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CHALLENGE OF CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION



- Migration and Regional Development
- EU Cohesion Policy
- Transnational Collaboration

time and I had no idea why..." (Focus Group Polish Women, 1st December 2009).

Migrants were perceived by some not to be entitled to equal treatment and as being less deserving and exploitable. An underlying assumption was that they would 'put up' with differential and discriminatory treatment and would be hard working despite their treatment in the workplace.

"Sometimes there were nightmares where supervisors would bully people to make them give up work and they wouldn't have to fire them... Like standing in front of them and telling them they should work faster, faster, faster... they would try and find any flaw possible, such as making sure the bone is clean and so they would find any type of meat" (Interview Polish Male, 13th June 2013)

In other circumstances migrants enacted their preferred identity, sometimes rejecting the less deserving, exploitable migrant identity in favour of other preferred roles (father, professional). The collective 'migrant' identity was found to be a catch-all, encompassing multiple identities and with differing outcomes for those enacting (i.e. migrants) it and for those deploying the category.

Final thoughts

Employers assign particular meanings to the migrant identity that allows them to enjoy the benefits of cheap, exploitable and hard-working employees. In some scenarios migrants used this identity to get a job, putting up with exploitation in the process. The implications of

these practices are not fully understood. Meanwhile the potential of migrants to boost a relatively stagnant region has not been maximised in the past, with many working below their qualification level.

Predictions made prior to Brexit were that, compared to the rest of the UK, living standards in Northern Ireland would decrease due to relatively lower levels of job growth along with job cuts due to the reduction in public expenditure. These predictions have been somewhat disrupted by the Brexit vote and the uncertainty of the future status of the UK. With a proposed hardening of UK borders, the economy's capacity will be negatively impacted overall (Oxford Economics 2016). Cheap and flexible workers may no longer shore up marginal businesses in the agri-food sector, the implications for existing migrants and the potential for future contributions from migrants are all as yet unknown.

Endnotes

¹Note the figure for 2015/16 is for the first three quarters and at 97, 843 is already greater than total annual figures 2014/15 (96,751).

²A8+2 plus Bulgaria and Romania

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Dr. Ruth McAreevey is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Newcastle University, UK. Her research interests include migration, research ethics and rural development and regeneration.

She has conducted extensive research with migrant communities in Northern Ireland. Her monograph on migrants will be published by Routledge in 2017. Ruth.mcareavey@newcastle.ac.uk

GEOGRAPHICITIES OF MIGRATION. ADDING A NEW DIRECTION

Daniel Göler, Otto-Friedrich-University of Bamberg, Germany and Zaiga Krišjāne, University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia



Lessons from Europe's new migratory map

Europe is facing a new era of migration: the process began in 1990, was accelerated by the enlargement of the European

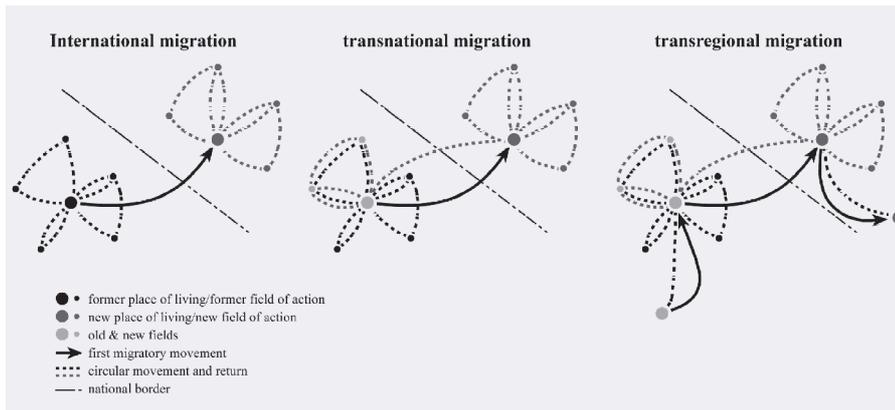
Union in 2004, and continued to be fuelled by crisis-driven migration from GIPS-countries¹ into Western European labour markets after 2008. However, these "migration waves" pale in comparison to the massive inflow of refugees that began in 2015. Brexit has since further complicated the situation by presenting the European migration system with a completely new and unpredictable set of changes, introducing new uncertainties for immigrants to the UK.

The European migration system has undergone several shifts due to various reasons. General changes (for

example, on the political map) did not necessarily have the same consequences in European regions, even in seemingly similar contexts. Given this, the aim of the following article is to analyse recent migratory movements in detail, basing discussion on similarities and differences in the challenging new migratory map of Europe. We aim to contribute a new perspective focused on issues of *geographicity* – in terms of spatiality, the phenomena that geographers look for "on the ground".

The resulting paper is the model of Elusive Migration Systems as an

Figure 1: From international to transnational to transregional migration



Source: Göler and Krišjāne (2016), p.33

analytical framework and hypothesis for researching new features of increasingly diverse migrant trajectories. With respect to the various causes and effects of migration in sending and receiving regions and societies, Elusive Migration Systems are highly flexible, spontaneous, varied and unpredictable.

Lifestyles of mobility as a challenge

A certain part of mobility and migration fits into transnationalism, one of the key concepts in migration studies for almost two decades. In fact, transnationalism may serve as an appropriate theoretical framework for analysing these migratory movements and their associated socio-spatial phenomena.

In adapting to transnationalism, the perspective in migration research has shifted away from the classical perspective. “Classical” studies drew attention to causes and effects of migration as a change of permanent residence. Contemporary theoretical and empirical analysis has focused more on the variability of social spaces continuously and individually defined by migrants in terms of transnationalism—even more so since the appearance of the new mobilities paradigm. Consequently, interest began to concentrate on different forms of circularity as well. As a result of episodic, periodic or spontaneously repeated migratory movements, different and distinct places are connected. By considering this perspective and refocusing the argument to transnationalism, the transnational social space can be interpreted as an arena of social relations.

Several contemporary approaches emphasize new elements like variability, flexible spatiality and individuality of

migration and mobility as a challenge for research. One of the most recognized conceptualizations may be the concept of liquid migration (for details see Engbersen et al. 2010). Others, like Bygnes and Erdal (2016), Ciobanu (2016) or Okólski (2012) highlight the importance of the rise of distinct lifestyles of mobility and the emergence of a well-defined migrant habitus. It is difficult to empirically sample the diversity of migratory movements or systematically categorize and theorize phenomena. The article may serve as an attempt to develop a new interpretation of geographicities of mobility to, and beyond the borders of, the EU.

Towards geographicity of migration

Europe’s new migratory map may illustrate the ability of migration systems to deal with changes in the conditions of political, social or economic frameworks. The majority of Europeans, and even many migrants, may implicitly desire to be grounded (Bygnes and Erdal, 2016), but there are too many motivations and triggers for mobility. This could be voluntary, e.g., in search of better wages, or forced, such as in the instance of altering framework conditions after Brexit. Being on the move is the reality for a certain number of migrants, both within and en route to Europe. Empirical results show that migrants are able to reorganize during this process in a novel and creative manner, and re-define themselves in new social systems if necessary. These systems are characterized by widespread, multi-local social networks led by migration, individual migration experiences, and migrant culture. Migrants are able to adapt social practices in different

economic, social, and cultural contexts. This performed social practice of permanent resilience is based on creativity, knowledge and the other individual skills and capacities of the network’s participants. All of these considerations are in line with arguments that lead to a slightly new paradigm called Elusive Migration Systems (Göler and Krisjane, 2016).

This approach takes recent changes into account, such as spontaneous decision-making by migrants manifesting in the form of highly flexible and increasingly diverse migration trajectories. Thus, the resulting mobility is statistically and intentionally unpredictable and intangible. Moreover, the concept tries to satisfy the need to “generate fresh results” (Düvell 2009, p. 342) by using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods to analyse scales, interrelationships between immigration

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and emigration, and the role of choice and coercion in decision-making by migrants. The mixed-methods analysis explicitly uses a bottom-up-approach with individual biographies as basic elements for exploration and for further modelling and considerations. This approach is able to strengthen, in terms of “Geographicity”, a more differentiated analysis of spatiality in migration studies (Figure 1) by including the transregional dimension of migratory movements.

Endnote

¹Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain. Sometimes the ‘I’ represents Ireland.

Professor Daniel Göler is Professor for Geographical Research on Migration and Transition at Otto-Friedrich-University in Bamberg, Germany. He is head of the department of Geography and scientific director of the European Forum for Migration Studies at the Otto-Friedrich-University of Bamberg, Germany. His research interests are migration and transition studies with a special interest in post-socialist transition contexts. daniel.goeler@uni-bamberg.de

Professor Zaiga Krišjāne is Professor of Human Geography and dean of the Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences, University of Latvia. She was granted the Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship for experienced researchers in Bamberg University, for transregional migration studies (2011–2013). Her scientific interests lie in population geography, migration and urban development. zkrisjan@lanet.lv

THE POPULATION OF SERBIA ABROAD: A REGIONAL APPROACH

Jelena Predojević-Despić and Goran Penev, Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia



At the beginning of the third millennium, public interest in the issue of international migration visibly increased. However, the vast majority of studies has been examined from the perspective of destination countries. Studies focussed on the countries of origin, as well as complex research involving both aspects are much less common.

Serbia is a country with a long tradition of emigration in the specific economic and political context, with a large number of its citizens abroad, as well as with a very heterogeneous spatial distribution and differentiated structure of emigrants. However, very rare are the studies related to their regional origin and distribution in the receiving countries. Therefore, based on the Serbian census data, as the most important source of information on the citizens of Serbia working or residing abroad, through the inclusion of a regional approach to the analysis of emigration trends, the main objective of our research is to show that between the regions of origin and certain destination countries there are ties, on the basis of which migrant networks originate and spread. Over time,

networks towards some countries lose their importance or are diverted to other directions.

The research includes the analysis of the results of the last five censuses conducted between 1971 and 2011. It is based on data on the number and share of emigrants from Serbia, with regard to the most represented receiving countries from a regional aspect (municipalities and zones of intense emigration). Such an approach is not only of academic interest but of wider social significance, particularly because most of the Serbian emigrants covered by the census maintain ties with their homeland, often visit their hometowns and present an important resource for the socio-economic development of the country.

Liberalisation of political conditions in Tito's Yugoslavia, the improvement of political relations with Western countries, implementation of economic reforms (1965) and the emergence of “open” unemployment, enabled a real expansion of international labour migration officially called “temporary employment abroad” by the authorities at that time. According to results of censuses carried out in 1971, 1981 and 1991, the number of Serbian citizens working or staying abroad continually increased (from 204,000 to 269,000 and then to 274,000). The grave political and economic situation and a sense of lost perspective for a large part of the population, and especially for the younger generation, were the main push factors

of intense emigration in the 1990's. According to the 2002 Census, 415,000 Serbian citizens (5.3% of total population) were registered to be working or staying abroad. Emigration continued in the years of this century as well. This, however, is not confirmed by the 2011 census (313,000 Serbian citizens lived abroad). The real number is much greater. The decrease in the number of people abroad could be attributed to the usual low census coverage (estimated at least about 50%), the boycott of ethnic Albanians of the 2011 Census, as well as the partial change in the method of collecting census data on emigrants (ISS, 2013).

Three “hot” emigration zones

In terms of emigration from Serbia, there are regional differences notable at the level of municipalities, districts but also the macro entities (Central Serbia and Vojvodina). They are primarily reflected through the uneven start of mass emigration, which is particularly characteristic at the level of smaller territorial units (municipalities and districts), then through a different intensity and direction of migratory flows, and different share of emigrants in the total population. At the same time, the differences appear if some other important characteristics of emigration and emigrant population are considered (destination country, age and sex structure, educational attainment, etc.).

Regions

THE VOICE OF THE MEMBERSHIP

The Regional Survey in this issue (Guest Editors Gary Bosworth and Danica Šantić) comprises a selection of papers which emerged from a conference staged in Belgrade as part of the Regional Studies MICaRD (Migration, Inter-Connectivity and Regional Development) network. The rationale for the network is to provide space to debate current and emerging issues on European economic migration in order to foster collaboration and expand research opportunities. The specific focus is on increasing labour mobility within the EU and the impact on regional development in rural areas for both sending and receiving nations. The papers presented here include perspectives from regions suffering depopulation and those facing challenges associated with the integration of new migrant populations. In a world of uncertainty for international migrants in the US and Europe, especially the UK, with growing numbers of asylum seekers and a continuing flow of people towards Europe, this issue of *Regions* forms part of a wider call for new thinking about contemporary patterns of mobility.

Our *In Depth* article by Crescenzi, Fratesi and Monastiriotes examines the factors that condition the successful implementation of Cohesion Policy in the EU using econometric modelling techniques. The experiences of 15 regions are analysed. Their results show that while there is a positive association between Policy and regional growth, the success of policies appears to depend on levels of concentration and effective targeting of spend on regional needs. This article complements our *Research Note* provided by Schopf and de Vries which consists of an analysis of transnational cooperation to stimulate regional development in the Alpine Border region of Bavaria-Austria.



Regional Studies Association, Sussex Innovation Centre, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9SB, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1323 899 698, Fax: +44 (0)1323 899 798
info@regionalstudies.org, www.regionalstudies.org

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