

FINAL REPORT

The most recent trends of the Hungarian emigration

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September 30, 2013 - March 31, 2018

Objectives of research

Hungary's population is seriously aging so that it becomes more essential for the country to retain young, working-age groups in order to be able to support the expanding old age generation. Nevertheless, the proportion of those citizens (particularly youngster with high qualifications) who are temporarily or permanently leave the country has grown to a small extent since the EU integration and switched to a dramatically fast pace since 2010. Increased emigration is one of the major burdens on Hungarian supply systems. This demographic crisis (decline of the population) in the past decade is causing hopeless situation especially throughout the economically weak rural countryside, moreover, the strengthening brain drain process threatens the continuous construction of future research, development and innovation capacities. Observing these negative phenomena, looking for explanatory factors in the background, the four-year research project has been realised. In order to get a profound knowledge of the recent emigration we focused on the following issues:

- Which factors (social, economic, political, private etc.) are explaining the growing pace of emigration intention and the high number of real emigration?
- What kind of socio-demographic groups are mostly affected, so what is the degree of selectivity of migration?
- What patterns of spatial differences might be observed, which areas of the country are mostly included (west-east dichotomy, duality in terms of developed and underdeveloped areas and / or urban-rural scale)?
- Which countries are preferred in particular by Hungarian emigrants and / or in light of Hungarian citizens' intention?
- What are those specific circumstances Hungarians live on abroad? How satisfied were they with their expectations and their careers? Are they willing to return back?
- What are the socio-economic consequences of this migration wave in the limelight of Hungarian macroeconomic situation?

Research results

Investigations of mobility within Europe in the fields of international research are at the forefront of scientific interest expressing high demands for objective and subjective data and the presentation of social, economic, political and cultural mechanisms explaining migration. Central and Eastern European countries, which have undergone successful / hampered economic transition since the regime changes, moreover, are burdened with the effects of demographic crisis, play an increasingly important role in terms of international migration. Despite the fact that Hungary was perceived as a popular host country in the 1990s, following the years after 2000, it gradually became a sending country. Since the EU integration emigration became slowly a general process, but following the

global financial crisis (since 2010), the pace showed up dramatic growth. The rate of emigration of Hungarians is reaching unprecedented levels for decades. Recently the estimated number of Hungarians working or studying abroad is somewhere between 350 and 600,000 (8-10% of the 4-4.5 million-labour market). For both the emigrant Hungarians and those planning to emigrate, Germany, the United Kingdom and Austria are preferred target countries, where Hungarian diaspora can be found predominantly in economically developed metropolitan areas. Among with them, Northern Europe, BeNeLux states, the Mediterranean countries, lastly and surprisingly, Poland and the Slovak Republic can be observed as crucial targets. The average age of migrants is 29 to 30 years and is steadily decreasing, proving that emigration is an emerging option among the young generation who are willing to choose education at foreign institutes, employment at foreign labour markets, family formation and career development within foreign circumstances. There is an equal number of women and men out of the country. Concerning individual movement, men are overrepresented, whereas women regularly move together in pairs with members of the family.

The intensity of emigration decreases as people getting older so the 21 to 30 year-olds have the most decisive migration intentions. There is a sinister correlation between the intensity of emigration intention and the length of stay. The weak, uncertain future emigrants prefer short and medium-term foreign stay, whilst those having serious intention consider to leave Hungary for long-term or even for a lifetime. Migration is a selective process. In general, the decision-making of those particular social groups is apparently more serious who own the plethora of opportunities (young people, having diverse human and social capital) and constraints (dissatisfied, pessimistic, discriminated) catalysing each other. The most cardinal repulsive factor for decades is the lack of macroeconomic stability, individual financial problems and adequate jobs. This is coincided by growing dissatisfaction with political life, diminishing of life prospects, fears about future uncertainty and the gradual emergence of social conflicts. The Hungarian social composition is seriously asymmetric: The proportion of deprived groups are getting widespread, in parallel the middle class is shrinking. Sharp territorial inequalities are reflected in connection with the willingness to migration. Strong and long-term migration intentions are more significant in economically underdeveloped regions (e.g. the former strongholds of the socialist heavy industry, ex-mining districts and underdeveloped regions). The young population of the Western Hungarian counties is less concerned with moving abroad, but their livelihood is greatly improved by the opportunities of the nearby Austrian and Slovakian labour market. There is also an obvious centre-periphery duality, because the highly qualified, independent urban youth has the most serious emigration intentions. The cumulative results of our four-year empirical research support the Hungarians rising willingness towards emigration from year to year both in terms of further education and employment. However, according to our results 6-7% of those Hungarians who are recently live abroad, plan to remigrate, furthermore, a growing number of Hungarian citizens would choose migration consciously temporarily or episodically.

Remittances, which account for 3% of GDP in the economy (920 billion HUF in 2016), if accompanied by an adequate institutional structure, may have diversifying effects on the development of the economy. Though, unfortunately the Hungarian case is different because those family members who stay home spend these money transfers to loan repayment and to improve their modest livelihood, hence does not support the overall convergence within the confines of living standards.

One of the most significant problem of Hungary – burdened by a great number of social, political and economic conflicts – to stop / mitigate the extreme tendencies of Hungarians' emigration and the growing nature of serious emigration intention. It would be possible only with policy interventions (economic and social reforms) that maintain – or even develop – living standards, diminish social inequalities and guarantee future prospects.

Based on our empirical data and many similar research outcomes, the ratio of emigrants consciously leaving the country in order to strengthen financially and existentially is increasing. Their re-integration into the Hungarian society, the new endeavours finally, their views in terms of Hungarian political, economic, social circumstances might give a wide fields to be analysed.

Methodology

The OTKA (Hungarian Scientific Research Fund) research launched in the autumn of 2013 endeavours to investigate the crucial emigration trends over the last fifteen years using mainly empirical methods. Quantitative and qualitative analyses include three pillars of data collection. The first sample was based on the questionnaire targeting 9,876 respondents. The complex Hungarian database was supported by both online and offline questionnaire data collection focusing on the emigration intention, the intensity and seriousness of the intention, the explaining factors and the reasons behind potential emigration.

The second data collection aimed at getting to know how already emigrated Hungarians live abroad (studying and / or working). The questionnaire used in the first case was expanded with questions on quality of life, prosperity, future plans and the possibility of remigration. The online questionnaire was filled by 245 people living in the most important target countries. Thirdly, in order to clarify the results of the research, we prepared 56 semi-structured long interviews during 2016 and 2017 concentrating on mainly Hungarian diaspora in the main migration centres, so we could also look at the social / family / community networks and the characteristics of the migration chain.

Timing of the research

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

- Scientific literature analysis (latest publications in Hungarian, English, German and French languages).
- Statistical data collection of the most important target countries.
- Data integration into GIS.
- First publications, lectures (Miskolc – Lillafüred) of the initial results.

October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015

- First launch of field surveys, interviews, questionnaires.
- Presentation of the results at international conference (Oradea – Romania)
- Publication of the first treatises based on empirical results.

October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016

- Continuation of field surveys (diaspora examination: Walton-on-Thames, London, Frankfurt am Main, Innsbruck and Vienna).
- Realisation and evaluation of online questionnaires based on 245 questionnaires.
- Empirical data collection and data processing. Integration of data into GIS.
- Presentation of partial results at international and domestic conferences (Berehove - Ukraine, Eger)

October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

- Preparation of 56 semi-structured interviews in Germany, Austria, UK.
- Creation of final analysis based on the entire database.
- Comprehensive studies on the crucial outcomes.
- Presentation of research results at international and national conferences (Boston, Brussels, Miskolc)
- Organisation of a Final Conference at the University of Miskolc on September 27, 2017.

October 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018

- Preparation, edition and print of the final book edited by Siskáné Szilasi, B. and Halász, L. entitled *“Boldogulni itthon vagy külföldön. Legújabb trendek a magyarországi*

kivándorlásban". [Succeed at home or abroad. Recent Trends in Hungarian Emigration], editing and printing the volume.

- Publication of research results in Hungarian and foreign special journals (Space and Society, Geographical Bulletin, Eastern European Business and Economics Journal).
- Presentation of research results at international and national conferences (Luxembourg, Cologne, Miskolc)
- Preparing a book presentation on May 30, 2018.

Final conference

On 27 September, 2017 a conference was organised at the University of Miskolc entitled "*Latest Emigration Trends in Hungary*", where the following speakers presented their migration-specific research results:

- Circulation in international migration (Illés, Sándor)
- The role of international migration in the transformation of Europe's ethnic-linguistic image from the mid-20th century to the recent years (Kocsis, Károly)
- The causes and characteristics of the intensified emigration of Hungarian youth (Levente Halász)
- Characteristics of mobility of young people in Europe (MOVE Project H2020) (Dabasi Halász, Zsuzsanna and Lipták, Katalin)
- Regional migration profiles in Hungary (Szilágyi, Roland and Varga, Beatrix)
- Geographical patterns and impacts of Hungarian migration in Europe (Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta)
- Migration rind and Migration Potential (Endre Sik)

Presentation of research results at foreign and Hungarian conferences

Judit Molnár: Model of migration and integration of immigrants.

7th Hungarian Geographical Conference, Miskolc – Lillafüred, 2-4 September, 2014.

Molnár Judit – Gál-Szabó Lajos – Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Mohos Mária – Dudás Gábor: Legújabb trendek a magyarországi kivándorlásban.

7th Hungarian Geographical Conference, Miskolc – Lillafüred, 2-4 September, 2014.

Beáta Siskáné Szilasi – Judit Molnár – Zsuzsa Piskóti-Kovács: The connection between tourism and migration. The case study of Miskolc.

GEOTOUR&IRSE Conference, Kosice – Slovakia, 27 September, 2014.

Judit Molnár – Tibor Kóródi: A new emigration of Hungarians? Why residents of Hungary are thinking about leaving their home country?

International Conference on Migration and European Integration, Oradea – Romania, 6-9 November, 2014.

Kóródi Tibor – Siskáné Szilasi Beáta: A XXI. századi magyar populáció migrációs szándékának térbeli vizsgálata.

International Geographical Conference, Berehove – Ukraine, 31 March – 1 April, 2016.

Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Kóródi Tibor – Vadnai Péter: Menni vagy maradni? Egyetemisták kivándorlási szándékának vizsgálata.

International Geographical Conference, Berehove – Ukraine, 31 March – 1 April, 2016.

Kóródi Tibor – Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Vadnai Péter – Gál-Szabó Lajos: Migrációs szándék az életminőségi tényezők tükrében.

8th Hungarian Geographical Conference, Eger, 25-26 August, 2016.

Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Kóródi Tibor: Az egyetemisták kivándorlási és munkavállalási hajlandóságának vizsgálata a Kárpát-medencében.

8th Hungarian Geographical Conference, Eger, 25-26 August, 2016.

Vadnai Péter – Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Gál-Szabó Lajos – Kóródi Tibor: Adatbázis átalakítások a magyarországi kivándorlási trendek összetettebb statisztikai vizsgálatához.

8th Hungarian Geographical Conference, Eger, 25-26 August, 2016.

Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Kóródi Tibor: Az egyetemisták kivándorlási és munkavállalási hajlandóságának vizsgálata a Kárpát-medencében.

8th Hungarian Geographical Conference, Eger, 25-26 August, 2016.

Beáta Siskáné Szilasi: The recent trends of the Hungarian emigration.

MDP American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Boston – USA, 5-9 April, 2017

Beáta Siskáné Szilasi – Levente Halász: Geographical patterns and impacts of the Hungarian workforce mobility in Europe.

6th EUGEO Congress on the Geography of Europe. Brussels – Belgium, 4-6 September, 2017.

Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Halász Levente: Fiatalok emigrációjának főbb jellemzői.

MOVE Project Final Conference, Miskolc, 29-30 January, 2018.

Siskáné Szilasi Beáta – Halász Levente – Vadnai Péter: Kivándorlás, külföldi munkavállalás és az európai munkaerőpiaci integráció körülményei.

MOVE Project Final Conference, Miskolc, 29-30 January, 2018.

Beáta Siskáné Szilasi – Levente Halász: Characteristics of the intensifying emigration process of the Hungarian youth and their consequences on socio-spatial inequalities

MOVE – Youth Mobility and Migration in Europe – Keep on Moving, Luxembourg – Luxembourg: 7-9 March, 2018.

Beáta Siskáné Szilasi: Characteristics of the Dynamizing Emigration Intention of the Hungarian Youth

EUROGEO – Annual Meeting and Conference, „Geography for All”, Cologne – Germany: 14-15 March, 2018.

Levente Halász: Living Conditions and Strategies of Emigrant Hungarians in the most Important European Target Countries

EUROGEO – Annual Meeting and Conference, „Geography for All”, Cologne – Germany: 14-15 March, 2018.

Book containing final results

Siskáné Szilasi, B. – Halász, L. (eds.): *Boldogulni itthon vagy külföldön. Legújabb trendek a magyarországi kivándorlásban.* [Succeed at home or abroad. Recent Trends in the Hungarian Emigration], Miskolc, University of Miskolc, 222 p. (ISBN: 978-963-358-154-4)

A tanulmánykötet fejezetei

Halász, Levente: *Socio-economic theories explaining migration.* (pp. 15-23.)

Halász, Levente: *Attributes of emigration in Eastern and Central European countries* (pp. 23-33.)

Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta – Halász, Levente: *Temporal change of Hungarian emigration.* (pp. 33-37.)

Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta: *Migration willingness, migration potential in Hungary.* (pp. 37-47.)

Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta – Halász, Levente: *Selective migration explained by socio-demographic and economic factors.* (pp. 47-55.)

- Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta – Halász, Levente – Vadnai, Péter: *Target countries of the Hungarians. Temporal changes of emigration trends.* (pp. 55-63.)
- Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta – Halász, Levente: *Emigration as general life strategy – differences of subjective well-being forms abroad.* (pp. 63-77.)
- Halász, Levente: *Macroeconomic effects of Hungarian emigration.* (pp. 77-85.)
- Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta – Halász, Levente: *Characteristics of the Hungarian youth emigration and the crucial motivation factors.* (pp. 85-93.)
- Siskáné Szilasi, Beáta – Halász, Levente: *Summary.* (pp. 85-105.)
- Sik, Endre: *Migration rind, migration potential.* (pp. 105-127.)
- Dabasi Halász, Zsuzsanna – Lipták, Katalin: *Post-socialist characteristics of mobility – based on survey results among secondary school and university students.* (pp. 127-138.)
- Dabasi Halász, Zsuzsanna – Kiss, Julianna: *Mapping youngsters' mobility – based on field surveys of the MOVE project in Hungarian.* (pp. 141-154.)
- Berényi, László: *The correlation between living conditions and employment mobility.* (pp. 157-167.)
- Illés, Sándor: *From mobility policy towards circular policy.* (pp. 167-187.)
- Kocsis, Károly – Bottlik, Zsolt – Sansumné Molnár, Judit: *Geographical specificities of the international migration targeting Europe.* (pp. 187-199.)
- Gödri, Irén: *Migration willingness, migration potential and the possibility of realisation.* (pp. 199-218.)