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Research Centre on Identity and Migration Issues - RCIMI

Faculty of Political Science and Communication Science

University of Oradea

Address:

Str. Radu Enescu nr. 2

Oradea, 410238

Romania

Tel./Fax: +40 259 455 525

E-mail: jims@e-migration.ro; contact@e-migration.ro

Web: www.iims.e-migration.ro

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THEMATIC ARTICLES – PATTERNS OF ROMANIANS’ MIGRATION

Transnational Labor Mobility of Romanians: Empirical Findings on Recent Migratory Trends

Viviana ANDREESCU and Violeta ALEXANDRU

Abstract. Over the past seventeen years, the level of out-migration from Romania has been constantly examined by national and international researchers. In particular, a growing interest has been noted following the accession of Romania to the European Union in January 2007. Drawing on IPP data collected in January 2007 on a representative sample (N = 1014) of the Romanian adult population, the present paper intends to assess the current level of potential temporary out-migration and compare it to international migratory tendencies registered in the country in the early 1990s. Multivariate analyses will be used to identify the factors more likely to predict short-term labor migration of Romanians.

1. European Migration: Brief Overview

Globalization and migration are two interconnected phenomena that dominate today’s world. The internationalization of capital, improvements in global corporate activities and trade liberalization, significant developments in transport and communication, the free and rapid flow of information all favored an increase in human mobility over the past two decades. A recent report of the Global Commission on International Migration (2005) showed that from 1970 to 2005 the number of international migrants increased rapidly from 82 million people to 200 million people, counting only those who have lived outside their country for more than one year and including 9.2 million refugees. However, international migrants represent today only 3% of the world’s population.

At the beginning of this century there were 56.1 million migrants in Europe (including the European part of the former USSR), compared to approximately 41 million migrants in North America. From 1990 to 2000, immigration accounted for

89% of population growth in Europe; without immigration, Europe's population would have declined by 4.4 million people (GCIM 2005).

The 27-state EU has now a population of more than 490 million. The EU's GDP of nearly \$14 trillion makes it the world's largest economic bloc — and a magnet for job-seekers. Based on recent trends, it appears that most European countries will continue to recruit migrants to fill out the labor and skills shortages that are more likely to raise in the near future (Boswell 2005). Over the past decade, some countries have actively recruited at the higher end of the job market and also at the lower end, hiring, usually on a short-term or seasonal basis, unskilled workers in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and in services. The majority of these short-term labor migrants came from Eastern Europe and Africa (Stalker 2002, 161).

While since the 1990s, the annual number of asylum and family reunification approved applications remained fairly constant in Europe, the composition of migration flows has changed due to a steady increase in labor migration (OECD 2004). Also, most recent UN figures indicate a significant change in the gender composition of migrant populations. In 2000, the number of migrant women exceeded the number of men not only in Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and Oceania, but in Europe as well (GCIM 2005).

Another important change that characterizes recent migratory phenomena, especially in Europe is the emergence of a new form of immigration – transnational migration- that no longer can use the nation-state as a reference frame. The recognition that some migrants maintain strong, enduring ties to their homelands even as they are incorporated into countries of resettlement called into question conventional assumptions about the direction and impacts of international migration. Transnational theorizing started in the early 1990s, when the traditional migration theory that treated migrants as “emigrants” or “immigrants” only, was found incomplete. Proponents of a transnational perspective argue that migrants often interact and identify with multiple nation-states and/or communities, and that their practices contribute to the development of transnational communities or new types of social formations within a transnational social space (Lewitt and Nyberg-Sørensen 2004). It is documented the ability of some immigrant communities in Europe to maintain connections and attachments to their country of origin. Developed transportation and communication technologies, a

more permissive legal framework, and an internationalized economy provide new opportunities for immigrants to move from one country to another and to live and work in a multitude of national contexts (Schmidtke 2001). The observed increase in short-term, circular migration is often a household's strategy for supplementing the income of families at home (Boswell 2005; Sandu 2005).

Analysts of human mobility within the European space also noted an increase in irregular migration, which can take the form of illegal entry or overstay, often organized by smugglers or people traffickers. Although data should be cautiously treated, some 500,000 irregular migrants appear to enter EU states annually. The stock of irregular migrants in Italy is estimated at 800,000, in Germany at 500,000, in France at 300,000, and in the UK at 200,000 (Boswell 2005).

The Commission of the European Communities (COM 2005) described the current situation and prospects of EU labor market as a "need" scenario, stressing the labor and skills shortages that affect certain sectors of the economy in many EU countries and cannot be filled with national workers. Also, the Commission's report underlined the importance of considering the effect of demographic trends (falling birth rates and an ageing population) on labor-force composition. Although economic migration and immigration in general are not considered long-term solutions to the problems experienced by most developed European countries, they appear to be available policy tools that have been successfully used in the past.

More recently an OECD (2007, 11) report also acknowledged that the European workforce is not mobile enough and that greater labor mobility is needed to strengthen the Union. Despite the fact that most policy obstacles to labor migration have been removed, cultural differences, language barriers, costs of migration, limited recognition of qualifications, relatively high transaction costs on housing sales, labor shortages, inappropriate job matching, and fluctuating demand for migrant labor in destination countries continue to undercut mobility. Currently, only 4% of the EU workforce has ever lived and worked in another member state (OECD 2007, 11). In particular, due to transitional restrictions on migrants from the new member states, the labor mobility of Romanians and Bulgarians will continue to be negatively affected for

an important period of time. Only in 2014, seven years after accession there will be complete freedom of movement for Bulgarian and Romanian workers.

2. Migratory trends in Romania over the past seventeen years

In the early 1990s, Romanians' inclination toward temporary migration was not different from that expressed by other countries in Central and Eastern Europe (IOM 1993; IOM 1994). Most of the former communist countries committed themselves to live up to the human rights standards of Western democracies and, except for some newly formed countries carved out of the former Yugoslavia and some of the Soviet successor states, they were considered "safe countries." As a consequence, in the majority of cases, asylum seekers from such countries were no longer eligible for refugee status (Kussbach 1992, 655). Also, the number of those who could receive approval to emigrate claiming "family reunification" was decreasing, because most of the persons, who had relatives abroad and wanted to join them, had already done so.

In the early 1990s, beside refugees, the majority of emigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, and the Commonwealth of Independent States were "ethnic migrants," most of them ethnic Germans and Jews. In the mid-1990s, in Romania, for instance (IOM 1994), the ethnic structure of migratory flows indicated a decrease in the number of emigrants belonging to minority ethnic groups, because most of those who wanted to emigrate for ethnic considerations had already left the country. Consequently, temporary migration seemed to be the most likely alternative for the majority of those who intended to emigrate legally.

During the communist regime, only a small number of Romanians were allowed to work abroad, and their short-term work contracts were mainly in African and Arab countries. Unlike Yugoslavs or Poles, Romanians did not have a tradition of temporarily migrating to Western developed countries. They therefore could not count on prior links with the receiving countries, or on social networks based on kinship or common area of origin that might have encouraged emigration and would have facilitated integration in the receiving country.

Only in the early 1990s, Romanian skilled workers, mostly employed in construction trades, signed temporary work contracts in Germany and Israel. In 1993, for instance, the number of placements for Romanian seasonal workers in Germany was 3,853. The number of Romanian occupational trainees in Germany in the same year was 562, and the quota established in June, 1994, between Germany and Romania concerning project workers was 4,360 (Werner 1995). This quota was only one fifth of the quota for Poland and a third of the quota for Hungary, a country whose population equals less than half of Romania's population. Romanians and workers from Thailand accounted for the majority of 72,000 foreign workers who have flooded Israel in the early 1990s to take low-paying jobs that Palestinians used to do before a rise in violence persuaded the Government to restrict the number of Arabs from occupied territories allowed to work in Israel (Andreescu, 1995).

Empirical research conducted in Romania showed that in 1993, 3.4% of the population intended to migrate permanently and 12% expressed a desire to migrate temporarily; in 1994, only a small percentage (0.8%) of the total population intended to resettle abroad and approximately 8.6% of the population expressed a willingness to migrate temporarily for work (Andreescu 1995). In the early 1990s, Romanians' willingness to migrate to another country was mainly motivated by economic pressures (IOM 1993).

Despite a much higher mobility of people from CEE countries in the early years of the present decade, the legal immigrants from the region represented only a small proportion of foreign-born residents in Western European countries. In 2000, citizens from eight countries that accessed EU in 2004 represented in most of EU15 countries less than 5% of the immigrant stock (Okolski 2007, 4). Based on 1999-2003 census data, it can be observed that Romanians' share of the foreign-born stock was no higher than 4% in any of the EU15 countries and was equally low in all CEE countries that recorded Romanian residents, except Hungary. The proportion of Romanian immigrants/non-naturalized citizens as percentage of total noncitizens in major destination countries is equally low. Only in Hungary, the Romanian immigrant community appears to be significantly higher than other immigrant communities in this country, but not so large in absolute figures. The total foreign-born population in this country represents less than 3% and non-

naturalized citizens account for less than one percent of the total population of approximately seven million residents (Table 1).

Table 1. Romanian communities in EU countries

EU country of resettlement	Romania-born pop. as % of foreign born population	Romanian noncitizens as % of total noncitizens	Low skilled Romanians as % of total low skilled foreign-born population	High skilled Romanians as % of total high skilled foreign-born population	Foreign-born as % of total population	Non-citizens as % of total population
Hungary	49.1	39.4	47.2	41.7	2.9	0.9
Italy	3.9	6.0	2.4	3.0	..	..
Austria	3.9	2.7	3.1	3.9	12.5	8.8
Spain	2.8	3.8	3.1	1.7	5.3	3.8
Czech Rep.	2.7	1.9	4.5	0.7	4.5	1.2
Slovakia	2.7	4.2	4.3	1.3	2.5	0.5
Greece	2.4	3.1	1.9	2.2	10.3	7.0
Ireland	1.5	2.3	1.3	0.8	10.4	5.9
Portugal	..	1.3	..	..	6.3	2.2
Germany	0.9	..	0.6	1.1	12.5	..
Belgium	0.7	..	..	1.3	10.7	8.2
Luxemburg	0.5	0.4	..	0.7	..	..
Poland	0.5	..	0.6	0.4	2.1	0.1

Source: OECD 2004; Dumont, JC & G. Lemaître (forthcoming)

In 2002, the stock of all CEE authorized migrant workers accounted for a small fraction of the labor force in major Western European receiving countries. Documented migrant workers from Eastern European countries and Albania were about 450,000 in Germany, 320,000 in Greece, 200,000 in Switzerland, 160,000 in Austria, and 150,000 in Italy (mainly Albanians, Poles, Romanians, and Ukrainians). In 2002, Spain signed temporary foreign worker agreements with Romania and Poland. However, the annual quota for the admission of all temporary foreign workers set up by Spanish authorities does not exceed 30,000 (Plewa 2007, 20-21).

In 2004, OECD countries received about 750,000 persons from CEE countries and Russia. About 196,000 Romanians have been admitted mainly in Italy and Spain. Romania ranked among the top five sending countries in Austria and Germany, and has sent the most documented temporary workers to Hungary, Italy, and Spain (Okolski 2007, 7). With respect to OECD destinations, in 2006, Romania

was considered the leader on the list of top world sending countries, surpassing China and Mexico (OECD 2006).

National survey data and qualitative research conducted in six Romanian communities from Italy, Spain, and Serbia showed that from 1990 to 2006, approximately 10% of the Romanian adult population worked abroad and 1/3 of the Romanian households have at least one person who is/was living in a foreign country. If from 1990 to 1995, the annual emigration rate was 5 per 1000 inhabitants and did not significantly increase until 2001 (i.e. the emigration rate was 6 per 1000 inhabitants from 1996 to 2001), starting with 2002, when Romanians gained free access to the Schengen space, annual temporary emigration rate constantly increased from 10 to 28 persons per 1000 residents (Sandu 2006).

In 1999, Borjas predicted fairly small post-enlargement migration flows from CEE countries to EU15 countries. Relatively small income differentials between the two blocs, cultural differences, and convergent economies as a result of increased amounts of capital, goods, and services CEE countries would receive after accession would explain in Borjas' view low population movements. The author also noted that it would be useful to identify the main characteristics of the potential migrants and in particular the skill composition of the potential foreign-labor because the skill content of the economic migrant population can have important consequences for both sending and receiving countries (Borjas 1999). The following analysis will identify the individual characteristics of Romanian potential temporary migrants and will also explore the socioeconomic macro-level factors more likely to induce out-migration.

3. Data and Methods

The source of the data is a survey carried out between December 2006 and January 2007 by the Institute for Public Policy in Bucharest, Romania. A three-stage probability sample comprising 1,014 individuals was designed to ensure maximum representativeness for the 18+ year old population of Romania along the following dimensions: gender, age, education, ethnic origin, urban-rural distribution, and historical region. The sample has been validated by 1992 and 2002 Census data. The margin of error is $\pm 3.1\%$.

It is the general thesis that the levels of external temporary migration from Romania are likely to be a function of conditions at the point of origin and a

function of conditions at the point of destination. The focus in this study is on individual and macro-level factors at the point of origin. In general, we expect that the pattern among potential temporary migrants in Romania will be consistent with the pattern already exhibited by Romanians in the 1990s.

In particular, we hypothesize that external temporary labor migration from Romania will be more prevalent among people who have a direct and indirect (through family ties) migratory experience. Also it is expected a negative relationship between age and labor migration tendencies. Although some studies (Sassen 1988; Boyd 1990) showed that migrant women tend to relocate abroad to reunite with their families rather than to become temporary workers and even if in the 1990s the proportion of Romanian male potential temporary migrants was significantly higher than the proportion of women who expressed an intention to work in a foreign country, based on recent research (Sandu 2006) that noted an increase in the female migrant population, we hypothesize that gender will not be a significant predictor of migratory flows in Romania.

The migrant profile outlined by surveys and studies of the 1990s revealed a high degree of potential mobility of the urban, the highly skilled, professionals, and young people (Majava and Penttinen 1991; Muus 1991; Okolski 1991; Salt 1992). Pacini (1992) also observed that temporary or permanent emigration seems to be induced primarily by push factors related to economic conditions, specifically by unemployment. The Romanian potential migrant of the past decade was not different from the "typical" international migrant (e.g., a young male, economically active, resident of an urban area). Among the individual level variables, three predictors (age, gender, and working class occupation) were consistently found significant predictors of migratory tendencies in Romania in a 1994 research analysis. The study also found that persons satisfied with their occupation and housing were less likely to intend to migrate (Andreescu 1995). A national survey conducted in Romania in 1993 for the International Organization for Migration, also described the typical Romanian potential migrant as a young male, usually urban, with an above-average education, professionally successful or unemployed, and residing in the southeast or in the northwest regions of the country (IOM 1994).

According to a recent study (see Sandu 2006), the Romanian potential migrants were described as predominantly males, married, with ages below 40, with a high-school or vocational school education. The study found that 40% of those who worked abroad wanted to repeat the experience. Approximately 20% of

the households had at least one family member who worked in a foreign country. Although significant differences regarding migration intentions were not found when rural and urban residents were compared, within particular historical regions of the country rural-urban differences in potential migratory behavior were identified. The research also noted a significant increase from the 1990s to 2006 in the labor migration rate in three regions of the country (Moldova, Muntenia, and Transylvania) and very small increases in migration rates in Bucharest and Dobrogea regions.

The present research anticipates that education, employment status, marital status, religious denomination, and the self-assessed level of well-being will have an impact in structuring one's decisions regarding temporary relocation abroad. Also, it is expected that migratory tendencies will vary as a function of one's region of residence. In particular, it is expected that residents of counties/regions that had a higher degree of urbanization and were more successful in socioeconomic terms (i.e., higher GDP per capita, higher proportion of active population in the labor force, higher percentage of people employed in the service sector, lower unemployment rates, positive internal migration outcome, and higher direct foreign investment) will be less likely to look for jobs in a foreign country.

Data for this study were analyzed by means of binary logistic regression. Table 2 presents the description and summary statistics for the variables used in multivariate analyses as possible predictors of potential labor migration in Romania.

Table 2. Variables Included in the Analysis: Definitions and Summary Statistics

Variable	Definition	Mean (N=1014)	Std. Deviation
Potential labor migration	Coded 1 for respondents indicating their willingness to work abroad in 2007, zero otherwise.	.2022	.4018
Migration experience (personal)	Coded 1 if the responded worked abroad during the past 12 months, zero otherwise.	.1000	.2971
Migration experience	Coded 1 if a family member currently works abroad, zero	.1193	.3243

(family member)	otherwise.		
Age	Categorical variable coded 1 for respondents age 18-29; 2 for respondents age 30-39; 3 for respondents age 40-49; 4 for respondents age 50-59; 5 for respondents age 60 and older.	3.0878	1.4999
Gender	Coded 1 for males, zero for females.	.4704	.4993
Education 1 (Vocational school)	Coded 1 if vocational school graduate, zero otherwise.	.2101	.4075
Education 2 (High-School)	Coded 1 if high-school graduate, zero otherwise.	.2515	.4340
Education 3 (Post High-School)	Coded 1 for respondents with more than high-school education, zero otherwise.	.1972	.3981
Employment status	Coded 1 for respondents with non- regular jobs, unemployed, or housewives, and zero otherwise.	.1785	.3831
Family income	Self-assessed household income, coded 1 if insufficient, zero otherwise.	.2959	.4566
Marital status 1 (Single)	Coded 1 for respondents single or divorced, zero otherwise.	.2357	.4246
Marital status 2 (Married with children)	Coded 1 for respondents married who have children, zero otherwise.	.5740	.4947
Religion (Non Christian Orthodox)	Coded 1 for those who do not belong to the Christian Orthodox denomination, zero otherwise.	.1183	.3231
Life dissatisfaction	Coded 1 for those (very) dissatisfied with their life in general, zero otherwise.	.2465	.4312
Job	Coded 1 for those (very)	.1805	.3847

dissatisfaction	dissatisfied with their job, zero otherwise.		
Dissatisfaction with friends	Coded 1 for those (very) dissatisfied with their friends, zero otherwise.	.0828	.2757
Satisfaction with health	Coded 1 for those (very) satisfied with their health, zero otherwise.	.7170	.4507
Development region (Bucharest)	Coded 1 for residents of Bucharest and Ilfov, zero otherwise.	.0917	.2887
Local Economic Growth	This continuous variable is a composite measure created using PCA (one component extracted with Eigenvalue = 5.674; variance explained = 81.06%; Standardized Cronbach's Alpha = .833); it includes seven 2005 county-level indicators (% urban, % labor force, % occupied in tertiary sector, GDP per capita, 2005 unemployment rate, migration outcome, and direct foreign investment in euros)*.	.0000	1.000

Data source: Ministry of Development, Public Works, and Housing, 2007.

4. Empirical Analysis

Recent migratory experience

The majority of Romanians (56%) did not travel abroad in 2006. If 65% of rural residents did not cross the border, the proportion of urban residents who did not have any recent migratory experience is lower (49%). One third of the families (33%) had at least one member who worked in a foreign country, 12% of the respondents had a family member who was working abroad at the time of the interview, and 10% of the respondents declared they worked in another country themselves during the twelve-month period preceding the survey. In 2006, a

relatively low percentage of the population went to a foreign country for tourism and less than 3% of the population migrated temporarily to study, for business, or health-related reasons.

Potential migration

The migratory prospects of the population appear to remain unchanged in 2007 compared to 2006. More than half of the population (55%) did not express any intention to leave the country in the near future. If the number of potential migrants is slightly higher in urban areas than the actual migration in 2006, in rural areas over 65% of the residents did not manifest any migratory intention. A closer examination of the results shows that the proportion of those who intend to work abroad in 2007 (20.2%) is twice higher than the 2006 labor migration. Also, the number of those who intend to travel abroad for other reasons than work is two (e.g. 24% for tourism) and three (e.g. 3% to study) times higher than the corresponding figures for 2006 migration. However, this increase in migratory tendencies is relative. The percentage of those who do not express any intention to relocate abroad, temporarily or permanently, remains unchanged. Approximately 29% of those who did not travel abroad in 2006 intend to do so in 2007, but 35% of those who left the country temporarily in 2006 do not intend to cross the border in 2007. Only 4.1% of the respondents who expressed a clear opinion declared themselves potential permanent migrants.

Asked in what country they would rather live, if they would have a choice, a large majority of Romanians (81%) declared they would prefer to live in Romania. Although men and women appear to have similar attitudes regarding their "country of choice," other variables such as residential area, education, age, and migratory experience had an impact on opinions. Those who would definitely choose to live in Romania if they would have alternative options are preponderantly residents of rural areas (85.1%), people over 60 years old (91.4%), persons who did not travel abroad recently or at all (85.5%), and persons with no more than a high-school education (82%). Based on the frequency of selection, the countries where some Romanians would prefer to live are Italy, Spain, Canada, Germany, and France.

Further analyses (Table 3) were conducted to determine which variables are more likely to predict membership to the potential labor-migrant group.

Results show that personal migratory experience appears to be the strongest predictor of potential labor migration for the overall sample (Models 1 and 2) and also for the male and female subsamples (Models 3 and 4). Persons from families with workers abroad are also more willing to work in a foreign country than those who do not have close relatives currently working in other country.

As hypothesized, there is a significant decrease in the desire to migrate as age increases. Although the proportion of men willing to work abroad is higher than the proportion of female potential migrants, gender is not a significant predictor of migration tendencies. In the overall sample, those more likely to migrate are vocational school graduates. Also, persons with no religious affiliation and those belonging to religious denominations other than Christian-Orthodoxy manifest a significantly higher propensity to move than the Christian-Orthodox residents. While persons who are single are more likely to want to migrate and those who are married and have children are less likely to want to migrate when compared to people who are married but do not have children, marital status does not appear to influence migration intentions. Additional analyses (not included) found no significant differences between urban and rural residents in terms of their intention to look for work in another country. In general, the proportion of potential labor migrants was higher in smaller urban areas and in peripheral villages, places with reduced job opportunities.

Significant positive relationships were identified for the overall sample between life dissatisfaction, job dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction with friends, satisfaction with one's health and potential labor migration.

Residents of Bucharest are significantly less likely to want to work in a foreign country than people in other regions of the country. A separate model (Model 2)¹ shows a direct negative relationship between the county's economic growth and one's willingness to work abroad. When controlling for the other variables in the model, additional analyses (not included) showed no significant differences among people's willingness to work in another country when their region of residence was taken into account.²

¹ Variable "Region (Bucharest)" was highly correlated with variable "Economic growth" (Pearson's $R = .84$) and the two variables were introduced in separate models.

² The propensity to move was the highest (28.6%) in the North-Eastern region of the country (North Moldova) and was also higher (23.1%) in the Central region (Transylvania). The other development regions of the country, except Bucharest (9.4%), had potential temporary migration rates with little variation (e.g. 17.6% in South-Oltenia; 17.8% in South-East region; 17.9% in Western region; 19.0% in South- Muntenia; 19.6% in North-Western region). Comparisons were made using the eight

Models 3 & 4 illustrate the potential migration correlates separately for men and women. For both subsamples one's age and migratory experience (direct and indirect) are significant predictors of potential labor migration. Also, measures of well-being have a similar effect on potential migration in both subsamples. The profile of the Romanian female migrant is however somewhat different from the profile of the Romanian male migrant. Romanian women who intend to work in another country are more likely to be vocational school graduates, who live in families with insufficient income. Also, they are preponderantly members of other denominations than the Christian-Orthodox church. The Romanian man who intends to relocate abroad is more likely to be a person who does not have a regular employment status (i.e. unemployed, jobless, or has irregular jobs). For men, the socioeconomic performance of their county of residence appears to be a more important decisional factor than it is for women.

Table 3. Logit Estimates for Labor Migration Predictors in Romania

	Model 1 (N=1014)	Model 2 (N=1014)	Model 3 (n ₁ =477) (Males)	Model 4 (n ₂ =537) (Females)
Migratory experience				
Personal	2.476*** [.286]	2.408*** [.289]	2.077*** [.356]	3.070*** [.531]
Family member	.785*** [.203]	.769*** [.204]	.673*** [.278]	.944** [.318]
Socioeconomic & demographic				
Age	-.527*** [094]	-.524*** [094]	-.419*** [123]	-.668*** [153]
Gender (Male)	.321 [.204]	.319 [.203]		
Education 1 (Vocational school)	.795** [.288]	.730** [.292]	.515 [.396]	1.127** [.444]
Education 2 (High-school)	.429 [.294]	.465 [.296]	.561 [.417]	.187 [.448]
Education 3 (Post-High-	.055	.052	.325	-.632

development regions in the country as described by the Romanian Ministry of Development, Public Works, and Housing.

school)	[.356]	[.355]	[.459]	[.604]
Employment status (Jobless)	.329 [.251]	.356 [.253]	.754* [.378]	-.097 [.381]
Family income (Very Low)	.509 [.244]	.457 [.247]	.129 [.351]	.734* [.371]
Marital status 1 (Single)	.274 [.354]	.219 [.354]	.320 [.488]	.103 [.545]
Marital status 2 (Married with children)	-.077 [.313]	-.097 [.314]	-.149 [.445]	.023 [.475]
Religion (Non-Christian- Orthodox)	.606* [.283]	.662** [.280]	.349 [.409]	.911* [.412]
Subjective well-being				
Life dissatisfaction	.651** [.252]	.672** [.253]	.780* [.354]	.608* [.380]
Job dissatisfaction	1.030*** [.229]	1.030*** [.230]	.768** [.329]	1.390*** [.342]
Dissatisfaction with friends	.739* [.350]	.737* [.349]	.868 [.501]	.374 [.507]
Health satisfaction	.926** [.295]	.914** [.297]	1.199*** [.466]	.785* [.407]
Macro-level indicators				
Region (Bucharest)	-.862* [.430]			
Economic growth (county level index)		-.271** [.116]	-.283* [.146]	-.312 [.204]
Constant	-2.492*** [.562]	-2.686*** [.568]	-2.706*** [.829]	-2.706*** [.829]
Model Summary & Classification results				
% Correct predictions	85.6	86.2	83.2	87.7
Log likelihood	680.531	677.147	361.988	300.518
Cox & Snell R ²	.285	.288	.292	.291
Nagelkerke R ²	.449	.453	.437	.490

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001 (2-tail tests)

5. Conclusion

Although the current out-migration phenomenon in Romania shares a number of general traits with the migratory processes of the past decade, its intensity is notably higher. This research analysis showed that conventional individual variables continue to explain migratory tendencies in Romania. Variables such as education, occupation, income, satisfaction with life, job satisfaction, etc., should be, however, perceived as mediating factors of human mobility. Macro-level conditions appear to strongly influence migration tendencies in the country. Results show that economic growth, such as the one experienced by Bucharest's residents, can successfully act as a deterrence to labor out-migration. In the 1990s, propensity to temporarily move abroad was significantly higher in Bucharest compared to other regions in the country and now it is the lowest.

To some extent, the levels of out-migration and potential migration in a country tend to be considered a reflection of the inner nature of the society, an indicator of how successfully political and socioeconomic problems have been solved. However, the higher propensity toward temporary emigration recently manifested by an increasing number of Romanians should not be exclusively regarded as a manifestation of the public's discontent toward Romania's uneven economic performances, political unsteadiness, deterioration of the safety net, or as an expression of Romanians' skepticism about the country's future.

Romanians' propensity to move and work in another country should also be perceived as a result of the reorganization of the European economy in general, and in particular, as one of EU accession consequences. Specifically, Romanians' higher mobility is undoubtedly influenced by the relatively recent formation of a transnational European space within which the circulation of workers is becoming as natural as the circulation of capital, goods, services, and information.

Romanians have only recently started to become users of the European transitional space and several studies have already documented the beneficial effects of the new form of immigration. Based on recent research (Grigoras 2006, 43), 7% of Romanian households were in 2006 the recipients of private transfers from abroad. Although over the past decade Romanians seemed to be more concerned with spending their money, remittances included, on housing renovation or acquisition of long-term goods and less with investments (e.g. purchasing a house/land or opening a business), Romanian transmigrants are

becoming more and more potential sources of positive social change and development at both family and community levels (Bobîrsc 2006, 83).

It is probably true that “a mobile work force can act as a safety valve for economies that are out of sync with their neighbors (OECD 2007, 11).” By combining the potential knowledge and skills of transnational and returning migrants with institutional and government backing, migrants can positively influence the development of the country, at both social and economic levels. But unplanned and excessive out-migration can negatively affect the structure of the work force in the sending country. With relatively low birth-rates, a steady population decrease, and low employment rates of the active-age population, Romania is in a particularly vulnerable position that policy makers in the country should carefully consider.

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The Changing Patterns of Romanian Immigration to Canada

Theodor TUDOROIU

Abstract. This article examines the largely neglected post-1990 Romanian immigration to Canada. During the 1990s, most Romanians selected by Canadian immigration offices were highly skilled, university-educated professionals. As they ignored important details of the Canadian labor market, about three quarters of them became kind of *lumpen*-intellectuals. In recent years, however, Internet-based networks have improved the quality of information available to potential migrants. This and structural changes in the home country are preparing a major shift of Romanians' migratory flow to Canada. In the years to come, it will progressively take the form of circulatory migration currently characterizing Romanian immigration to Western Europe.

Keywords: Romanian migrants, Canada, skilled migration, immigration patterns.

1. Introducing an ignored phenomenon

The Romanian immigration to Canada is an almost unstudied subject. Both academic and general public literatures are quite rich with regard to the overall Romanian migratory phenomenon. Still, with minor exceptions, they elude its Canadian component. It should be added that we are currently witnessing a fundamental change of Romanian-Canadian migration patterns. In my opinion, stable, nineteenth century-type immigration will be replaced in the years to come by some kind of post-modern, circulatory migration, characterized by important flows of return and secondary immigration.

The main goal of this article is to provide a comprehensive analysis of post-1990 migratory flows linking Romania to Canada. Detailed information concerning little known characteristics of Romanian immigrant communities in this country is provided. As the analysis would be incomplete without paying attention to the above-mentioned change, the final section tries to extrapolate recent trends in order to picture future, fundamentally different, immigration patterns.

The next section describes the Romanian migratory flow to Canada; section 3 depicts widely ignored details of Romanian immigrants' social status. Finally,

section 4 analyses the consequences of this situation and of important structural changes in the country of origin for the future of the migration patterns.

From a methodological point of view, research for this article was rather difficult. Statistics are often incomplete, and secondary sources are extremely poor. Therefore, my work is mainly based on interviews conducted between 2002 and 2005. Out of the 52 respondents, 30 are male and 22 female. Forty-nine earned university degrees before leaving Romania; 42 of those were in engineering. Forty-seven respondents immigrated as skilled workers, two as family. The others entered Canada as foreign workers (2) or illegally (1) before being accepted as immigrants. Most of the interviews (48) were conducted in Montreal. The respondents were chosen in order to be as representative as possible for the post-1990 Romanian migrants to Canada; all left Romania after the fall of Communism. While interviews were informal, they included the same set of questions. In most cases their duration was longer than one hour.

2. The Canadian connection. Romanian immigrants to Canada

Every year, no less than 220,000-230,000 immigrants enter Canada (see Table 1). Their admission is the result of a careful selection process. For English speaking provinces, the selection is conducted by the federal "Citizenship and Immigration Canada". The French-speaking province of Quebec has its own immigration policy. In both cases, immigration procedures are similar. Selection is based on a points system. Each applicant is awarded points on a range of characteristics including education, professional experience, proficiency in English and French, age, and adaptability. Selection criteria and procedure are detailed in guides posted on Internet (see *Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 2005d*; *Publications Quebec 2005*). Most Romanian immigrants selected in the 1990s belong to the category of "skilled workers". This is illustrated by 1996 statistics (in fact, documents published by *Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada* ceased to provide this kind of information after 1996). Skilled workers – who represent most of the "other immigrants" class – make more than two thirds of the total number of migrants. The "family" class represents about 18 per cent, refugees and assisted relatives about 12 per cent, while entrepreneurs, self-employed and investors numbers are insignificant (*Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 1996*).

A useful insight is given by immigrants' intended occupation. Out of 2,386 persons "destined to the labor force", 1,044 (44%) have qualifications in "natural sciences, engineering, and mathematics" (*ibid.*). Interviews suggest that most of them are in fact engineers. As, until 2000, only 3,000-4,000 Romanian immigrants were admitted each year out of a huge number of candidates, selection was very strict. One respondent remembers that he and his wife were one of the only two married couples selected during an entire day of interviews in 1996. There were no unmarried successful candidates that day. This led to a very high quality of selected immigrants. Almost all were university educated (this concerns both members of married couples). Many had distinguished professional careers. One should not forget that Romania used to have a very developed industrial sector, producing everything from cars to ships to airplanes, both civilian and military. In the 1980s, Bucharest alone had nine faculties of chemistry and one of the only four aircraft engineering faculties in all Europe. But in the 1990s, most of the industry went bankrupt. That explains why many of the successful candidates to immigration were highly skilled engineers.

Romania was the country of origin of the most important number of immigrant engineers to Canada in 1992 and 1993 and the third most important in 1994 and 1995 (Slade 2004: 109). This is despite the fact that total number of Romanian immigrants was maybe ten times smaller in comparison to other countries of origin. It was logical for all these university-educated persons to expect finding decent work in Canada. After all, an important reason of their applications' positive assessment was Canada's need of people with their specific professional skills. The only question was raised right before receiving the immigration visa in the Canadian consulate in Bucharest. Immigrants with certain professions were asked to sign a declaration acknowledging the possibility they will not find a job according to their qualifications. However, this did not concern engineers. Furthermore, the formulation of the statement seemed to take into consideration just a remote and unlikely probability. This subject will be developed in section 3.

As Table 1 shows, Romanian annual immigration to Canada is not impressive. It represents only about 2 per cent of the total. Still, between 1995 and 2004 Romanians were the first or the second most important group of immigrants from Europe.

Table 1. Permanent Residents of Canada with Romania as country of origin

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Permanent Residents-Total	212,869	226,073	216,038	174,200	189,966	227,465	250,638	229,040	221,355	235,824
Romanian Permanent Residents-Number	3,851	3,670	3,916	2,976	3,467	4,431	5,588	5,688	5,465	5,655
Romanian Permanent Residents-Percentage	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.4
Romanian Permanent Residents-Rank	14	12	12	15	14	11	8	7	8	8
Rank Among European Countries of Origin	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	1

Source: Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 2004a; 2004b.

The 2001 Canada census reports about 60,000 Romanian immigrants in Canada (see Table 2), out of whom more than half had come after 1990. More than half were located in Ontario and a quarter in Quebec.

Table 2. Immigrants and non-permanent residents of Canada born in Romania and period of immigration (2001 Census)

	Total	Immigrants	Before 1961	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2001	1991-1995	1996-2001	Non-permanent residents
Canada	61,330	60,165	7,155	2,305	3,645	11,890	35,170	15,135	20,040	1,160
Ontario	34,360	33,725	3,450	1,335	2,145	6,715	20,075	8,140	11,935	635
Quebec	14,805	14,505	1,270	675	950	2,770	8,840	4,195	4,645	300

B.Columbia	6,215	6,135	1,005	150	315	1,250	3,410	1,565	1,850	80
Toronto	21,140	20,805	1,225	810	1,550	3,900	13,315	5,050	8,265	340
Montreal	13,310	13,100	1,225	670	840	2,365	7,995	3,760	4,235	215
Vancouver	4,850	4,795	390	95	235	1,035	3,035	1,340	1,695	50

Source: Statistique Canada 2005.

Asked about their choice between, mainly, Ontario/Toronto and Quebec/Montreal, many respondents identified the language they speak better (English or French) as an important factor. Besides that, some had believed Toronto offers better employment opportunities while others wanted to take advantage of the faster procedures of Quebec's immigration services (less than two years in comparison to three years or even more for the federal immigration office). In general, respondents consider Quebec's immigration policy more permissive than that of the federal authorities. This is presumably a consequence of the fact that Romania is one of the few countries of emigration where French language is widely, if not very well, taught at school and French culture is traditionally very influential. During interviews, a certain pattern of immigration related to regions of origin could be identified. It seems the bulk of Romanians in Montreal come, in relatively equal proportions, from Bucharest and from Transylvania. Ontario, on another hand, seems to attract immigrants from all over Romania.

It is interesting to compare the perceived image of Romanian immigration to Montreal and Toronto. In the French-speaking city, Romanians represented the fifth to eighth immigrant flow for most of the 1997-2002 period. In 2002, they provided almost 8 per cent of the total number of newcomers (Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 1999; 2002a). In Toronto, the usually more numerous Romanian immigrants were submerged by other groups. 2001 is the only year when they got the tenth rank. Each year, Romania was the origin of less than 2 per cent of the total number of Toronto immigrants (Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 2002b). The obvious consequence of this distribution is the uneven visibility of Romanian communities in the two cities. The smaller group of *montréalais* Romanians already represents an important and well-known component of their city's *mosaïque ethnique*. In Toronto, the more numerous Romanians tend to play a marginal role in comparison to other massive minority groups.

Speaking about visibility, the spectacular but secondary aspect of Romanian illegal immigration to Canada has to be addressed. Geographical conditions protect the country against undesired visitors. Except illegal border crossing from the US (which few migrants choose), the other only way into Canada is through the risky crossing of the Atlantic in a container shipped to a Canadian port. Each year, 25 to 30 such clandestine passengers (some of them Romanians) are identified in Halifax (*Métro* 2001). It seems most Romanians desperate enough to take this chance use the Livorno-Montreal route (Cristea 2002). But there is a real danger of death, mainly by suffocation and starvation. The only respondent who lived through this experience had friends who died during the voyage. This is discouraging enough to keep the flow at an extremely low level.

The other end of the visibility spectrum is represented by Romanians coming to Canada with a work permit. There are very few of them, as Canadian law gives priority to hiring of Canadian citizens and residents. However, they do exist. One of the respondents earned a Ph.D. (in engineering) in the Netherlands and obtained a work permit allowing him to become a professor in a Canadian university. A small number of IT experts were recruited by companies in Ontario (see Nedelcu 2003). Another category is represented by female "exotic dancers" working in the Toronto area. If the total number of Romanian foreign workers in Canada is not available, on December 1, 2004 there were 367 female foreign workers of Romanian origin (Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 2004d: 71). However, such temporary residents usually apply for permanent residence and join the legal status of regular immigrants.

As a general conclusion, Romanian migration to Canada is the opposite of that directed to Western Europe. The overall flow is much smaller. Today, there are about 80,000 Romanians in Canada, in comparison to a million in Italy and half a million in Spain. There is a very strict selection. In Canada, most Romanian migrants are university educated, which is by no mean the case in Western Europe. The legal status is completely different. On one hand, specific conditions make illegal immigration insignificant. On another, immigrants become permanent residents from the very moment they land. Three years later, they can apply for citizenship. Combined with geographical isolation, this favors the settlement of migrants and their integration in the Canadian labor market and society. There is no circulatory phenomenon similar to that dominating Romanian immigration to Western Europe.

Nevertheless, this general picture neglects some major aspects of the day-to-day life of Canadian Romanians. They are analyzed in the next section.

3. Promised land's dark side. Canada's Romanian *lumpen-intellectuals*

The absence of scientific work related to the Romanian-Canadian migratory phenomenon is surprising. On the contrary, there is a good reason for lack of more general texts. Such narratives (travel books, *mémoires*) can only be produced by immigrants. Or, as this section will show, most of them are not at all proud of their new transatlantic life. It is wiser, they think, to keep for themselves certain unpleasant details. Hence the silence.

As I have shown in the previous section, in the 1990s, most of the Romanian immigrants to Canada were university educated; a majority were engineers. Once in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver, their main preoccupation was to find a job. In principle, most Romanian university degrees are recognized. This does not mean there is no problem. A very grim picture of the subject can be found in the article *La grande moquerie de la reconnaissance de diplômes*, published, in French, by a Romanian newspaper of Quebec City (Cristea 2005). But engineering degrees earned in best Romanian universities are in better position. In fact, respondent engineers accepted as immigrants to Quebec had their diplomas positively evaluated by the Quebecois Order of Engineers while still being in Romania (they paid a fee for this individual evaluation). On the basis of a scale of equivalence, such diplomas allow their owners to continue their studies in Canadian universities. To these recognized degrees, immigrants were adding seven or eight years of professional experience required by immigration services when selecting candidates.

Still, only five to ten percent of university-educated Romanian immigrants (mostly computer programmers or engineers specialized in computer-related fields) find a job in accordance to their qualifications. Of course, this is an approximate value. There are no available statistics on the subject and I did not have the means for a large-scale survey. However, my interviews suggest 5-10 per cent is a realistic figure, even if some respondents considered it too high. The main obstacle in finding an appropriate job is lack of Canadian professional experience. University-educated immigrants entering the country are caught in a *cercle vicieux*: in order to become Canadian engineers, they are asked to prove they have already

been, for one year, Canadian engineers. This is how the huge majority of university-educated Romanian immigrants became low skilled workers or shop assistants. Interviews show that an engineer is easily hired as a low skilled industrial worker in the field in which he earned a university degree. Sometimes, if he is lucky, he might be promoted and become a technician. But he will never be able to work as an engineer. In Montreal, many interviewed former engineers became *concierges*. This has very little in common with the signification of the same word in other parts of the world. It is a mix of building manager, janitor and plumber whose wage is lower than that of a low skilled industrial worker.

Obviously, immigrants trapped in such jobs are desperate to recover their previous social status. Basically, there are two strategies they can choose. The first is to continue their studies at graduate level. This is difficult enough for persons having finished their studies seven or even ten years earlier. Furthermore, it requires a minimum of two years (and usually more) during which their only source of income is a very modest scholarship. If they have children, this is an impossible choice. The other solution is to work as a *bénévole* (that is, unpaid) for one year. In Quebec, an immigrant engineer typically takes courses and passes exams in order to become a member of the Order of the Engineers. Then, he asks the Order to help him find a *bénévole* engineer job. One year later, he finally has the required Canadian experience and can search a normal, paid job. In certain provinces, the very admission into the order is conditional, under a form or another, by this one year Canadian experience. Therefore, the immigrant has to find himself the unpaid job. However, in both cases, the problem is to live on social security for one year or more. For a married couple, the solution is to have the other member of the family working in an unskilled, low-paid job. But if they have children, it is doubtful they will make it for one year.

On the basis of interviews, I assess at 10-15 per cent the proportion of Romanian immigrants who succeed in getting a Canadian degree or the one-year Canadian experience. Adding the 5-10 per cent who find a job ("by pure chance", as several respondents put it), a total of about 25 per cent recover the social status they had in their country of origin. The rest, a massive 75 per cent, have to abandon any hope and adapt to a way of life they could have never imagined before immigrating. Of course, I do not claim that these figures are extremely accurate. They only reflect the situation that my respondents, their relatives and close friends could describe in detail. A large-scale survey might lead to different

results. Still, I do not expect errors to be important. Absolutely all respondents stated that a huge majority of university-educated Romanian immigrants to Canada could not take advantage of their Romanian degrees.

One question, which may arise at this point, concerns the comparison with native Canadians' difficulties to find jobs corresponding to their university education. Of course, such difficulties exist. But they differ in nature and scale. As I showed in section 2, most of the university-educated Romanian immigrants are engineers. This is equally the case of my respondents: there were 42 engineers out of a total of 52. All had their Romanian degrees easily recognized. Still, less than 10 per cent could find an appropriate job. On the contrary, *all* Romanian engineers who continued their studies in Canadian universities found a job and started to work as engineers. I speak here not only of my respondents, but also of their relatives and friends. It is true that they spent some time before being employed, sometimes had to move to another city, and in certain cases the wage was not as high as expected. In other words, they faced the same difficulties as native Canadian graduates. But these difficulties cannot be compared with those of university-educated Romanian immigrants who could not continue their studies in Canada or afford one year of *bénévolat*.

In fact, in their case the obvious question is "why do they stay in the new country?" It is logical to think that, confronted to a dramatic professional downgrade, they should simply go back home and restart their previous life. There is a very simple explanation. Most immigrants sell their house when they leave to Canada. The money is spent for the travel and settlement. When they realize there is no chance to get a decent job, there is no money left. If they return to Romania, there is no way to buy a house. Or, rents are extremely high due precisely to the fact that most people own their house. Even if they recover their previous jobs, it would be extremely difficult to pay rent. And, of course, everybody will know they have miserably failed. That is why, until recently, almost nobody went back. Adapting to a new, diminished social status, three quarters of the Romanian university-educated migrants turned into a *sui generis* kind of *lumpen*-intellectuals trying to convince themselves their *déclassement* is not so terrible, after all.

Of course, everybody has relatives and friends in Romania asking details about Canadian life. But distances are huge, communication difficult, visits improbable and easy to discourage. It is very tempting to replace a humiliating reality with a more advantageous picture. That is how families find out "they are

OK", "they have good jobs", "bought a car," etc. A respondent gave an example illustrative of this situation. One of his university-educated acquaintances had immigrated from Romania to Manitoba, telling everybody she was working for a brokerage firm. After some years, he immigrated to British Columbia and started sending her emails. He repeatedly and insistently asked details about her job. It was only after a long time – and probably fearing a possible visit – that she finally admitted she was simply cleaning the floor of that brokerage firm.

But such details are never revealed to friends in Romania, who receive an idyllic picture of immigrant life in Canada. Combined with aggressive advertising by Canadian immigration offices, this maintained and developed the myth of professional accomplishment and high living standards. For years, thousands of qualified Romanian professionals crossed the ocean convinced of their bright Canadian future. When they finally found out about the "Canadian experience", it was too late. Interviews revealed very many such personal stories. The most extreme case is that of a young woman who, while in Romania, decided Canada was the country of her dreams. She even earned a M.A. degree in Canadian Studies. The logical next step was to go see the dreamed country *in situ*. She immigrated to Montreal and, two years later, was working in a supermarket as a shop attendant. She had no apparent chance to find a job more appropriate to her qualifications.

Obviously, this situation creates a state of malaise, if not revolt, among university-educated immigrants. Some respondents went as far as making very aggressive statements about those responsible, in their opinion, of their *déclassement*. However, this is a marginal attitude. Most *lumpen*-intellectuals seem to be resigned to their fate, as day-to-day surviving is more important than protest. Many seem to start believing distorted information initially fabricated for relatives and friends back home. The typical statement is "my wage as a *concierge* here is bigger than my former engineer wage in Romania" (which is true in absolute, but not in relative terms. Cost of living is also much higher in Canada than in Romania). Many point to better public services now available to them. This is especially true for public health services, whose situation in Romanian is bad. Interestingly, Canadian education for children is also often mentioned. It is hoped it will allow the second generation of immigrants to recover the social status lost by their parents. Most if not all Romanians in Canada insist on having their children university educated, despite the significant material sacrifices it implies. The social upgrading

of their children is seen as a *revanche* for their own immigration-related misfortunes.

Of course, social *déclassement* is by no means specific to Romanian immigrants. Nor is it limited to one specific Canadian province. A variety of sources show all university-educated migrants to Canada face the same problem. In October 2005, Montreal's *The Gazette* presented the case of an Argentinean family (a corporate lawyer, speaking four languages, and a dentist, with three children) attracted by "very aggressive" advertising of Quebec's immigration office in Buenos Aires. They were assured their professional credentials would be accepted on the basis of reasonable tests and fees. Two and a half years later, the former lawyer was working, mainly nights and weekends, in a call center, and lost hope of improving his situation. "Today, he feels trapped in a life he would never have chosen if he had known what he does now" (Bagnall 2005). In June 2005, *The New York Times* described two similar cases. The first was an Indian researcher with a Ph.D. earned in Germany, two published books and teaching experience in an American university, who immigrated to Vancouver. The second was an Egyptian gynecologist now living in Ontario. Both were unemployed and desperate about their future (Krauss 2005). Internet sites like www.notcanada.com describe Canada as "A land of shattered dreams". They list "Top Eight Reasons NOT to Immigrate to Canada", with "No Jobs" in the first place:

Yes, coast to coast, there are no jobs. Immigrants are highly qualified (MD's, PhD's, Lawyers, Engineers etc.) but they are driving taxi cabs, delivering pizza's or working in factories. Even people with bachelors degrees from Canadian Universities cannot find jobs after graduation. This is the tragedy associated with immigration to Canada. I feel sorry for those immigrants who are stuck in Canada for the rest of their lives. It is indeed a very sad and hopeless future (<http://www.notcanada.com>).

This site presents individual testimonies covering all Canadian provinces ("I have an MBA degree and speak 5 languages and find myself working in the kitchen" - R.B., New Brunswick; "I am extremely frustrated in my job search here, feeling completely useless and marginalized despite my significant qualifications and experience", Shery A., Alberta, etc). Another Internet site, www.canadaimmigrants.com, even asks visitors to sign a letter demanding "to be compensated for all the time you were unemployed or underemployed in Canada" (<http://www.canadaimmigrants.com/Compensation.asp>).

More scientific studies have also been produced. An M.A. thesis is even entitled "*Qualifications alone will not get you the job you want: Integrating into the Quebec labor market with foreign credentials*" (Mansour 1997). Several surveys confirm difficulties encountered by university-educated immigrants. In 2002, Boyd and Thomas found that "*a male engineer from Yugoslavia who speaks English at home and has been in Canada for eight years has a 55 percent likelihood of working in an engineering occupation or management in Canada*" (quoted by Slade 2004: 109; my italics). It should be noted women constitute an important part of Romanian immigrant engineers and almost no Romanian speaks English at home. These elements further decrease probability of finding a job. A survey published in 1998 by Basran and Li examines 404 Asian immigrant professionals in Vancouver. 88 per cent of them had been practicing professionals in their home countries. However, only 19 per cent were working as professionals in Canada and 79 per cent reported difficulties in having their credentials recognized (Slade 2004: 109). Several other surveys presented by Bonnie L. Slade (2004: 108-111) identify a lack of Canadian experience as the main barrier in obtaining an appropriate job by university-educated immigrants.

Official Canadian statistics and analyses frequently explore "*The deteriorating economic welfare of immigrants and possible causes*" (Picot 2004), sometimes dramatically asking "*Will they ever converge? Earnings of immigrants and Canadian-born workers over the last two decades*" (Frenette and Morissette 2003). It is on the basis of 1996 Census statistical data that most relevant quantitative estimations have been made. For example, Peter S. Li found that native-born white men earned about \$9,000 a year more than immigrant degree holders. Native-born visible minority men earned about \$8,000 more than immigrant Canadian degree holders and immigrant mixed-education degree holders of the same gender and origin, but \$14,000 more than immigrant foreign-degree holders. Native-born white women earned \$42,449 a year, while immigrant Canadian degree holders and immigrant mixed-education degree holders earned about \$33,000 a year. White female immigrants with foreign degrees earned about \$30,770 a year (Li 2003: 119). Equally based on 1996 Census data, Jeffrey G. Reitz evaluated the total "immigrant earnings deficit" for the year 1996. It amounts to \$15 billion (Canadian), of which \$2.4 billion is related to skill underutilization, and \$12.6 billion to pay inequity (Reitz 2001: 347). These are the amounts immigrant

workers would have received if employed and paid according to their skills and qualifications.

Of course, moral considerations are inappropriate. The Canadian labor market does not care about money lost by immigrants. However, there is another aspect. Underutilization of tens of thousands of university-educated immigrants implies clear losses for the Canadian economy. If immigrants lost \$2.4 billion due to skill underutilization, it is logical to believe an even higher amount was lost by companies, which might have used those skills. Canadian authorities are perfectly aware of the situation (excerpts of an interview on this subject with former Immigration minister Joe Volpe can be found in Krauss 2005). They realize that immigration services make costly efforts to bring highly skilled professionals into the country – praising the human capital thus acquired by Canada – just to see them turned into janitors. Recently, some measures were taken in order to improve immigrants' professional integration. The 2005-2006 Report on Plans and Priorities of Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada states that a coordinated strategy to integrate foreign-trained Canadians and immigrants into Canada's labor market was developed in 2004 as part of the government-wide initiative to address interrelated barriers that prevent immigrants from rapidly and successfully integrating into the labor market (Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada 2005c).

This strategy focuses on four key areas, the first being "foreign credential assessment and recognition". Unfortunately, three years later there are no visible results. There is a simple explanation. Government measures can be effective in the field of university degrees official recognition. But, as the example of Romanian immigrant engineers shows, this is not enough. The real obstacles are created by the labor market itself. Canadian employers do not accept foreign-educated engineers, and no federal or provincial action can force them to do otherwise. Some incentives may help, but on a small scale. What is needed is a change of mentality, which might take a generation to become effective.

In fact, a different approach could be adopted in order to make things simpler. Once in Canada, most Romanian immigrant engineers become janitors or low skilled workers. One might think of simply bringing janitors to work as janitors, low skilled workers to work as low skilled workers. Canadian immigration services would simplify their costly recruiting activities, spending less money. Immigrants wouldn't be frustrated by their *déclassement*. Everybody would be satisfied. This is, however, a very improbable perspective. The Canadian immigration policy has

already been reoriented. The new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, which became law in June 2002, states that one of the objectives of this Act with respect to immigration is "to promote the successful integration of permanent residents into Canada, while recognizing that integration involves mutual obligations for new immigrants and Canadian society" (Department of Justice Canada 2006).

Unfortunately, immigrant selection criteria perpetuate the previous situation. The new assessment system awards 25 points for education (out of a total of 100; on September 18, 2003, the pass mark was 67). A secondary school educated candidate is awarded only five points. A bachelor degree brings 22, and a master's 25 points ([http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/l-2.5/SOR-2002-227/218282.html#rid-](http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/l-2.5/SOR-2002-227/218282.html#rid-218283)

[218283;http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/skilled/assess/index.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/skilled/assess/index.html)). Therefore, a university-educated candidate is awarded 17 to 20 more points. It is obvious that his or her chances of being accepted are much higher than those of less-educated candidates. Consequently, an engineer is always preferred to a *concierge*, even if the latter, and not the former, is needed in Canada. The present situation will not change unless the logic of immigration procedures is fundamentally modified. But this is impossible without a rethinking of the overall Canadian immigration policy. Nothing suggests such a move will take place in the foreseeable future.

Some steps were however taken by the Quebec immigration authorities. In October 2006, scores for a limited number of professions that do not require university education were increased while less or no points were attributed to university degrees in certain fields (<http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/publications/fr/divers/liste-formation.pdf>). It is improbable that holders of university degrees in chemistry or biochemistry, which still receive the maximum score, will ever find a job without the required Canadian professional experience. But, overall, the number of frustrated highly skilled immigrant professionals will clearly diminish. Nevertheless, this is true only for French-speaking Canada and cannot change the situation of present immigrant *lumpen-intellectuals*.

During the interviews, I tried to find out respondents' personal opinion on this paradox. Why a country like Canada, in clear need of *concierges* and low skilled workers, made costly efforts to recruit Romanian engineers who can only become victims of *déclassement*? This question was asked to all respondents. Most of them were simply puzzled and unable to find a reasonable answer. But some formulated

two tentative explanations. For some respondents, having university-educated janitors, low-skilled workers and shop assistants simply improves the quality of immigrant lower classes. Such people will work hard and send their children to university. Their previous status will keep them away from dishonest or illegal activities. Neither they nor their sons will go burn cars in the street, as it happened in autumn 2005 in Paris. As one respondent put it, "in Canada, an immigrant university diploma is no more than a guarantee of future clean police record". The alternative explanation is related to the 25 per cent of university-educated Romanians who, on my interview-based assessment, succeed in restoring their previous social status. Even if three quarters of the incoming highly qualified professionals are *de facto* lost, the remaining quarter contributes to Canada's economic prosperity, and probably compensates the costs of overseas recruitment.

There is, however, a major problem concerning Romanian best-qualified professionals. During the 1990s, most of them were engineers with five-year university studies in Romania who decided (or, rather, were forced) to continue their studies in Canada at the master's and Ph.D. level. Out of those completing a Ph.D., most, if not all, find a job south of the border and definitively quit Canada. One respondent who was preparing this move indicated that higher American wages are one reason. But he would not do it for money alone. In fact, it was his way of protesting against the treatment he had received in Canada (he had to live for more than seven years on desperately low scholarships, while in Romania he had occupied a highly respected and decently paid management position). In his words, "Canada cannot ask loyalty from people treated as I have been". Nevertheless, Romanian immigrants who earn only a Canadian master's degree and those who have the chance of getting a job with no Canadian studies at all are less able to find jobs abroad. Consequently, they stay in the country and contribute to Canada's economic growth, probably justifying efforts and costs related to the recruitment of a number of immigrants four of five times bigger.

4. Winds of change

Misinformation kept Romanian migration patterns unchanged for a decade. But this could not last forever. In fact, a major shift is currently taking place. One factor of change is the cumulative effect of migration itself. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of Romanians in Canada more than doubled. This

means the number of potential sources of information doubled, too. More important, a revolution in communications is under way. New technologies allow much better contacts between migrants and relatives or friends back home. In 1997, the cost of phone calls from Canada to Romania was three Canadian dollars (plus taxes) per minute. No wonder few low-paid immigrants spent hours talking long distance. But, in ten years, prices decreased 77 times. Today, one has to pay only 3.9 Canadian cents (plus taxes) a minute.

However, this is nothing in comparison to the tremendous impact of Internet. This powerful instrument (with its different components: email, information web pages, forums, chat, voice communication) started to be used by Romanian immigrants in Canada precisely in order to break their isolation. Mihaela Nedelcu (2003; 2004) makes an extremely interesting analysis of this phenomenon: "the propagation of a culture of mobility was in this case formalized by concentrating resources in the virtual space" (Nedelcu 2003: 333). This led to a visible increase of social capital within Romanian communities in Canada and helped develop their identity. To give just an example, the same author mentions the creation in Toronto, in 2001, of a Romanian school due to Internet forums discussions (*ibid.* 2003: 336).

Nevertheless, field research suggests that Internet use had for a long time very limited results in connecting Canadian Romanians with the majority of prospective immigrants. The explanation is simple: during the 1990s, Internet development in Romania was slow and difficult. It was only in 2003-4 that high speed Internet became available at affordable prices. However, even today, most Romanian "high" speed connections are no better than decent Canadian dial-up connections. Still, in 2003, Romania ranked 53 out of 165 countries, with 179 Internet users per 1,000 people (compared to 491 in Canada, 361 in France and 263 in the Czech Republic) (<http://www.nationmaster.com/country/ro/Internet>). This is enough to allow large-scale access to Romanian-Canadian Internet sites, whose number is rapidly growing (a list can be found at <http://www.aboutromania.com/roworld.html>).

Asked about their main source of information on immigrants' life in Canada, almost all recently landed respondents answered "Internet". They claim the picture they got at first look was quite puzzling. Half of the texts posted on the web describe a *lumpen*-intellectuals-populated inferno. The other half depicts a paradise of skyscrapers and icy lakes (one should notice the two images are not

necessarily incompatible). But all sources make it very clear that foreign university degrees are useless and have to be replaced with Canadian ones. This is the essential piece of information Romanian immigrants lacked in the 1990s. Once advised on this point, many potential migrants make Internet contact with Romanians in Canada. They get involved in forum discussions, use email, chat or voice communication. They make new friends whose advice they can trust. Consequently, those who persist in their decision to migrate to Canada are better prepared to confront the harsh realities of immigrant life. But most highly qualified, university-educated potential migrants realize Canada is not their promised land. Or, recent structural changes in Romania create new alternatives.

The main cause is Romania's adhesion to the European Union (EU). Consequences include increased capital investments in Romania, which triggered significant economic growth. For potential migrants, access to EU labor market has already improved. In the following years, freedom of movement of the labor force will be progressively extended to all EU states. The present massive migration directed to Italy and Spain will probably encompass all Western Europe. My own estimation is that, six to ten years after adhesion, Romania's population will reach an historical minimum of 15 million (compared to 22 million at present, out of which 3 million to 4 million are already part of circulatory migration).

These perspectives make a university-educated potential migrant think twice before choosing Canada. He or she can cross the ocean and very probably become a *lumpen-intellectual*, spending the rest of his or her life as a *concierge*; or join the circulatory migration to Western Europe, accepting equally unqualified jobs *for some months per year* until wages in Romania reach a decent level. The second choice also includes a *déclassement*. But it is a temporary one. Consequently, there is no wonder the *bassin de recrutement* of Canadian immigration services visibly narrowed. Unlike in the 1990s, they are now forced to select many immigrants with no university degrees. In 2007, all newly landed respondents insisted on this point. The times when best-qualified Romanian engineers crowded in front of Canada's consulate in Bucharest are gone.

There is another consequence of this change. In the 1990s, return migration was nonexistent. In 2002, a married couple giving up and going back to Romania became widely known because of this unusual act (Mureseanu 2002). However, today almost every respondent personally knows, or at least has heard of, somebody who took the same step. In 2005, a respondent gave me a list of five

of his Romanian friends who had returned to Romania. Return migration is favored by better information available to new migrants. Knowing the risks involved, they are less enthusiastic in selling their houses in Romania and therefore keep open the option of return. Progressive economic growth back home and opening of European Union's labor market will clearly accentuate reversed migration.

It is perhaps useful to remember that this phenomenon has in fact a long history. One century ago, Eastern Europe was the origin of important migratory movements targeting America. But few realize the magnitude of return migration. As Table 3 shows, between 1908 and 1923, only one tenth of the Bulgarians, Serbians and Montenegrins going to the U.S. settled there. The rest, an unbelievable 89 per cent, came back. For Romanian and Hungarian migrants, only a third became Americans. Two thirds returned home.

Table 3. Migration between the United States and Eastern Europe, 1908-23

Nationality	Immigration into U.S.	Emigration from U.S.	Net gain	Emigration / Immigration
Bulgarian, Serbian, Montenegrin	104,808	92,886	11,922	89%
Hungarian	226,818	149,319	77,499	66%
Polish	788,957	318,210	470,747	40%
Romanian	95,689	63,126	32,563	66%

Source: Wyman, 1993: 11.

Of course, there are important differences between 1908 U.S. and 2008 Canadian immigration processes. One century ago, all Romanian migrants were low skilled workers. Today, many of them (if not most, as during the 1990s) are highly qualified. But this can only encourage their return migration, as definitive *déclassement* in Canada can be avoided due to the visible improvement of labor opportunities in Romania and/or EU. Therefore, it is logical to expect Romanian immigration to Canada to take, at least in part, the form of circulatory migration already in place in relation to Western Europe.

Taking advantage of migrant networks built with the help of Internet-based communications, immigrants will continue to cross the ocean hoping better knowledge of local conditions will improve their situation. But this will not be the definitive step it was for Romanian migrants in the 1990s. Rather, it will be a tentative, exploratory move. It might become permanent if decent working

conditions are available. But confronted with *déclassement*, newcomers will have no reason to stay. Like their forefathers one century ago, they will simply go back and, perhaps, try a new migrant experience in Western Europe. In certain critical domains – IT, for example – Canada will still be able to attract highly qualified specialists, provided real professional perspectives are available. But even in this case, the closer and more familiar European Union might attract a majority of Romanian immigrants.

The shift of immigration patterns will have a major impact on Romanian communities in Canada. Since 1990, they were in a process of progressive growth and consolidation. Migrants' settlement was, in most cases, definitive. Communities were therefore stable. Increased numbers implied increased contacts and development of social capital within these groups. Links with the home country were, *au contraire*, progressively diminishing, even for persons who had come to Canada only eight or ten years earlier. Future newcomers will most probably bring here the circulatory logic of present Romanian migration to Western Europe. They will rely on networks linking people in Canada, Romania and the rest of the European Union. The relatively stable, nineteenth century-type Romanian communities of Montreal or Toronto will face a new, revolutionary challenge. For their new members, they will be less a final destination than a stop in a possibly longer journey.

5. Conclusions

Romanian immigration to Canada is currently turning from a classical, nineteenth century-type process to a twenty-first century, post-modern phenomenon. During the 1990s, migrants' actions were perfectly explained by the micro version of neoclassical theory. They decided, individually, to immigrate to Canada in order to take advantage of wages five to ten times higher. But this rational choice process was plagued by distorted information on the openness of the Canadian labor market. Once in place, many of them found the "Canadian myth" of professional accomplishment and high living standards is just a mask hiding the reality of *déclassement*. Three quarters of highly skilled, university-educated Romanian immigrants became, for the rest of their lives, low skilled industrial workers, *concierges* or shop assistants. These resigned *lumpen-*

intellectuals form the majority of Romanian communities in Quebec, Ontario or British Columbia.

However, development of Internet-based means of communication, economic growth in Romania and, essentially, progressive opening of European Union's labor market create conditions for a fundamental change of immigration patterns. Following a process best captured by migration networks theory, diffusion of Internet allowed the creation of transnational networks linking actual and candidate immigrants. Within these structures, newly created social capital provides trust and information absent in the 1990s. New migrants are now fully aware of the real perspectives in Canada and can optimize their choices.

The first consequence is related to the structure of the migratory flow. Fewer university-educated Romanians decide to cross the ocean, risking to become *concierges* or low skilled workers. Canadian immigration services facing this situation have to select increased numbers of less-skilled professionals. The second consequence is more fundamental. Since 1990, Romanian immigration to Canada was definitive. Despite *déclassement*, newcomers had little alternative. They settled and became part of stable, nineteenth century-type Romanian-Canadian communities. However, in the near future, this pattern will be more and more challenged by new professional opportunities in Romania and the European Union. Disappointed immigrants will simply return home or continue their migration to Western Europe. One century ago, two-thirds of the Romanians migrating to the New World returned home. There is no reason for the present unsuccessful immigrants to do otherwise.

In the years to come, patterns of Romanian immigration to Canada will become similar to the circulatory movement linking today Romania and Western Europe. A significant return- and secondary migration will connect Romanian communities in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver to the home country and the EU. These communities will stop being islands of a dispersed archipelago, transforming themselves into elements of an active, transnational continuum innervated by multidirectional human flows. In a way, it is only then they will become part of the post-modern world.

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RESEARCH ARTICLES

Social Participation of Turkish and Arabic Immigrants in the Neighborhood: Case Study of Moabit West, Berlin

Figen UZAR

Abstract. Social participation of immigrants in district activities and local planning processes is given significance in Germany. It has become an important issue with the introduction of Neighborhood Management concept in the 1990s. This concept deals with districts which have a considerable percentage of low-income, unemployed, low-educated, immigrant population and social help beneficiaries. Immigrants are usually seen as the cause of the problems in those areas by the authorities since they are not integrated into the host society and to the other immigrant groups. Since the 1990s, they have started to be seen as potential solution to the problems by means of an active social participation in their neighborhood. Desired level of social participation, however, has not been reached due to a number of reasons although there are a few immigrants who take part in social, cultural and planning activities in their district.

The aim of this article is to outline the reasons of low participation rates, motivations of the participant immigrants and the forms of participation among Turkish and Arabic immigrants in a neighborhood of Berlin, Moabit West, based on in-dept interviews made with both non-participant and participant immigrants and with some immigrant associations. The field research was carried out in June 2005, within the framework of the project 'Immigrants in the City'. The reasons of low participation which were found as a result of this research study are language deficiency, different cultural understandings of participation, looking for concrete results of participatory actions and lack of information. The participant immigrants are motivated to solve the problems in the district and to change it, to increase integration of the immigrant youth into the society and of the immigrants, to the established society. Lastly, participant immigrants usually take part in street festivals and youth social work, and in immigrant associations instead of German ones.

Keywords: *Social participation, integration, neighborhood, Turkish immigrants, Arabic immigrants, Berlin*

1. Introduction

This paper is an account of a research study which I carried out in Berlin in 2005 in the framework of the project "Immigrants in the City" to find out the state of participation of Turkish and Arabic immigrants in the district activities in Moabit West which is a neighborhood of Berlin; their motivations to participate, forms of

their participation and the reasons of non-participation. I made interviews with the participants and non-participants as well and with the represents of four immigrant associations. In this paper, I tried to evaluate the interviews I made, with the help of another colleague, to find out why immigrants do not participate in decision-making processes and in district activities and if they do participate, how, where and why they choose to participate.

Firstly, I will start with a brief description of the project “Immigrants in the City” (Zuwanderer in der Stadt). Next, I will give a theoretical framework for the concept of social participation in the neighborhood; when and where it has become an important policy in immigrant issues; how it is related to the integration of immigrants into the society and democratization processes, what are the forms and methods of participation and last point in this part; what are the reasons of immigrants’ non-participation mentioned in the existent literature. After the theoretical introduction to the concept of participation, I will pass on to a short description of the study area, Moabit West and then to the evaluation of the interviews which I conducted in order to find out the answers to my concerns in the theoretical part.

2. The Project: Immigrants in the City (Zuwanderer in der Stadt)

Socio-spatial integration of immigrants is the main concern of the project “Immigrants in the City” which is initiated by Schader Foundation and the partners of which are German Association of Cities (DST), German Head Federation of Housing and Real Estate Associations (GdW), German Institute of Urban Affairs (DifU) and Institute for Housing, Real Estate, Urban and Regional Development at Ruhr-University Bochum (InWIS). The project started in January 2004 and is expected to end in August 2006. It is promoted by the German Ministry of Education and Research.

Two assumptions of the project are as follows: first one is the spatial concentration of immigrants in certain districts of the cities. Second assumption is that the role of labor market as an integrating force leaves its place to the neighborhood and home.

The project is consisted of two bases: the expert forum which is a group of academics and practitioners and which give recommendations for integration policy; and a practice network which is made up of certain districts of eight cities,

namely; Essen with Altendorf and Bergmannsfeld, Frankfurt am Main with Nordweststadt, Hamburg with Mümmelmannsberg and Schiffbeker Berg, Hannover with Mittelfeld, Mannheim with Neckarstadt-West and Durlacher Straße (Rheinau), Munich with Moosach, Nuermberg with Langwasser and Südstadt and lastly Berlin-Mitte with Moabit-West (www.zuwanderer-in-der-stadt.de).

The area where and on which I conducted my research study was Moabit-West in Berlin Mitte. In the following part after the theoretical introduction to the concept of social participation in the neighborhood, I will give general characteristics of the district and then I pass to the analysis of the interviews. What I mean by general characteristics should be understood in a broader perspective to comprehend both demographic and social features and also the state of the neighborhood in terms of integration and in terms of the existing associations, organizations and projects which aim to ease and accelerate the integration and participation processes in the district.

3. Social Participation in the Neighborhood: A Theoretical Overview

What is meant by social participation in this paper and within the framework of the project is made clear in this part. First, I will mention the conditions when and how the concept of participation in the neighborhood appeared and is discussed. Later, I will give a definition of social participation according to the aims of this project. Then, I will continue with the forms and methods of immigrant participation in the neighborhood and the motivations of the residents with an immigration background to participate with an emphasis on the relationship between social participation in the district activities and integration of the neighborhood population. Lastly, I will state the difficulties, barriers and handicaps of immigrant participation in the district level.

Participation of residents in local planning processes and in the district activities has become an important issue with the introduction of 'Neighborhood Management' which has been discussed under 'Social City' (Social City Development) concept in 1990s (Seidel, 2005, p. 221). This concept deals with districts which have a considerable percentage of low-income, unemployed, low-educated, immigrant population and social help beneficiaries. What this concept offers is that these districts seen as problem areas should be renewed in order to

be sustainable residence areas. They should be made attractive for new segments of the population and the negative image of those areas should be erased.

Immigrants, as they usually live in this kind of discriminated districts, are sometimes seen as the cause of the problems in those areas by the authorities since they are not integrated into the host society and to the other immigrant groups. Since 1990s, they have started to be seen as potential solution to the problems in the districts they live. In addition to this, immigration and immigrants started to be seen as a solution to larger economic and demographic problems of Germany because of the rising unemployment rates, decreasing qualified active workforce and aging population in the country. Germany's population is aging and this will affect the labor market and security system in the country.

Germany is an immigration country. This is a fact which German authorities and political elite and also German public had not accepted for decades until 2001 when The Independent Commission on Migration to Germany published their report. According to this report, Germany's first migration law was made in 2004. This report puts emphasis on Germany's growing dependence on immigration and importance of integration of them into the host society and their participation (2001).

In this changing framework of ideas of planning and immigration, social participation of residents in the neighborhood gained importance. This makes it crucial to explain what is meant by social participation in this paper for the purposes of the project. There are various types of participation such as political participation, participation in the labor market, social and cultural participation. What this paper deals with is social and cultural participation of immigrants at the neighborhood level. I find it also crucial to divide social participation into two categories according to the types of activities which immigrants are expected to take part. This division is necessary as the level of participation and level of difficulty to pull immigrants into the activities differ according to the type of activity and the methods used. The first of these two categories is participation in social and cultural activities in the district which can also be further divided as participation in immigrant associations and participation in associations/organizations initiated by German population or local governments. Second type of social participation is participation of the residents in decision-making processes of spatial planning in the district.

This second type of social participation is especially more difficult as it needs another and a higher level of consciousness both socio-culturally and educationally. Local governments have been complaining about low levels of participation in decision-making processes among the majority society, too. Thus, a low level of immigrant participation in planning processes in the neighborhood is not only about or determined by being an immigrant. Of course, the characteristics that are attached to being an immigrant affect this type of participation in a negative way. However, this is more importantly influenced by a loss or low level of consciousness of citizenship and feelings of belonging to the locality/space on which one lives. A little number of residents has this kind of consciousness. Moreover, methods of participation used do not address to everybody in the society. They are middle class techniques and often criticized on this ground (Hinte, 2001, p. 155).

Thus, different methods have to be applied for the participation of immigrants in planning processes. "Planning for real" is the method which is seen as a best-practice example to make immigrants involve in neighborhood activities. Through personal contacts in everyday communication points, they can be informed of participation possibilities and their ideas and views can be asked (Zuwanderer in der Stadt, 2005, p. 41). Another problem in immigrant participation is that there is little number of recruited personnel with ethnic background in participation facilities. This leads to a low level of immigrant participation, too. In order to have increased rates of participation among immigrants, there has to be an 'immigrant-mainstreaming' like gender-mainstreaming (Otman, 2004). It can seem at first as a divisive mechanism rather than an integrative one. However, in order to be integrative and to support integration, some time has to be spent on learning and evaluating the needs and interests of the immigrant population; how they respond to the methods of participation used and whether another method works better or not.

Although participation is generally seen as both an aim in itself and a method to achieve integration in the society, participation processes (I mean here participation in planning and decision-making processes) do not necessarily have to be integrative at the "first step". In fact, they end up with the integration of immigrants by adding their views and thoughts into the planning which will design the environment that immigrants share with the majority population. However, in more serious processes where the needs of the immigrants are more significant,

the methods and the forms of participation should be appropriate for immigrants to understand and evaluate. Participation and integration can be simultaneously achieved well in social and cultural activities such as street festivals or cultural associations other than need-based and more complex participation facilities.

Another significant point here to be mentioned is the relationship between participation and integration and the importance of the neighborhood for this relationship to occur. As socially underprivileged groups in the city such as immigrants spend most of their everyday life in their neighborhood, importance of home and the district has become important for the integration of them (Zuwanderer in der Stadt, 2005, p. 6). If immigrants are made participate in the social and cultural activities and in planning processes in their neighborhood, once they are engaged in that kind of activities, their integration into the society and with other immigrant groups increases.

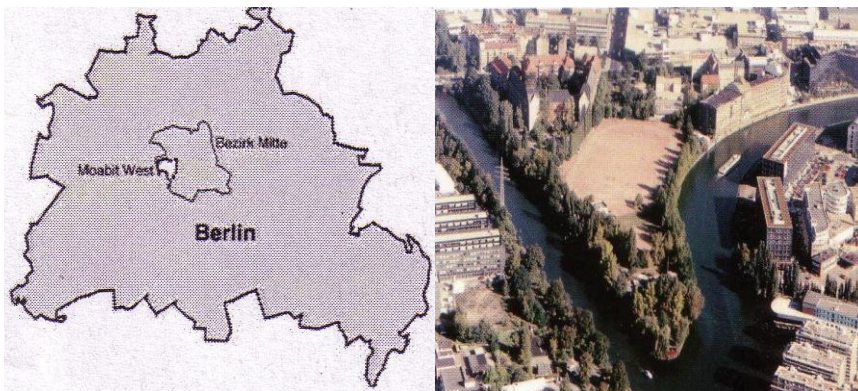
There are also difficulties in immigrant participation which are specific barriers stemming from being an immigrant. These are language deficiency, having a different understanding of participation or little tradition of participation, being socio-economically deprived so that immigrants can not participate in activities which do not bring them any material benefit, preference of immigrants to take part in their own associations. This last point becomes a barrier only when the immigrant associations deal with the country of origin and its people "back home". If the immigrant association has offers and activities in the neighborhood, then it adds also to the social participation of immigrants because what they do in their own association, in turn, affects the neighborhood and changes it.

Immigrants are usually motivated to take part in their own associations as they share common interests and needs with their co-ethnics. What are the motives of participants in district activities in general? Hoppe itemizes the motivations of voluntary work as follows and this also counts for the immigrants' motivations of participation in the neighborhood: enjoying oneself, meeting sympathetic people, helping other people, doing something good for the public, gaining and using knowledge and abilities, developing a sense of self responsibility and decision making, finding recognition in the society, representing own interests and solving own problems (2003, p. 31). There are specific motivations of immigrant to participate in addition to these more general incentives which will be mentioned in the part where I evaluate the interviews.

When we consider the forms of participation of immigrants in the neighborhood activities, we see that they usually take part in cultural activities such as music, sports or theatre events. Moreover, they join street festivals; they cook traditional foods, wear traditional costumes and show their traditional dance during these festivals. Some argue that this kind of participation is not actually social participation in the district. They claim that it is just enjoyment and do not provide the district with any good. However, they are useful in getting into contact with the neighbors and it provides the immigrants to identify themselves with the district.

In this part, I tried to clarify what is understood by social participation in the neighborhood and forms, methods and problems of social participation of immigrants in the neighborhood. Now I will pass to a description of the case study area, Moabit West.

4. Moabit West (Berlin Mitte): General Characteristics



Sources: Berlin map, Reimann, 2004; air photo of Moabit, Quartiersmanagement flyer

The study area where I conducted my research, Moabit West, is located in Berlin Mitte which is formed by three regions (Wedding, Tiergarten and Mitte). Moabit West is a part of old quarter Tiergarten. Moabit West is on the north of the district Moabit and was a traditional worker and immigrant quarter which has made Moabit West, in turn, known as an area full of social and economic problems. The southern area of Moabit is, quite contrary to Moabit West, a favorite area to live as a result of its proximity to the administrative blocks of the Federal State of

Berlin. The street “Alt-Moabit” separates these two areas from each other; not only physically but also in terms of social, cultural and economic differences of the neighborhoods.

If we have a closer look at the demographic and social structure of Moabit West, we see that a high percentage of the population is constituted by immigrants, social help beneficiaries and the unemployed. Following tables summarize social, economic and demographic structure of Moabit West by numbers.

Table 1: Percentage of foreign population in Berlin-Mitte and Quarter Management area, Beusselkiez

	Berlin-Mitte	Beusselkiez (QM Gebiet)
% of foreign population	27, 3 % (2002)	35, 4 % (2003)

Source: Reimann, Bettina. 2004. „Zwischenbericht Fallstudienstadt Berlin Untersuchungsgebiet Moabit West (Berlin Mitte)“ *Zuwanderer in der Stadt*

Table 2: Percentage of social help beneficiaries and the unemployed in Moabit West

Moabit West	Foreigners	Total
Social help beneficiaries (2002)	18,9 %	12,8 %
Unemployed	28, 9 %	20, 2 %

Source: Reimann, Bettina. 2004. „Zwischenbericht Fallstudienstadt Berlin Untersuchungsgebiet Moabit West (Berlin Mitte)“ *Zuwanderer in der Stadt*

Foreign population in the Quarter Management area, Beusselkiez, was 35, 4 % in 2003 and it is more than the percentage of foreign population in Berlin Mitte (Here I use the figures for Beusselkiez since data is not available for Moabit West and since Beusselkiez and Moabit West are close to each other in terms of demographic and social structure). Percentage of social help beneficiaries and the unemployed in Moabit West is higher among foreign population (18, 9% and 28, 9% respectively).

After examining the social, economic and demographic structure of Moabit West, it is also important to have a closer look at the social relationships between different groups in this heterogeneous neighborhood. How is the relationship of immigrant population with the German population and how is the communication between different immigrant groups such as Turks, Arabs and former Yugoslavians? Can we talk about an integrated Moabit? It seems very difficult to talk about this

because of a two-fold process. First of all, individual immigrant groups have little contact with the German population and secondly, different immigrant groups have problems with each other's existence in the society and also in the ethnic economy which lead them to have conflicts with each other. For instance, Turkish immigrants in the ethnic economy are irritated by the high numbers of Arabs who take part in the economic structure of Moabit with their restaurants and shops. This fact has been increasing by the continuous migration of people from Middle Eastern and North African regions to Germany as a result of the ongoing wars and political instability.

Because of the intersection of low levels of integration, high density of social problems and high percentage of young immigrant population in Moabit West, we see numerous organizations, associations and projects, either initiated by the local government or by the immigrants themselves, in order to ease the integration and participation of immigrants. These efforts especially aim the integration and participation of children and teenagers with an immigration background. However, the existing organizations are still insufficient to supply the need in the district. Thus, social work concerned with youth and children is seen as a deficiency in Moabit West by experts (Reimann, *Zwischenbericht Untersuchungsgebiet Moabit West*, p. 25). Why is it important to work especially on the participation of children and teenagers in the district? Firstly, as I stated in the previous parts, participation of immigrants in the social and cultural activities in the district is important for the integration of them into the society because neighborhood and home have become the places where high percentage of socially underprivileged residents spend most of their everyday life, weekends and holidays. They have seldom opportunity to take part in social and cultural activities in the other districts. In addition to this first reason, it is particularly vital for the youth and the children as they are the ones among the whole immigrant population who stays in their neighborhood mostly and as it is easier to integrate younger generations and to have them participated.

To have a rough idea about the types of organizations, associations and projects in Moabit West, I will give a list of organizations which aim to help immigrants through their offers such as consultancy, language courses, and free time activities and also in a broader perspective, which aim the integration and participation of immigrants in the district level. I will exclude the self-help groups and country of origin oriented associations of immigrants as they are of no use for

the concerns of the project. These are not all of the associations in Moabit but the mostly known ones: Al-Tadamun e. V., Fenerbahce Berlin e. V. 1989 Türkischer Kulturverein, Bacim e. V., Beraberce e. V. Türkisch-Deutscher Mädchenverein, Al-Bayan- Islamischer Kulturverein e. V., Al-Diwan e. V., Atatürk e. V., El-Patio e. V., F. C. Karame, Dünja Mädchen Verein, Haus der Weisheit (Moschee and Kulturverein), Stadtteilplenum, Stadtschloss Moabit (Moabiter Ratschlag), Quartiersmanagement Moabit West- Stern, SOS Kinderdorf, Gangway-Straßensozialarbeit etc. (For further information www.moabitwest.de, www.moabiter-ratschlag.de)

There were four of these associations, organizations and projects which I made interviews with, namely, Dünja Mädchen-Kultur-Treff (Dünja Girls' Cultural Meeting Point), F. C. Karame, Al-Diwan and Stadtteilplenum. I will be talking about the reasons why I chose to make interviews with these four organizations/associations/projects in the following part where I will describe the aims and activities of them.

5. Interview Partners

Dünja Mädchen-Kultur-Treff:

Dünja, as a club for girls to meet and share experiences, was the idea of an immigrant girl from Palestine. With her idea, she went to the Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) and asked for a place to realize her project and in 1999, Dünja was founded in Moabit in a place which was renovated by all the participant girls. It is financially supported by Jugendamt. There are two social workers who are paid through this institution and other social workers are paid through other projects. There are also interneers and voluntary workers.

The aims of Dünja are to provide the girls in the neighborhood a place where they can spend their free time with the other girls and where they can get help with their school work, psychological problems or problems in their families. The services offered by Dünja are as follows: homework help, help with computer and internet use, consultancy in university and job applications, free time activities, consultancy in all kinds of difficulties in life, discussions about integration, intercultural and inter-religious differences and differences in one's own culture and religion. Dünja, with its broader perspective on integration and participation, is one of the successful examples of district projects in Moabit and also in Berlin. It is an open place to all cultures and there are Arabic, Turkish, German, Asians girls

participating in it. In 2004, Dünja was given Berliner Integrations-Sonderpreis (Berlin Special Integration Prize). (For further information www.moabiter-ratschlag.de)

F. C. Karame:

F. C. Karame was founded in 1978 first as a sports club for the Arabic teenagers, who migrated to Germany because of security and economic reasons from Lebanon and Palestine without their parents. The aim of the club was to provide those teenagers with a free time activity and by this way to prevent them from the dangers in the “streets”. In 1990, the association was moved to Moabit where its concern had changed from just being a sports club to a migrant association which started to deal with youth and family social work. F. C. Karame works mainly on honorary basis and partly gets financial support from Bezirksamt Mitte (Borough of Mitte). There are eleven people working in the association only one of whom gets salary. All of the others are voluntary social workers. What is offered by F. C. Karame is nearly the same with what Dünja offers: language and computer courses, free time activities for the teenagers, homework help, consultancy for families, theatre and folklore groups. They organize discussion panels about integration, immigrants’ problems, conflicts between different cultures and religions, too, especially on the conflict between the Jewish and the Muslim in Israel and Palestine.

Al-Diwan e. V.:

Al-Diwan e. V. was founded in 2001 as a family association. However, instead of being called as an Arabic family association, it prefers to be called as a German-Arabic cultural association as its aim is the integration of different groups of immigrants and also integration of German and immigrant groups. They get personal (labor) help from Bezirksamt and the founder of the association, Mr. El-Said, supports his association himself with some support from his relatives. He and a German social pedagogue work voluntarily for Al-Diwan. Services offered by Al-Diwan are consultancy in bureaucratic processes, help with official letter writing, German and Arabic language courses, free time activities for children and teenagers.

Stadtteilplenum:

Stadtteilplenum is a modified form of citizen participation organized by Moabiter Ratschlag (Moabit Council) and Quartiersmanagement Moabit West.

It takes place every third Tuesday of the month and it is open to everybody who is interested in joining the discussions about planning Moabit West. The aim of Stadtteilplenum is to achieve something good and useful for Moabit together with the politicians and residents. Discussions are usually in the form of round table discussion and moderated by two social workers from the Moabiter Ratschlag and Quartiersmanagement. The topics to be discussed are usually determined according to the wishes of the residents who participate. A bureaucrat or a politician who is responsible for that certain topic is invited and residents ask questions to her/him and share their concerns and ideas about the topic. The profile of the participants varies. There are not only intellectuals but also people who live in Moabit without high educational level. However, people who participate regularly are those for whom their district is important and who want to change something in their neighborhood. There are also participants who are interested in politics. This means participation in a citizen forum such as Stadtteilplenum is determined mostly by interest. What is lacking in the Stadtteilplenum and what is disturbing the organizers of this discussion panel is the low levels of immigrants participating. I will be dealing with the reasons of low participation rates in Stadtteilplenum in the evaluation of the interviews part.

Why I chose to make interviews with these immigrant associations depends on the popularity of them among immigrant population in Moabit West. The other reason is that they display successful examples for the participation of the immigrants and they try to achieve social participation of immigrants in Moabit. They attempt to do useful organizations and activities both for Moabit West and for the integration of immigrants and the majority society. Later, I chose to make interviews with these associations because they were the most open organizations to answer my questions and to talk about their activities.

The reason why I chose Stadtteilplenum is that it is the mostly used discussion forum of Moabit residents and it is necessary to compare the answers of immigrant associations with a German organization which tries to build connections with immigrants. Additionally, it was one of the main concerns of this research study to find out why immigrants do not get involved in decision making processes such as the Stadtteilplenum. That's why it was important to know the organization closely.

6. Evaluation of the interviews

In order to find out the motivations of the immigrant participants in social activities in Moabit West and the forms and methods of participation used and more importantly, the reasons of non-participation of the majority of the immigrants, I did interviews with both immigrants who actively take part in the activities in the district and who do not participate in any of the activities. To be able to reach the first group of interviewees, who were the participants, I contacted the four associations I mentioned above. I made interviews with the responsible people and also with the people who take part in the activities of those associations. Firstly, I talked to Hatice Ciftci, who is a social worker in Dünja. After this first contact with her, I attended discussion groups of the girls in Dünja. The themes were Moabit, its problems and girls' motivations to take part in Dünja. Moreover, I attended Mother's Breakfast twice, which is a project organized by Dünja to make the mothers' of the participant girls get in contact with each other and share their experiences. The themes were again motivations to participate and Moabit West in general.

The second person interviewed was Mr. Zaher from F. C. Karame where two interviews with two participant boys were made. Next, Mr. Said from Al-Diwan was interviewed and lastly, Susanna Torka, who is one of the moderators of Stadtteilplenum, was spoken to.

It was easier to reach the participant immigrants than the non-participant immigrants. Although the participants are less in number, they can be reached through associations and organizations and this makes the communication with them easier. However, I had great difficulty when I tried to make interviews with the non-participants. The only way to reach them was to make interviews with the people on the street. Thus, I could make thirteen interviews with the people who do not participate in any kind of social activities in their district, other than street festivals. I should state that non-response rate was very high when we consider the people who could not speak German, who misunderstood what I asked and who had no interest in what I was asking.

In this part, I will try to analyze the interviews while keeping the following questions in my mind as tools to structure the evaluation of the interviews: how do immigrants conceive Moabit as their neighborhood area? What are the problems in

Moabit from the point of view of the immigrants? How do these problems affect, motivate or hinder immigrants to participate? What are the motivations of participant immigrants and what are forms and methods of their participation? How can the methods of participation be improved in order to activate the immigrants who do not take part in any kind of social or decision-making activity in their neighborhood? What are the reasons why immigrants do not participate in the district activities? What is the importance of participation of immigrants in the district activities, for the immigrants themselves, or the neighborhood and for the majority society?

Problems in Moabit

As I stated in the part where I gave a short description of Moabit West, Moabit is seen as a problem area by the experts. With its high percentage of immigrant, unemployed and social help beneficiary population, the district has to face social and economic problems. What the residents of Moabit West uttered during the interviews was not different from the expert views. They also see their neighborhood as a problem area. However, here I must point out that there was a difference between the views of the immigrants who participate and who do not participate. While the participant immigrants talked about integration problems, social and economic problems in the area, non-participants stated that they do not see any problems in Moabit or that although there are problems-however they did not name any-they are obliged to live in Moabit. There were also paradoxical answers given by some of the interviewees such as "I do not like living in Moabit at all but everything is OK" or "There are no problems in our district. Life is here very bad".

When we look at the answers given by the immigrants who participate, we see that they are mostly problems of integration and difference. I tried to categorize the most commonly stated problems in Moabit West by the immigrant participants in the following:

"There is little contact and communication between the residents of Moabit; both between different immigrant groups and between immigrant population and Germans. There are different immigrant groups living together but they have contacts only with their co-ethnics; Turks with Turks and Arabs with Arabs"

"The district is very crowded and there is a high rate of foreign population composed of many different nationalities. There is the feeling that you do not live in Germany and that Moabit is a deported district"

Social problems and conflicts within the immigrant families; High crime rates and fights in the district; Discomfort, uneasiness in the neighborhood; High unemployment rates; High flat rents; Drug dealers and drug users; Pollution and lack of maintenance of the infrastructure. These problems, which were mentioned by the immigrants who take part in social activities in Moabit, are, in fact, the factors which lead the participant immigrants take part; which lead them go into action and do something against these problems. Thus, there is a strong connection between the problems stated and the motivations of participants to participate. Before building the connection between the two areas, it is significant to look deeper into the motivations of the participants.

Motivations of participants

Immigrants who participate in the neighborhood activities are motivated to solve and to better the problems which they see in their district. All of the participants I talked to believe that low levels of integration can be increased through participation. To quote Mr. El Said from Al-Diwan:

“When people are engaged in activities together, differences disappear”

In order to achieve integration, many of the participants are engaged in youth social work because they believe that and also experience has shown that, it is more difficult to work with the first generation immigrants in the field of integration. The efforts in integrating the first generation immigrants who are not capable of the language, who are generally low-educated and who have a totally different socio-cultural background, are tempted to give negative results. Thus, participants prefer to work with the teenagers. Their motivation to participate in the district activities is their attempts to integrate the youth into the society and to keep them away from the problems in the neighborhood such as crime, drug addiction, by offering them something to do in their free time. For instance, one of the voluntary workers in F. C. Karame, Fouad, stated that he wants to help children because when he was young he always created problems and now he wants them to keep away from problems.

Participants who pointed out the problems of contact and communication between different immigrant groups take part in intercultural projects to increase the level of communication and to improve the quality of contact between immigrant groups and between immigrants and Germans. For instance, the women who take part in Mother’s Breakfast, which is an offer from Dünja, stated their

concerns about the little contact between the residents of Moabit. As a result of their concern, they participate in this activity of Dünja and as I learned from them during the interviews that they also participate in other activities in their district such as the activities of Nachbarschaftshaus and Diakonie. They try to get into contact with other immigrants and with Germans by participating in street festivals, too.

When we look at the motivations of immigrant girls who take part in Dünja, we see that they are also motivated to get rid of the problems they utter, namely, problems of restricted freedom by living in an ethnic community and patriarchal oppression in general. What they try to achieve with Dünja is to create a private sphere for themselves in the public, outside home, which is the traditional private sphere. They want to be visible in the society through their participation in the neighborhood. They want to show that they are also residents of Moabit West; they want to stress their existence as immigrant girls. Moreover, they want to have a say in the processes about Moabit, they want to change their environment and play a role in its development. There are also motivations like enjoying themselves, knowing other people, told by the participants.



Waldstrassenfest in Moabit West and the participants of Dünja
Photograph taken by F. Uzar

Unfortunately, not all of the immigrants are motivated to participate. On the contrary, number of immigrants who do not involve in the neighborhood activities is higher than the number of participants. In the next section, I will

emphasize the reasons of low immigrant participation in social activities in the district.

Reasons of low participation among immigrant groups

The reasons of low participation of immigrants in district activities, which were told by the interviewees, share some common points with the reasons we see in the previous research studies. For instance, some of the people whom I talked to also mentioned language deficiency as the primary barrier in front of immigrant participation. When they are asked about their non-participation in the Stadtteilplenum, for instance, their answer is “We do not participate because we understand nothing”. What needs closer attention here is that it is not only a problem of German language; a language deficiency problem but also a problem of lack of an expert language or to put it in other words, difficulty in understanding the language used in the discussions in Stadtteilplenum or in any kind of planning discussion about the neighborhood. To quote Mr. Zaher here:

“The elderly immigrants are not confident enough to go to the Stadtteilplenum as they think that they do not understand the themes discussed. Moreover, Germans use complicated vocabulary related to the specific area they are discussing about, so immigrants do not understand the points which are put forward. Germans themselves do not understand that kind of complex definitions, either. I am sorry, but it is like this. Then, they start discussing certain paragraphs of certain laws. Immigrants sit there and say ‘aha’”

There were also immigrants who mentioned immigrants’ having a different cultural background as a reason of non-participation. According to Mr. Zaher from F. C. Karame, the reasons of low participation rates among immigrants are strongly related to the different understanding of participation which stems from their culture. He stated that immigrants have not learned in their culture to make their neighborhood clean or to initiate an action. Elderly Germans try to do something for their district or want to help others because they do not have anything to do. They have free time and they are motivated to participate. However, it does not mean that immigrants do not like helping others or that they do not want to participate. On the contrary, they are ready to help

others or work for their districts' good. They are willing to take part not only in cultural or social activities in their neighborhood but also in decision making processes about their district. However, they are not used to the German way of citizen participation. Immigrants have a different understanding of participation or working for public good. What Mr. Zaher means by lack of immigrant knowledge of participation is these different understandings in participatory styles of different cultures. As many of the interviewees stated, immigrants take part in activities when they are asked. This is one of the differences between German way and immigrant way of participation. It carries the danger of putting different cultures of participation into one heading when I use "immigrant culture of participation". However, in order to highlight the differences between the way Germans and the immigrants participate, I find this division necessary. As most of the first generation immigrants came from countries where there was a different understanding of democracy and citizenship when they first migrated to Germany at the end of 60s and 70s, they usually obey the authority. They do not have the understanding of initiating a project. It should not be forgotten here that the group of immigrants mentioned here are first generation immigrants and difficulties experienced in their participation and difficulties faced in the participation of second and third generation immigrants are different from each other.

Some time has to be spent in order to make immigrants used to the way participation is realized in German cities. Some argue that immigrants have been living in German cities for more than thirty five years now and they have to get used to this way of citizen participation. However, immigrants were not asked to participate from the beginning of participatory activities in Germany. As I have stated before the views of immigrants have begun to be taken into consideration from the 1990s onwards together with a growing interest in disadvantaged districts which have a high number of immigrant population.

Another barrier why immigrants are not motivated in spite of their willingness is that, they are looking for concrete results of participatory activities; when they experience that the activities or planning discussions do any good for the district and for themselves, they are motivated to take part. In Mr. El-Said's terms from the association Al-Diwan, "immigrants take part when there is an action". When they see something concrete then they are interested in it and motivated to participate. They do not stand on the corner without doing anything

as long as the activity is announced and immigrants are asked to join. For example, when Moabiter Ratschlag organizes an activity to clean Moabit, people realize that it is doing something good for the district and thus for the residents of the district. Then, they become interested in the activities of Moabiter Ratschlag. What Susanna Torka from Stadtteilplenum also claims is that immigrants come and join the discussions in Stadtteilplenum when there are concrete offers. Some can think that there is a pragmatic approach to the discussion forums such as Stadtteilplenum when immigrants mostly take part when there is a concrete help or offer or activity. For instance, as Ms. Torka states immigrants take part in Stadtteilplenum but they ask for a place or financial support for their own associations or for their own projects. I agree that it seems pragmatic but in turn, those associations try to achieve something useful for their co-ethnics who are also the residents of the same neighborhood and most of those associations also try to improve the quality of their neighborhood through their activities. This is also an important part of social participation in the district. Another reason for the motivation of immigrant associations to work on their own without cooperating with institutions such as Stadtteilplenum is that immigrants feel some Germans do not accept them as foreigners in the citizen forums such as Stadtteilplenum. Thus, they want to show that they are also the residents of the same district and citizens of this country as Germans. The best place to realize their aims is not Stadtteilplenum but their own associations or organizations. That is why they insist on participating in their own associations where they can also enjoy a higher number of participation rates of their co-ethnics.

Another reason for low levels of participation among immigrants is that they do not have information about the possibilities of participation in the district. Most of the non-participants I made interviews with have never heard of Stadtteilplenum. This may be because they are not interested in taking part in discussion forums about the spatial needs or development of Moabit. However, if the authorities want immigrants to be interested in this kind of forums or organizations, they have to advertise themselves in order to make people participate. Not all the German residents are aware of the fact that there is a Stadtteilplenum in Moabit West and thus not all of them join to the discussions. Lack of information is related to a general problem more than just being an immigrant and being not interested in decision making processes in their

neighborhood. First, it is a matter of inefficient advertisement and informing. As Mr. El-Said claims, in the flyers of Stadtteilplenum it is only written when and where the forum will take place but there is no information about what Stadtteilplenum is and what it tries to achieve. Secondly it is a problem of the methods used in the discussion process. They are middle class oriented moderation methods which are not appealing to the most sections of the society.

In addition to the methods which hinder immigrant participation, the contents of the discussion forums or activities can either hinder or ease the immigrant participation. This is because participation mostly depends on the interests and needs of the people. For instance, as Mr. Zaher, Mr. El-Said and Ms. Torka stated, immigrants take part when topics like integration, problems of immigrants, immigration policies are discussed. This can be used in a fruitful way by combining the interests of immigrants with other participation facilities or possibilities. On the contrary, when certain topics about immigrants' problems are not discussed deeply and thoroughly, they hinder the participation of them.

The other reasons of non-participation which were mentioned by non-participants are inappropriate times of the meetings, which hinder especially women's participation since they are one of the vulnerable groups to the 'dangerous streets' of Moabit. Moreover, most of the immigrants who do not participate stated that they don't have time to take part in social activities in their district and others complained about lack of activities in Moabit.

What can be done in order to make immigrants participate in social activities and in decision making processes in the district? The answers of participants and non-participants share some common features. Both of these two groups offered organizing street festivals or cultural activities to make people know each other and to have a consciousness of being neighbors. It would be more interesting for immigrants when they start with activities like festivals. When different immigrant groups and the Germans organize and take part in various activities together, they get to know each other and then this eases the way to participation in the neighborhood. There were also suggestions of organization of Stadtteilplenum by immigrants themselves, when they could invite the other immigrants and also feel themselves engaged in the process.

7. Conclusion

In this study, I tried to understand, explain and evaluate social participation of Turkish and Arabic immigrants in a neighborhood of Berlin; Moabit West which is perceived as a problem area with high percentage of poor, social beneficiary, unemployed and immigrant population, high crime rates and uneasiness. The interviews I made indicate that immigrants do not participate in local decision making processes and do take part rarely in social and cultural activities in the neighborhood. When they participate, they prefer immigrant associations and street festivals. They are motivated to take part in order to solve the problems in their neighborhood which must be given priority in their points of view. Immigrants who do not participate give reasons of language problems- both problem of German and an expert language-, different understanding of participation and economic and social integration problems which prevent a social participation. Although less in numbers, there are immigrants who do participate in local planning processes related to the neighborhood problems and decisions and in social and cultural activities in the district. They usually take part in immigrant associations or intercultural organizations in order to ease the communication and integration of different groups.

Social participation in the neighborhood can be instrumental for the integration of immigrant groups into the established society and for the increase in communication between different groups who live in the neighborhood. Thus, social and cultural activities such as street festivals, which may seem as ordinary activities, may increase the integration level in the society by bringing different immigrant groups and the members of the established society together as residents of the same neighborhood.

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Central and Eastern Europeans Migrants' Subjective Quality of Life. A Comparative Study

Sergiu Bălăţescu

Abstract: There is no general agreement among scholars on the consequences of labor migration on the sending countries. Some argue that the migration would increase the quality of life of the families or communities involved, giving support for democracy and market reforms in these countries, while others share the view that the brain drain and fiscal losses would have long term effects on the sending countries' development. This paper takes another approach, focusing on the migrant persons' subjective quality of life. Using data issued in the first two rounds of the European Social Survey (2002/2003, 2004/2005), the Eastern European immigrants' satisfaction with their lives as a whole and with the social and political environment is measured. They report lower satisfaction with life as a whole, but higher satisfaction with the societal conditions than the natives and other kind of immigrants. Explanation lies in the different sources of these evaluations: when evaluating their overall satisfaction, the immigrants rely on their experiences in their receiving countries, while when evaluating the societal conditions they compare these to those from the sending countries. The fact that they show higher levels of satisfaction with the societal conditions than the other immigrants also supports this hypothesis, because the former are more recent and less accommodated to the receiving society than the latter.

Keywords: *immigration in Europe, economic migration, citizenship, quality of life, subjective well-being, social attitudes, social comparison*

Introduction

The relationship between migration and development is a recent and promising study area³ although there is no general agreement on the main conclusions of the literature. Some scholars share the view that the migration would increase the quality of life of the families or the communities involved, reducing the extent, the depth and the severity of poverty⁴ and providing

³ Ninna Nyberg-Sørensen, Nicholas Van Hear, and Poul Engberg-Pedersen, "The Migration-Development Nexus" *International Migration* 40 no. 5 (2002)..

⁴ Richard H. Adams, Jr. and John M. Page, "Do International Migration and Remittances Reduce Poverty in Developing Countries?," *World Development* 33, no. 10 (2005).

opportunities for better education and health⁵. This, it is argued, would increase the support for democracy and market economy in these countries. Others suggest that we deal here only short-term effects⁶. The brain drain, the fiscal losses, and the lack of the internal pressure towards democratization and development⁷ would have long term negative effects on the sending countries' quality of life.

This paper approaches differently the debate, focusing on the quality of life of the migrants' (which is an obvious effect of social development), measured on the level of the individual. The perspective is not entirely new⁸, but there are not many studies in this research area. We would expect to find a lower quality of life of the immigrants from Eastern Europe compared with the natives. However, any good comparative data, like the New Immigrant Survey in U.S.⁹, lacks on the continent. A new study would be better fitted for this job: the European Social Survey, a very robust and reliable comparative research¹⁰. The first (2002/2003) and the second (2004-2005) waves included relatively high samples than other similar surveys (between 1.500 and 3.000 subjects for each nation) that allow a more reliable comparisons between the studied groups.

The present paper is focused on the Central and Eastern European immigrants. I included under this category all those who came from the post-communist countries in Europe, including those from Southern Europe (like Albania) or from European Post-Soviet countries. I used the subjective quality of life approach that takes into account the effects of different factors that worsen the quality of the migrating individuals. Using data from the first two rounds of the European Social Survey (2002/2003, 2004/2005), the Eastern European immigrants'

⁵ J. Page and S. Plaza, "Migration, Remittances, and Development: A Review of Global Evidence," *Plenary Session of the African Economic Research Consortium, May 29* (2005).

⁶ S. Martin, "Remittance Flows and Impact," *regional Conference on Remittances as a Development Tool, Organized by the Multilateral Investment Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank* (2001).

⁷ N. Stern and N. H. Stern, *A Strategy for Development* (World Bank Publications, 2002), quoted by Ellerman (2005).

⁸ Gordon F. De Jong, Aphichat Chamratrithirong, and Tran Quynh-Giang, "For Better, for Worse: Life Satisfaction Consequences of Migration," *International Migration Review* 36, no. 3 (2002), A. C. Michalos, "Migration and the Quality of Life: A Review Essay," *Social Indicators Research* 39, no. 2 (1996).

⁹ Douglas Massey et al., "The U.S. New Immigrant Survey: Overview and First Results from the Baseline Round of the Nis-2003 Cohort" (paper presented at the Conference Papers -- American Sociological Association, 2005).

¹⁰ James McBride, "The European Social Survey," *Irish Political Studies* 20, no. 1 (2005).

satisfaction with their lives and with the social and political conditions will be compared to those of the natives and of the other categories of immigrants.

Subjective quality of life and immigrant life

Subjective quality of life is defined as the way people evaluate the significant domains of their life as a whole¹¹. For example, people can be asked to report their satisfaction with their family, work, community relatedness and so on (all called *domain satisfactions*), or with their life as a whole (*subjective well-being*)¹². There is a common agreement that these variables have a cognitive and an affective dimension that are highly correlated. The way these relevant life domains are evaluated is determined by the individual position in the social system, but also by the personal characteristics (inherited or developed through yearly socialization) or cultural specificity¹³. However, we may consistently use this personal evaluation at societal level as an account of the individual and the societal conditions.

What are the subjective outcomes of the immigrant situation? In a previous paper¹⁴ I detailed three categories of factors that influence subjective well-being of migrating individuals:

Intrinsic (that the immigrant come with). People usually migrate because of their low level of living, and we can reasonably suppose that this reduces significantly their overall quality of life. Indeed, in a recent study, it was shown that the propensity to migrate is associated with lower subjective well-being and evaluation of societal conditions in Turkey and Poland¹⁵. The cultural inheritance is

¹¹ Frank M. Andrews and John P. Robinson, "Measures of Subjective Well-Being," in *Measure of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes*, ed. John P. Robinson, Phillip R. Shaver, and Lawrence S. Wrightsman (San Diego etc.: Academic Press, 1991), Ed. Diener, "Assessing Subjective Well-Being - Progress and Opportunities," *Social Indicators Research* 31, no. 2 (1994).

¹² Robert A. Cummins, "The Domains of Life Satisfaction: An Attempt to Order Chaos," *Social Indicators Research* 38, no. 3 (1996).

¹³ Ed. Diener and Richard E. Lucas, "Explaining Differences in Societal Levels of Happiness: Relative Standards, Need Fulfillment, Culture and Evaluation Theory," *Journal of Happiness Studies* 1, no. 3 (2000).

¹⁴ Sergiu Băltătescu, "Subjective Well-Being of Immigrants in Europe. A Comparative Study," in *European Identity and Free Movement of Persons in Europe*, ed. Lia Pop and Cristina Matiuță (Oradea: University of Oradea Publishing House, 2005).

¹⁵ Hubert Krieger, "Migration Trends in an Enlarged Europe," (Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2004).

also included by some authors as a factor with some influence here (there is a debate on different meanings of happiness in language are invoked here, and also the propensity of one or another culture towards feelings of happiness)¹⁶.

Acquired (linked with the immigrant experience in their receiving countries). The immigrants accept underpaid jobs or suffer from unemployment, and have bad housing conditions. These are objective circumstances that affect their level of living. The language differences, communication difficulties, loneliness, social isolation and the inability to integrate into the labor force can cause psychological problems such as depression, anxiety or feelings of anomie¹⁷. They also suffer because of their low social capital¹⁸, and perceive more and less acutely the prejudices and discriminations towards them¹⁹, and this increases their dissatisfaction²⁰.

Context (factors varying from one country to another, like the immigration policy and the ethnic/immigrant attitudes of the receiving society)²¹.

All these factors predict that the migrants will display a subjective well-being and also low evaluation of their personal domains. However, as I showed in a precedent paper, the immigrants display higher levels of satisfaction with most of the societal domains (quality of education, of the health services and the way democracy in general) than the natives. I explained it as a social comparison effect: the immigrants positively compare the situation in the receiving countries with that in their sending countries. However, it is known that the evaluation of the societal

¹⁶ R. Veenhoven, "Is Happiness a Trait - Tests of the Theory That a Better Society Does Not Make People Any Happier," *Social Indicators Research* 32, no. 2 (1994).

¹⁷ Bilge Ataca and John W. Berry, "Psychological, Sociocultural, and Marital Adaptation of Turkish Immigrant Couples in Canada," *International Journal of Psychology* 37, no. 1 (2002), Vanessa Smith Castro, *Acculturation and Psychological Adaptation*, Contributions in Psychology, No. 41 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003).

¹⁸ Alejandro Portes, "The Two Meanings of Social Capital," *Sociological Forum* 15, no. 1 (2000), "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24, no. 1 (1998).

¹⁹ M. Werkuyten and S. Nekuee, "Subjective Well-Being, Discrimination and Cultural Conflict: Iranians Living in the Netherlands," *Social Indicators Research* 47 (1999).

²⁰ A.H. Richmond, "Aspects of the Absorption and Adaptation of Immigrants," *Manpower and Immigration* (1974).

²¹ J Berry, "Psychology of Acculturation," in *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, ed. J. Berman (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

conditions is also a predictor of their subjective well-being. This would constitute what some scholars would call the “paradox of satisfaction”²².

The present study has the objective to test this regularity in the context of a special immigrant group, composed of those from Eastern Europe. Their levels of satisfaction with their lives as a whole and of the domain satisfactions will be compared with those of the other immigrants and of the natives. The working hypothesis is that the Eastern European immigrants will express lower subjective well-being than the natives, and also compared to other immigrants. The second hypothesis is that the immigrants will express higher satisfaction with the socio-political environment than the natives and also than other immigrants.

Method

I will use data from the European Social Survey, research funded by the European Commission's 5th Framework Program, whose first round was in 2002-2003. The European Social Survey is a brand new and very qualitative research that involves 21 countries with a database of 42.359 cases for the first wave, which included also a migration and refugee module with 58 questions. The second wave took place in 2004-2005 and comprised 45.681 cases and, with few exceptions, the same countries were involved. Measures of subjective well-being and satisfaction with different societal conditions are included, along with questions about the immigrant status of the respondent.

Satisfaction with life as a whole is measured on a 0-10 scale. Satisfaction with socio-economical environment is measured with questions such as: how satisfied are you with the present state of economy in country, the national government, the way democracy works in country. Evaluations of state of education and state of health services are also measured on the same scale from 0 to 10.

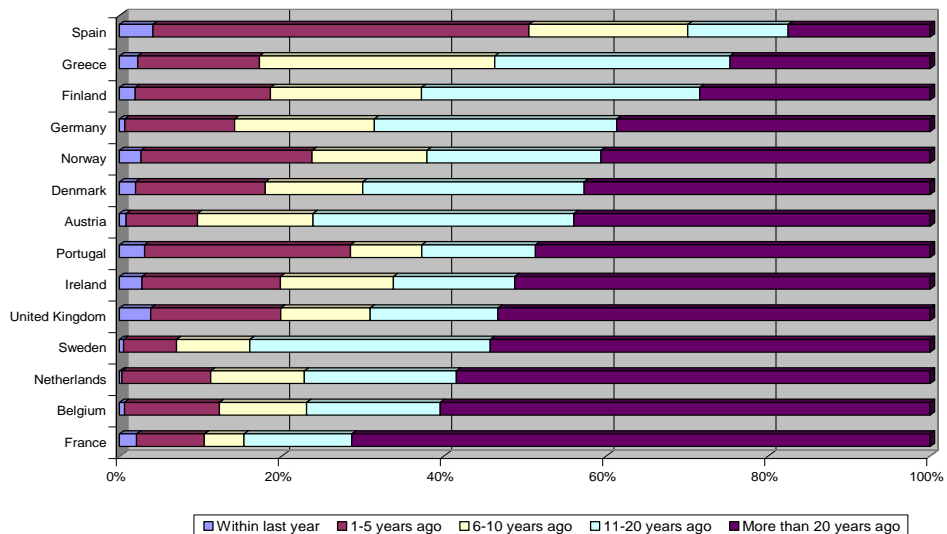
The immigrant status of the interviewed is a problematic measure in this survey because it is not asked directly: “are you an immigrant?”, but “Are you born in this country?” And if the answer is “no” they were asked “how long ago first came to live in country?” The structure of the questions may induce some errors in

²² Bălăţescu, "Subjective Well-Being of Immigrants in Europe. A Comparative Study.", Sebastian Rincken, "Condiciones Laborales Y Calidad De Vida De Los Inmigrantes En Andalucía" *Calidad de Vida y Salud* 1, no. 1 (2006).

the case when the citizens did not migrate, but were moved by territorial rearrangement from a country to other. For example, all of those not born in Poland and 90 % of those not born in Czech Republic declared they came in to this country more than 20 years ago, and they are in fact not immigrants, but peoples who lived in Germany before the Second World War.

In order to include a higher number of cases I merged the two files, selecting only the Western European countries involved in the both waves. 56.499 cases resulted in 14 countries: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom and Norway (Switzerland and Luxembourg were omitted because a large part of those not born in these countries came actually social the neighboring Western European countries). The research teams of the remaining countries had also big problems selecting the immigrant category. Spain, for instance, has in the study one of the lowest percents of immigrants. However, we know that it's confronting with new and important affluxes of mainly illegal immigrants from Eastern Europe. It is likely that illegal immigrants could not be found or refused to be interviewed. For those not born in the country, we have an account of the date when they firstly came into the country. This is presented in the next FIGURE:

FIGURE 1. Percent of respondents accounts of the time they came into country for 14 European states. Sources: ESS1,2; personal calculation.



There is still an important gap between older migrating countries like France, Belgium and Netherlands where at least 60 percents of those non-natives stayed for more than 20 years and the newer immigrating countries like Greece and especially Spain where over 40 % came in the last five years.

The respondents were classified in three categories: natives, immigrants from Eastern Europe, and other immigrants. Not all included in the last category may be immigrants. Some special cases still remain – children of EU citizen born, for different reasons, in some other country, or those who migrated from a western European country to another: it was hardly possible, on the basis of the existent questions in the survey, to isolate those cases. “Eastern European Immigrants” will denote here all those who came from the post-communist countries in Europe, including from Southern Europe or from European Post-Soviet countries. Their percents from the total population are the highest in Greece, Germany, and Austria (around 4-5 percents of those interviewed), and the lowest in the other Portugal, Spain and Ireland (under 0.5%), as shown in TABLE 1. The very low percentage of immigrants from Eastern Europe included in the survey is again a sign of the systematic errors in the selection of the respondents.

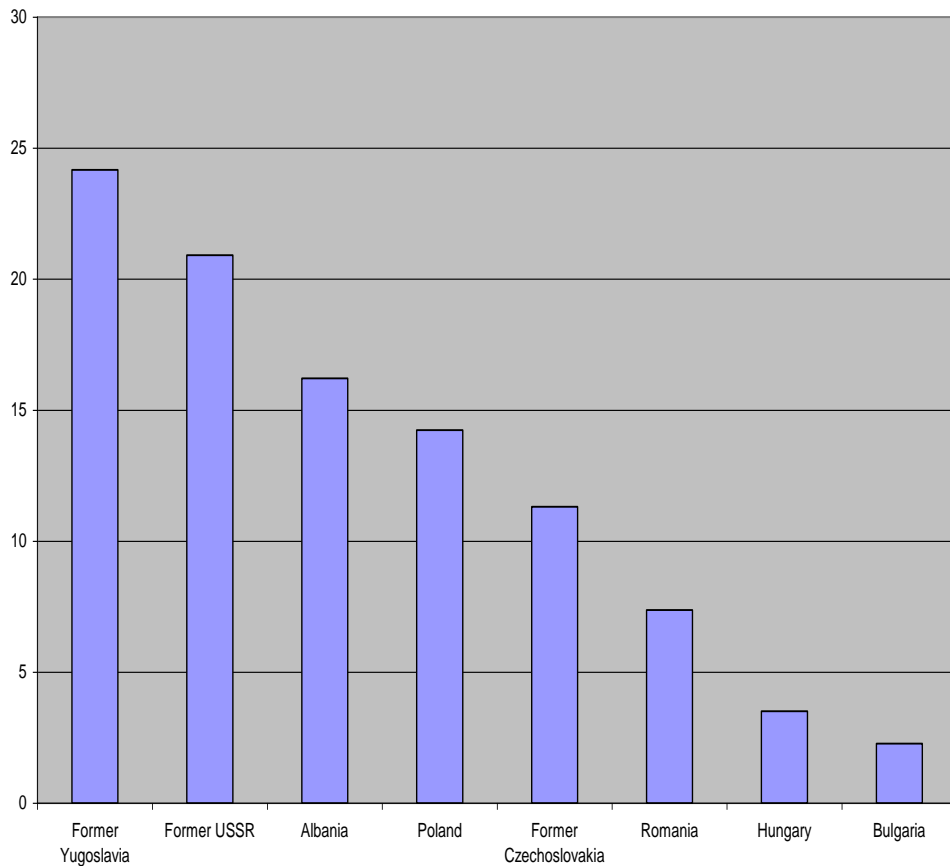
TABLE 1. The immigrant status in 14 Western European countries.

	Native	Immigrant from Eastern Europe	Immigrant from other countries
Finland	97,9	0,8	1,2
Denmark	95,3	0,9	3,8
Portugal	94,4	0,2	5,3
Spain	94,4	0,6	5,1
Norway	94,1	0,9	5,0
Ireland	93,5	0,1	6,4
Netherlands	92,9	0,6	6,5
Austria	91,9	3,7	4,4
Belgium	91,4	0,5	8,1
Germany	90,8	4,4	4,8
France	90,7	0,5	8,8
United Kingdom	90,6	0,4	9,1
Greece	90,2	4,9	4,9
Sweden	90,2	2,1	7,7

Sources: ESS1,2; personal calculation.

With regard to the sending country, the Eastern European immigrants are mostly from post-soviet and Yugoslav spaces. Albania and Poland follow. Only 10 percents of the total of the Eastern European immigrants in the included countries are from the recent EU members, Romania and Bulgaria, which is most probably an underestimation (see FIGURE2).

FIGURE 2. The sending countries of the Eastern European immigrants interviewed 14 European countries. Sources: ESS1,2; personal calculation.



Results

Life as whole

Overall, as we expected, the life satisfaction of those not born in the country is lower than that of natives. For some countries, nevertheless, the differences are not statistically significant. The differences are shown in Table 2:

TABLE 2. Life satisfaction levels and std. deviations in 14 European countries, by immigrant status.

	Native		Immigrant from other countries		Immigrant from Eastern Europe	
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev
Denmark	8,5	1,5	8,1	1,7	7,0	2,7
Finland	8,0	1,6	7,7	1,9	7,5	2,4
Sweden	7,9	1,7	7,5	1,9	7,2	2,3
Norway	7,7	1,7	7,3	2,0	7,6	2,0
Netherlands	7,7	1,6	7,2	2,0	7,1	1,8
Austria	7,6	2,0	7,1	2,4	7,0	2,3
Ireland	7,6	1,9	7,3	1,9	6,5	1,1
Belgium	7,5	1,8	7,1	2,1	7,8	2,1
United Kingdom	7,1	2,0	6,9	2,1	7,2	2,0
Spain	7,1	1,9	7,0	2,1	7,0	2,2
Germany	6,9	2,3	7,0	2,1	6,4	2,4
France	6,4	2,5	6,3	2,5	6,6	2,2
Greece	6,4	2,3	6,3	2,2	5,9	2,3
Portugal	5,8	2,1	5,7	2,1	5,4	2,4
MEAN	7,3	2,1	7,0	2,2	6,6	2,3

A first remark is that the mean levels in all these countries are situated above the median line: all immigrant status groups report to be more satisfied than dissatisfied with their lives. The rank-order of countries is usual for European surveys, as showed the data from European Value Survey²³ and Eurobarometer²⁴. The Northern countries like Denmark, Norway and Netherlands are on top and the Southern countries like Spain, France and Portugal on the bottom of the ranking.

As predicted, overall, the Eastern European immigrants have sensible lower subjective levels than the natives, but also than the other categories of non-natives. The most important factor that explains this difference is that they came rather recently in these countries, and had not much time to integrate culturally and economically in the receiving country. They often arrived from conflict regions (like those in the former Yugoslavia).

Regarding the countries, only in Germany, Greece and Austria we have enough cases to meaningfully compare all three groups, and in all these countries the Eastern European immigrants have significantly lower life satisfaction than the other two groups. For the rest of the countries except Finland, only a comparison between the levels of the natives and of other immigrants is possible, and in all countries except Spain and Portugal the difference between these groups is significantly in favor of the natives.

Satisfaction with the socio-economic environment

The respondents were asked to report their satisfaction with the five public domains: state of the economy in country, the national government, the way democracy works in country, state of education in country, and the state of health services in the country. The following TABLE shows the mean values and standard deviations for each immigrant status:

²³Tony Fahey and Emer Smyth, "Do Subjective Indicators Measure Welfare? Evidence from 33 European Societies," *European Societies* 6, no. 1 (2004).

²⁴ Jan Delhey, "Life Satisfaction in an Enlarged Europe," in *European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/files/EF03108EN.pdf>, 2004).

TABLE 3. Life satisfaction levels and std. deviations in 14 European countries, by immigrant status.

	Native		Immigrant from other countries		Immigrant from Eastern Europe	
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev
How satisfied with present state of economy in country	4.9	2.4	5.0	2.4	4.9	2.5
How satisfied with the national government	4.5	2.3	4.7	2.3	4.7	2.4
How satisfied with the way democracy works in country	5.6	2.3	6.0	2.4	6.3	2.4
State of education in country nowadays	5.7	2.3	5.8	2.4	5.8	2.5
State of health services in country nowadays	5.4	2.5	5.7	2.6	6.0	2.5
AVERAGE of the five domains	5.2	1.8	5.5	1.8	5.6	1.9

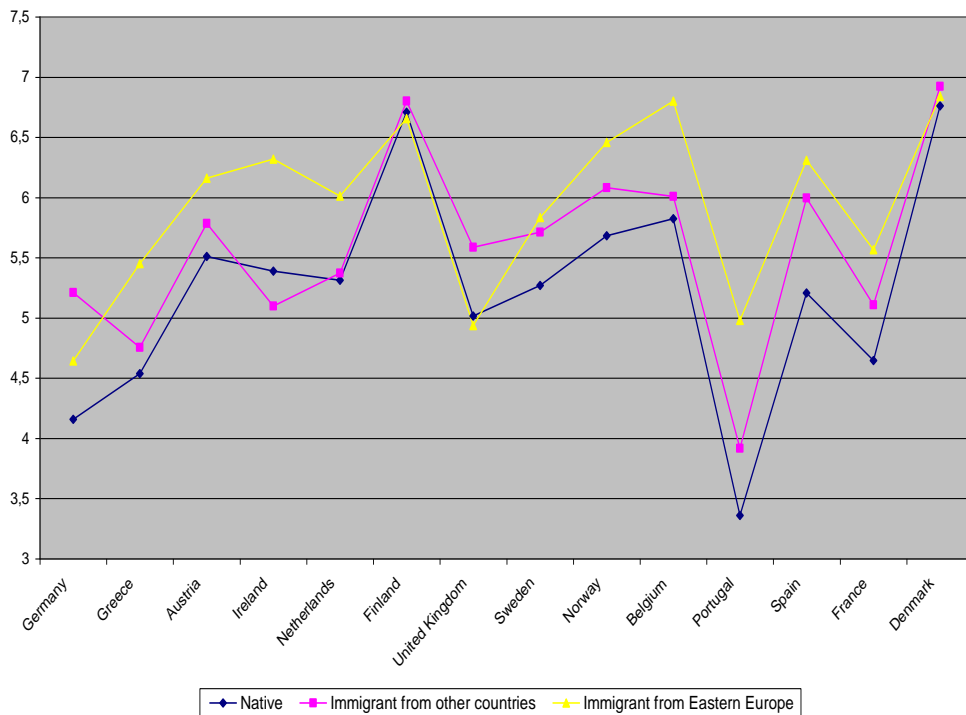
All the domain satisfactions have lower mean levels than satisfaction with life as a whole. The proposed explanation for this is that there is a positive bias in favor of one's satisfaction with personal areas in life²⁵.

²⁵ R. A. Cummins et al., "Developing a National Index of Subjective Wellbeing: The Australian Unity Wellbeing Index," *Social Indicators Research* 64, no. 2 (2003).

Overall, the natives show lower satisfaction (except satisfaction with economy), and the Eastern European display higher satisfaction with the state of education, of social services and democracy than those born in other countries. The last domain satisfaction has also the highest levels, while the satisfaction with the national government is the lowest in all studied groups.

In order to analyze all differences between natives at a time, I constructed a composite scale with all the domains satisfactions. The composite scale was found to be reliable (Crombach alpha coefficients above 0.7 for each country). The values of the composite variable for the three groups are represented in the next figure:

FIGURE 3. Summed evaluation of five societal domains for natives and non-natives in 14 European societies. Sources: ESS1,2; personal calculation.



Overall, in the Northern European countries people evaluate better the five societal domains. As in the case of the life satisfaction variable, only in Germany, Greece and Austria we have enough cases to meaningfully compare all three groups. In all these countries except Germany, the Eastern European immigrants significantly rate better the societal conditions than the other two groups. For the



rest of the countries except Finland, only a comparison between the levels of the natives and of the other immigrants is possible, and in all countries except Belgium and Denmark the immigrants show higher satisfaction with societal conditions.

Conclusions and limitations

It was found that, in most of the included countries, the immigrants report lower satisfaction with life as a whole than the natives. This confirms the previous study based only on the first wave of European Social Survey²⁶. Where the comparison could be made, it was also found that the migrants from Eastern Europe report having lower subjective well-being than the other immigrants. Possibly, this happens because the former are more recently in the receiving countries. Their socio-economic status is rather low and they suffer more from adaptation problems. However, we should take these results with precaution. Even if the number of cases analyzed is high, there still are too few cases to try to further compare subgroups or to control for some variables.

What was called "the paradox of satisfaction" was also confirmed: immigrants generally display higher satisfaction with societal conditions than the natives, and in two countries out of three, those from Eastern European countries are the most satisfied with the societal conditions. The effect can be explained by social comparison and adaptation: the immigrants compare the societal conditions from their sending country with those from the receiving country, and the results are, obviously, favorable to the latter. The other immigrants had more time available to adapt, and the social comparison process give not so strong results.

In both cases, the magnitude of the differences is not as high as we would expect. Actually, the correlation is rather weak. This can be explained by the limitations of the survey program. From different reasons, the fieldwork operators could not contact the recent immigrants, some of them illegal. Isolation of immigrant cases in the samples was also difficult, because the structure of the questions concerning the origin of those interviewed.

This is one of the few European-level comparative analyses on the subjective quality of life of the immigrants. In order to extend the quantity and the quality of the comparisons, we need surveys that include more European countries and more immigrant cases in each society.

²⁶ Bălăţescu, "Subjective Well-Being of Immigrants in Europe. A Comparative Study."

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Coping with Floods: Does Rural-Urban Migration Play any Role for Survival in rural Bangladesh?

Israt RAYHAN and Ulrike GROTE

Abstract. At the time of flooding, rural people in Bangladesh cannot manage the lingering effects of labor market disruptions, price fluctuations, and consumption deficiency. As a consequence, kin groups, lineages or even entire villages shift from their home to nearby big urban areas. To assess the efficacy of migration, a cross sectional household survey was carried out two weeks after a flood in four districts of Bangladesh in the year 2005. In total, 595 rural households were interviewed based on fully structured questionnaires. The results show that the decision to migrate is often guided by the aspiration to replenish asset values damaged by the flood. Thus, rural-urban migration emerges as a source of credit. Inclusion of social networks plays an important role during flood crisis to get information about the host areas. In financing livelihoods during floods, landless or poor people incur informal debts from the money lenders; this in turn accumulated by the consecutive years of flooding, leave a shadow of default and liquidation over many vulnerable households. The rural-urban migration allows potentially vulnerable households to avoid a debt cycle.

Keywords: *Bangladesh, Flood, Coping, Migration, Vulnerability*

1. Introduction

Bangladesh consists mostly of a low-lying river delta with over 230 rivers and tributaries, situated between the foothills of the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal. With a population of almost 124 million people and an area of roughly 148,000 square km, Bangladesh is one of the world's most densely populated countries (839 persons per square km)²⁷.

The combination of its geography, population density, and extreme poverty makes Bangladeshi people very vulnerable to risks and disasters. Flood is a frequent catastrophe for Bangladeshi people. In the year 1987, about 40 percent of the country was flooded, affecting 30 million people and

²⁷Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Population Census 2001, published July 2003.



causing about 1,800 deaths. The floods in 1988 were even more serious, covering about 60 percent of the land area, affecting about 45 million people, and causing more than 2,300 deaths²⁸. In 1998, over 68 percent of the country was inundated²⁹ and caused about 2,380 deaths. In 2000 and 2002, floods affected approximately 20 million people. In the year 2004, a devastating monsoon flood submerged two-thirds of the country; close to 36 million people were affected, 726 died, and millions of people were made homeless³⁰. Also in 2005, floods occurred again in some areas of Bangladesh, affecting people's livelihood, assets and activities. The frequent cases of floods and river-bank erosions are found as significant causes for homelessness, landlessness and consequent migration for many thousand people every year³¹.

Migration is denoted as a component of people's livelihood strategies and in shaping the national economy in Bangladesh. Natural disasters play a part in forcing people to migrate and cope with vulnerability. Rural-urban migration is playing a significant role in this process. The net migration (migrants/1000 population) increased dramatically from 1.2 to 16.4 in urban areas between 1984 and 1998³². A study by Rahman et al., accumulating the information from 62 randomly selected villages in Bangladesh, shows that nearly two-thirds of the emigration from rural areas was to urban areas³³.

This study thus is set forth to examine whether rural-urban migration, which involves both permanent and temporary moves in search for better livelihoods, mitigate the vulnerability of flooded households. In addition, the role of social networks for rural-urban migration is analyzed.

²⁸ Irrigation Support Project for Asia and the Near East, "Flood response and guidelines on planning flood proofing", *Bangladesh Flood Action Plan* (1993: FAP 14/ FAP 23).

²⁹ Carlo del Ninno, Paul Dorosh, L.C. Smith, and D.K. Roy, "The 1998 floods in Bangladesh: disaster impacts, household coping strategies, and response", *Research Report, International Food Policy Research Institute*, (Washington, D.C: 2001).

³⁰ http://www.adb.org/Documents/Economic_Updates/BAN/2004/eco-update-ban.pdf (last accessed 11.10.2007).

³¹ James Lewis, *Development in Disaster-prone Places*, Studies of Vulnerability, Intermediate Technology Publications, London: 1999).

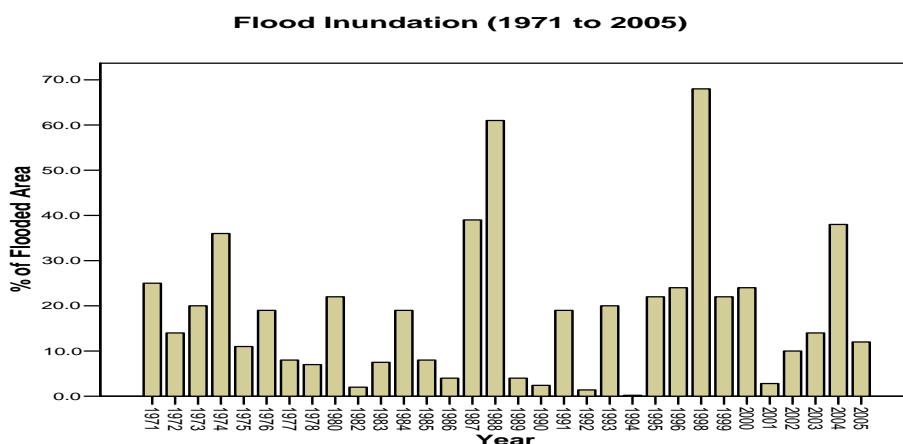
³² Rita Afsar, "Internal Migration and the Development Nexus: The case of Bangladesh", in *Migration and Development: Pro-Poor Policy Choices*, ed. Tasneem Siddiqui (The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2005). 39-63.

³³ H. Z. Rahman, M. Hossain, and B. Sen, "1987-94 Dynamics of Rural Poverty in Bangladesh", *Report in Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies* (1996).

2. Flood as a Frequent Disaster in Bangladesh

Flood is a natural calamity which occurs by huge rainfalls followed by the overflow of riverbanks. Usually floods occur at the bottom of a valley and in coastal areas. There are numerous causes of floods but the basic one is climatologic. The south-western monsoon causes heavy rainfall in mid-June to mid-September in Bangladesh. The average annual rainfall ranges from 1,693 mm to 3,801 mm, and more than 80 percent of rainfall occurs during the monsoon season³⁴. There are also backwater effects of the tides of the Bay of Bengal as those slow down the drainage of the flood water that inundates the low-lying areas and river basins in the southern and north-eastern parts of the country. In addition, the high water level of the major rivers slows down the discharge flow of the tributaries and distributaries. The average water level of the sea rises during the monsoon season and slows down the discharge flow of the rivers, which in turn causes floods in the adjacent coastal areas. There are some other climatologic reasons for devastating floods in Bangladesh, such as tsunamis, earthquakes and high rate of sedimentation. The figure below shows the frequency of floods and the percentage of inundation area of Bangladesh since independence in 1971.

Figure 1: Flood inundation in Bangladesh, 1971-2005



Source: Bangladesh disaster management bureau

³⁴ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 2003*, (January 2005).

The topography of the country is also one of the major causes of flooding. The height above the mean sea level ranges from 60 m at the northern tip to less than 3 m at the southern coast³⁵ and 50 percent of the country is situated within the 8 m contour line with respect to the mean sea level³⁶. Moreover, deforestation in the upstream, mainly in India and Nepal, worsens the floods downstream, namely in Bangladesh.

The frequent floods severely disrupt the livelihoods of millions of people. Aftermath flood disease causes severe health hazards. Wage laborers often suffer during floods, because the scopes of work and wage rates shrink at that time. It is estimated that real wages fall by more than 10 percent during the floods³⁷. The most direct disastrous impact of flooding in Bangladesh arise from damage to standing crops, affecting the small farm holders significantly. As a consequence, poorer households fall into debt and lastly choose to migrate in nearby cities to enhance their livelihoods. In an empirical study on the impact of floods in the year 1988, researchers found that widespread increase of family migration was high for landless households who could not manage the lingering effects of labor market disruptions, price fluctuations and increased competition for formal and informal credit³⁸.

3. Data and Methodology

This study uses primary data from a sample survey conducted in rural Bangladesh just after the flood in 2005. During that year, Bangladesh was affected by two types of floods: a monsoon flood which occurred during mid August to September in the east and west parts of the country and a flash flood which occurred in the northern areas during November. Monsoon floods in Bangladesh

³⁵ M. Hossain, A.T.M.A. Islam and A.K. Saha, "Flood in Bangladesh: Recurrent Disasters and People's Survival", (University Research Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1987).

³⁶ M. Ahmad, "Deluge in the Delta", in *Flood in Bangladesh*, ed. Ahmed M., (Community Development Library, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1989).

³⁷ Jean-Paul Azam, "The impact of floods on rural real wages in Bangladesh", *The Bangladesh Development Studies*, XXI 1 (1993):1-14.

³⁸ Randall Kuhn, "The Logic of Letting Go: Family and Individual Migration from Rural Bangladesh". *Working paper at Institute of Behavioral Science*, (2002: University of Colorado at Boulder).

are caused by heavy monsoon rains over the Himalayas and overflow of the Ganges-Brahmaputra rivers and their tributaries. Flash floods often occur in hill streams over the Meghna-river basin.

A cross-sectional household survey was carried out two weeks after the floods. Four districts were randomly chosen according to the flood proneness and damage. A three stage stratified random sampling technique was applied to the survey, where the first stage was the district, the second one the mouza (the smallest administrative unit in the rural area) and the third stage the household level. Flooded households were detected if at least the home or homestead was submerged by flood water. The sample size was determined by the estimated proportion formula³⁹. The total number of surveyed households from different rural areas amounted to 595. The survey include some questions about fixed household's characteristics such as age, gender, education, occupation; related to household variables such as monthly income, or expenditure; and information about temporary migration during flood periods, as well as permanent migration.

To analyze the poverty and vulnerability of households in the context of migration, the following concepts have been used:

Poverty can be defined in multidimensional ways. It is an ex-post measure of household's wellbeing. Poverty refers to being deprived of basic levels of economic wellbeing (absolute income poverty) and human development including universal primary education, girl's access to primary and secondary education, infant, child and maternal mortality⁴⁰. It is also characterized as the deprivation of capabilities⁴¹.

Vulnerability, on the other hand, is an ex-ante measure of household's wellbeing and concerning the future poor. Vulnerability is always defined relative to some benchmark. Vulnerability may be the product of risk, household condition and actions. The term that distinguishes or relates poverty and vulnerability is risk⁴². The risk of a household relates to events possibly occurring, but with less than certainty. Households may have a priori sense of the likelihood of some events occurring, without overall knowledge of this likelihood. Completeness of the

³⁹ William G. Cochran, *Sampling Techniques*, (3rd Edition, John Wiley, 1977): 75.

⁴⁰ Stefan Dercon, "Assessing vulnerability to poverty", *working paper at Centre for the Study of African Economies*, (2001: University of Oxford).

⁴¹ Amartya K. Sen, *The Standard of Living*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987).

⁴² Shubham Chaudhuri, "Assessing Vulnerability to Poverty: concepts, empirical methods, and illustrative examples", (2003: Columbia University, New York, mimeo).



distribution distinguishes risk from the concept of uncertainty, where the probability of an event occurring is assumed to be unknown. Risky events may relate to the environment or climate, to the death of a person, or to any action taken by households. Such kinds of risks may be upside or downside. This study is focusing more on the downside risk effect on the households of rural Bangladesh, albeit some fishermen or boatmen may increase their income from flooded season. Downside risk is defined here as the estimate of the potential that a security, income, expenditure or overall livelihoods might decline in real value if the area is flooded.

Working Concept of Household Vulnerability

A household is said to be vulnerable to future loss of welfare below some socially accepted norm(s) caused by risky events. The degree of vulnerability depends on the characteristics of the risk and the household's ability to respond to risk. Ability to respond to risk depends on household characteristics, notably their asset base. The expected future outcome is defined with respect to some specified benchmark—a socially accepted minimum reference level of welfare (poverty line, nutritional standards). Measurement of vulnerability also depends on the time horizon: a household may be vulnerable to risks over the next month, year, etc. Thus, households are vulnerable to suffering an undesirable outcome, and this vulnerability comes from exposure to risk⁴³.

Some general principles related to vulnerability as a concept include: (a) it is forward-looking and defined as the probability of experiencing a loss in the future relative to some benchmark of welfare, (b) a household can be said to be vulnerable to future loss of welfare and this vulnerability is caused by uncertain events, (c) the degree of vulnerability depends on the characteristics of the risk and the household's ability to respond to the risk, (d) vulnerability depends on the time horizon, in that a household may be vulnerable to risks over the next month, year, etc. and responses to risk take place over time, and e) the poor and near-poor tend

⁴³ Karin Heitzmann, R. Sudharshan Canagarajah, and Paul B. Siegel, "Guidelines for assessing the sources of risk and vulnerability", *Social Protection Discussion Paper* (2002: 0218. Washington, D.C.: World Bank).

to be vulnerable because of their exposure to risks and limited access to assets (broadly defined) and limited abilities to respond to risk⁴⁴.

4. Results of the Case Studies

The following part delineates the empirical results from the field survey and relates these to some literature review and theoretical point of views. It will be first investigated what types of migration occur in Bangladesh due to floods, and how these different types relate to poverty and vulnerability of households. Special attention will be put on the reasons for migration, and the role of social networks in the context of migration. What follows is a more detailed analysis of income sources and their relations to vulnerability, as well as an analysis to what extent migration impact on the household members who stayed behind.

4.1 Synopsis of Migrants

The interview was conducted by asking the respective household head or representative. All members sharing the same kitchen were defined as belonging to the household; any member who lives outside the residence but who contributes to the household's resources, is denoted as migrant. Out of 595 rural households, 168 (28%) households indicate that they have at least one migrant. 79 percent of these 168 households have only one migrant, others have more than one. The following Table 1 shows different types of migration of the flooded households.

Table 1: Types of migration

Type	Frequency	Percentage
From village to village	10	6
From village to nearby city	150	89
From village to outside country	8	5

Source: Own survey results, total households = 595, migrant households = 168.

⁴⁴ Jeffrey Alwang, P. B. Siegel, and S. L. Jørgensen, "Vulnerability: A view from different disciplines", *Social Protection Discussion Paper* (2001: 0115. Washington, D.C.: World Bank).



From the above it is depicted that most of the flooded households (89 percent) migrate from the rural area to the nearby city. Only 6 percent of the households move to another village, while 5 percent decide to move to another country. Now, the general question arises why 89 percent of migrant households choose a nearby city?

This study starts searching on the basis of the theoretical literature which offers two models in this context. The Harris-Todaro model is based on a neo-classical response to urban-rural wage differentials⁴⁵, while the Massey-Parrado model is from the new economic theory of migration which anticipates migration from areas with limited credit and capital markets⁴⁶. The first neo-classical model only focuses on the migration's role in generating labor market equilibrium, return of remittance in origin areas and the migrants' knowledge of expected returns. The Harris-Todaro model predicts that migration is more likely if an individual's expected income in the destination area, arising from the expected wage times the probability of employment, is higher than income from the current origin area. Asking about reasons for migration, it is found from the empirical analysis that 83 percent of the migrants' households see unemployment and deficiency of capital market formation due to frequent floods as the main reasons for migration, 5 percent of the head of the households with emigrants gave wage differentials as a cause. Only 3 percent indicate education as a main reason for migrating, and the remaining 9 percent of households with migrants said better employment and high wage in nearby cities as well as loan repayment impelled the migrated members to move, despite they were employed in the rural areas with low wages.

As an agro-based country, majority of the households in Bangladesh depend on underwater cultivation of rice during the flood season (June-September) as a primary staple crop. Small landholders overcome flood-season deficits by taking loans in terms of high, pre-harvesting grain prices

⁴⁵ John R. Harris and Michael P. Todaro, "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two Sector Analysis", *American Economic Review* 60(1), (1970): 126-142.

⁴⁶ Douglas S. Massey and Emilio A. Parrado, "Migradollars: The Remittances and Savings of Mexican Migrants to the United States", *Population Research and Policy Review*, 13 (1994:3-30).

and repaying the loans with lower, post-harvest prices⁴⁷. This type of yearly cycle of debt dependence often leads small landholders to default, land mortgage, and foreclosure⁴⁸. Remittances sent by the emigrants to the places of origin, like rural areas, would reduce the need to incur debt. The results demonstrate inclination to the Massey-Parrado model of limited credit and capital markets. However, the two models are not mutually exclusive; some justifications for the wage differentials are also found from the data set, supporting the Harris-Todaro model.

4.2 Income Quartile and Migration Cost

Migration can take different modes by being either temporary or permanent, or by selecting different household members to migrate. The mode of migration also depends on to which income quartiles the households belong. Households from the richest quartile would send the most efficient member to a new destination area being located either within or outside the country. In fact, the 5 percent migrants from village to outward country in Table 1 are all from the richest income quartile, those who could also bear the migration cost. However, households from the poorest quartile would choose preferably temporary migration during the flood period and in the extreme case, landless households would undertake family migration for survival because their rural options would hold little value. All village to village migration in Table 1 occurred indeed from the poorest quartile households. The major proportion of rural-urban migration (about 70 percent) arises from the 2nd and 3rd quartiles income groups. It is an interesting finding that households in the poorest group are mostly vulnerable but migration rate is higher in middle income group. The reason might be that rural-urban migration is highly constrained by the migration cost.

⁴⁷ Eirik G. Jensen, "Rural Bangladesh: Competition for Scarce Resources", (1987: University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh).

⁴⁸ Randall Kuhn, "The Logic of Letting Go: Family and Individual Migration from Rural Bangladesh". *Working paper at Institute of Behavioral Science*, (2002: University of Colorado at Boulder).

4.3 Social Network and Migration

This study also focuses on the role of village-based social networks in perpetuating the flow of rural-urban migration. According to Kuhn⁴⁹,

“The decision to migrate is often guided by a desire to restore or replenish a family’s agricultural tradition and resources, yet ironically the success of migration is often determined by the extent of a family’s resources. And more often than not, the opportunity to migrate is determined by social linkages based in the village.”

About 79 percent of migrant households said they had known someone in the destination place. In the context of migration, networks function as a form of credit and information source for the potential migrants. This study examines the strength of weak ties for rural-urban linkage⁵⁰. Weak ties are defined as acquaintances being less likely socially involved with one another compared with strong ties arising from close relatives or friends. According to the Granovetter⁵¹,

“...individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends. ... the weak ties have a special role in a person’s opportunity for mobility.”

Empirical work also supports the above stated theory of networks and weak ties for enhancing rural-urban migration. About 72 percent of the households reported that rural-urban migration was motivated by friends already living in the destination places. Those who migrated received the information from former village friends or neighbors in urban areas, which indicates the strength of weak ties. 26 percent of households indicated that their migrated members shifted to urban places with the help of close relatives or friends (strong ties), and the remaining 2 percent was based on organizational links and networks.

⁴⁹ Randall Kuhn, “Identities in Motion: Social Exchange Networks and Rural-Urban Migration in Bangladesh”, *Working paper at Institute of Behavioral Science*, (2002: University of Colorado at Boulder).

⁵⁰ Mark Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revised”, *Sociological Theory*, 1 (1983): 201-233.

⁵¹ Ibid

4.4 Income Sources and Vulnerability

A more detailed analysis aims at finding out which groups of households are more vulnerable to floods depending on the source of income, including remittances. As it can be seen from Table 2, most households derive their income from agriculture and from day labor. These households also belong to the poorest and most vulnerable households after a flood event. Less poor and vulnerable households are either employed in the services sector, or they have their own business.

Table 2: Sources of income and vulnerability after flood

Source of income of main earner	Distribution of households in frequency	After flood	
		Poverty	Vulnerability
Agriculture	29.4	67.23	93.79
Service	7.7	35	39.5
Business	13.8	37.35	45.78
Day labor	26.5	77.5	90
Dairy & Poultry	5.3	28.57	50
Fishing & Boating	5.55	64.71	61.53
Remittances from migration (urban)	8.8	24.15	25.44
Remittances from migration (other villages and foreign countries)	2.95	18.63	29.66

Note: methodology and sensitivity analyses are shown in the appendix
 Source: Own survey results.

The least vulnerable households are those whose major source of income is remittances from urban migrants. However, their poverty level due to flood is

slightly higher than in the household group receiving remittances from urban migrants.

4.5 Consequences of Migration

If households suffer from a shock like a flood, they utilize the resources and options they have to survive. The actions for survival strategies are considered as coping strategies. The coping strategies are fallback mechanisms for when habitual means of meeting needs are disrupted⁵². Initially, households try to minimize risks and maintain some minimal level of sustenance. Gradually, the households start the disposal of assets as a coping strategy. Several phases can be distinguished: first, the liquid assets are disposed of, then jewelry, and finally, the productive assets. After the disposal of assets, individual or family migration is chosen as a survival strategy.

The household heads were asked about the effects of migration in origin places. The following Table 3 shows the consequences if any member of household has migrated.

Table 3: Impacts of migration

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Financial help from migrants	100	60
Improvement of social value (without any financial help)	21	12
Financial help and social value	33	20
Financial loss due to migrants	14	8

As an illustration from the above Table 3, it is apparent that 80 percent of the households with migrants receive financial help. 12 percent of the migrants' households respond not to get any remittances but their social prestige increases; inhabitants from surrounding places come and ask them about the way how and where to migrate and give them importance in social gatherings. Only 8 percent of

⁵² T. Frankenberger, "Indicators and data collection methods for assessing household food security", in *Household food security: Concepts, indicators, measurements. A technical review*, ed. S. Maxwell and T. Frankenberger. (New York and Rome, 1992: UNICEF and IFAD).

the households responded that they had spent migration cost for migrants which are higher than the remittances they are getting back. Therefore, the households from the places of origin in the rural areas who are left behind are denoting the investment costs as financial loss for migrants.

Households were also asked about the utilization of remittances from emigrants. The analyses from data show that the highest amount of the remittances was used for buying food items in both before and during flood periods. Remittances are also used for repairing houses after floods.

5. Conclusions

Rural-urban migration acts as a form of credit. The results from the empirical study show inclination to the Massey-Parrado model of credit market deficits due to flood and unemployment. Some results, however, also support the Harris-Todaro model of the rural-urban wage differentials. About 70 percent of rural-urban migration was held from 2nd and 3rd quartiles income groups, which indicates that migration cost has an important effect on the migration choice. It is depicted from the cross-sectional vulnerability estimates that households whose major source of income are remittances from urban migrants were the least vulnerable from the flood 2005 in surveyed areas. Empirical works also justify the strength of weak ties; about 72 percent of the households reported that rural-urban migration was motivated by acquaintances and lose friends living in destination places, which indicate that weak ties were more effective for the surveyed households.

Migrants who are successful are pivoted not just only from social networks, but also from a direct and significant connection with the places of origin and having something to offer in return. The success of migration really depends on whether a member of the household can earn a steady income from migrant labor and can share the earnings with his or her family. Many of the migrants also move to nearby urban places to diminish health hazards and insecurity caused by floods; their aims are not matched by economic gains. Some households from the poorest quartiles are found to migrate to other villages or cities without knowing anything about the destination place, but as an ultimate coping strategy for survival. In sum, it can be concluded that migration plays a major role for survival after floods in Bangladesh.

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APPENDIX

Vulnerability estimate⁵³

This study incorporates some variables to estimate vulnerability to floods with sensitivity analyses at 95 percent confidence level. The variables are classified into several factors, such as: *demographic factors*: household size, age of the household head, year of schooling of working members, gender and district dummies; *economic factors*: per capita land holding, value of durable assets, distance to nearest market place, ownership of dwelling place and membership in cooperatives; *coping factors*: amount coped from loan, savings, and selling items; *shock factors*: flood height and duration in homestead, value of crop and asset loss for flood.

Vulnerability level of a household i at time t is defined as the probability that the household will be in income poverty at time $t + 1$:

$$v_{it} = \Pr(y_{i,t+1} \leq z) \dots\dots[1]$$

where, $y_{i,t+1}$ is the household's per capita income level (welfare indicator) at time $t + 1$ and z is the income poverty line. Therefore, the level of vulnerability at time t is detected by the future income of the household at time $t + 1$. The assumptions begin with the stochastic process, generating the income of a household i :

$$\ln y_i = X_i \beta + e_i \dots\dots\dots[2]$$

Where, y_i represents the per capita income before flood, X_i is a set of observable household characteristics, β is a vector of parameters and e_i is a disturbance term with mean zero. Applying the three-step Feasible Generalized Least Squares (FGLS)⁵⁴, we get,

$$\hat{E} \ln y_i | X_i \cong X_i \beta_{FGLS} \dots [3]$$

⁵³ Shubham Chaudhuri, J. Jalan, and A. Suryahadi, "Assessing household vulnerability to poverty: A methodology and estimates for Indonesia", *Department of Economics Discussion Paper* (2002: No. 0102-52, New York, Columbia University).

⁵⁴ Takeshi Amemiya, "The maximum likelihood estimator and the non-linear three stage least square estimator in the general nonlinear simultaneous equation model", *Econometrica*, 45 (1977): 955-968.

and the variance of log per capita income for each household i as given below:

$$\text{Var} \ln y_i | X_i = \sigma_{e,i}^2 = X_i \hat{\theta}_{FGLS} \dots\dots[4]$$

By assuming that income y_i is log-normally distributed (that is, $\ln y_i$ is normally distributed) and using the above estimates, it is possible to form an estimate of the probability that a household with characteristics X_i will be poor after flood or vulnerable due to flood shock. Letting $\Phi(\cdot)$ denote the cumulative density of the standard normal distribution, the estimated probability can be expressed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{v}_i &= \Pr \ln y_i < \ln z | X_i = \Phi \left[\frac{\ln z - \ln y_i | X_i}{\sqrt{\text{Var} \ln y_i | X_i}} \right] \\ &= \Phi \left\{ \frac{\ln z - X_i \beta}{\sqrt{X_i \hat{\theta}}} \right\} \dots\dots[5] \end{aligned}$$

The value of \hat{v}_i varies from 0 to 1. The estimate \hat{v}_i thus denotes the vulnerability of i th household with the characteristics X_i . The vulnerability threshold is assumed 0.50.

The Factors that Affect Indian Migrants' Decision to Stay in or Counter Migrate from the United States: A Study with Special Reference to the Role of Tourism Related Imagery as a Determinant

Babu P. GEORGE and Anuratha SHYAMSUNDAR

Abstract: In the light of the changing socio-economic realities of the present times, this paper explores the complex dynamics underlying Indian immigrants' decision to continue to stay in the United States or to counter migrate back to India. In a reversal of fortunes, the specific set of conditions that once triggered a massive inflow of economic migrants from India to the US has been causing a counter migration to India. Based on a review of literature and an exploratory study involving focus groups the paper identifies some of the major migration / counter migration related factors. Then, employing a survey, the relative importance of each of these factors is gauged for individuals associated with different professions. In addition, the study explores as a special case the role of tourism related images about the US being held by immigrants as determinants of their migration related decisions. Tourism images held by the migrants and the tourism opportunities provided by the US act more as hygiene factors than as motivators. In course of the exploration, a number of hypotheses are emerged that are of interest to future researchers. The study has got significant implications for migration / counter migration policy makers, industry practitioners, and the migrants themselves.

Keywords: *Determinants of migration and counter migration; tourism-migration inter-relationship; work and tourism; focus group; life history of migrants; implications for policy; USA; and India.*

Introduction

In many parts of India, it is rare to find a family without at least a single migrant (Mosse *et al*, 2002). There exist two major types of outbound migration from India (Pandey, 1996): firstly, the migration of people with technical skills and professional expertise to countries such as the USA, Canada, UK and Australia; secondly, the migration of unskilled and semi-skilled workers to oil exporting countries of the Middle East. Most migrants in either category come from the

southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, in addition to the northern state of Punjab. In percentages, it is just one percent of the Indian population that has migrated so far; yet, the consequences to the sending regions are myriad.

India's massive investment in higher education, particularly technology, during the past decades has resulted in large numbers of the highly trained personnel willing and seeking to work abroad. The US has emerged far and above its competitors as the number one choice for immigration, although there exists a great deal of competition amongst developed nations for India's highly trained workforce. In addition to technical competence, cultural openness, willingness to learn, and mastery over the English language make the Indian labor pool a superior class compared with the other seekers of migrant labor to the US. Another reason for the Indian labor presence in the US is the existence of large numbers of Indian owned or managed MNCs in the US. Also, Indian students represent a significant chunk of overseas students being enrolled in the US higher education system every year; most of these students get an H1-B work permit or a green card after their graduation and continue to work in the US. Some commentators note that the Indian migration to the US will continue unabated even in the event of a US policy shift against migration (Reichl, 2005). This is because Indians in the US constitute a highly collective society just like they are at home and the social networks and ties will sustain migration even without policy support.

Extant literature has listed out a number of generic causes for migration (Castles and Miller, 1998; Skeldon, 1997). The attractions in the destination countries include higher levels of income, low poverty level or at least social support for the poor, low level of crime, opportunities for self expression, opportunities for courtship, avenues for career growth, tolerance for religious practices, higher standard of living, family ties and cultural proximity, colonial ties, escape from wars and other calamities, escape from environmental degradation, escape from political oppression, prospects for entrepreneurial activities, escape from overcrowding, among others. Some studies show that it is the educated middle class that is most likely to migrate (Kritz, *et al.* 1992). Once someone migrates successfully, the same leads to a chain reaction: the migrant's colleagues, friends, relatives, and so on are more likely to migrate in that event, with the snowballing effect increasing exponentially with the passage of time. Thus, although mass migration is almost always through the same paths treaded by a few pioneers, over a period of time, it becomes a self-sustaining social mechanism



(Castles, 2000). Most temporary workers in wealthy destination countries seek permanent residency, too, as the case with H1-B visa holders in the United States (Meissner *et al.*, 2006). A study by OECD (2001) found that, of the 33.5 million foreign born residing in the US, approximately 38 percent have obtained US citizenship through naturalization.

The current phase of transnational migration is one in which immigrants forge and maintain concurrent multi-stranded relations between home and host societies (Glick Schiller *et al.*, 1995). Literature has segregated the traditional 'political' migrants to the more recent 'economic' migrants (Pedraza-Bailey, 1995). While the United States has historically received millions of political migrants in the past, the nature of migration has fundamentally changed in the recent decades (Suárez-Orozco *et al.*, 2005). While issues like persecution, war, famine, and calamities motivated political migrants, economic migrants are a totally different class: they leave their country of origin motivated by the economic advancement opportunities and the associated enhancements in the quality of life offered by the host countries. Generally, they do not have socio-political or cultural deprivations that drive them out of their home countries and even while at the host country they ardently practice the cultural practices of their home (Iredale, 2001). This factor plays a very important role in the counter-migration of Indian and Chinese economic migrants from the United States. As a result of the recent economic surges in the emerging economies across the world, the very same conditions that triggered migration in the past have begun to appear in these countries. This is a significant motivator for many economic migrants who want to take the mantle of the new wave. The US experience is a big advantage for them in getting lucrative offers from the neo-multinationals in these countries who want the US corporate history from the mid 1950's replicated in their corporations. Likewise, many senior executives have begun to go back home to launch start-ups, often with the wealth they have accumulated while being in US or with venture capital funds that are widely available for start-ups. If immigration has shaped the United States over the past century, counter migration has become a formidable force in shaping the destiny of countries like India in the twenty first century.

During the 1970s and 1980s, there existed serious concern that India was losing its educated workforce to the West, particularly to the United States (Bhagwati, 1976). However, since the first decade of the 21st century, attention has re-focused from 'brain drain' on 'reverse-brain drain' or 'brain-gain' (Chacko, 2007).

The reverse brain drain that began in small numbers seems to have a snow-balling effect as well: the few who counter-migrate initially induce their colleagues to go back to India and the effect has dramatically spiraled over the past few years. Long back, Piore (1979) noted that migration sustains itself. Likewise, in the present set of conditions, we find that counter-migration too seem to sustain itself. Studies show that the pride of migrant Indians about their homeland has been steadily on an increase; especially, the phenomenal growth of India's information technology industry has produced a transnational class of professionals who are actively engaged in constructing a notion of a new India that is global in scope, yet Indian in essence (Radhakrishnan, 2008). Discourses of a new belonging that emphasize the re-invention of Indian family values gain strength through constant circulation among the expatriate circles.

If immigration is historically demand driven and is primarily facilitated through recruitment from the receiving nations to fill unattractive jobs at home, even in the initial years of counter migration, it is not so. The migrants in the host countries were generally looked down upon, until they acquired a respectable status due to their professional competence. However, the counter-migrants to India, from the very beginning, has been able to create an elite class of their own in India: They come back home as respectable citizens who have done wonders in another country and are looked towards with awe and aspiration by the rest of the society. There is an added dimension to this: most of the Indian migrants to the US are from the lower castes of the highly class-structured Indian society. Being able to work in the US seems to have the effect of erasing the traditional stigma attached to being a lower caste individual. A testimony to this is the fact that lower caste individuals have increasingly gotten into traditionally higher caste occupations through the experience and contacts developed in the US in the last few years.

In the context of the temporary specialty workers, technically termed as H1-B Visa holders, who constitute the largest chunk of Indian immigrants in the US, an unanswered issue in the literature is where to put them in the available classification schema. If we follow the dual labor market hypothesis of Piore (1979), H1-Bs should fall under the secondary sector laborers. But, according to the traditional theory, the flexibility of the secondary sector manifests itself in a general undesirability of the jobs it offers: lower wages and prestige, expendability, and part-time or irregular work. And, the nature of the jobs in this sector renders



them unattractive to natives; thus there is an inherent, constant demand in the secondary sector regardless of general unemployment or wage changes. But, H1-Bs constitute a highly qualified and specialized labor pool, often more educated and experienced than the natives who are in the primary labor sector (Chakravartty, 2001). Also, natives do compete with the temporary workers for these specialty jobs and when selected are rarely paid any more than what the temporary workers are paid. Thus, based on the nature of their job, they do not fall under the secondary labor sector. Yet, the checks and balances that are placed upon their jobs, especially Visas that are tied to particular employers, tend to denigrate their societal status and make them to exhibit at least certain characteristics of the traditional secondary labor pool. Another noteworthy thing is that many so called specialty occupations that get filled by temporary workers are 'specialty occupations' merely from a legal standpoint: for instance, Iredale (2001) noted that, due to the increased standardization of software programming and interoperability, the mobility of IT workers from one job to another has tremendously increased, leading to the situation of an invisible deskilling. Despite the fact that these jobs have become 'clerical' in scope, the societal acclaim attached to them has not reduced significantly since the mainstream society remains largely unaware of these changes.

Chacko (2007) notes that Indians began immigrating to the United States in large numbers after the Immigration and Naturalization Services Act of 1965 abolished the national-origin quotas that had been in place in the United States since 1924. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were only a couple of thousands of persons from India in the USA. But, according to the 2000 Census, the foreign born in the US of only three countries, namely, Mexico, Philippines, and India had a population of over one million; the Indians represent the third largest immigrant group in the US. Even though the foreign born from India make up only one percentage of the total US population, in a single decade from 1990 to 2000, the Indian immigrant population almost doubled, highlights a statistics released by the Immigration Policy Institute (IPI, 2003). During this period, data available with the United Nations reveal that the overall percentage of international migrants in the US has just moved from 17.8% to 22.9% (UNO, 2008). According to the US Department of Homeland Security, 47,582 applications from Indians for naturalization have been approved in the year 2006 alone (YIS, 2006).

Table 1 summarizes the number of Indians in the US over a period of ten years. As per the US Census (2000), most of the Indian population resides in the following states: California, New Jersey, New York, Illinois, Texas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida, Maryland, and Virginia, in the descending order.

Table 1: Stock of Indian born population in the US from 1995 to 2006

Year	1995	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06
Population (In thousands)	540	757	748	722	839	1007	1027	1304	1142	1262	1411	1446
Percentage	2.2	3.1	2.9	2.7	3.2	3.5	3.4	4.0	3.4	3.7	4.0	4.1

Source: Migration Policy Institute

The Census also highlights that the number of male/female migrants from India are almost equal: 53.9% males and 46.1% females. Individuals in the age group of 25-34 comprise 30.7% of the migrants, followed by individuals in the age group of 35-44 which comprises 20.7% of the population. The median age is calculated to be 35.4 years. Of the migrants, 74.8% come as married people. These statistics taken together may imply that most of the migrants come for employment while others come as their dependents.

The educational attainment of Indian migrants is remarkable, too: 69.1% of the Indian population has got at least a Bachelors degree; and, 38% has attained a graduate or professional degree. Also, 57.8 % of the Indian population had registered for a college or graduate school program when the census was undertaken. The types of jobs that Indians get in the US may imply their societal status: As per the Census, 42.1% of the Indian migrants do jobs related to education, health, social services, science, and professional administration and management. Among the total number of professional highly skilled immigrants admitted to the US from all countries, India made up 19.5 percent in period between 1971-1980, and 13.4 percent between 1981-1990 (Nayyar, 1994). Most interestingly, according to the Census 2000, the unpaid family workers are only 0.4% of the total Indian population in the US. Also, 67.9% of the population has



own car, truck, or van. Almost a half of the population has got own homes while the remaining half lived in rented homes.

The Study

The present study was conducted during December 2007. Three focus groups, in two stages, were organized among the migrants from India in the United States. The focus group was mainly to elucidate the reasons held by the Indian migrants to stay on in the US or to go back home in the light of the newly emerging realities. In addition, the focus groups discussed the importance of touristic images of the US being held by Indians in their migration and counter migration decisions as well as in their attitude towards work. Focus group is an accepted exploratory technique often used to unearth opinions, beliefs, and attitudes on issues of interest held by a community. The semi-formal setting arranged for a focus group interview encourages guided brainstorming on topics of interest. The immediate outcome of this exercise is the understanding of what people think, which helps the researcher to generate testable hypotheses for more structured and quantitative studies in the future. Some contend that a quantitative stage as noted above is avoidable if multiple focus groups are conducted and a theoretical saturation, equivalent to statistical generalization, is achieved (Morgan, 1996). For the present study, due to the time and resource limitations, only a minimal quantitative investigation was done after the focus group. The data for this stage was gathered in the form of a short, researcher administered questionnaire.

Participants for the focus group study were identified from the audience of a Christmas-New Year celebration event conducted by the overseas Indian community in San Francisco. These initial informal interactions served to identify some of the potential questions to be raised during the focus group discussion as well. Sixteen participants were selected on a first come first served basis and were divided into two groups of eight participants in each. Excluding the time taken for warming up and partying, each of the two focus groups lasted for around one hour. With no professional sophistication like one way mirrors and recording devices, there remained a warm and cordial informality all around. The researcher himself acted as the facilitator. These two focus groups were conducted with relatively less facilitator intervention to allow free flow of ideas.

Both the focus groups were organized independently of each other and the topics discussed or ideas generated during the first focus group were not brought into the second one. The questions raised elicited a great deal of respondent interest and many interesting conjectures were emerged.

It was decided that participants for the third focus group would be individuals selected on a quota sampling basis from the first two focus groups: five participants from each. Due to the inconvenience factor, a couple of participants dropped out and in the end three participants from the first group and four participants from the second group finally agreed to participate in the third focus group. The two-stage focus group is an incremental methodological innovation and was conceived with a view to minimize the first degree “groupthink”. Groupthink occurs when a group makes faulty decisions because group pressures lead to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment”. Individuals affected by groupthink ignore alternatives and tend to agree for irrational decisions (Janis, 1982). In the present research design, the third focus group is aimed at reducing the net groupthink effect since the groupthink effects associated with the first two focus groups work in the third focus group to create a dynamics of dialectics. Ideally, the groupthink can be entirely eliminated only by an infinitely large sequence of focus groups, which is impractical. However, moving from the first degree groupthink to the second degree groupthink alone is sufficient to minimize the idea losses due to groupthink to a very great extent. In addition, by the end of the first two focus groups, the facilitator is likely to gain a great deal of clarity about the issues being discussed and hence can pre-script the proceedings of the third group. And this really happened in course of the present study.

In between the focus groups, prolonged informal interactions took place between the researcher and a few interested participants: this helped to unravel some interesting aspects of the life history of Indian immigrants to the United States. The focus groups, the informal interactions, and a review of popular literature taken together yielded a number of variables that potentially represented the important reasons to migrate and counter-migrate. Later, the importance of these variables in the propensity to migrate or counter-migrate was assessed using a questionnaire. The questionnaire also contained a question to measure the influence of touristic images in the migration/counter-migration decisions.

Tourism and Migration: The Inter-relationships

Since most technical definitions of migration stipulate that boarder crossings should be for a minimum period of at least six months, strictly speaking, tourism does not fall under the category of migration (Castles, 2000). Yet, for a pragmatic observer, international tourism constitutes the most major form of temporary migration in the present times (Gustafson, 2002). Resettlement of labor and capital to provide products and services to tourists in the destination countries is a related form of migration. Entrepreneurial migration takes place motivated by the desire of entrepreneurs to capitalize upon the potential opportunities provided by a destination. In addition, tourism flows may lead to the creation of consumption oriented systems like second homes in the destination countries. It has been noted that such systems more often than not lead to the permanent migration of tourists to the destination countries (Rodriguez, 2001). Tourism attractiveness of a destination country may trigger non-touristic permanent migration: destination attractiveness is sometimes taken as a proxy for the quality of life at a place. Such migration in turn results in the development of other industries in or near to the destination areas wherein these industries thrive on the new-found migrant settlers. Again, the permanent migration of workforce may boost VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives) tourism (Yuan *et al.*, 1995). The migrants themselves may travel back to their country of origin for VFR or other purposes (Feng and Page, 2000).

Tourism attractiveness of a destination results in retirement migration as well. These changes have the power to metamorphose the traditional image of a tourism destination: say, from the image of a laid-back backpacker haven to a booming business destination. Sometimes, tourism acts as an anti-migration influence: tourism creates jobs in the destination countries and the same acts as a compelling reason for the residents not to migrate elsewhere (Ferreira, 2007). The triadic forces of liberalization, privatization, and globalization in the recent times have amplified multiple times the scale and scope of these changes. The definition of migration itself is becoming more and more complicated than ever before: an Asian in the US can simultaneously be a student, worker, a tourist, and a likely “permanent resident” in the near future. Tourism related migration has yielded a range of socio-cultural, economic, and political issues for the migrants, for the

destination communities, and for governments, many of which have been under-researched (O'Reilly, 2003).

The migration drivers can be classified into push and pull factors: push factors are motivations that make one to think that he has to migrate and are socio-psychological; pull factors are the country attractions that 'pull' the individual to it. For example, motivation to get a better paid job is a push factor. It 'pushes' the individual to search for different country alternatives to migrate; information is sought and presented; many competing country alternatives enter the individual's choice set as potential migration destinations. Out of them, he chooses the one alternative that pulls him the most. Tourism images of a country constitute an important medium through which the information about a potential country for migration is passed on to individuals. Touristic images are intensely perpetuated, widely held, and are attested by many seemingly independent agencies: these characteristics make them trustworthy (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999) and may heavily influence one's migration related decisions.

One of the chief attractions for migrants in the United States is its promise of improved quality of life. Millions have sold their property in other countries and have left their friends and relatives in search of a better quality of life that they believe is available in the US. Apart from the globally pervasive influence of the mass media, international inbound tourism to the United States is one of the vital communicators of this widely held image. International tourism has become one of the the dominant faces of our times and the markers that once used to separate tourism from the rest of routine life have thinned down to a negligible level (Medlik and Lockwood, 2002). The present investigation on the influence of touristic images held by Indians about the US upon their migration and settlement plans in the US as well as in their decision to counter-migrate to India is to be seen in the light of the above.

The Social Construction of Work versus Tourism

Work and tourism has traditionally been defined in diametrically opposite terms: it has been an *a priori* assumption that work and leisure compete with each other for time that is scarce (Adler and Adler, 1999). This view continued largely unchanged despite the information and communication technology revolution in



the recent past that enabled people to free work from its spatio-temporal boundedness and gain more autonomy and flexibility.

Lawson (2000) notes that migrants' experiences are socially constructed and are situated in particular political-economic and cultural contexts in meaningful ways. The complex interplay of desires, identities and subjectivities determine belonging, exclusion, and affiliation felt by the migrants. According to world systems theory (Chase-Dunn and Grimes, 1995), master-slave structuration of the international system accounts for economic, political, and cultural relationships between core and peripheral nations and these relationships manifest as ideological infiltration of the peripheral nations by those of the core. A common result of this is the 'Edenization' of the core countries, leading to the intellectual elites gazing at them with a touristic awe. But, these elites are not economically capable enough to visit and live in the developed core countries as tourists and they rather seek employment opportunities in these countries. Another advantage of being a resident rather than a tourist is the images of belongingness that it communicates: For instance, if one is a tourist to USA from India, he is still an Indian; but, if one is a resident in the USA, he becomes more a part of the host society, which is seen as an important elevation in the peripheral countries like India.

Manrai and Manrai (2003) suggest that time usage patterns for work versus leisure activities differ across individuals originating from low and high context cultures. This study revealed that, in any particular work-leisure situation, respondents from high context cultures perceived the work time to be higher and their counterparts from low context cultures perceived the leisure time to be higher. The saying quoted by Buttler (1995) that Americans are workaholics than any other population because they do not have a clue on how to live makes real sense in this context. If this is the case, immigrant workers from the East, conditioned by the added influence of their prior touristic experience in the US, are much more likely to be dissatisfied in any work-leisure situation the US than the natives. Even otherwise, individuals informed in their decision to become migrants in a country by the touristic images of that country may continue to hold touristic attitudes towards everything even after migration, which is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer course. Their attitude towards work is likely to be 'negative' (or they may take work as 'fun') given that tourism is conceived in terms of its dialectical opposition to work. As noted by Uriely (2001), work is strictly

scripted with its dos and don'ts where as the activities of tourists involve playfulness that gives them escape from work and hence loosely defined. In addition, if prior touristic expectations are not met, this may further their chances of returning back to the home country.

Another study by Uriely and Reichel (2000) shows that those who perceive their work situation as a means to continue their travel are less likely to have positive attitudes about their hosts than others who grasp their work situation as part of their touristic experience. These authors suggest that while the touristic orientation of the latter induced them to develop social exchange with their hosts, the mercenary approach of the former limited their encounter with hosts to economic exchange only. This could mean that those migrants influenced by the touristic images of a country and engage in jobs that they consider as constituting their touristic experience may remain favorable in their perception about the host country than others.

Yet, most often than not, tourist spaces are artificially organized for authentic experiences (MacCannell, 1973). Without their knowledge, what tourists get is an assemblage of frames creatively staged with a view to satisfy their desires. But, when an individual becomes a migrant later, there will not be a tourist agency in his service to continue to serve him with the staged touristic realities. This leads to something like cognitive dissonance, the feeling of an uncomfortable tension coming from holding two conflicting thoughts in the mind at the same time (Festinger, 1957; Oshikawa, 1972). They expected touristic comforts and pleasures in the country to which they migrate but meet with harsher situations. The resultant uncertainty and the need to cope up with the unexpected create strains in them.

Discussion

The focus groups helped to generate a number of subjective decision bases for people to continue to work in the US or to counter-migrate: These are listed in tables 2 and 3. Many of these reasons were anticipated and have already appeared in the extant literature (Narayanan, 2007) and are referred in the previous sections. Some reasons were found to be more important for some migrant segments than others. Material comforts provided by the US emerged as the highest rated reason for migrants to stay, followed by career opportunities,



international exposure to kids, and an increased purchasing power. However, there exist profession-wise differences in perception. For instance, IT workers did not give much rating for 'exciting work place' as a motivator; nevertheless, this was a great motivator for those in the academics as well as those who perform managerial jobs. Likewise, those who do academic-research jobs love the individualistic orientation and multi-culturalism prevalent in the US, which, however, is not a significant motivator for any other class. This may have something to do with the elitist-idealistic orientation of those who are into these professions. This may be contrasted with the attitude of the manufacturing workers: their 'practical' attitude towards life may be envisaged from the higher ratings that they have given for items like material comforts and international exposure for kids.

Everyone agreed that higher purchasing power is a motivator: but, given that most of the migrants spend at least a half of their earnings to maintain a family or infrastructure in India and given that dollar is weakening against the Indian rupee as a currency, this may not continue to remain as a major motivator. Many focus group participants compared the purchasing power that they had a decade back and the same now, both within the US and in India, and lamented that they are losing out in both fronts. In addition, the increasing purchasing power of the Indian rupee and the current trend among many Indian companies to give salaries with global parity has been cited as attractions to go back to the homeland. Also, note that, in table 3, the low cost of living in India is highlighted as the most important motivator for going back to India.

One striking aspect across all the classes of respondents is the value they give for family. For instance, giving an international exposure to their kids has been rated as an important item by all classes of respondents, irrespective of whether they believed in the idea of multi-culturalism. Likewise, it can be seen from table-3 that the need for parents to be taken care of has been cited as a major reason favoring the decision to go back. Also, many the respondents participated in the focus groups lamented that they would have a better family life if they were in India. Many were concerned that their family name might cease to exist soon in India if they do not go back and root the next generation there. In fact, this is one of the recurring themes that emerged in all the three focus groups. The survey outcome fortifies this. However, this preference is unlikely to be rooted in the macro-cultural preferences: quite contrary to the popular perceptions and

highlighting a gap in the theoretical rhetoric, the motivation to imbue the values of the East in the kids got only an average preference rating. Also, in many Indian families, grand parents are the ones who look after the kids until they go to school and give them the preliminary introduction to culture and heritage; but, re-connecting kids to grand parent is not a significant motivator enough to go back home. Close to this, again contrary to what appears constantly in the populist media most do not think that they want to go back to give something back to their motherland or to make their kids to love India. This is a motivation for a few philanthropists, but not to the larger segments of mainstream migrants. Or, are these because the so-called self oriented American values have influenced the Indian migrants to that extent? More study is required for an answer.

In popular discourses on the life of migrants in the US, a topic that appears so often is the issue of racial discrimination (Schuman *et al.*, 1997; Tonry, 1995). However, the participants of the survey do not seem like perturbed by the same at all. In fact, it came as the least important variable in their counter-migration decision. Those who work in the medical profession and those who are into academics or research did not even consider it as a problem worth mentioning. This variable was included in the survey since during the focus groups some raised it as a significant issue. However, the survey implies that, if at all some groups are concerned about it to some extent, they are the manufacturing workers and those who do miscellaneous jobs. To probe into why this happens so, we need to examine the demographics of these two segments. Most of the manufacturing/industrial workers whom the researcher interviewed are un/semi-skilled personnel who reached the US as dependents of their spouses on green cards and are employed mostly as school teachers or as nursing/para-medical staff. Likewise, the respondents who fell under the category 'others' are mostly part-time workers or self-employed for a living. Does this mean that racial discrimination is still prevalent in the lower echelons of the society? In a post-focus group follow up, this question was raised: many seemed to believe that, given the magnificent economic progress of India and that many Indians are working in top organizational capacities of many US MNCs, the Indian migrants have got an increasingly higher respect in the US in the recent times. Also, many believed that since Indians are neither black nor white, they escape from the direct effect of discrimination, if any.

Eastern societies are known for forming thick relationship networks (Hofstede, 2005). And most Indian families in the US are parts of strong community



networks that help to nurture continuation of the home culture through frequent cultural activities, events, newsletters, and so on. Most Indian migrants are parts of online social networking communities, too. In addition, by the time kids begin to go to school they develop a different set of cultural ties with their pals in the school. During the focus groups, many highlighted these community ties that they formed here as a maintenance factor for them to continue to live in the US. Some narrated the stories of families that counter migrated: the feeling of isolation at the homeland due to protracted years of separation; adjustment problems for kids in an entirely different educational system; expectation of kith and kin to continue to get gifts they way they used to get before counter migration; difference in job orientation; and so on. But, the survey implies that the networks formed while the migrants are in the USA are not a strong motivator enough to hold them here, *ceteris paribus*, other things are favorable for counter-migration. Taking part in the community activities here in the US may be a compromise out of necessity, with a feeling of 'something is better than nothing'.

The only entrepreneur participant in the focus groups highlighted the positive changes in the entrepreneurial climate of India: business friendly governments, decreasing corruption, fast track and single window clearances, improved access to capital and labor, world class infrastructure, and so on. He said that he is slowly moving his business back to the home country. According to him, he is the last among his group of friends who came to the "land of opportunities" around two decades back and that he saddened by the stagnation that he perceives everywhere in the US economic sphere.

In response to the question of why there are thousands of migration applicants waiting for the favorable consideration of appropriate US authorities, a lot of discussions were taken place. This is an issue that emerged from both the first two groups. It is true that people have to wait for months even to get a Visa appointment and the H1 quota available under various categories is getting filled at the beginning of the year. One set of participants responded to this by noting that those who show craze to land in the US do not understand the changed ground realities. A louder voice, however, was that even these days a few years of US experience is a great addition to one's resume. Based on personally known instances, these participants explained that the salary and perks offered to a US returnee is at least a half more than those offered to someone who spent his entire career even in the IT hot spots of India like Bangalore and Hyderabad. Also,

most US returnees directly fetch managerial positions once they are back. Academic assignments are another hot area: US returned professors attract huge salary from a burgeoning number of private schools and universities in India that plan to replicate the American model in India. Likewise, US returned school teachers are quickly absorbed by the private international schools in India that follow international curriculum. However, these incentives are not available for all classes of employees or across all industries: one noted example is the medical profession. The United States continue to be a great attraction for those trained in the medical, nursing, and para-medical professions: the salary and perks offered in India for them, except for a small segment of outstanding doctors, is menial compared to the US rates. An added incentive for them is the ease with which they can grab a green card.

Table 2: Reasons for Indian migrants to continue to stay in the US (7 point scale; Rounded off to the nearest whole number)

Reason to Stay in the United States	Information Technology Employees N=25	Medical/Para Medical Employees N=28	Administrative/Managerial Staff N=17	Manufacturing Workers N=16	Academic/Research Staff N=11	Others N=14	Average Importance N=111
Career Opportunities	7	6	5	5	7	4	6
Meritocracy	7	5	4	4	7	3	5
Exciting Workplace	4	6	7	4	7	4	5
Multiculturalism	4	2	2	2	6	2	3
International Exposure for Kids	7	7	5	6	7	4	6
Individualistic Orientation	2	2	2	1	7	2	3
Material Comforts	7	7	7	7	6	6	7
Efficient							

Systems and Procedures	3	3	4	3	5	2	3
Less Corruption	4	4	4	4	4	5	4
Higher Purchasing Power	6	5	6	5	6	6	6
Tourism Opportunities	5	4	5	2	5	2	4
Enjoyable Life	5	4	5	5	7	5	5
Less Pollution	2	4	1	1	4	2	2
Medical Care	3	3	2	2	4	2	3
Established a Network in the US	6	2	2	1	1	7	3

Table 3: Reasons for Indian migrants to counter-migrate to India (7 point scale; Rounded off to the nearest whole number)

Reason to Leave Back to India	Information Technology Employees	Medical/Para Medical Employees	Administrative/ Managerial Staff	Manufacturing Workers	Academic /Research Staff	Others	Average Importance
	N=25	N=28	N=17	N=16	N=11	N=14	N=111
Take Care of the Parents	5	6	5	6	5	5	5
Imbue Eastern Values in Kids	3	5	3	5	2	4	4
Reconnecting Kinds with their rand	3	4	2	4	2	3	3

Parents							
Give Back Something to India	4	3	2	1	7	3	3
Overcome Homesickness	2	2	2	4	4	2	3
Family Life a Casualty in the US	6	5	5	5	3	6	5
High Level of Crime in the US	3	4	2	2	3	2	3
American Culture is Immoral	2	6	2	3	1	4	3
Continue the Family Lineage in India	5	7	5	6	5	7	6
Make Kids to Love India	3	4	3	3	4	3	3
Low Cost of Living in India	6	7	7	7	6	7	7
Career Opportunities in India	7	2	6	2	6	3	4
Racism in the US	2	1	2	3	1	3	2



To the central question of the importance of touristic images and experiences in determining the decision to migrate, a variety of responses came out from the focus groups. For many, the influence of touristic images began from their childhood: they began to hear the glory of the United States from their primary school teachers which got fortified through years of higher schooling and exposure to the international media. Some revealed that, as kids, they found their migrant neighbors coming back to home once in a year or so with a lot of foreign goods and enviously gazed at the extravagant and pompous way they lived their lives. For many, these images were important; they agreed that the tourism attractions available in the US are an important add-on to the motivating factors. Yet the more important pull factors that the US provided were the opportunity to realize their intellectual potential; merit based rewards; higher income; superior quality of life; a range of career opportunities, and so on. Of course, touristic images provide one of the vital-most clues to the subjective evaluation of factors like quality of life. Towards the middle of the first focus group, there was a consensus that touristic images, although important, were not a motivating factor. The discussions sounded like an empirical substantiation of the famous two factor theory involving motivating and hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1959). Touristic images form a hygiene factor which cannot increase the motivation or satisfaction of a migrant although a lowering the same may lead to dissatisfaction.

Some members of the first group commented that the widely prevalent touristic image of the US in India as a highly promiscuous society in fact work against the decision to migrate. In many traditional aristocratic family settings, elders prohibit the youth from migrating to the States. The hardcore Hindu families, likewise, do not allow the young generation to visit the US even for a short while since people in the US consume beef, which is anathema for Hindus. Even now, women of many aristocratic Hindu families will not be given in marriage to a US employed, how much so ever educated or wealthy the groom may be. Tourism promotional materials have caused another unfounded perception: the perception that sex and drugs are freely available in the US. Due to this, some participants complained that whenever they go back home to India for a holiday, they hear rumors around them like "that girl is with another guy", "he has got four wives there", "he is a drug addict", and so on.

Members of the second focus group expressed that they had some sort of cognitive dissonance after reaching the States. The images of the United States that

they knew were far different from what they saw when they landed here. It was difficult for most to believe that there were poor people in America. Many recent migrants quipped that some of the cities in India like Bangalore and Pune were much better in terms of amenities than the places in the US they stay and work and for them their presence in the US provided a vantage point for making informed contrasts. The Utopian image of the United States seamlessly propagated by the international tourism industry creates a lot of unrealistic expectations in the Indian migrants is something that emerged very clearly from the focus groups.

Respondents across all the focus groups agreed that the wonderful tourism attractions that US has got across the country and a highly affordable air transportation system make them to vacation more. For them, this is a great stress reliever and rejuvenator, too. Many said that they rarely took a long distance tour in India but after coming to the US they go at least two times year for a long distance tour. The esteem ascribed by the host society for travelling is another reason for this, according to some. In addition to long distance vacationing, many Indian migrants go to nearby vacation spots for spending the week-ends. In both cases, they take a lot of photos and videos and share them with their friends and relatives back in India. This constitutes a large chunk of personal collection of the Indian migrants in online sites such as Flickr and You Tube.

Thanks to these colorful touristic imageries, many did not think that workers would be required to do manual labor in the US. The expectation was that, since "everything in the US is computerized", there would be no need to physically exert oneself as an employee. This was one of the most disconfirmed expectations for most of industrial workers whom we interviewed. A couple of construction workers who participated in the focus group said that the physical strain for a similar job back in India was much less compared to the same in the US. Even though not in the matter of physical toil, similar expectations were held by most Indians migrants. The cut-throat competition and the rampant hire and fire policy prevalent in the employment scenario in the US were difficult to grapple with for many who have enjoyed highly protected jobs. Many glorified the successes they achieved through trade union mediated negotiations and employment strikes. However, some of the focus group participants who had a stint of work experience in Middle-East before coming to the US intervened and commented that the job situation in the US is far superior than in the Middle East and that they felt relieved. Any how, rather than lamenting over it and deciding to go back,



migrants quickly learn to live up to the new set of circumstances. Some members responded that they began to respect work irrespective of the "class of work" only after reaching the US.

Conclusion

The United States accepts more legal immigrants as permanent residents every year than any other country in the world and immigration has been a major source of cultural and institutional change throughout much of US history (YIS, 2006). Yet, the economic, social, and political aspects of migration have always remained an issue of hot debates due to its controversial impacts upon economic growth, settlement patterns, environmental and aesthetic deterioration, social change, criminality, moral values, political loyalties, and so on (Suárez-Orozco *et al.*, 2005).

The present study has explored the complex set of motivations that are held by the Indian migrants in the United States in the matter of their migration and counter migration related decisions. While a large number of migrations related studies can be cited in the literature, not many India-US specific migration studies are available, which is shocking given the specific nuances associated it. The Indian migrants in the US form a highly influential group and the recent trend of their counter migration back to India may have far reaching consequence for the US and Indian economies. It is said that the US software industry remains largely in the hands of India born IT experts and the information technology edifice may need fundamental redesign if the exodus of top brains continue. A weakening dollar and the lure offered by the new generation India based companies may amplify the trend and cause the US to loose a significant part of the software business to India. Returning high skill migrants bring with them knowledge, expertise, access to global networks and capital, but also a international sensibility that influences where they work, live and their expectations and vision of life in the Indian cities in which they settle. If this trend is to be arrested, large scale changes may be required in the US immigration and citizenship regulations. Of course, this is an important topic worthy of a separate discussion. Counter migration is an issue of importance to the policy makers of countries like India too, given that the same may exacerbate the inequalities in the society. NASSCOM, the premier organization that represents and sets the tone for public policy for the Indian software industry

has put in its recent strategic review a detailed road map on how to integrate the US returnees and help to maximize their contribution to the Indian software trade (NASSCOM, 2008).

When counter migration becomes a massive trend governments may need to bring in counter migration policy frameworks, just as they have had migration policy frameworks so far. Counter migration can affect the lives of not only the ones who do it but also the lives of residents, firms, and the industries as well. It is high time national governments think about this issue seriously. The US government is yet to have a strategy or plan of action to follow in case the migrants decide to leave the country massively. Likewise, despite the motivational rhetoric taken by the government of India in welcoming back the migrants, it is yet to have a clear vision on how best to accommodate them into the mainstream fabric of the society or how best to utilize their learning and experience.

With regard to the role of tourism in the migrants' decision framework, the study revealed that tourism imagery is very much part of the subaltern minds of migrants and sway some influence in the migration decision. However, their dominant role comes as hygiene factors: tourism images enhance the ego satisfaction of the migrants; they act as tension busters; and they enrich the lives of migrants. Migrants who reach the US conditioned by the tourist imagery do go through a stage of disconfirmation of expectations, but, rather than continuing to lament about the gaps in perception, they quickly learn to live with the newly encountered reality.

A study built upon a few focus groups and an elementary survey conducted among just above a hundred respondents cannot become a solid base for generalization. Also, the geographical bias of the study towards the California region is very likely to have biased the results. The researchers could have collected data on other pertinent variables and could have conducted more sophisticated analyses, which was not possible within the time resource constraints for the present study. However, this preliminary investigation is sure to have thrown light upon some of the important factors that determine the propensity of migration and counter migration and future researchers may take leads from this.



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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Viviana ANDREESCU is an Assistant Professor at the University of Louisville, Dept. of Justice Administration, USA . E-mail: v0andr01(at)louisville.edu.

Violeta ALEXANDRU is the Director of the Institute for Public Policy in Bucharest, Romania

George P BABU is an Assistant Professor, at University of Southern Mississippi, USA, Email: Babu.George(at)usm.edu.

Sergiu BĂLȚĂTESCU is a PhD. lecturer in sociology at the University of Oradea, Department of Sociology. His main research interests are the international comparison in well-being, discrimination, quality of life, social change and sociology of culture. Email: bsergiu(at)uoradea.ro.

Ulrike GROTE is Professor at the Institute for Environmental Economics and World Trade, Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Hannover. Email: grote(at)iuw.uni-hannover.de

Israt RAYHAN is a PhD student at Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Hannover, Germany and Junior Researcher at Department of Economic and Technological Change (ZEF-B), Center for Development Research, University of Bonn, Germany. Email: israt677(at)yahoo.com / irayhan(at)uni-bonn.de

Anuratha SHYAMSUNDAR is a freelance writer, Email: anuratha.shyam@gmail.com

Theodor TUDOROIU works as a Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Institut d'études européennes, Université de Montréal–McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He is currently working on subjects related to Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. E-mail: tudoroiu(at)hotmail.com.

Figen UZAR is a research assistant and a PhD student at Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara Turkey. She received her BS degree in Sociology from METU in 2004 and her MS degree in European Urban Studies from Bauhaus University Weimar, Germany in 2006. Her academic interest areas are urban sociology, urban policy and international migration.

