugees in Austria, and Aldén and Hammarstedt (2016) estimated negative fiscal effects caused by refugees arriving to Sweden between 2005 and 2007 in seven individual fiscal years from 2006 to 2012. Thus, there are only a few estimates, but their findings are quite uniform. However, the estimates targeting non-Western immigrants in European countries which are presented above can help us make our argument more robust. The two groups typically overlap, usually a large part (sometimes the majority) of non-Western populations is made up by refugees and their family members. The two groups also have similar socio-economic characteristics and, according to the estimates, 'produce' similar negative fiscal effects.

In fact, it is quite hard to find an academic paper arguing differently and presenting different outcomes. Even if some do exist, their specific design and assumptions do not undermine the main argument presented here. For example, Evans and Fitzgerald (2017) observed the refugees who entered the United States between the ages 18 to 45 for 20 consecutive years and estimated that after the first eight years in the U.S. they started to produce a positive net fiscal balance which reached \$21,000 on average for the 20-year period. The problem is that the observation ends exactly when the oldest people in the

sample turn 65, so expenditure on some of the most expensive American welfare programmes such as Medicare (publicly financed healthcare for the elderly) or Social Security (the US public pension system) is basically excluded. In addition, costs of public education are omitted (the age in the sample starts at 18 and children of the immigrants are not included). Some other expenditure items (housing, infrastructure, incarceration) were also exempt.

2. THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FISCAL BALANCE

2.1. Employment and category of entry

A review of the international literature revealed that employment has a central role in determining fiscal effects since it largely influences both the revenue and expenditure side. 'Employment is the most important factor that weighs on migrants' net fiscal contribution, particularly in the European OECD countries with relatively generous welfare systems. These are also often countries which have significant numbers of humanitarian and family migrants who tend to have lower employment rates, at least initially' (OECD, 2013, p. 161). The fiscal estimates showing positive net contributions from some groups of immigrants usually highlight the role of high employment rate of these immigrants. For example, the study by CReAM in the UK focusing on A8 migrants showed that 90% of men and 74% of women at working age within this group had a job, while the employment rate was 78% and 71% among native (UK-born) men and women respectively (Dustmann et al., 2009, p. 8). Thus, the

Table 2 Comparison of selected estimates of the fiscal balance of immigration in some high-income countries

Country, reference year	Author(s) (year of publication)	Targeted immigrant group and type of the fiscal impact model.	Research design characteristics and limitations.	Results – net fiscal impact as % of GDP or other
USA 1989/90 and 1994/95	Smith & Edmonston (1997)	All immigrants plus native-born children of mixed (native/foreign-born) couples assigned by the birth status of household head.	Instead of an analysis at the nation-wide level comparing the results of two case studies on the fiscal impact of immigration at the state level, for New Jersey and California. All publicly-provided goods, with the exception of defence, are assumed to be pro rata.	The annual US fiscal burden between \$ 14.77 and \$ 20.16 billion per year in 1996 dollars.
Sweden 1991	Ekberg (1999)	All immigrants (born abroad without descendants); static accounting model.	Deep economic crisis in the early 1990s in Sweden pushing down net contributions.	- 0.9%
Sweden 1994				- 2%
Denmark 1997	Wadensjö (2000)	Non-Western immigrants (foreign-born and native-born offspring with at least one immigrant parent); static accounting model.	Descendants of immigrants born before 1960 or became Danish citizens prior to 1978 not included (small but most successfully integrated part). Costs of public goods (defence) exempted.	-0.84%
United Kingdom 1999/2000	Gott & Johnson (2002)	Foreign-born households, immigrants plus dependent children with two or at least one (lone) foreign-born parent.	Spending on children of mixed couples not divided to equal parts between the UK-born and foreign-born groups but allocated entirely to the UK-born.	+0.3%
United Kingdom 2003/04	Skisandarajah et al. (2005)	The same as above, both are static accounting models.	The same as above.	0%
Australia 2008–2028	Access Economics (2008)	All immigrants entering with different visa categories (during the 2006/07 fiscal year, only foreign-born); dynamic model estimating the 2006/07 cohort's impact over a period of 20 years.	Fiscal effects measured only on the national (federal) level, state and local level not included. Estimates only for the 20-year period after arrival – not a life cycle model. Costs for native-born children not included as well.	Net benefit rising from 707 million AUD for the first year to 1.43 billion AUD after 20 years.
United Kingdom 1995–2011 (17 years)	Dustmann & Frattini (2014)	Immigrants and their dependent children (children of mixed	Taking into account the “savings” to the destination country	Different scenarios: –0.7 (public goods pro

United Kingdom 1995–2011 (17 years)	Dustmann & Frattini (2014)	couples considered as half natives and half immigrants); static accounting model.	from education of migrants financed by the countries of origin. Retrospective cross- sectional approach which uses historical data to estimate the net fiscal contribution.	rata) to +0.3% of GDP 2001–2011.
Sweden 2007	Ruist (2015)	Refugees, foreign- born (likely refugees estimated by year of immigration and country of birth, arrived before 2007); static accounting model.	The way of identification of refugees; from the corporate income tax (7% of public revenues) zero is attributed to refugees; native-born children of refugees not included.	-1%
USA 2013	Blau & Mackie (2017)	The first generation of immigrants and their dependent descendants (55.5 million people in the US).	Different scenarios estimated, in the first scenario immigrants pay average cost of public goods (including defence and debt interest).	Minus \$279 billion for the first scenario.
29 EEA (European Economic Area) states 2004–2015	Ahlskog & Nyman (2018)	EU migrants – people born in an EU member state but residing in another EEA member state, regardless of their citizenship plus children living in households with EU migrant adults regardless of place of birth; static accounting model.	Expenditure on congestible public goods is allocated pro-rata while the marginal costs for non-congestible public goods were set to zero.	Positive net balance for 21 of the 29 states. Negative effects are smaller (up to -0.3% of GDP), than positive (up to 1.7%).

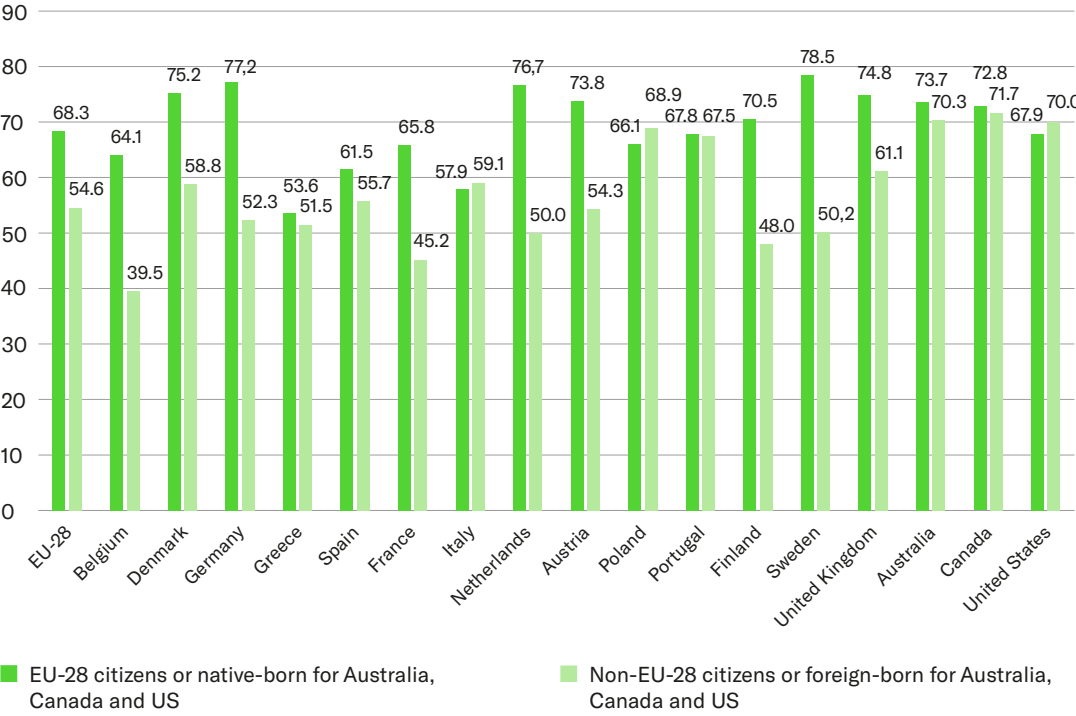
Source: Except the sources in the second column also based on Blau & Mackie (2017), OECD (2013), Rowthorn (2008) and Vargas-Silva (2016).

employment rates of A8 migrants were well above the average of UK-born population, which had already been regarded as high for international standards.

Data from advanced economies show that in some major host countries of immigration – typically in the US, Canada or Australia, there are no large differences between the employment and unemployment rates of the native-born and foreign-born populations. In many EU Member States, especially in Scandi-

navian and continental countries, there is a large gap between the labour market performance of EU and non-EU citizens (Figure 1 and 2). The UK and some Mediterranean countries stand somewhere between these two country groups. The composition of migrants plays a central role in these differences, employment rates are strongly related to other factors such as category of entry, education and skills, welfare incentives, cultural norms and age. Turning back to Australia's unique fiscal impact model could be quite helpful in

Figure 1 Employment rates by citizenship or country of birth in selected high-income countries (as % of 15–64 years old age group, 2017)



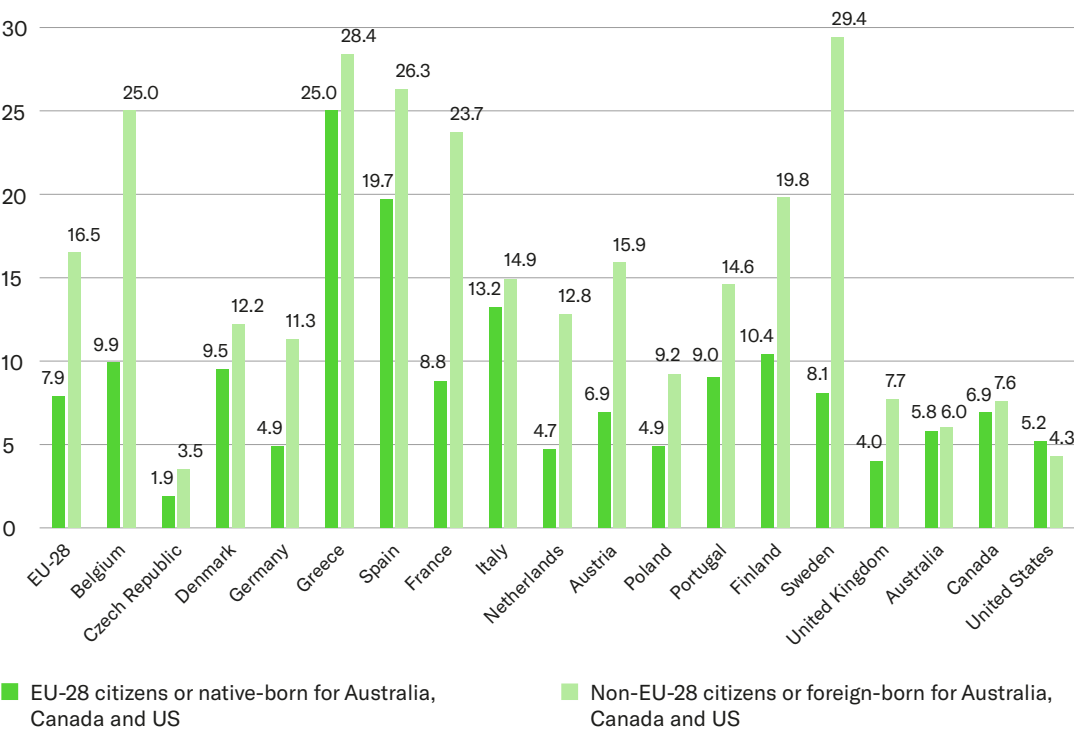
Source: Eurostat (2018) and OECD.Stat (2018).  
Note: 2016 for Australia, Canada and US.

explaining these differences. The estimate (Table 3) showed a strong positive fiscal contribution to the federal budget. This was mainly due to the fact that labour migration dominated the inflow (over 60% of the visas were issued in different labour migration programmes while only 7% in the ‘Humanitarian or refugee’ category). The key reasons for strong net contributions are high rates of labour force participation (generally well above the Australian average); high incomes leading to a high level of direct tax receipts; strong levels of English proficiency which reduce the need for language services; temporary limits for immigrants accessing welfare and an age profile generally much younger than the

Australian population on average (Access Economics, 2008, pp. 25–26). Except for the age structure, none of this is true for the refugee migration to extensive European welfare states, so it is not surprising that the results of fiscal balance estimates look entirely different.

The Australian fiscal impact model also highlights the importance of duration of residence, since the overall fiscal impact is improving during the analysed period and this is true for all visa categories, except for the parents of immigrants. In the humanitarian category (refugees), a declining negative net contribution was estimated, which is projected to turn to

Figure 2 Unemployment rates by citizenship or country of birth in selected high-income countries



Source: Eurostat (2018) and OECD.Stat (2018).  
Note: Total unemployment rate for Poland and Portugal instead of the rate for EU-28 citizens. Unemployed as percentage of 15–74 years old age group in 2017 for EU countries and as percentage of active population aged 15–64 in 2016 for Australia, Canada and US.

positive numbers only after the initial 12 years (but this later net contribution is not large enough to offset the previous net costs). It is important to note that the Australian model covers only 20 years and is not a lifecycle estimate. If we look beyond these 20 years, the net positive contributions will probably gradually turn to negative numbers in all categories due to the retirement of immigrants. However, an NPV calculation of the lifespan fiscal impact for the ‘average immigrant’ or for the entire immigrant population would probably show considerable positive net contributions.

**2.2. The composition of immigrants, skills, age and education**

Australia's example demonstrates that the composition of the immigrants influences their labour market outcomes to a very large degree, and this affects the fiscal balance. Skills, education and age structure are crucial. Young, educated and skilled immigrants normally make a large fiscal contribution (Rowthorn, 2008, pp. 576–577). *The New Americans* study already concluded that ‘(i)f the only policy goal were to maximise the positive contribution of immigration to public-

Table 3 The estimated net impact (net cost or revenue) of immigration on the Australian budget by visa category and length of stay (per 1.000 immigrants in 2006/2007 constant million dollars)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 10	Year 15	Year 20
Family – Parents	-4.8	-3.5	-4.0	-3.9	-4.2	-4.7	-9.2	-7.7
Family – Partner and Other	2.1	4.3	3.6	4.3	3.5	6.6	6.6	6.9
Family – Parents Contributory	25.7	-1.2	0.4	-1.2	-1.4	-2.1	-8.4	-8.7
GSM – Sponsored	2.7	5.1	5.1	5.6	5.8	6.7	7.0	7.5
GSM – Independent	4.7	6.7	7.0	8.0	8.3	10.3	10.8	11.7
GSM – Independent – Student	4.6	7.3	6.9	7.3	7.6	9.1	8.9	9.1
GSM – Regional Sponsored	3.8	4.4	4.6	6.0	5.6	6.2	6.4	7.0
Employer Sponsored	13.8	14.3	14.2	14.4	14.4	15.0	15.1	15.2
Business Skills	5.0	5.9	6.0	5.2	5.2	6.0	5.4	4.5
Humanitarian or refugee	-20.1	-7.2	-6.6	-5.8	-5.6	-1.1	1.2	4.3
Total Permanents	3.4	5.4	5.3	5.9	5.8	7.7	7.8	8.4

Source: Access Economics (2008).  
Note: Based on data from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants in Australia. GSM = General Skilled Migration.

sector budgets, that could be achieved by policies favouring highly educated immigrants and not admitting immigrants over age 50’ (Smith & Edmonston 1997, p. 12). Almost all fiscal effect studies from the UK highlight the important role of education. An estimate by the Home Office, for example, showed that in 1999 less than 10% of migrants with higher education claimed state benefits (except child benefits), while nearly 40% of those with no qualification did so. More than 50% of immigrants with no qualification were inactive and only 35% had a job (Gott & Johnston, 2002, p. 19). Typically, selective labour market migration programmes result in the best mix of skills, age and education and thus lead to high labour market participation, and this results

in a positive fiscal balance. Australia is probably the best example where this selective labour migration dominates.

Just as in the case of the category of entry, and with much accompanying overlapping, there are substantial differences between immigrants based on national origin as well. For example, one IPPR report showed that in the UK only 1% of immigrants born in the US, the Philippines, Poland, France and Australia had claimed Income Support, however, 11% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi, 21% of Turkish and 39% of Somali immigrants did so (IPPR, 2007, p. 27). Similarly, while only 5% of American, French or Australian immigrants lived in social housing, the corresponding figures for Bangladeshi,



Turkish and Somali immigrants were 41, 49 and 80% respectively (ibid., p. 30). The differences between various groups of immigrants were so large that making generalisations and talking about immigrants using average data can be much misleading. As the IPPR argued: ‘The immense differences between different subgroups within the immigrant population (e.g. country of origin or route of entry) and even bigger differences within groups can often mean that lumping people together as immigrants is almost meaningless’ (House of Lords, 2008, p. 42).

In the US, there is a large gap between education and corresponding incomes of various immigrant groups based on country of origin. Latin American (most notably Mexican) immigrants tend to have lower education, while Asian (e.g. Indian, Chinese, Philippine) and European and Canadian immigrants have higher (Blau & Mackie, 2017, pp. 86–90). This is related to substantially different earnings for various groups. For example, the average annual earnings of a native-born employed woman was \$40,996 in 2012. The corresponding figures for Chinese (49,634), Philippine (49,914) and especially Indian (60,320) women were higher, yet much lower for the Mexican woman (17,865) (Blau & Mackie, 2017, p. 109). Welfare utilisation shows very similar patterns. In 2012, the share of native households (defined by the head of the household) using at least one (US federal) welfare programme<sup>11</sup> was 30%, while in the case of immigrant-headed households, it was 51% in average, i.e. a difference of 21 percentage points (Camarota, 2015, p. 6). Households headed by immigrants from Central America and Mexico had

by far the highest welfare use at nearly 73%, while immigrants from East Asia (32%), Europe (26%) and South Asia (17%) had the lowest rates, which were around or below native-household levels (Camarota, 2015, p. 9). In recent decades, a predominant share of immigrants from Latin America arriving to the US has substantially influenced the fiscal effects of immigration. This has been already revealed by the *New Americans* study: ‘... except for immigrant households from Latin America, today's current immigrants are net fiscal contributors to the overall fiscal position of native U.S. households... The Latin American immigrant cohort is large, however, and their negative net annual fiscal impact more than offsets the aggregate fiscal contributions paid to natives by Canadians, Europeans, Asians, and other immigrants’ (Smith & Edmonston, 1997, p. 288).

Researchers in the Netherlands noted substantial differences in employment levels of labour, family and refugee migrants, but pointed to significant divisions even within the refugee population itself. Studying the employment patterns of the 1995–1999 refugee cohort, they showed that Iranian refugees (both men and women) are more likely to be employed over time, while women from Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq are least likely. The former may be explained by their higher average

<sup>11</sup> The welfare programmes considered were the following: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Women Infants and Children food programme (WIC), free or subsidised school lunch, food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP), Medicaid, and public housing and rent subsidies (Camarota, 2015, p. 4).

educational level, while the latter with different cultural views on performing paid labour outside the home for men and women (Bakker et al., 2017, p. 1788).

The composition of migrants makes a difference as the various examples (presented above) from major host countries demonstrate. Country of origin and category of entry are important factors, but they usually intertwine with factors such as education, skills and language ability. Selective labour market migration programmes can usually ensure the best mix of skills, age and education for host countries from an economic and fiscal point of view, which lead to high labour market participation and this results in positive net contributions to public budgets. Australia is probably the best example, where this selective labour migration dominates. As the British case clearly demonstrates, ‘free movement’ migrants have been contributing considerably to the budgets due to their characteristics (young age, high employment rate, low social ‘consumption’) as well. The fiscally beneficial nature of (mostly labour) intra-EU migration in most EEA countries was also highlighted by Ahlskog & Nyman (2018).

However, high-income countries with relatively high share of these types of labour migrants such as Australia and the UK are rather exceptional. In many EU countries the share of refugees and their family members is much higher, and the share of labour migrants and their family members much lower than in the UK or Australia. This too has a significant influence on the fiscal impact of immigration (OECDiLibrary, 2018).

### 2.3. Refugee specific costs and barriers and welfare state arrangements

In contrast to the selective labour migration programmes, in the case of humanitarian migrants, the receiving country is unable to select newcomers based on its actual economic needs and preferences, which influence characteristics such as age, education, skills, language ability, cultural background etc. Fiscal balance estimates almost uniformly show negative fiscal effects related to refugees. The poor fiscal results are a combination of one-time refugee-specific short-term public expenditure and longer-term problems connected to the slow labour market integration. Specific short-term expenditures are related to the influx of refugees, which implies considerable government layouts that are usually concentrated in the first years of arrival. The administrative costs of processing asylum applications with the costs of rescue operations and border protection are included here, along with the expenditures related to the provision of food, healthcare and shelter. These short-term costs related to the refugee crisis were estimated to increase the average budgetary expenses for asylum seekers in EU countries between 2014 to 2016 from 0.08% to 0.19% of GDP according to the IMF staff calculations (IMF, 2016, p. 12). This seems rather marginal; but the refugees and consequent costs seemed to be unevenly distributed with some EU Member States receiving most of the burden: the first and foremost being Sweden (expenditure rising to 1% of GDP), and then Denmark, Finland, Austria and Germany (all above 0.3% of GDP), which were expected to pay the highest price.

After the initial period, other (non-refugee-specific) expenditure items were added to the list, e.g. the costs for social housing, (language) training, integration courses, education and social benefits for the non-working. Due to their characteristics, humanitarian migrants are usually overrepresented as receivers here. Apart from the skill and education gap they also face legal barriers when trying to enter the labour market since traditionally they are not allowed to initially work. Most EU Member States require periods of up to nine months and apply also additional limitations,<sup>12</sup> and only Sweden,<sup>13</sup> Greece and Portugal grant asylum seekers the possibility to enter the labour market immediately after application for asylum. Even when they are allowed to work after a certain time, problems with recognition of educational credentials or skills often hamper their skill recognition and job placement (Holler and Schuster, 2017, p. 2). However, legal barriers play a role mostly after the arrival, contributing to the 'refugee entry effect' that causes the 'refugee gap' in employment, and this only slowly diminishes over time (Bakker et al., 2017, p. 1788). Other reasons for poor

<sup>12</sup> Asylum seekers (after their asylum application) have the right to work after two months in Italy; after three months in Austria, Germany and Romania; after four months in Belgium; six months in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Spain, Poland and Netherlands; and after nine months in Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Hungary, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Lithuania does not have provisions on access to the labour market for asylum applicants, and regarding these applicants Denmark, Ireland and the UK have 'opt-outs' on the Recast Qualification Directive 2011/95/EU which limited waiting periods up to 9 months (European Commission, 2016b, p. 21).

<sup>13</sup> Asylum seekers in Sweden are exempted from the need to have work permit. This right lasts until a final decision on their asylum application, including during the appeals (Poptcheva & Stuchlik, 2015, p. 27).

labour market performance are due to a lack of host country work experience, language proficiency and the problematic recognition of educational credentials. Different motives (flight) for leaving country of origin also play particular roles – for example, refugees often experience psychological problems and trauma (Bakker et al., 2017, p. 1788). We can add discrimination along with racism and xenophobia and the lack of adequate integration policies in many receiving countries. In addition, refugees usually arrive without financial resources or material assets, social networks or without their family members and their support – they must overcome traumatic experiences from the past as well (Sekulová & Hlinčíková, 2015).

As many initial barriers are lifted and integration gradually proceeds in the long term, education, skills and language ability (or the lack of these) are factors that increasingly determine the labour market outcomes of refugees. The main problem is that their language proficiency, education and employment lag behind not only EU-born citizens, but also extra-EU migrants, i.e. migrants coming from third countries outside the EU (European Commission, 2016a, pp. 113–123). Earlier literature demonstrates that employment rates of refugees stay at very low levels after arrival (around 10 to 20 percent in the first year) and it takes 15 to 20 years to reach the initial employment level of labour migrants which is around 70 percent (Konle-Seidl & Bolits, 2016, pp. 22–23). Refugees arriving during the refugee crisis (in 2015, early 2016) to Germany and Austria only had a 14–15% employment rate in mid-2016 (Germany) and in late-2016 (Austria) respectively (Konle-Seidl, 2018, p. 22).

Finally, the generosity of welfare systems also matters, and this includes the access of immigrants to welfare services and benefits, which varies a lot across high-income countries (IMF, 2016, pp. 26–27). Some countries (typically US, Australia, Denmark) have been restricting the access of immigrants to welfare at least temporally and partially. Together with cultural norms (role models of mothers, fertility) it can make a difference. However, for the most part, this does not apply to refugees since they are usually exempted from most restrictions applied to welfare use in high-income countries. Welfare systems generally, are more important regarding the fiscal effects of refugee populations. The argument here is that more generous or more extensive welfare systems increase fiscal costs for refugees who are overrepresented in welfare consumption. This leads to higher negative fiscal effects. The same is true for cultural norms, for example the traditional role of women who do not enter the formal labour market and take care of dependents and the household. When combined with higher number of children in migrant families, this also pushes up fiscal costs and decreases revenues, thereby worsening the fiscal balance.

With regards to the average number of children, the US witnessed a declining gap between immigrant and native fertility rates in the last years. Between 2008 and 2017, the total fertility rate (TFR)<sup>14</sup> of immigrant women declined from 2.75 children to 2.16 (a 0.6-child decline) and for the native born it de-

<sup>14</sup> The total fertility rate (TFR) reports the average number of children a woman can have in her reproductive age based on current patterns.

clined from 2.07 to 1.75 (a 0.33-child decline), and thus the gap between the two narrowed from 0.68 to 0.41 (Camarota & Zeigler, 2017, p. 5). In Western European countries, the difference in fertility has been traditionally similar, perhaps a bit higher but with very high TFR (and therefore a very large gap) in the case of some immigrant groups typically from Muslim countries, e.g. Somali women (5.2) in Norway and Denmark, Pakistani women (4.7) in England and Wales and Turkish women in Austria (2.96), Norway (3.09) and France (3.21), to show some examples (Sobotka, 2008, pp. 232–233). A study by the Pew Research Centre (2017, pp. 34–35) estimated the Muslim fertility in Europe in 2015 to 2.6 (1.0 above the Non-Muslim average) which is projected to decline to 2.4 by 2050 (when the difference will still be 0.7). This is important because during the last years the overwhelming majority of asylum seekers and refugees coming to Europe is from countries with Muslim majorities, and this was especially the case during the 2014–2016 refugee crisis. This has caused a major impact on the fiscal effects of immigration.

### CONCLUSIONS – BE REALISTIC, PREPARE FOR A NET FISCAL BURDEN

Although immigration is not a feasible solution for the demographic problems related to ageing in high-income countries, it may contribute to the alleviation of their fiscal consequences. However, this occurs only as a part of policy mix together with incentives to increase fertility, raising labour force participation and measures that contain growth in age-related spending (health care and

pensions system reforms). Furthermore, this results only when its fiscal balance is positive, i.e. immigrants contribute to public budgets more than they receive (in form of benefits, services and public goods). This is usually the case when immigrants have a favourable age composition (with a high share of working age people), high employment rates, high income and below average take up of welfare services and benefits. This correlates with a higher level of education, good language proficiency and skills. Other factors also play a role, such as the nature and extent of welfare states or factors such as the fertility rate and roles attributed to women. Positive fiscal effects might be best achieved by implementing selective labour-migration policies. However, the right to free movement within the EU also contributed to positive fiscal balances according to the estimates.

On the contrary, the immigration of refugees is unlikely to produce positive fiscal effects at least in the short and medium term. Two types of empirical arguments underpin the conclusion. The first argument concerns fiscal balance estimates and the second concerns the relevant factors which influence the fiscal outcomes. Regarding these factors with the sole exception of age composition, all the others are contradictors to the mixture required for positive net fiscal contributions. Compared to the natives or any other immigrant groups, refugees have lower employment rates, slow labour market integration and high social consumption. With a few exceptions, refugees are arriving with education levels well below the average, their language ability and skills are

often poor and, of course, they are not selected based on the economic needs of host countries.<sup>15</sup>

Considering the characteristics of refugee populations, it is not surprising that fiscal balance estimates which target this group almost uniformly show negative results. This holds across various countries and methods. Most estimates targeting non-Western immigrants in Western and Northern European countries usually end up showing similar results – this is quite natural since the two populations have many things in common and there is a significant overlap between them.

During the 2014–2017 refugee crisis, asylum seekers from countries like Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Eritrea headed to a few major host countries like Sweden, Austria and Germany.<sup>16</sup> Thus, people from mostly Muslim countries with a higher fertility rate, where it is quite common for women to stay outside the formal labour market and provide care for family dependants have been arriving

<sup>15</sup> In 2014, 22% of the refugees aged 25–64 years who resided in the EU had a high level of education (tertiary or above) what compares to 30% of other non-EU born migrants and 29% of the native-born. On the other hand, 40% had low level of education which is above non-EU born migrants (35%), and especially the native-born (23%). In total, less than half (45%) of refugees in the EU reported having at least an advanced knowledge of the host-country language, compared with two thirds of other non-EU born migrants. (Tanay & Peschner, 2017, pp. 4–5.) Naturally, the asylum applicants arriving in new waves are going to have even worse indicators than the average for the already established refugees.

<sup>16</sup> At the height of the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016 when more than 1.2 million first time asylum seekers were registered in EU countries annually more than half of these asylum seekers were coming from the 4 countries mentioned, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Eritrea (Eurostat, 2019).

to generous EU welfare states.<sup>17</sup> Considering this, the labour market integration of current refugees is probably going to be a slow process, and this is in line with the previous experiences. It might take another 15–20 years until refugee employment rates reach near-average levels (Konle-Seidl & Bolits, 2016, pp. 22–23). It is unrealistic to expect positive fiscal effects during this period. Even if the fiscal balance will later turn to positive numbers, it is questionable whether future positive contributions are going to be large enough to offset previous negative contributions. Under these conditions, refugee migration is unable to help alleviate the ageing related fiscal burden of the host societies; on the contrary, it contributes to its worsening.

In this chapter we concentrated on the fiscal balance of immigration, and special attention was given to the fiscal effects of refugee populations. Immigration, apart from fiscal balance, has widespread economic and non-economic effects on host societies, countries of origin and the migrants themselves, who are not only led to benefits and opportunities but to challenges and problems as well, although these effects were not discussed here. This is not to say that they are less important or that they should not be considered when shaping

<sup>17</sup> Total fertility rate was estimated by the Population Division of the United Nations on average between 2010 and 2015 at 5.26 for Afghanistan, 4.55 for Iraq, 4.4 for Eritrea and 3.1 for Syria while in the case of Western and Northern Europe it varied between the German (1.43) and the French (1.98) level (UN DESA, 2017). The female labour force participation rate in 2018 was estimated at 12% (from female population aged 15+) in Syria, 19% in Iraq, 20% in Afghanistan, and 75% in Eritrea while in Sweden it reached 61% and in Germany 55% according to the International Labour Organization's ILOSTAT database (World Bank, 2019).

public policies. The mere fact that fiscal balance estimates are mostly negative in the case of refugee populations in high income countries is not about questioning the moral and legal obligations to accept refugees and treat them according to the law. In other words, the fiscal effects cannot and should not be the only factor influencing political decisions, public and media attitudes. On the other hand, decision makers, and host societies need to take a realistic approach toward to the most recent waves of refugees. They should be prepared for the problems connected to them, including the likely negative fiscal effects.

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# ⑦ Risk, Uncertainty and the Role of Serendipity in International Student Mobility

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The role that serendipity plays in triggering mobility measures is a scarcely researched topic and often overlooked in the studies of mobility and migration. However, serendipity is considered good luck, chance or a fortuitous event that plays an important part in the mobility of many international students. This chapter represents an in-depth empirical study on the interplay of serendipity in mobility and migration among students who studied in three different international locations (the UK, the Czech Republic and New Zealand). Data originates from research conducted for the author's doctoral thesis (Weibl, 2015). While serendipity is broadly understood as an unplanned occasion, it may occur in the time of pre-departure planning and the preparation period of a particular mobility or migration. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the instances of serendipity within the study trajectories of students and the events which led to them, as well as to assess the likelihood that serendipity triggers or contributes to decisions by individuals to study abroad.

International student mobility ('ISM') is a subset of global mobility and migration. International students can be defined as 'individuals who leave their country or territory of origin and travel to another for the purpose of studying there' (OECD, 2011, p. 319). They 'cross a national border to study or undertake other study related activities, for at least a certain part of a study programme or a certain period of time, in the country

to which they move to' (Kelo, Teichler & Wächter, 2006, p. 211) – in the context of this chapter for the 'purpose of or in the context of tertiary education' (Richters & Teichler, 2006, p. 78) in particular.

The percentage of mobile students persistently represents only 2–3% of the worldwide student enrolments and the largest increase in actual student numbers was recorded from 1975 to 2009, from 0.8 million to 3.7 million students (OECD, 2014). The US is the no. 1 destination of the last two decades, by hosting circa 22% of foreign students from the global pool of mobile students, followed by the UK (12%), Germany (10%), France (9%) and Australia (6%) (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2009).

The length of stay abroad helps to set some basic categories and types of student mobility, similarly to the classification of short- and long-term migration. The chapter uses the term student mobility instead of migration, since all participants considered studying abroad as their major activity at the time they began participation in the research. Nevertheless, some of the student trajectories gained the character of migration, because some students, upon their return home, soon left to work and live abroad or did not return to their home countries at all. A short time-frame and expected return is referred to as mobility, while relocation over one year is usually termed migration (King & Findlay, 2010). At times, study abroad precedes instances of mobility and eventually leads to migration (Williams, Baláz & Kollár, 2004). Newer terms, such as 'international student circulation' (Agarwal et al., 2007, p. 109), have been finding their way into

the discourse of ISM. The concept pays attention to aspects of direction and frequency of the student flow (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). The study itself is rarely the sole motivation to go abroad (Kelo, Teichler & Wächter, 2006). Hence, the lines between mobility and migration and short- and long-term migration are often blurry. Some of the factors influencing the decisions by students to study abroad include more affordable travel, the rise of the information and communications technology and the prevalence of the English language, both in popular culture and in the field of education and science. Also, there are specific policies supporting and encouraging ISM, such as the European Union's (EU) Erasmus+ programmes, or the internationalisation strategies of some governments and/or education institutions. This is because the earnings from cross-border student mobility have been increasing, especially in English speaking countries, which motivates the governments and/or institutions to obtain greater international enrolment (Altbach & Engberg, 2014).

In relation to the time abroad and the choice of study programme, the literature distinguishes between three main types of ISM. The most institutionalised are students for credit mobility, utilising the various short-term bilateral or Erasmus exchanges. The second category is degree, diploma or programme mobility for students who undertake the entire study programme abroad. Thirdly, there are voluntary, spontaneous mobile students or the so-called free movers, who arrange their study by themselves, which can consist of a combination of the previous two categories as well (Carlson, 2011; Gordon & Jallade, 1996;

King et al., 2004; Richters & Teichler, 2006). 'Self-sponsored' (Altbach & Engberg, 2014, p. 11) individuals currently represent the majority of students studying abroad. From the point of view of risk and uncertainty, credit mobility is considered the least risky, because the study programmes are usually established with supportive schemes, such as buddy systems or networks of university clubs, and they often include residence or work packages. At the same time, factors such as individuals' personalities and the vast array of economic, academic, political and sociocultural influences and serendipity infringe on the constellation of study abroad opportunities (Weibl, 2015). However, it is not a common routine for students to factor in serendipity when they weigh the pros and cons of studying abroad. Yet, when the study abroad depends on successful admission and/or securing a scholarship, good luck or calculation of chances and contemplation of some unforeseen elements might cross the individuals' mind in addition to factors such as grades, admission procedures, finances, distance from home and many others.

This chapter aims to identify those instances of serendipity that contributed to international students' decisions to undertake a study abroad and sought to trace serendipity throughout the entire mobility cycle, including their experiences in the host country and return home. The methodological approach relied predominantly on the grounded theory of enquiry, induced with a few available references and definitions of serendipity. The anecdotal evidence and the pilot studies suggested that students were

<sup>1</sup> The research used in this article was supported by the Slovak VEGA grant, Grant/Award: 2/0151/19.

able to sense (detect or recognise) serendipity, especially when it was explained through examples in real life. Since serendipity was assumed to be one of the factors leading to a study abroad, it was positioned within the traditional concept of 'push and pull factors' (Altbach, 1991; Altbach, 1998; Agarwal et al., 2007, pp. 115, 18–19) of mobility. This research also sought to answer the frequent calls to design a more holistic study which integrates various frameworks, perspectives, methodologies and theoretical approaches (King, 2002), as well as calls for qualitative studies with a focus on students' experiences and self-perceptions that echo student voices (Brooks and Waters, 2011; Butcher, Spoonley & Trlin, 2016; Ward, 2001; Ward & Masgoret, 2009).

The chapter turns its attention to the historical conceptualisation of serendipity, which is then applied to the field of international student mobility as one of the factors influencing the decision to study abroad and also more broadly in mobility and migration. The empirical part of the chapter is based on the research of internationally mobile students enrolled at universities in three different locations. The paper offers insight into the experiences of students abroad with a focus on the role of serendipity in their mobility event.

## 1. ROLE OF SERENDIPITY IN MOBILITY AND MIGRATION

Operational definitions of serendipity were developed, partly in conjunction with the concept of risk and uncertainty, and gradually, as the study progressed, based on the responses from the participants. The definitions are operational,

because of the lucidity of the concept and because of the predominantly inductive character of this research. The idea was to gradually probe students with open-ended questions on serendipity and to map whether serendipity reveals itself through other topics, both directly related and non-related, over a longer period of time to allow for comprehension and reflection on this notion. Serendipity within this study was defined as:

- luck and a mix of coincidental events that contributed to a study abroad, such as granting of visa, scholarship and admission;
- occurrence and development of events by chance, in a happy or beneficial way, events which were triggered unexpectedly or unplanned;
- an event that was connected to the mobility and had an unexpected and fortuitous outcome, or without any fortuitous outcome;
- an event that was unexpected and not contemplated;
- risks and uncertainties connected with chance or good fortune.

These operational definitions of serendipity originate from different understandings of this concept and are based on historical reflections on serendipity in the literature. The goal of this research was to study the entire mobility cycle of international students, their pre-departure decision making, experiences abroad and their arrival home, and where it was possible, to detect the interplay of serendipity and mobility. Arguably, seren-

dipity plays an important role in mobility encounters just as there may be interference of serendipity in events which are not mobility or migration related. At the same time, many students prepare for study abroad for a long time, but the misfortune changes their plans and prevents them from travelling abroad. The incentive was to find out to what extent individuals recognised this fact and how they contemplate it. The anecdotal evidences of some international students suggested that a lucky coincidence contributed to their decisions to travel abroad for study purposes and there were few references to serendipity in the literature, including the historical evidences and understandings of serendipity. They themselves helped to form the operational definitions of serendipity used in this study.

There were only a couple of works on serendipity addressing its role in mobility and migration. The first publication, which explicitly mentioned circumstances that triggered an unplanned mobility episode, was by Ackers and Gill, who introduced the idea of serendipity in cases where pre-mobility circumstances did not gravitate toward, nor assumed mobility at all; yet there were circumstances which 'precipitated or triggered an unplanned mobility episode' (Ackers & Gill, 2008, p. 59). The case was serendipitous since it was unforeseeable, unpredictable and unplanned and, importantly, it triggered a mobility action. Ackers and Gill argued that 'serendipity or chance plays a critical role in understanding the migratory process' (Ackers & Gill, 2008, p. 59) and they described the case of a PhD student, who as the result of unexpected events, completed her degree in Germany. An-

other publication mentioned the consequences of serendipity as being fortuitous events, such as mobility, employment and meeting a spouse (Williams, Chaban & Holland, 2008) or in the case of diaspora networks (Solimano, 2008) and migration of highly skilled individuals (Habti & Elo, 2019). Coleman and Chafer mentioned the socialisation of international students abroad as being 'in fact highly serendipitous' (Coleman & Chafer, 2011, p. 80). In this context, mobility, which sometimes leads to migration, was both the consequence of timing (Abbott, 2001) and/or a sequence of events (Carlson, 2011).

Historically, the initial story of serendipity dates back to 1754 by Horace Walpole, and also concerned mobility. It described the travels of 'The three Princes of Serendip' (sic), who made discoveries by sagacity and accidents, and these were never in quest of (Roberts, 1989). Sagacity (the process of planning and preparation) referred to the process of planning, preparation and information gathering, as well as to preparedness and decisiveness, and making a decision or taking a chance, at the right time when it presented itself. Therefore, the elements such as the informed consent and preparedness connect serendipity with the notion of risk and uncertainty and mobility, because both elements are taken into consideration in the case of mobility event, for example, as push and pull factors of mobility.

The initial story of serendipity carried a significant reference to mobility and migration. Firstly, there was the analogy of the travellers, which directly embodies

the notion of mobility. Secondly, discoveries by accident and sagacity were the focal points of the story, through which the concept of serendipity gained a broader definition. By extension, the discoveries of the three princes can be thought of as the experiences of international students. Serendipity was understood as happy or lucky accidents as well as sagacity, which was captured also through Pasteur's expression of 'fortune favours the prepared mind' (Pasteur, 2014). At the same time, happy or lucky accidents can refer to the 'not-prepared mind', yet finding 'things they were not in quest of' (Roberts, 1989, p. ix), which is similar to the very first case of serendipity in the mobility literature by Ackers & Gill (2008). The question is whether and how can good luck be attracted, to which Virgil seems to offer and answer by stating that 'audaces fortuna iuvat' (Maro, 2014), meaning that 'fortune favours the bold.'

Another stimulating thought of serendipity is that of scientific research, as serendipity was historically, but not exclusively historically, connected to scientific discoveries, such as happy accidents or chance (Maro, 2014). They were detrimental to furthering science in many disciplines, for example, in anthropology, history, literature, physics, political science, history, literature and astronomy (Cambridge, 2014; Merton & Barber, 2004). These explain the existence of some popular meanings of serendipity, such as: good luck, lucky chance and fortuitous (unplanned) events. Merton and Barber validated the notion of serendipity for sociological theory, as they explained that 'fruitful empirical research not only tests

theoretically derived hypotheses, it also generates new hypotheses. This might be called the 'serendipity' component in research, i.e., the discovery by chance or sagacity, of valid results which were not sought for' (Merton & Barber, 2004, p. 141). Empirical research tests hypotheses driven by theories, but at the same time, new hypotheses are generated and new valid results are discovered which were not sought (Merton & Barber, 2004). This logic of enquiry is exercised when tracing the role of serendipity in mobility within this study, by employing the grounded theory approach to research.

The importance of studying the role of serendipity in mobility is to further the knowledge and understanding of this phenomenon, especially since only a handful of works referred to the notion of serendipity, but without any deeper exclamation. An extensive set of questionnaires and interviews helped to embed serendipity within the concept of the push and pull factor of mobility and experiences abroad, with a focus on employability, future mobility aspirations of students, development of intercultural competence, and knowledge transfer.

2. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY

The field of international student mobility currently lacks an all-encompassing theory (King, Skeldon & Vullnetari, 2008), and there are frequent calls for an interdisciplinary approach to student mobility (Brooks & Waters, 2011; King, 2002; OECD, 2000). Some of the concepts employed in the chapter are new typologies of European migration (King, 2002) or one of the most recent concepts that considers risk

and uncertainty with regard to mobility (Williams & Baláž, 2012). Other theoretical concepts suitable for analysis of ISM, however, without any or scarce mention of serendipity in connection with student mobility, are theories of the 'push and pull' factors of mobility (Creswell, 1993; Wang, 2010), 'do-it-yourself biography' (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002), transnationalism (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998; Vertovec, 2002), social capital (Bourdieu, 2012) with its more recent derivatives, such as total human capital (Williams & Baláž, 2005), geographical mobility capital (Leung, 2012), and transnational capital and transnational identity capital (Kim, 2010). The concepts of the new typologies of European migration, the 'push and pull' factors of mobility and the notions of risk and uncertainties were the most utilised in this study, because they helped to conceptualise serendipity as one of the contributing factors of mobility. The concept of risk and uncertainty then additionally helped to characterise serendipity more in depth. The remaining theoretical underpinnings of ISM were not used as analytical tools in this re-

search, but were mentioned to showcase the breadth of the concepts on ISM and their perspective on serendipity for future research.

2.1. New typologies of European migration

According to King (2002), there are seven typologies which identify some of the main motivations for migration (Table 1). Even though the concept states 'European', this concept has a worldwide implication too. This chapter focuses on mobility rather than migration and it is evident from the individual categories that King's use of migration is arguably applicable to ISM, since the entire mobility cycle of students often includes some typologies of migration. Despite the fact that King's concept is outdated, it appears to be timely in capturing the essences of the contemporary ISM, which can often be very individual and fluid, both planned and ad hoc, as well as serendipitous and transnational. The left column in Table 1 is the ascribed typology, and the right column describes the term.

Table 1 Seven new European typologies of migration

1. The migrations of crises	Refuge, irregular and 'illegal' migrations
2. The 'sisters are doing it for themselves'	Growth in independent female migration
3. The playing the global labour market	Skilled and professional migrants
4. The here and there and back and forth	Shuttle migration
5. The student migrations	From the year abroad to the 'Big OE'
6. The love migration	The transnationalisation of intimacy
7. The heliotropes and rural idyllists	Migrations of environmental preference

Source: King (2002).



Student migration is itself an independent category, which suggests the increased popularity of student mobility at the time of this concepts' development. King's typologies intertwine especially because the motivations for studying abroad and the consequent experiences of staying abroad are characterised by the combination of the typologies' description. Another fact is that boundaries between these typologies blur and further fragment. When it comes to serendipity, arguably it is present in all seven typologies of migration, particularly in the fifth one – student migration – and, for instance, the third and sixth one, as some literature which mentioned serendipity highlights its role in employment (Habti & Elo, 2019) and in forming relationships (Williams, Chaban & Holland, 2011). It is also present in the fourth typology, which connects serendipity with diaspora networks (Solimano, 2008).

## 2.2. Risk and uncertainty

Some of the most recent research on migration pioneers the concept of risk and uncertainty in connection with knowledge (Williams & Baláž, 2008, 2012). This concept combines the views of economics and sociology. The main idea is that any migration is informed and informs on the perception of risk and uncertainty. It is applicable to both migrants and non-migrants. In a way, migration or mobility can be considered a form of knowledge that has the ability to decrease the risk and/or uncertainty of future migration and mobility (Alwang, Siegel & Jorgensen, 2001). Risk and uncertainty differ in that uncertainty can be considered a uniformed risk and when it comes to mobility, it is disposed

more to uncertainty than risk (Williams & Baláž, 2008, 2012). Thus, serendipity falls under the realm of uncertainty, because it refers to the unknown in the context of mobility. This is because risk is taken on circumstances which are known, and outcomes that can be understood in terms of probabilities, while uncertainty describes the imperfect knowledge of the situation and the unpredictability of the nature of risk, for example, the typology of migrations of crises.

There are a couple of similarities between uncertainty and serendipity, for example, they both can have positive and negative mobility effects. However, serendipity usually refers to a lucky coincidence and chance. There is also a link between the European typologies of migration and risk and uncertainty through the concept of edgeworker (Williams & Baláž, 2012). These can be matched with the typology of student migration and/or the migration of crises, because the edgeworker characterises the type of migrant (students and backpackers) who seek adventure. Such individuals consider risk positively.

It is argued that serendipity should be included as one of the factors leading and influencing student mobility (Weibl, 2015), and could typify a new mobility category termed, for example, as serendipitous travellers. Second, serendipity can act both as push and pull factors of mobility depending on the decisive substance factored in by students, for example, admission to university paired with a full tuition and living expenses scholarships. Thirdly, as an unknown variable, serendipity is logically closest to the notion of uncertainty, since risk is a known variable one

can calculate with. While the unknown part would classify serendipity as uncertainty, when it strikes it can dash from the unknown and bypass the category of risk.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was guided by the calls for complete, comparative, empirical, large-scale, longitudinal and regular research in existing literature on student mobility (Chaban et al., 2011; Daly, 2007; King & Ruiz-Gelices, 2003; King et al., 2008; Rizvi et al., 2010), in order to obtain credible data worth of examination. This study also considered it important to aim for a more holistic approach (Deardorff, 2014) and to amplify student voices (Gargano, 2009; Haan & Sherry, 2012) and trigger the participants' self-perceptions of their experiences (Brooks & Waters, 2011). This study was designed to give a qualitative account on the understanding of the role of serendipity in student mobility, ideally capturing the whole mobility cycle of students (pre-departure, in-country experience, return home). Given the limited conceptualisation of serendipity, methodology of the grounded theory was employed in this case, similarly to the study of foreign students' learning in the UK, which helped to enhance the personal narratives of the participants (Bakar, 2015). This is because it is chiefly inductive in its nature, which suits the investigative and exploratory task and because it favours qualitative method with its progressive categorisation of meanings, identification of links and relationships and their further integration (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss argued for the method, which advocated the move from the context of the data to development of specific theoreti-

cal frameworks (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) that aids the recognition of similarities and differences and their relations (Dey, 1999). At the same time, deductive methods gathered the available historical and contemporary references of serendipity.

Both data collection and data analysis followed the logic of grounded theory, as each of its methodological tools was developed reflecting on the results of the previous empirical data using preliminary codes and nascent categories (Craemer & Burrows, 2012; Creswell, 2003; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Suddaby, 2006; Charmaz & Henwood, 2008).

This was followed by constant comparisons and references to the data, resulting in sampling and categorisations of various groups (Creswell, 2003) through a logical-deductive and interpretative process, with highly creative input (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). It also requires some amount of luck and is suitable for research that explains and predicts behaviour (Suddaby, 2006). The method of data gathering consisted of anonymous on-line surveys, which targeted first-time abroad international students, i.e. first-time students in the host country. This was followed by in-depth, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with students who indicated in the anonymous survey that they would like to continue their studies. The interviews were followed by 12 on-line diary type surveys, semi-structured Skype interviews and a final email survey, predominantly with open-ended questions and distributed to students upon their arrival home; the last three methods were the results of students' preferences chosen during the semi-structured interviews.<sup>2</sup>

The comparative research engaged 563 international students (anonymous on-line survey) who studied at universities in three destinations from three countries – New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic (see Table 2), of which 90 students agreed to be interviewed. Overall, 39 students of those 90 completed the whole study. The columns in Table 2 refer to the individual research stages of this study in the sequence they were conducted.<sup>3</sup>

The multiple stages of the data collection enhanced the qualitative analysis, especially the comprehension, interpretation and understanding, because it allowed reflection on collected results, and which in turn helped develop each next step of inquiry.

The choice of the three geographical locations was partly given and to some degree serendipitous. The recruitment of research participants was initially designed for the University of Canterbury, then to universities in New Zealand, but was inevitably demarked by some unforeseen events, such as the two major earthquakes in Christchurch. This immediately infringed on the number

<sup>2</sup> In order to enhance the participation rate in this study, the researcher discussed the planned methods of inquiry and the final version rests on a compromise between the potential participants and the researcher, where participants could choose from one of the methods (online survey, diary entries, final email survey).

<sup>3</sup> In the case of New Zealand, there were 302 responses. The international students originated from 60 different countries. In the case of the United Kingdom, there were 142 respondents in the anonymous survey of which 131 were completed, and the international students originated from 42 different countries. In the case of the Czech Republic, there were 106 respondents from 39 countries.

of participants, especially because the second earthquake, which was deadly, initiated an exodus of international students from the Canterbury region, which is home to two universities (Lincoln and UC). A decision was made to extend the study to international students at all NZ universities, which proved to be challenging in terms of getting access to students, even in terms of having the survey link circulated, presumably due to the competitive environment in terms of international student intake.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS<sup>4</sup>

Serendipity interfered and influenced the mobility events of individuals regardless of factors such as students' personality types or chosen length of study. Risks seemed to be considered by students often, just as uncertainties, prior to embarking on the journey to study abroad. Hence, the quest for the role of serendipity in ISM required in-depth examination and reflection over time. Interestingly, while there is a common understanding of the concept of serendipity, it became an elusive and hard to grasp concept by students at early stages of their study abroad. It was mostly towards the end of their mobility or upon their return home after reflection and comprehension of their experiences when they confidently pinpointed whether serendipity played a role leading to or in their mobility.

<sup>4</sup> Names of the participants are pseudonyms; real names if the respondent wished to use own name; and the third option was to use the term 'anonymous\_no\_contry code'; study destination refers to NZ = New Zealand, UK = the United Kingdom, and CZ = the Czech Republic.

Table 2 Response rates of international students

Universities	Anonym	Inter.	On-line diary-type surveys												Skype	Email
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
University of Canterbury	127	19	17	8	13	11	9	8	5	7	6	6	3	3	3	3
Auckland University of Technology	106	19	18	15	15	15	14	14	14	14	13	13	12	12	12	10
Lincoln University	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
University of Otago	16	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
Victoria University of Wellington	28	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
University of Auckland	22	3	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Massey University	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
University of Oxford	131	24	19	16	15	14	14	14	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	11
Charles University	106	16	15	9	12	12	11	14	13	12	11	12	9	11	12	9
Total	563	90	81	58	66	60	55	57	51	52	49	50	42	44	46	39

Legend: Anonym = anonymous on-line surveys; Inter. = face-to-face semi-structured interview; 1–12 = twelve on-line diary-type surveys; Skype = semi-structured interviews via Skype, Email = survey of open-ended questions via email.  
Source: Weibl (2015).

4.1. Risk and uncertainty – perceptions of international students

The students were asked whether they were aware of any risks regarding their study destination and whether they were uncertain about anything. The inquiry was based on open-ended questions, as well as on multiple choice questions where the list of perceived risks and uncertainties was adopted from (Williams & Baláž, 2012).

The data shows students' perceived differing degrees of importance regarding literature (Williams & Baláž, 2012). The findings show that the most commonly cited concerns of risk and uncertainty were: (loss of) employment because of leaving to study abroad; perception of crime/terrorism in the host country – study destination; possible political unrest in the host country; health concerns in terms of reliance of the healthcare services abroad; poor hygiene – perceived or assumed

issues concerning the state of hygiene; and in the case of New Zealand, weakening ties with family and friends, which is usually the case because New Zealand is geographically isolated, unless students are from neighbouring Australia or the Pacific Islands. Many students mentioned that the geographical proximity of Oxford and Prague to their home countries lessened their concerns when they were weighing the factors influencing their decision to study there. Students were the least concerned about the different climate or weather, local customs or religion, and natural disasters, which was an interesting finding with respect to New Zealand because of the two major earthquakes the South Island suffered in September 2010 and February 2011.

#### 4.2. Risk and uncertainty – perceptions of international students – pre-departure

The following part considers students' reflections on risk and uncertainty retrospectively from the times of their pre-departure and then their perceptions of risk and uncertainty during their stay abroad. In all three study destinations, there was a similar proportion of students, usually one third to one quarter, without any encounters of mobility related concerns of risk or uncertainty. In one case, a student's initial holiday in New Zealand by chance turned into a PhD study, which she later considered serendipitous. *'It was a leap of faith, not a risk'*, another student stated on this account (Ghislaine, NZ). On the other hand, Raj (NZ) believed in thorough preparation, not chance: *'I don't believe in formative opinions before I go to a place. I didn't think there was an element of risk and I felt no uncertainty and had planned*

*and expected to move abroad for my PhD for years (virtually before I even started my BSc), the only question was where.'* On the contrary, Jeff (NZ) represented a risk taker or edgeworker as he stated: *'I enjoy taking risks but had absolutely no doubt as to the fact that going overseas to study was the best decision I made,'* which characterises the concept of edgeworker.

The findings were also confirmed by literature, which emphasised a strong link between previous and institution organised mobility and the likelihood of future mobility (King, Findlay & Ahrens, 2010). For example, *'no risk; I had to go on exchange as part of my undergraduate degree, and the decision to stay felt right'* (Benoit, UK) and *'no, not much risk involved as it is part of an organised programme'* (Carlos, CZ). Risk and uncertainty were by most students perceived in a cluster or intertwined; for example, Eric (NZ) had several concerns: *'I was never sure whether or not I would be able to 'fit in' socially; would I be able to be financially responsible and whether or not I would have the willpower to work hard academically. I didn't know anyone in New Zealand, and there was always the risk that my chosen field of study was actually not the one that was suitable for me.'*

Some of the students' testimonies identified a number of categories, which were not captured at the time of research by the concept of risk and uncertainty, such as: study (assignments, supervisors, exams, content of study, returning to study from professional lives, style of education, degree recognition); sense of right decision; living alone far away from home; unspecified/general worries; and the previous mobility experience.

#### 4.3. Risk and uncertainty versus serendipity

Data reflect a close relationship between risk, uncertainty and serendipity; for example, Cesco (NZ) said: *'I came to New Zealand with neither a student visa nor a PhD position available, so I was relying on a bit of luck', 'the project I started my PhD on – which ended up not being good fortune and was subsequently switched, but now it's great, so no problems;'* represent the turning of good fortune into a less fortunate situation, and then back to good fortune. In the case of Leslie (NZ): *'Looking back, the only certainty that I had was that I wanted to research squid, everything else was up to chance.'* Similarly, Heather (NZ) declared: *'I did not leave any financial aspect of my stay up to chance or good fortune, but I left my fate in terms of earthquakes up to chance or good fortune.'* It needs to be explained that New Zealand was hit by two major earthquakes at the start of the data collection in 2010 and 2011, which in the second occasion cost the lives of civilians, and in both occasions diminished the number of international students' enrolments at the University of Canterbury (Campbell, 2016; Harris, 2018).

Raj (NZ) offered a comprehensive explanation with regard to risk: *'It is fair to say for me I did leave a lot to chance. Personally, I have always found that random events or chance decisions (which for me is something that occurs out of unnatural circumstances, unexpected meetings etc.) have always worked positively in my favour, but what I cannot produce is chance. That is a random event. If it happens, I will convert that chance into something positive for me*

*through effective communication. The chance I cannot produce, but the chance I get I can convert. Chance: random. Conversion was due to communication.'* Raj's testimony was as close to serendipity as it gets without spelling out the word serendipity; however, when asked for the very first time about serendipity directly, he recorded: *'I think me being an Indian, and people in my country having the pre-empted tendency to use 'divine disposition' and 'coincidence' has turned me off that aspect of it. Even if it were a coincidence, I would not have noticed it: because I am averse to it.'* This statement stresses two points. First, that serendipity can have different cultural connotations, which should be a subject of future study. Second, when it comes to study of such elusive concepts as serendipity as well as experiences of mobility, there is a need for a thorough in-depth and longitudinal approach in order to get as close to the perception of the participants as possible.

#### 4.4. Serendipity – perceptions of international students

Students were asked on several occasions whether their pre-departure and experiences abroad contained an element of serendipity. This was done using both positive and negative examples of serendipity, single event and/or a sequence of incidents or co-incidents, serendipity in terms of luck and the mix of coincidental events with open-ended questions, with and without any definitions or examples of what is considered serendipity in order to map the understanding and triangulate the methods of inquiry on the micro-scale and be in compliance with the grounded theory of enquiry.



According to the responses, when reflecting back on their half year into their mobility experience, 19 out of 39 international students at New Zealand universities encountered serendipity in their mobility experience and 18 did not. In the case of Oxford, 13 out of 15 students remembered some serendipitous circumstances leading to their study abroad, and two students did not at all. As for the students at Charles University, the ratio was 50/50 with 12 students on both sides. The most frequent references were unexpected scholarships (6 times) – only in the case of NZ universities and Oxford (4 times). Scholarship was followed by students' personal encounters (falling in love, finding partners or friends, family present or accompanied students while abroad – these are reminiscent of at least one European typology of migration), which can be considered the most serendipitous events – five times in the case of NZ, four times at Oxford and three times at Charles. The remaining serendipitous experiences concerned: admission, visa, receiving crucial information on a study programme, or being in the right place at the right time and with the right and/or prepared state of mind, as suggested by the three Prices of Serendip.

Some of the findings reflect a connection between serendipity and students' expectations with regard to their mobility event or study abroad. Simon (CZ) said that he *'generally had the mindset that most issues would be able to get solved on the spot (...) accordingly, most uncertainties were left to good fortune.'* Similarly, Tom (NZ) *'didn't know what to expect, (so) most things were unexpected.'* Matt (UK) experienced a couple of serendipitous events: *'I didn't go into it with a tonne of expectations before, because I didn't know what to expect (...)*

*I was surprised with the traditions and quirks of the place (...) but nothing particularly happened to me otherwise.'* These could be the arguments for and against the literature that suggested a prepared mind. On the other hand, the 'lesser' prepared mind experienced several occasions of serendipity as well, on more occasions than the examples listed above.

A question comes to mind and some students spelled it out, whether the very same event may classify as being or not being serendipitous to different people. A more interesting question then is whether or what serendipitous events would have happened to students if they had enrolled elsewhere or stayed at home. Emma (UK) explained: *'I made friends but I don't see how that would have been different had I stayed in my home country'* and a bit more sure was Jed (UK) who thought that *'got to know a few people which results in such a fruitful friendship even after they have left the UK. I am also fully aware that this could have happened elsewhere.'* On the other hand, Benjamin (UK) considered any *'friendship always somehow unexpected.'* In respect to all three examples, the experiences would have been different, perhaps with or without any serendipity involved, because different locations come with a different set of people and circumstances.

Turning to the one-off versus a sequence of fortuitous events, Debbie (UK) experienced a *'mix of coincidental events'* and Anna (UK) considered *'most of my moves to new places were combined with much luck. You have to organise a lot, but it also has to work out really smoothly, which is luck,'* which is reminiscent that fortune favours the prepared mind.

Awareness of lucky events leading to a graduate programme, which was almost cancelled for Jess (NZ), she believed that this experience *'encouraged me not to pursue further education in marine ecology, but pursue my PhD study in a different specialisation'*. On the other hand, students had lucky encounters meeting their supervisors. However, when it came to personal encounters, most students mentioned meeting their partners abroad. For example, Michael (UK) found serendipitous *'the fact that after being accepted to the same college and same degree course, one of my very good friends also became my girlfriend'*. Seven research participants found their spouses while studying abroad in response to the question of a lucky and positive coincidence. Moreover, Benjamin (UK) found his spouse at the Royal Wedding ceremony and Anna's (UK) relationship determined her multiple future mobility endeavours, from the UK, her being German, to New Zealand, then back to Germany, and then France being the latest. On the contrary, Imko (NZ) believed that his mobility event *'ruined' his relationship, but in the long run, this led to an improvement of 'general skills with women from different cultures'*. Finally, life-threatening situations were experienced by both, Ghislaine (NZ) and Noelani (NZ), one escaped deliberate food poisoning, the other a knife attack.

There were some interesting findings at the final stage of this research, based on Skype interviews and the final survey emailed to the participants. Many of them were reached at the end of their student mobility cycle and reintegration home. Some of them returned home and were in the process of job searching, others enrolled in the next level of studying abroad

(Imko, NZ). Several students, shortly upon their arrival home, moved away and found new homes that finally felt like home, for example, Noelani (NZ). Many students *'grew up'*, became more mature and self-confident and got to know themselves better thanks to their foreign study experience. From this end, students confirmed that their perceptions of risks and uncertainties as barriers to mobility diminished or disappeared with more experience abroad. The most positive outcomes of the overseas experience as opposed to the time before studying abroad, were increased independence and self-reliance as well as possible future mobility or migration aspirations for employment.

In addition, this research confirmed the calls of ISM literature for studies stretching to a longer period of time because, in this case, it helped to obtain meaningful information and gradually helped to gain trust of the participants. This was then often rewarded in more comprehensive data, which offered greater insight into students' negotiations of experiences abroad. In some cases, they testified that their involvement in the study and its longer time span turned out to be beneficial to the participants, because it served them as a tool of self-reflection. For some students, it created the sense that somebody cares about their feelings and that universities are interested in their experiences. This was sometimes also a reason to participate in this study, namely to help improve the well-being of international students. In effect, the interest in their stories was also very helpful to them at moments of homesickness and loneliness, which is something the recruitment (agencies, study fairs, the international offices) and academics could bear in mind.



## CONCLUSION

The records of serendipity in human history and science, in particular scientific discoveries, are abundant. There is a scarcity of serendipity-focused research in the field of mobility and migration. Factors influencing the decision to undertake a study abroad vary according to time, as their constellations may be perceived differently in the pre-departure period in contrast to the retrospective reflection (Weibl, 2015). Serendipity, for all its unpredictability, can be connected with the notions of risk and uncertainty, the perceptions of which have an affect on students' decisions to embark on study abroad endeavours (Baláz, 2009; Weibl, 2015).

The study revealed that serendipitous events caused and/or contributed to the mobility events of many international students and, in some cases, serendipity turned out to be very common and deeply culturally embedded. Furthermore, in line with the literature, this study confirmed the need for a thorough, in-depth and longitudinal approach to study the mobility of students, to enable collection of comprehensive data and to enhance the understanding of student experiences. It would be valuable to conduct more studies on serendipity in student mobility in order to further test this notion as a factor of student mobility. Another contribution to the development of this concept would be its thorough examination among non-mobile students, for a start, whether these students ever contemplated studying abroad and if why it did not materialise. Similarly, greater scrutiny of individual serendipitous accounts could be executed through focus groups, for example, to identify whether the individual serendipity events of stu-

dents would be perceived as serendipitous also by other people.

Serendipity helped to prove that student mobility often represents a life-changing experience, perhaps due to the wealth of experiences, their diversity, new inspirations or instances of learning. Hence, it is debatable whether one encounters serendipity or only an abundance of differences or awakening of senses. Nevertheless, several students declared serendipitous experiences without any prior expectations, resulting in profound changes in their perceptions and value systems.

The research also identified several new typologies of student migration; one could be coined the serendipitous student, traveller and or the individual that plays out the chances offered by circumstances. There were also a number of new risks and uncertainties identified by the research, most of them concern learning and study performances; however, they were often intertwined with a lack of self-confidence and self-doubt

Serendipity is a complex concept and is contrary to a mere anecdotal understanding of it being pure good luck. Subjective insights of the participants and unravelling their individual stories was fundamental for obtaining data, and the same was true for the grounded theory approach combined with some theoretical knowledge produced results. The challenging issue was to retain the number of participants over a longer period of time.

Finally, the prepared mind can help to recognise the opportunities and chances presented to the individuals better than the unprepared mind – that is sagacity,

as explained in the work of the Princes of Serendip. Yet, there were things that happened out of the blue without any preparation. Further research should focus on different types and intensity of serendipity. This is especially so, because there were well-prepared mobility events that were halted by bad luck or misfortune which is serendipity too, because it was unforeseen.

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# About the Authors



● **Rafael Ahlskog**

Department of Government,  
Uppsala University,  
Box 514, 751 20 Uppsala, Sweden  
rafael.ahlskog@statsvet.uu.se

**RAFAEL AHLKOG** is Assistant Professor in political science at the Department of Government, Uppsala University. His research has centred on fields as disparate as vaccination policy, altruism, fiscal impacts of migration, and political behaviour genetics. His recent publications include a report prepared within the REMINDER project *Fiscal effects of intra-EEA migration* (Nyman & Ahlskog, 2018) or *Essays on the collective action dilemma of vaccination* (Ahlskog, 2017).

● **Martina Bolečeková**

Matej Bel University, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations,  
Kuzmányho 1, 974 01, Banská Bystrica,  
Slovak Republic  
martina.bolecekova@umb.sk

**MARTINA BOLEČEKOVÁ** holds a degree in International Relations from the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. Currently, she is an Assistant Lecturer at the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy. In her teaching and research activities she focuses on international migration and international development issues. Since 2008, she has been lecturing the course on international migration and migration policy and supervising numerous students' final theses on this topic. She is the author and co-author of several publications on migration, such as monography *The Non-Profit Response to the Migration Crisis: Systems-Theoretic Reflections on the Austrian and Slovak Experiences* (Valentinov, Bolečeková & Vaceková, 2017) published

in Springer or the articles *Migration as a Political and Public Phenomenon: the case of the Slovak Republic* (Bolečeková & Olejárová, 2017) or *Migration Policy Instruments: The Case of the Slovak Republic* (Bolečeková & Olejárová, 2018).

● **Martina Chrančoková**

Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences,  
Šancová 56, 811 05 Bratislava,  
Slovak Republic  
martina.chrancokova@gmail.com

**MARTINA CHRANČOKOVÁ** is a researcher at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of Forecasting – Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences. She previously worked on the international YMOBILITY Project (part of the Horizon 2020 Project) and two national VEGA projects. Her VEGA projects 2/0117/15 and 2/0010/14 were entitled 'Variations of Corporativism and its Effect on Economic Outcomes and Outputs in Middle and Eastern Europe' and 'Institutional and Technological Change in the Context of the European Challenges'. She is currently working on national VEGA project 2/0002/18 entitled 'Institutional Framework of Slovakia's Economic Development in the New Phase of Globalisation' and another APVV-17-0141 project entitled 'Analysis of Barriers in Access to Employment for Marginalised Groups of Population: Selected Regions of Slovakia from Socio-Economic, Geographic and Socio-Anthropological Perspectives'. Her research interests involve qualitative methods and the migration of Slovaks, their experiences and tacit knowledge abroad. Prior to her current academic post, she studied Statistical Methods in Economics at the University of Economics in Bratislava between 2010–2012 and later obtained her Ph.D. in 2016 in Spatial Planning at the Institute

of Management of the Slovak University of Technology. Her recent bibliography includes the articles *Connectivity as a Facilitator of Intra-European Student Migration* (Baláž, Williams & Chrančoková, 2018), *Building and Transferring Human Capital Via Migration* (Karasová, Baláž & Chrančoková, 2018) or *Risk Attitudes in International Travel and Migration by Young Europeans* (Baláž, Chrančoková & Karasová, 2018).

● **Zsolt Gál**

Department of Politology, Faculty of Art,  
Comenius University,  
Gondova 2, 814 99 Bratislava,  
Slovak Republic  
zsolt.gal@uniba.sk

**ZSOLT GÁL** is assistant professor at the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. He holds an MA degree in Political Science from this department and a PhD degree in Economics from Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary. His research interests include public finances, economic aspects of European integration, economic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe and international migration. Zsolt teaches several courses in these fields at Comenius University. He is the author of the book *The 2007–2009 Financial Crisis. What Went Wrong and What Went Different?* (2011) and numerous other publications. His recent publications include chapters analysing the impact of various EU crises on the political and economic development in Slovakia, for example, *Slovakia farewell to a passive policy-taker role?* (2018) written in co-authorship with Darina Malová and published in 2018 in Routledge, or *Slovakia's Elite: Between Populism and Compliance with EU Elites* (2016), written in co-authorship Soňa Szomolányi.

● **Miroslava Hlinčíková**

Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology, Slovak Academy of Sciences,  
Klemensova 19, 813 64 Bratislava,  
Slovak Republic  
miroslava.hlincikova@savba.sk

**MIROSLAVA HLINČIKOVÁ** works as a researcher at the Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, where she received a PhD in 2013. She has been member of various research teams regarding different minority issues: disadvantaged groups in the society (migrants, minorities, and women), social exclusion, equal opportunities, civic participation, integration, human rights and diversity in urban environment. She has cooperated as an analyst at the Institute for Public Affairs; Citizen, Democracy and Responsibility and Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture. She is the author and co-author of several monographs and studies, such as *Integrating People with International Protection in Slovakia: Seeking the Starting Points*; *Migrants in the City: Present and (Not) Visible and Beyond the Borders of Science? Applied Anthropology in Society*.

● **Pär Nyman**

Department of Government,  
Uppsala University,  
Box 514, 751 20 Uppsala, Sweden  
par.nyman@statsvet.uu.se

**PÄR NYMAN** is a researcher at the Department of Government at Uppsala University. His research focuses on fiscal policy, migration and political behaviour. Before his career in academia, he worked as an economist at the Swedish Fiscal Policy Council. His most recent and relevant publications include his doctoral thesis *Austerity Politics: Is the Electorate Responsible?*



(Nyman, 2016), or a report for the European Commission prepared under the REMINDER project within the Horizon 2020 Fiscal effects of intra-EEA (Nyman & Ahlskog, 2018).

● **Barbora Olejárová**

Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic,  
Kuzmányho 8, Bratislava, Slovak Republic  
olejarovab@imafex.sk

**BARBORA OLEJÁROVÁ** is an analyst at the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic. She holds a PhD degree in international relations from the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, Matej Bel University (Slovakia), having graduated with a thesis focused on the migration policy and geopolitics of Turkey. Her geographical expertise includes the Middle Eastern region and the Transatlantic sphere. She further specialised in defence and security policies, non-military security threats and international migration in the Eastern Mediterranean. Prior to her current position at the Ministry of Defence, she worked as a Conference Project Coordinator at the Globsec Academy Centre. She was a visiting researcher at the Department of Sociology, University of Vienna (2016), and Trinity College, Dublin (2017). Ms. Olejárová is a former trainee at the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia (2014) and was active on behalf of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin (2014), too. She also spent some time travelling China (2012) during her early career and studies, while working for the non-governmental sector to raise cultural and language awareness of the local population. Her latest policy publications focus on security concerns over third-country migration in the EU, Turkish migration policy and coercive-engineered migration waves. She recently co-authored the books *Panorama*

*of Global Security Environment 2017–2018* (Stratpol, 2018) and *Migration Policy in Crisis* (TP London, 2018).

● **Mădălina Rogoz**

International Centre for Migration Policy Development,  
Gonzagagasse 1, 1010 Vienna, Austria  
Madalina.Rogoz@icmpd.org

**MĂDĂLINA ROGOZ** is a research Officer at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Vienna (ICMPD) with a decade of experience in conducting research in the field of migration policies. At ICMPD she has been involved in several collaborative projects on migrant integration, migration data collection, anti-trafficking policies and, more recently, care work mobility. She has been conducting extensive research on trafficking in human beings and related areas, with a particular focus on data collection and the relevance of addressing demand in the context of trafficking. She was the main researcher in the ICMPD-led FP7 project 'Addressing Demand in Anti-Trafficking Efforts and Policies' (DemandAT). Mădălina was also involved in one of the first efforts to assess the extent of trafficking in Europe, concluded with the first in-depth analysis of 17 national anti-trafficking data collection systems. Her research interests range from traditional topics in the area of migration – such as integration policies and migrant rights – to challenges in policy-driven migration research. As an IMISCOE member, she co-organised a series of workshops on reflective dynamics of knowledge transfer in migration research. Her recent publications include *The Perceived Impacts of Care Mobility on Sending Countries and Institutional Responses: Healthcare, Long-Term Care and Education in Romania*

*and Slovakia* (2018), published by ICMPD and written in co-authorship with Martina Sekulová.

● **Martina Sekulová**

Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology, Slovak Academy of Sciences,  
Klemensova 19, 813 64 Bratislava, Slovakia  
martina.sekulova@savba.sk

**MARTINA SEKULOVÁ** is an anthropologist with more than a decade of experience in migration research, specialising in care work migration, gender issues, integration and human rights. She has been involved in national and international cooperative research projects. Martina currently works as a scientific researcher at the Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and is a long-standing collaborator of the academia and non-governmental organisations such as Institute for Public Affairs from Bratislava, Open Society Institute in Bratislava, Citizen, Democracy and Responsibility in Bratislava, Migration Policy Group in Brussels (MIPEX and European Web Site on Integration), and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Vienna. Her recent publications include the monography *Crossborder Care: Lessons from Central Europe* (2019), published by Palgrave Macmillan from New York in co-authorship with Miloslav Bahna, on circular migration of care workers, or a research report on the effects of care mobility and institutional policy responses on countries of origin *The Perceived Impacts of Care Mobility on Sending Countries and Institutional Responses: Healthcare, Long-Term Care and Education in Romania and Slovakia* (2018), published by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Vienna and written in co-authorship with Mădălina Rogoz.

● **Michal Smrek**

Department of Government,  
Uppsala University,  
Box 514, 751 20 Uppsala, Sweden  
michal.smrek@statsvet.uu.se

**MICHAL SMREK** is a researcher at the Department of Government, Uppsala University, where he obtained his PhD in Political Science in May 2019. His research focuses on political parties and their candidate selection practices, political candidates and their career longevity.

● **Gabriel Weibl**

Institute for Forecasting, Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences, Slovak Academy of Sciences,  
Šancová 56, 811 05 Bratislava,  
Slovak Republic  
proggawe@savba.sk

**GABRIEL WEIBL** has worked at the CSPS SAS since 2017 and is currently engaged in the ENLIVEN – Horizont 2020 project focusing on adult education and lifelong learning. His research interests include internationalisation of higher education and international student mobility with the focus on the idea of cosmopolitanism, intercultural competence, knowledge transfer and employability, as well as political communication through social media and queer geography. Gabriel studied at the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand (BA, BA with Hons. and PhD). As a visiting scholar he lectured at the Charles University, University of Oxford, the University of Primorska, the University of Valencia and the London Metropolitan University. He also works at the Institute of European Studies and International Relations – Faculty of Social and Economic Science at the Comenius University in Bratislava.

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## **GLOBE in MOTION 2**

### **Multiple Shades of Migration: Regional Perspectives**

**Miroslava Hlinčíková,  
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Martina Chrančoková, Zsolt Gál, Miroslava  
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