

**SUMMARY.** Migration as a quest for better living is a never-ending phenomenon, and millions of migrants, even today, are still on their way to the more developed parts of the world. On the one hand, the question arises whether the phenomenon seems to be slowly changing its former characteristics in the era of the latest globalization processes. On the other hand, migrations for a long time used to be heading from the South to the North and from the East to the West, at least for the last couple of centuries, something that is not the only case anymore. In this paper, the main goal is to analyze: first, the current process and what is new about globalization; second, the latest phenomena of migrations and the individualization of migration; third, the connectedness and interdependence between the two categories, including some of the gains and losses; and fourth, shed more light on migration in Southeast Europe and consequences for the migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries.

**KEYWORDS:** globalization, migration, Southeast Europe, gains and losses of migrations, individualization of migration.

This summer (2024), as thousands and thousands of Macedonians, Serbians, and Southeast and Central European citizens drove through the Balkans towards the South, to the Greek coast and islands, driving near the border, I noticed one young guy walking alone, probably from the Middle East, just beside the road after crossing the border. I slowed down the car. It seems that he was there for the first time and was looking for a way where he should continue. He was most probably going to the North! Shortly after he saw the conditions on the road, he went back to the forest nearby. I guess he was not alone and probably would wait for the night to continue his 'journey.' I dedicate this paper to this guy and millions of new migrants looking for a better living and trying to reach Berlin, London, Hamburg, Vienna, Brussels, or many other prosperous cities in Western Europe.

## GLOBALIZATION

Many things have changed in the world in the last three or four decades. The higher level of interconnectedness of the modern world is often the cause of new phenomena, too, and migration is one of them. Traveling abroad and going further around was never easier. As never before, one can travel anywhere and in many countries on cheap flights. Also, our cars are faster, and the roads are improved. You can even 'be' in the world and 'see' the world through digital tools and devices. The online world is all around. Even the physical world has never been closer. Everybody, almost everybody, carries a smartphone. It provides access to all the known and unknown facts of human civilization. Models of mobile devices are very similar, but the groups of people on the move are very diverse and differ in many aspects. More and more people, at least from the Syria crisis onwards, are massively leaving the less prosperous places and regions, walking away and entering the wealthier states and looking for a decent life that their domestic countries cannot provide. Not just because of the wars but also because of personal reasons for making this journey, with smaller or bigger hazards.

That indirectly proves, from the people's perspectives, who the real winners of globalization are – the more prosperous countries in the World, mainly in Western parts, but not exclusively. The new migrants that we are talking about usually come from the non-democratic world, authoritarian states, and many hybrid regimes – from the East and South. The positive moment is that in the last decades, the number of democratic states has been on the rise, but the process is too slow and is interrupted by too many setbacks. It becomes harder for older 'democracies' to keep up the pace, give more quality for daily living, take a fresh breath, and advance their liberal ideology. In the meantime, millions of people annually exit their homes and begin their historical journeys, trying to reach and settle in West European countries, the USA/Canada, and a not-so-long list of other countries. In the summer of 2023, I met an Afghan family on Centre Island in Toronto, Canada, who were recent immigrants. The father proudly made a barbeque and explained what he traditionally cooked at home. It was their choice to accept the new lifestyle.

Hence, 100 years from now on, due to the continuation of migrations, as we see it, the world population will be more multicultural and diverse. Some states are receivers of new migrants, while others are 'producing' migrants. The latest waves of migration mostly come after more significant conflicts. The national governments of the poorer countries, by their inefficient and corrupted ruling elites, are producing more migrants daily. It becomes more challenging for the democratic process to advance its historical mission. Year by year, national governments are

challenged by global processes (capitalism, liberalism, globalization). At the same time, the world media and the Internet are spreading pictures of advanced living conditions in the West. The images of the glamorous life in more prosperous parts of the world capture the citizens' attention and arouse hope.

In his book *'Globalization: A Critical Introduction'*, Scholte defines globalization as internationalization, liberalization, universalization, modernization (Americanization), and deterritorialization (supra-territoriality). "Only the last notion gives 'globalization' a distinctive meaning – and at the same time identifies a key contemporary historical development. In the remainder of the book, therefore, globalization refers to the advent and spread of what is alternately called 'global,' 'transplanetary,' 'transworld' and in certain respects also 'supra territorial' social spaces" (Scholte 2005: 3). Globalization has its pre-history and its modern features, supra-territoriality being one of the latest. Wherever you live, hundreds of millions of people today experience instant written, audio, and video contact with other people a few times a day. Sometimes, even all the time. Globalization is faster and faster, and there is no longer going back to the territoriality of the one we knew before the 1960s.

The electronic mass media, the world's economic and cultural products, and global changes have touched every living being. There are some minor limitations, though: what kind of smartphone you have, the strength of the signal, the Internet package you have, which region you are coming from, what society you belong to, what kind of (non)democratic environment you live in, what the average income in your country is, etc. Not all people are equally connected or have the same degree of inclusivity – more privileges are still on the side of more urban, prosperous, and white men. This is changing, but it will take time for some countries to improve. Research proves that inequality prevails everywhere.<sup>1</sup> We are in the era of globalization, but some people who do not belong to privileged societies might never experience a high quality of education, urbanization, democratization, individualization, and secularization, which can be summarized firstly as modernization and secondly as globalization.

The skeptics see globalization as a Western ideology, an American strategy for control and propaganda of the American elites. Wallerstein (1982) analyzed it as a conceptual framework. His World Systems Theory (WST) draws on the time of the development of capitalism (1500 – 1850), bringing in the categories 'center,' 'periphery,' and 'semi-periphery.' "Despite the overall economic growth of the world system, the gap between core and periphery had become greater than ever"

<sup>1</sup> Internet access <<https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691160528/the-globalization-of-inequality>> [retrieved 27 11 2024].

(Wallerstein 2004: 84). Naturally, the people's movements will follow from the periphery to the semi-periphery and from the semi-periphery to the center. In today's case, migrants from the periphery try to enter straight to the center.

As regards the abovementioned concepts, it seems that only Scholte's "supra-territoriality" offers the possibility of a clear and specific definition of globalization. The notion of supra-territoriality (or trans-world or trans-border relations) provides a way to appreciate what is global about globalization. So, globalization is about increased mobility across borders – mobility of goods and ideas, mobility of information and communication products and services, and, of course, the mobility of people. Mobility became customary in the new global era and some label it transnationalism.<sup>2</sup> With mobility come contacts and connectedness. Global resources and interactions produce new, inventive cultural forms and repertoires even though, sometimes, communication between cultures creates tensions. Some still call it a conflict between the West and the East. However, the mobility of people does not crisscross with big ideological ideas; it concerns individuals, families, and their wish to go to Germany or other countries, and it does not interfere directly with globalization even though it goes parallel with it.

#### MIGRATION(S)

The world has already gotten used to the news that day after day, thousands of desperate people drown in the seas on their journey to safe territories. UNHCR's account of the situation is just devastating: "The fact that there are children among these people in danger and that we have unfortunately had to retrieve the number of dead ones has deeply marked us," says Commander Michele Niosi of the Italian Coastguard. "Children are symbols of renewal, and in these conditions, it feels like defeat rather than renewal." Moreover, "While individual naval and coastguard officers often treat the people they rescue with sympathy, governments tend to approach the phenomenon of boat people from a national security perspective. On occasions, they have declared a 'state of emergency' to deal with perceived 'invasions' by people who are not only unarmed but very often half-starved, sick, and destitute. Some national and local officials have even gone so far as to suggest that the boats should be shot at with live ammunition."<sup>3</sup> If we go back in time, most of us will surely learn that we are from somewhere else, inside or outside our

<sup>2</sup> Internet access <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/transnationalism>> [retrieved 27 11 2024].

<sup>3</sup> Refugee or Migrant – Why It Matters. *Refugees Magazine*, 12 December 2007, 148, 16. Internet access <<https://www.unhcr.org/news/refugees-magazine-issue-148-refugee-or-migrant-why-it-matters-refugee-or-migrant>> [retrieved 05 01 2025].

political boundaries. So, we are all somehow migrants. Many would agree with this comment: “Nor should voluntary migration – economic or otherwise – necessarily be viewed as negative (even though it is usually seen that way). Migrants often fill the gaps in the workforce, rather than take other workers’ jobs – but they still make the perfect scapegoat for a society’s ills, and their contribution is often hidden or ignored.”<sup>4</sup> When the symbioses are reached, the results are long-term. Nevertheless, the history of the population movement is not straightforward to foresee.

In recent years, some wealthy countries have lessened their laws and immigration rules, which were much stricter before. It was in the EU regulations – that if you are ‘caught’ in any EU country, you will be brought back to the state where you first entered the EU zone. The ‘law’ that was in power for an extended period was that if someone were classified as an economic migrant, they would likely be sent back home. Some migrants tell their false stories well, while others retell their true stories poorly. The data from the International Organization of Migration shows that today, over 200 million people are believed to be living outside their original home country. Many of their statuses are between legal and illegal migrants, the most common being economic migrants. Relatively few of them are refugees. The phenomenon of ‘irregular migration’ in which people move without passports and visas grew in scale and scope, often consisting of migrants trying to escape home poverty. Still, not every family member has the same story and destiny. Charles-Edwards et al. (2023: 14) state that

At the global level, the changes wrought by international migration have been gradual or “slow.” The decline in impact is not, however, felt uniformly across the globe due to differences in the intensity and effectiveness of migration at different development levels. Our results revealed that migration impact is greatest between countries at *Very High* levels of development and between countries at *Low* and *Very High* levels of development; however, the mechanisms vary. At *Very High* levels of development, migration impact is driven by high intensity. There are several factors likely contributing to this including the greater capacity of individuals to migrate and lower barriers to mobility. High migration intensity at later stages of development was foreshadowed in Zelinsky’s hypothesis of the mobility transition which posited vigorous accelerating circulation in advanced societies. The presence of significant circulation is supported by the decline in effectiveness among countries at *Very High* levels of development due to increased reciprocity of flows. Following Zelinsky (1971), high intensity may not persist over time as communication systems increasingly substitute for migration, however, this has not yet been observed.

Some flows are stable, as new data show that nearly two-thirds of all world migrants live in wealthier countries. Middle-income countries were the destination of 31% of all international migrants, whereas relatively few migrants resided in

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

low-income countries. In 2020, international migrants comprised nearly 15% of the population in high-income countries, compared to less than 2% in middle- and low-income countries. The picture looks like this:

Most of the world's international migrants live in a small number of countries. In 2020, two-thirds of all international migrants were living in just 20 countries. The United States of America remained the largest destination of international migrants with 51 million migrants in 2020, equal to 18 percent of the world's total. Germany hosted the second largest number of migrants worldwide (around 16 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (13 million), the Russian Federation (12 million), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (9 million). International migration often takes place within the same regions. In 2020, nearly half of all international migrants resided in the region from which they originated. Europe had the largest share of intra-regional migration, with 70 percent of all migrants born in Europe residing in another European country.<sup>5</sup>

In the DEMIG project, insights were gained on the trends and drivers of international migration and migration policies in the post-WWII period.<sup>6</sup> The empirical evidence challenges the two common assumptions: that (1) migration has accelerated and that (2) migration policies have become more restrictive. Drawing on four novel datasets, the project insights synthesized evidence on the various ways migration policies affect migration patterns. It disentangled migration policy effects from structural migration determinants and provided a comprehensive view of what policies can – and cannot – achieve. The main findings are:

- Questioning popular images of rapidly increasing migration, international migration has remained remarkably stable at around 3 percent of the world population. Rather than a global acceleration of migration, main migratory shifts have been directional...
- The growing structural complexity and segmentation of labor markets, as well as concomitant increases in educational levels and occupational specialization, encourage people to migrate for work, education, and family...
- International inequality is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition for migration. Most migration occurs between middle-income and high-income societies, and most migrants from low-income countries belong to middle-income groups...
- Non-migration policies in the areas of labor markets, education, health care, welfare, and social protection pursued by origin and destination states have potentially strong—but theoretically ambiguous—consequences for migration... (De Haas et al. 2019: 912–913)

<sup>5</sup> Internet access <[https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/international\\_migration\\_2020\\_highlights\\_ten\\_key\\_messages.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/international_migration_2020_highlights_ten_key_messages.pdf)> 1–2 [retrieved 05 01 2025].

<sup>6</sup> Internet access <<https://migrationnetwork.un.org/projects/demig-project-determinants-international-migration>> [retrieved 05 01 2025].

According to this study, the idea is that international migration has accelerated and has become more diverse. In line with the ‘new economics of labor migration,’ relative deprivation from migrant communities is a stronger migration determinant than inequalities on the national or international level. Even the individual trajectories and pursuit of personal development may be the highest argument for leaving the local community and trying one’s capabilities elsewhere, where the opportunities are better. One step beyond the undocumented trend of moving because of one’s career concerns the most successful stratum between the ages of 30 and 50, changing the cities and jobs all around the globe. This happens to the young and brave individuals in London, Los Angeles, Seattle, Dubai, Singapore, etc. It is a sign of the future trend of mobility.

#### GLOBALIZATION AND MIGRATION(S)

Pieterse argues that globalization involves human integration, a long-term, uneven, and paradoxical process. In the global human condition, widening social cooperation and deepening inequality go together. Consider his reasoning below:

Taking a historical point of view, globalization and migration are twin subjects. In a historical sense, we are all migrants because our ancestors have all traveled to the places where we have come from. States that impose border controls may go way back in time, but their spread is a recent phenomenon (nineteenth century) and their covering the globe is more recent still. Few of our ancestors have lived under these dispensations. These are not merely ‘academic’ considerations. Profoundly our perspective on history shapes our perspective on migration. Presently the taken-for-granted way of looking at migration is from the point of view of the nation-state. (Pieterse 2000: 392)

We can further elaborate that globalization and the new migrants are categories that might be put together. Still, some would argue that they are separate phenomena with their history and logical consequences. Some processes cannot be seen as connected, like successful people traveling and living abroad, by their own decision, welcomed by the host country, professionals and businesspeople living in several places, compared to migrants and refugees, who have different backgrounds and are approached differently by the host country. How far should you go to be called an economic migrant – previously called *Gastarbeiter* in Western Germany?<sup>7</sup> Today, you may live in some EU country but have the right to travel and work

<sup>7</sup> The term “guest worker” is most commonly associated with its German translation, *Gastarbeiter*, mainly referring to Turkish and South European workers admitted to West Germany after World War II to help rebuild the country’s infrastructure.



anywhere in the EU zone. Moreover, seasonal workers are desperately wanted by the German economy and are generously paid by companies.

Concerning human population, Billari (2022: 11) asserts that “In current scientific discourse, the inertial and slow nature of demography is epitomized by two paradigmatic and interrelated global-level megatrends: the demographic transition and population aging.” He documented the growing speed of population change in Italy and Germany. Through this lens, Billari’s research has sought to quantify the overall impact of international migration on the global population distribution across development levels. The impact is defined as the percentage of the population redistributed in five years and is a function of both the overall intensity and the effectiveness of migration. The conclusion is that the global impact of international migration has declined since the 1990s.

The intensification of global migration since the Second World War, particularly in recent decades, has transformed immigration into a meaningful and contentious political issue. Giddens and Sutton (2021: 538–539) describe it this way: “Four models of migration have been used to describe the main global population movements since 1945: the classic model, to the emigrants’ nation (Canada, USA, and Australia), the colonial model, connected with France and UK, the guest workers model, examples of Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium, and an unauthorized forms of immigration, cases of USA and European Union.” With each wave of migration, the receiving societies, especially their cities, became multi-ethnic and religiously diverse. Since the end of Eastern European communism, the EU has witnessed a new migration marked by two main events. According to Koser and Lutz (1998), “The origins of the new migration in Europe are normally traced to 1989 since the conclusion of the Cold War and the collapse of communist regimes have resulted in the end of Europe’s political division and the opening of borders between East and West. At the same time, the outbreak of ethnically motivated wars and so-called ‘ethnic cleansing’ have precipitated the expulsion and flight of an estimated five million refugees from the territory of the former Yugoslavia alone” (Koser, Lutz 1998: 1). Today, migration has changed as people are using global transport, travel opportunities, and new possibilities for various reasons – tourism, education, and work. Examining recent trends in global migration patterns, researchers identify four tendencies that will characterize migration in the coming years, namely, “acceleration of migration across borders in bigger numbers, diversification, as new migrants coming from different places, a tendency towards globalization as a larger number of countries are today senders and receivers, and feminization of migration, as a growing number of migrants are women” (Castles, De Haas, Miller 2009: 16). These trends mark the new age of migration showing



how globalization influences patterns of migration and how migration has much greater potential to reshape societies.

Some theoretical frameworks argue about the relationship between globalization and migration, including Immanuel Wallerstein's World Systems Theory, which emphasizes the division of the world into core, semi-periphery, and periphery regions. It suggests that "migration is influenced by global capitalist expansion, where people from peripheral regions (often less economically developed) migrate to core regions (more developed) in search of better economic opportunities" (Wallerstein 2004: 85). This statement reflects the broader processes of globalization that maintain inequalities across regions. The Human Capital Theory also claims that migration is driven by the desire of individuals to maximize their human capital (education, skills, and labor) in more competitive environments. The academic approach to globalization and migration is diverse and interdisciplinary. It examines how globalization facilitates the movement of people through technological, economic, and political changes while also considering how migration shapes global systems. Scholars seek to understand the interconnectedness of these processes, exploring both the opportunities and challenges that arise for migrants and receiving societies in a globalized world. The academic discourse continues to evolve as new migration patterns emerge, particularly in response to economic and political developments and many other global events.

Economists analyze the effects of globalization on migration through the lens of labor markets, remittances, and development. Globalization has led to the liberalization of labor markets, facilitating workers' movement across borders, particularly in the technology, healthcare, and agriculture sectors. The global demand for labor in specific industries results in the migration of workers from countries with surplus labor to those with labor shortages. However, the movement of people, according to the global economic systems (such as multinational corporations, trade agreements, and neoliberal policies), can shape migration patterns, often exacerbating inequalities between countries and encouraging migration as individuals seek better wages and living conditions. Even though its impact can vary depending on the context, individualization is important in migration. It refers to the increasing focus on individual choices, personal freedom, and self-determination in modern society, where individuals are responsible for shaping their lives.

Globalization and migration are complex and multileveled issues. They are creating vast opportunities and challenges related to inequality and demographic numbers. Gains from globalization and migration can be multifaceted, as can the losses. The main areas where the gains are spotted are economic growth, considering the trade and investments, and labor market benefits for the migrants individually. There are other gains, such as knowledge transfer between the countries

and fostering technological advancements, including developing transnational networks, sharing information, and family benefits. Sending remittances is not an insignificant aid for Albania, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other Southeast European countries. Losses related to inequality influence many sectors in migrant-sending countries. The processes are complex to follow and not easy to summarize. Countries experiencing high emigration rates, such as Serbia and Romania, face population decline and aging demographics, which can burden social welfare systems. Emigration of skilled workers from countries like Bulgaria and Romania has led to a loss of human capital, negatively impacting their economic development. “Recently, the countries also experienced accession or pre-accession arrangements to the greater economic and political space of the European Union. Most of the societal changes in Southeast Europe are rooted in key long-term developments that exhibit time lags, intensifications, slow-down phases, and convergences with development in Western Europe” (Fassman et al. 2014: 152).

In the past, migration was often influenced by decisive factors such as family needs, national conditions, or economic pressures. However, there has been a change towards individual aspirations in the era of globalization. People migrate for various personal reasons: seeking better economic opportunities, pursuing education, exploring career growth, or escaping personal circumstances such as poverty or discrimination. The ability to make migration decisions based on individual goals – rather than purely collective needs – reflects the impact of individualization. Globalization has made migration more accessible, with easier access to information, faster travel, and the ability to connect with people globally. This has allowed migrants to plan their journeys independently, with more control over their decisions. For instance, technology enables individuals to research destinations, job opportunities, or housing arrangements in ways that were not previously possible. The rise of platforms like LinkedIn or online job boards allows people to pursue migration based on personal career goals. While individualization empowers many, it can also create challenges. Migrants often face more isolation and issues with a sense of belonging, especially if they migrate alone. The emphasis on individual agency can make it harder for people to rely on traditional family or community support systems, which can lead to social dislocation and mental health challenges. Moreover, individualized migration often puts the responsibility for success or failure solely on the individual, which may amplify feelings of pressure or alienation. In the globalization era, individualization is a significant aspect of migration as globalization is designed as an ideology that does not explain every process unidimensional but serves to direct actions toward the stated goal of apologists and supporters of the existing global system. If we follow the economy, one

can easily find the logic behind the need of the rich countries to use emigration as a resource for earning higher GDP. The people with higher education and competencies are always very welcome everywhere.

#### A VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST EUROPE

The migration waves in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean over the last 100 years show a complex integration between socio-economic factors, historical contexts, and demographic changes. It turned out that Southern Europe, a region that was emigrated from, is now a region (like Italy and Spain) attracting migrants from the Global South. Quoting King, Lazaridis and Poyago-Theotoky assert that “Southern Europe has played a major role in shaping the global map of migration during the last few centuries” (Lazaridis, Poyago-Theotoky 1999: 716). The sole reason for this is the lack of better jobs, so people from South Europe sought better opportunities in Western and Northern Europe, especially high-skilled migrants. However, Ingellis and Stornaiuolo (2022) notice new trends: “The individualized attempts to escape the lack of good jobs and a generalized situation of crisis explains the intensity of this migration flow. Conversely, there has been no such interest in migration within Southern Europe. Yet, recent decades have witnessed a significant and growing migration of Italians to Spain” (Ingellis, Stornaiuolo 2022: 2). The economic crises that have periodically affected Southern Europe before, particularly the 2008 financial crisis, have significantly influenced migration patterns. But times are changing.

Migrations are a complex socio-economic factor that affects every individual (family) starting their journey today. Such movements occasionally – but not always – involve people traveling from less prosperous and stable states to more prosperous and secure countries. Migration experts have pointed out that the world is characterized by increasing differences in development and democratic processes. Populations in some regions (Western and Northern Europe) are shrinking and getting older, whereas others have young, growing populations with little or no employment prospects, like Southeast Europe.

Southeast Europe is a less prosperous or advanced region but secure and stable. That is not why migrants will halt their wish to move to places with the same jobs but much higher wages. Table 1 below shows migration inflows in 2011–2021 to the selected OECD countries, which are most desirable for migrants from Southeast Europe. Migration trends have varied, and some countries in the region have become immigration destinations (like Austria, Italy, and Slovenia). Others remained or became emigration countries (like Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia).

The migration accelerated after 1989, with a significant shift in the number of migrants from Eastern European countries moving towards countries of Western and Northern Europe. Accession of some Southeast European states to the EU influenced the free movement of people within the EU, leading to increased migration patterns. This process has brought benefits for both migrant-sending and migrant-receiving states. Fassman et al. (2014: 161) describe the shift as follows:

Like other Western European countries, Austria and, later, Italy and Slovenia experienced favourable economic development and turned into *de facto* immigration countries. In Bulgaria, emigration largely affected the population development negatively. In the period from 1985 to 1992, the population of the country decreased by 461 000 people. Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia, in particular, became emigration countries, whereas countries like Hungary and Slovakia – according to the officially registered net migration rates – turned into ‘emerging immigration countries.’ There, a positive migration balance was reached in the 1980s and in countries like Hungary, it could probably be easily reversed by recent trends.

We can see in Table 1 that Austria, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Switzerland are the countries with the greatest capacities, potentials, and numbers of migrant inflows. Also, traditionally, for economic and other reasons, these countries are the favored destinations for migration from Southeast Europe (the Balkan region).

Table 1. Inflows of foreign population into selected OECD countries

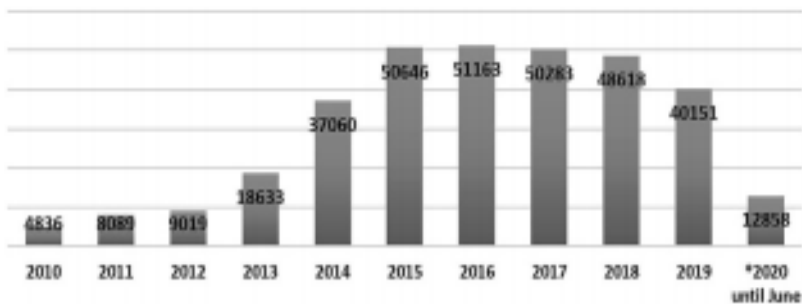
Thousands	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Austria</b>	<b>109,9</b>	<b>125,6</b>	<b>135,2</b>	<b>154,3</b>	<b>198,7</b>	<b>158,7</b>	<b>139,3</b>	<b>131,7</b>	<b>135,0</b>	<b>121,3</b>	<b>139,5</b>
Belgium	133,6	116,1	105,5	106,3	128,8	106,1	109,2	119,7	129,5	101,6	122,4
France	..	..	249,2	236,9	240,5	243,6	246,2	259,9	268,5	208,5	250,4
<b>Germany</b>	<b>841,7</b>	<b>965,9</b>	<b>1108,1</b>	<b>1342,5</b>	<b>2016,2</b>	<b>1719,1</b>	<b>1384,0</b>	<b>1383,6</b>	<b>1345,9</b>	<b>994,8</b>	<b>1139,8</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>354,3</b>	<b>321,3</b>	<b>279,0</b>	<b>248,4</b>	<b>250,0</b>	<b>262,9</b>	<b>301,1</b>	<b>285,5</b>	<b>264,6</b>	<b>191,8</b>	<b>243,6</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>118,5</b>	<b>115,7</b>	<b>122,3</b>	<b>139,3</b>	<b>159,5</b>	<b>182,2</b>	<b>183,9</b>	<b>191,0</b>	<b>215,2</b>	<b>170,6</b>	<b>208,1</b>
Portugal	45,4	38,5	33,2	35,3	37,9	46,9	61,4	93,2	129,2	118,1	111,3
Slovenia	10,8	12,3	11,6	11,3	12,7	13,8	15,5	24,1	27,6	24,8	19,7
Spain	335,9	272,5	248,4	264,5	290,0	352,2	454,0	560,0	666,0	415,2	456,6
Türkiye	..	..	..	..	..	273,9	364,6	466,9	578,5	242,5	615,1
<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>142,5</b>	<b>143,8</b>	<b>155,4</b>	<b>152,1</b>	<b>150,4</b>	<b>143,1</b>	<b>137,8</b>	<b>140,1</b>	<b>140,6</b>	<b>137,0</b>	<b>141,5</b>
	2092,5	2111,6	2448,0	2690,9	3484,6	3502,4	3396,9	3655,6	3900,4	2726,0	3448,0

(Source: International Migration Outlook 2023, © OECD 2023<sup>8</sup>)

Juric's research reveals the size and number of Croatians who migrated to Germany and Austria from 2011 to 2020. We can see that the years when the migrants

<sup>8</sup> Internet access <[https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023/10/international-migration-outlook-2023\\_0faed233.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023/10/international-migration-outlook-2023_0faed233.html)>[retrieved 05 01 2025].

from Croatia arrived in Austria and Germany were mainly between 2015 and 2019 (see Graph 1 and Table 2). As Juric showed, “the benefits that Germany has derived from immigration are best illustrated by the portion of immigrants there with some level of higher education from 2001 to 2020, which comes to 32% on average. The share of highly educated Croatian immigrants is 12% higher than in the age group 25–40 in Croatia and amounts to 37.8%” (Juric 2022: 135). The need for new labor in the German economy for the next decades is enormous, so migrants from Southeast Europe and others will continue coming on different bases and various occasions.



**Figure 1: The emigration of Croatian citizens to Germany from 2010 to 2020.**  
Source: Author's construction based on data from BAMF (2020b).

Graph 1. Emigration from Croatia to Germany

(Source: Tado Juric's construction based on data from BAMF<sup>9</sup>)

<sup>9</sup> Cited from: Juric, Tado. Forecasting Migration and Integration Trends Using Digital Demography – A Case Study of Emigration Flows from Croatia to Austria and Germany. *Comparative Southeast European Studies*, 2022, 70(1), 134.

Table 2. Emigration from Croatia to Austria

**Table 2: Total number of emigrants from Croatia to Austria from 2013 to 2020.**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No. of emigrants	58,619	61,959	66,475	70,248	73,334	76,682	79,999	83,596
Increase from previous year	322	3340	4516	3773	3086	3348	3317	3597

Source: Author's calculation based on data from Statistik Austria (2021).

(Source: Tado Juric's calculation based on data from Statistic Austria<sup>10</sup>)

To demonstrate the differentiation between old and new patterns, King and Okólski use the results of their analysis based mainly on data for 2005–2014 sourced from the SOPEMI network and published in the *International Migration Outlook 2017*. By focusing on this decade, they start from the ‘historic’ year of 2004 when the major eastward enlargement of the EU took place and the European area of free movement was substantially extended, corresponding to the fifth phase of their scheme. The analysis covers 26 countries that are part of the European Economic Area (EEA) plus Switzerland, for which data were available on the structure of inflows by country of origin.

In the majority of countries, there was a considerable diversity of immigrant countries of origin. Greece remains, once again, the extremely exceptional case: most of the immigrants to this country are from neighbouring Albania. Slovenia, Romania, and Hungary are also at the monoethnic end of the spectrum, though these are countries with only small inflows from abroad. Their majority inflows are, for Slovenia, 39 percent from Bosnia and Herzegovina; for Romania, 37 percent from Moldova; and for Hungary, 35 percent from Romania. (King, Okólski 2019: 21)

According to the Global Competitiveness Report of 2019, North Macedonia ranks low in terms of having highly skilled workers. Blazhevski (2021: 42) points out that “In addition, the increasing trend of migration of young, skilled, and educated people, according to the analysis by the World Bank, will hinder demographic development, given that from 1990 onwards, the decline in birth rates, population aging, low and even negative growth rates, and population decline are characteristic for our country.” He elaborates that the global trend of ‘brain drain’ is reflected in Macedonia because, according to the World Bank, between 1995 and 2005, the emigration rate of highly educated citizens continued to increase. According to the Institute for Employment Research database, by 2010, Macedonia lost

<sup>10</sup> Cited from *ibid.*, 135.

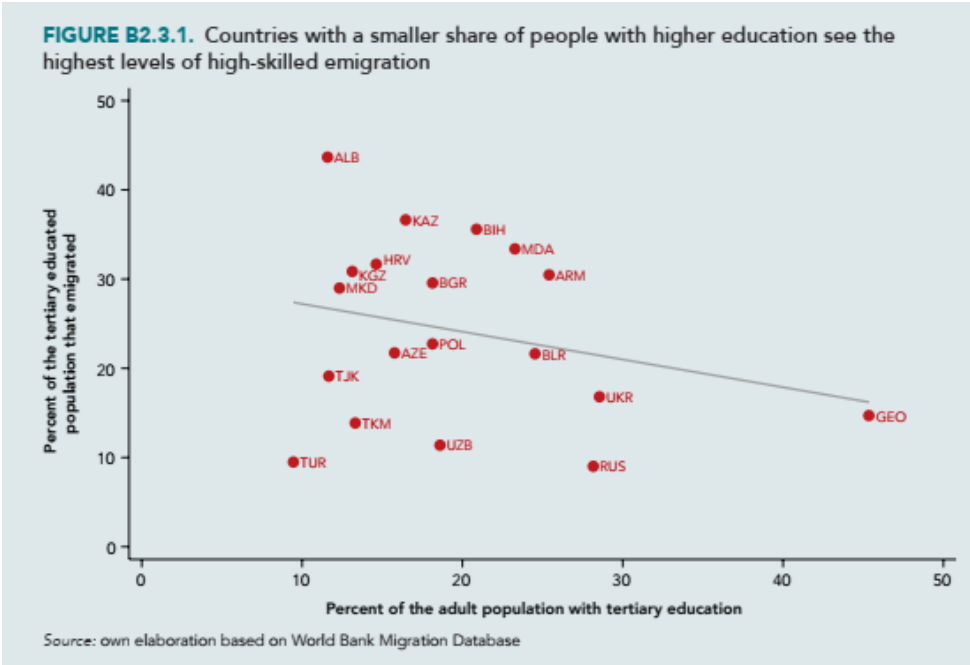
32% of the highly educated population aged 25 and over. These data are very pessimistic about the country's future. Naumovski's research findings regarding intellectual migration, specifically the 'brain drain' in Southeast Europe, particularly emphasize North Macedonia:

Of the surrounding countries, the worst index of "brain drain" is Kosovo with 42%, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania with the same result of 32% of the population that can leave the country, followed by North Macedonia with 30%. Serbia is in a slightly better category, below 30%, if we can divide them that way, but still not enough to be able to say that the trend of young and educated people leaving is controlled and that there is progress. According to the results, we are significantly behind neighboring Croatia, which has a brain drain index of only 6%, which shows that this country either manages to retain its population or manages to attract new immigrants, even though many of them have emigrated. (Naumovski 2021: 13)

OECD for 2012–2016 confirms that 113,975 individuals left North Macedonia for OECD countries (Switzerland, Austria, Germany, and the United States), which is 5.5% of the total population that left the country in 5 years. North Macedonia has a diaspora in Italy, Slovenia and Croatia. As regards labor emigration, Zulfiu (2018: 30) provides the following statistics on Macedonia: "Labour emigration was intensified in the last two decades and according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in 2015 around 20% of all citizens of Macedonia lived outside of their country of origin. The total number of emigrants who left the country in 2017 was 534.7 thousand or about 26% of the total population (UN DESA, 2017)." In Dietz's (2010) opinion, "... in Macedonia, there are indications for a brain drain which will prevail in the near future. This situation seriously concerns Macedonian academics, governmental representatives, and NGOs. To address the (potential) loss of highly educated people, one option is to activate the resources of the highly skilled diaspora, i.e., in supporting the retention of knowledge-based links between skilled migrants and R&D institutions at home" (Dietz 2010: 22).

Precise data on the number of individuals leaving the country each year after visa liberalization is a difficult mission, as the emigration process is very easy. The result is the exodus of a young, highly educated, and most productive population segment.





Graph 2. Countries with the highest levels of high-skilled emigration

(Source: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2024/10/17/better-education-for-stronger-growth-in-europe-and-central-asia>)

A common concern across Europe and Central Asia is the emigration of talented workers (see Graph 2). This is because “[m]ore than a third of the people with higher education degrees emigrate from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, and Moldova, and more than a quarter in Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Kyrgyz Republic, and North Macedonia do so. Countries with fewer higher education graduates see the highest emigration rates among them. In small countries where education is publicly funded, the emigration of individuals with higher education degrees represents a subsidy from the origin country (typically a middle-income country) to the destination country (typically a high-income country)”.<sup>11</sup> According to the report of the World Bank titled “Better Education for Stronger Growth” (2024: 42),

[s]everal factors underpin the emigration of high-skilled workers. “Pull” factors include proximity to the European Union, where demand for high-skilled labor is strong. “Push” factors include the limited job opportunities for some specialized professions in

<sup>11</sup> Internet access <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/94bdc078-9c64-4833-992a-fda7b3d1a640/content>>, 41.

origin countries. There is little that origin countries can do concerning pull factors, but they can try to diminish the strength of push factors (World Bank 2019). Increasing the competitiveness of wages and productivity in critical high-skilled occupations can help weaken the incentives for talented workers to migrate.

## CONCLUSION(S)

Migration is a multifaceted phenomenon mainly driven by powerful economic and labor market forces and significant differences in wages and employment opportunities, both between advanced and undeveloped countries and within developing regions. It creates strong incentives for individuals to migrate, achieve a higher income, and increase the expected living standard for their offspring. Migration presents challenges and opportunities for both receiving countries and countries of origin, but policymakers' task is to overcome the challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities. Immigrants can create problems in local labor markets for destination countries, potentially depressing wages in the short run and displacing some native workers who compete with them. Koczan et al. (2021: 27), however, stress positive aspects of immigration:

[b]ut immigrants also tend to boost output, create new opportunities for native workers, provide skills needed for growth, generate new ideas, stimulate international trade and contribute positively to long-term fiscal balances. Integrating migrants into the labor market is key to achieving their full productive contribution, limiting their potential burden on public finances, and reducing their potential impact on crime rates.

For the origin countries, emigration may lead to a loss of much-needed human capital (brain drain), and the optimal strategy is to improve business and employment opportunities, take advantage of the financial and technological inflows, and reduce the loss of highly skilled labor.<sup>12</sup> Most benefits are on the side of receiving countries compared to the losses and the damages that the migrant-sending countries and societies suffer. Maybe in the long run, we can count on benefits for the migrant-sending countries, as happened to some countries in Central Europe, but the outflows of young and skilled working people in the meantime are slowing down the development of such states.

From the individual point of view, the answers to the questions we introduced at the beginning of this paper relate, first and foremost, to the eternal individual (family) search for the quantity and quality of leisure time, forcing people to move to where a 'better living' is and spend their time the way the citizens of rich countries do. Secondly, there is a need to buy more goods and expensive things – homes, cars, and holidays in exotic places, i.e., specific objects we see in the movies, on the

<sup>12</sup> Internet access <[https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr\\_2020\\_en\\_ch\\_2.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020_en_ch_2.pdf)>.

news, and in the media. Being part of such a world will mean you already have a better education, better health insurance, a cleaner environment, secure family long-term planning, and other elements of the Western style of life. Finally, as the concept of equal chances tells us that everybody has the right to live and prosper in normal circumstances, why not allow more and more people to go someplace to enjoy such a life? The most effective independent variable is to push governments in the semi-periphery and periphery to govern better and create decent living conditions and higher standards for their subjects, decreasing the dreams about the wealthy West and North and offering decent living in the South and East. In the meantime, globalization and migration will still be on the news and in the media:

The emigration of highly qualified personnel from Macedonia is alarming, and according to all world organizations, we are at the top among countries that are losing their talents. According to the report, from 2013 to 2021, an average of 2,500 highly educated people left the country every year, for whose education the state invested about 725 million euros. Macedonia is in the group of top 20 countries in the world with the largest emigration abroad, according to the data for 2020 of the IOM, while according to the estimates of the World Bank, almost 40% of the Macedonian higher education staff has left the country...<sup>13</sup>

As we have seen in this paper, there are more challenges and new developments ahead of us in the processes of globalization and migration. Perhaps it is time for a new balance in the world but from the people's point of view, locally and internationally?

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<sup>13</sup> Internet access <<https://kanal5.com.mk/iseluvanjeto-na-visokokvalifikuvanje-kadri-od-makedonija-e-alar-mantno/a647613>>.

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# GLOBALIZACIJA IR MIGRACIJA (-OS) – ŽVILGSNIS IŠ PIETRYČIŲ EUROPOS

**SANTRAUKA.** Migracija, kaip geresnio gyvenimo siekis, yra nesibaigiantis reiškinys, o milijonai migrantų net ir šiandien vis dar keliauja į labiau išsivysčiusias pasaulio šalis. Viena vertus, kyla klausimas, ar naujausių globalizacijos procesų eroje šis reiškinys pamažu nekeičia ankstesnių savo bruožų. Kita vertus, ilgą laiką migracija vyko iš pietų į šiaurę ir iš rytų į vakarus, bent jau pastaruosius porą šimtmečių, tačiau dabar tai jau nebėra taisyklė. Šio straipsnio pagrindinis tikslas – išanalizuoti keletą aspektų: pirma, šiuo metu vykstančius procesus ir naujoves globalizacijoje; antra, naujausius migracijos reiškinius ir migracijos individualizavimą; trečia, šių dviejų kategorijų sąsajas ir tarpusavio priklausomybę, įskaitant kai kuriuos laimėjimus ir praradimus; ketvirta, plačiau nušviesti migraciją Pietryčių Europoje ir pasekmes migrantus siunčiančioms ir priimančioms šalims.

**RAKTAŽODŽIAI:** globalizacija, migracija, Pietryčių Europa, migracijos nauda ir nesėkmės, migracijos individualizavimas.