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PEOPLE ON THE MOVE, CITIZENSHIP, IDENTITY AND DEVELOPMENT

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Book of Abstracts

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OVERVIEW OF THE 2021 CENSUS IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The MAKStat, Republic of North Macedonia, State Statistical Office, held the census in the Republic of North Macedonia in 2021. According to the results show that the resident population is 1,836,713 people, which is 185,834 people less than the number recorded in the previous census in 2002. Together with 260,606 counted non-residents, whose participation in the census was optional, the number rises to a total of 2,097,319. Also, here are 132,269 people that refused to take part in the census, but have been counted administratively in the final number of residents. Their data has been taken from the existing national databases but without any ethnicity or religion, since those data are a matter of personal identification, according to the explanation from the State Statistical Office.

This result has provoked numerous debates and is considered unacceptable, sometimes even harmful for the demographic, economic, social and political development of Northern Macedonia. It can be justified by the decrease in the fertility rate (for the first time in 2020 there is a negative natural increase, 3.2 promile less births than deaths) and the large number of external migration (32 percent of population left the country from 1990). Both of these stands, but not to the extent that they cover the shortcomings of the registration process as claimed to exist.

This paper tends to answer the questions raised on the degree of reliability of the census result, addressing several issues such as: political and technical aspects, *de facto* and *de jure* residents, differential growth of population including fertility and mortality rates and migration.

Keywords: Republic of North Macedonia, census, population growth, vital statistics, migration, voter registration

SESSION 1: CITIZENSHIP, IDENTITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Chairman: Aleksandar Petkovski

- 1) Labor market reintegration strategies of Albanian return migrants from Greece: The role of human and social capital / Armela Xhaho, Ajay Bailey, Erka Caro
- 2) The social rights of emigrants with EU citizenship / Merita Xhumari
- 3) Diaspora's Role in Their Home Country Economic Development: The Case of Kosovo / Mimoza Dushi
- 4) Causes and consequences of Kosovar migrants in the last decade of the 21st century / Ferdi Kamberi, Adem Shala
- 5) Self-organization in the social, educational and health sphere as a prevention of migration in the '90s in Kosovo / Florent Rrahmani
- 6) The Syrian refugee crisis and its implications on the Turkish state and society / Muhamed Ali

LABOR MARKET REINTEGRATION STRATEGIES OF ALBANIAN RETURN MIGRANTS FROM GREECE : THE ROLE OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

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Abstract

Return to the country of origin is often an important turning point within the migration trajectory. However, whether or not this milestone could be considered successful, depends largely on the abilities to participate again in the social, economic, cultural, and political life of their countries of origin. This paper draws on 37 biographical interviews conducted with Albanian returnees in three geographical areas in Albania- Fier, Tirana and Voskopoja. It aims to capture the diverse strategies return migrants employ to navigate the labor market upon return. We examine the ways how returnees' social and human capital accumulated abroad shape patterns of reintegration into the labour market. Social capital in the forms of social relationships and human capital in the form of work experience influenced entrepreneurial activity back home. Returnees' ability to capitalize on their migration experiences in the host country led them to introduce a new working culture, new products and better-quality work than their local competitors. While social networks were crucial in enhancing economic prospects, the elements of trust and social responsibility among these networks were key in developing and expanding the business.

Keywords: *return, labor market reintegration, entrepreneurship, social network, human capital*

THE SOCIAL RIGHTS OF EMIGRANTS WITH EU CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract

The pandemic Covid-19 culminating in 2020, continuing until nowadays have the highest effects on the age group 55-64 years, not only regarding their health but, above all, on employment and social rights. The Covid-19 pandemic has made it difficult for migrants in the upper age groups to cope with labour market changes such as unpaid leave, reduced working hours, extended shifts or extra workload for several sectors such as education, health, etc... Government aid packages to address job losses are not available to many emigrants in Italy, especially for people with irregular residence status and without citizenship in destination countries (Repetti et al., 2021).

This paper will be focused on the denied of social right for pension for Albanian emigrants with EU citizenship in Italy. After they loss of jobs and income because of Covid-19, the first reaction of the upper age groups above 60 has been the demand for early retirement. The lack of bilateral agreements between the Albanian government and the governments of destination countries such as Italy in the field of social security, resulted in a discrimination of the Albanian emigrants for using their right for pension, compared to the Italian elderly population.

The research methodology is based on the literature review, mainly legislation, and interviews with emigrants in Italy in media during their protest for the pension rights in August 2020. My role as the head of Public Voluntary Social Insurance scheme for emigrants in Social Insurance Institute of Albania during 2003-2006 enabled my argumentation on this issue.

The results show that the EU integration process, along with other conditionalities need to establish obligations of the respective governments for guaranteeing the pension rights of emigrants as an instrument of their social re-integration. New approach to empower people to face new social problems require integration of social policies with foreign relations.

Key words: emigrant, social rights, EU citizenship, coordination of social security.

DIASPORA'S ROLE IN THEIR HOME COUNTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF KOSOVO

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Abstract

In the state of Kosovo, an extremely important economic asset is considered the Diaspora. This is because the Diaspora, through financial remittances, creates significant flows, which produce effects on the country's GDP. In this study, among others, we highlight it by arguing that the contribution and investments of the diaspora in the country of origin are not tracked efficiently (despite their importance). This makes the intended synergy between development and migration unattainable. Given the current obstacles and challenges faced by the Kosovo diaspora in undertaking investments in the homeland, in this study we present a series of criticisms on these obstacles – given the potential and importance of the Kosovo diaspora. It aims to engage at the individual and policy level and deliver a set of recommendations aimed to facilitate diaspora financial initiatives. The paper is based on the reflection and analysis of 53 biographical interviews, from which, 26 in Switzerland and 27 in Germany. In addition we draw on a total of 20 expert interviews with government officials, trade unions, and civil society. For Kosovo to aim at achieving sustainable development, it is time to offer new dimensions and perspectives for further strengthening the transnational diaspora entrepreneurship initiatives.

Key words: Investments, Kosovo Albanian, diaspora remittances, policy recommendations

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF KOSOSVAR MIGRANTS IN THE LAST DECADE OF 21st CENTURY

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Abstract

Migration is among the main social causes that have been present at our society all the time. Migration was an important part of the societies and an important field of study for social sciences and studies. Social changes and developments in last decades, including different conflicts, economical crisis, political pressures, also other various causes, have impacted the increase of migration rate all over the world. Such trends, is detected at West Balkans, in last decades, particularly in Kosovo. Based on data taken from Kosovo’s statistical agency from 2013-2017, a number of 170,000 citizens left country. In these figures are included regular and irregular migrations and also asylum-seekers. Lately, a large number of migrants are people with medical background (nurses and physicians), thing that have been alerted the society and institutions and it was named and “brain drain” phenomena and represents a threat for the future of the country. Therefore, this paperwork, shows the research and analysis of causes and consequences of such migration rate in last decade of XXI century in Kosovo. Working methodology is focused on the analysis of reports and researches of trusted agencies in Kosovo and of civil society. Overall, latest results shows that only in December 2021 and January 2022, around 105,601 citizens have applied for working visa permit at any of embassies in Kosovo. These figures are an alert, indicator for Kosovo society and institutions regarding youth migration, “brain drain” and for population aging in the near future.

Keywords: *Causes, consequences, migration, brain drain, Kosovo.*

SELF-ORGANIZATION IN THE SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH SPHERE AS A PREVENTION OF MIGRATION IN THE '90s IN KOSOVO

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Abstract

For an entire decade 1900-1999, a great battle took place in Kosovo between trying to make life impossible within the borders, while on the other hand the idea to enable it came to life. The constant political pressure, then exerted on other aspects as well, made an entire society feel constantly under the pressure of permanent migration. However, it was precisely the response through self-organization that in a way prevented the mass migration of citizens, despite all those efforts to implement such a policy.

In this regard, migration was another attempt to implement a policy which aimed to achieve equality of the population within the country, and in this form through colonization and migration to fulfill the policy of their equalization.

However, this entire situation was answered through self-organization in fields where life was overthrown within these boundaries. While, those who had emigrated had a crucial role in preventing this migration, contributing extremely much to maintaining life within the borders of Kosovo.

The answers given in the social, health and educational spheres were preconditions of resistance, and at the same time a guarantee of the failure of a policy which naturally aimed at ethnic cleansing.

Key words: migration, self-organization, diaspora, prevention

THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON THE TURKISH STATE SOCIETY

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Abstract

Although during the first decade of the XXI century, as a result of Turkey's new foreign strategy the opening of the Turkish diplomacy towards the Middle East had begun, however the Arab Spring had and still has negative impacts on the Turkish relations towards a number of countries of this region. In the first period of the ruling of Erdogan, as a result of the implementation of this vision and on the other hand, along with coming to power of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, a new conjuncture in the Turkish-Syrian relations was created, that had an influence on the mutual strengthening and development between these two countries like never before. Turkey and Syria didn't only eliminate their mutual political contests, but they raised their level of trust from zero to a very high level. The warm mutual relations were also reflected on the economic field. However, along with the beginning of the new process called the Arab Spring, which changed the strategic and political equilibriums in the Middle East to a large extent, the functionality of the above mentioned Turkish strategy was brought into question in the bilateral relations between Turkey and Syria. This research mainly is based on the following research methods: historical, descriptive, and in depth analysis. The basis of the source represents the books, scientific articles, press materials, and websites in the field of Turkish refugee policy. The objective of this study is to get the answer to the main question of this research – Does the Syrian refugee crisis has implications on the equilibriums of Turkish state and society? To conclude, the increase of the number of Syrian refugees on the territory of Turkey, as a result of the Syrian conflict, has had and still has series of effects on the Turkish society which can be classified as economic, social, security and political implications.

Keywords: Turkey, Syria, the Arab spring, refugees, society, implications

SESSION II: DIASPORA, MIGRATION AND MEDIA

Chairman: Mimoza Dushi

- 1) The cultural image of Albania in Italy from migrant authors texts / Majlinda Bregasi
- 2) Development of strategic approaches to enhance effective communication on migration / Arbresha Meha
- 3) Report on the issue of the migrants in North Macedonia's media. An empirical study / Agron Kurtishi, Enver Abdullahi, Avni Avdiu
- 4) Political economic crisis and migration in Yugoslavia after Tito's death according to CIA reports / Fati Iseni, Agim Jakupi
- 5) Erasmus+ Student and Teacher Mobilities as a Form of Circular Migration: Development a Theory of Individual and Group Change on the Case of International Burch University / Amer Kurtovic dhe Sanel Safic

THE CULTURAL IMAGE OF ALBANIA IN ITALY FROM MIGRANT AUTHORS TEXTS.

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Abstract

The focus of this article is the cultural identity as a collective expression of a community of people in relation to its representation in literary production abroad. What constitutes the identity of a literary tradition?

What makes it unique compared to other cultures? What can we say about the orientation of literary criticism in Italy after the first publications of Albanian authors who are part of the so-called ‘migrant literature’?

Starting from the fact that cultural, literary, cinematographic, artistic and mediatic images may transform the reality, create, and nourish stereotypes, conflicts, change our way of thinking, this paper addresses the question of the self-representation of a community. The reason why we are focused on the texts of Albanian authors in Italy is because they constitute the largest community of migrant authors that have chosen Italian as the language of their literature expression, with a particular interest in female authors.

Keywords: Cultural identity, Albanian authors in Italy, migrant literature

DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON MIGRATION

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Abstract

Development of strategic approaches to address communication on migration is vital for raising awareness of local community and endorsing efficient policies. Moreover, development of communication strategy will support setting up different activities by involving different audiences to address migration issues, and as such avoid potential misunderstanding and conflict among communities with different cultures.

The purpose of the study is to show the importance of development of communication strategy by policy makers to address policies, increase information and enhance effective communication on migration for host societies and migrants.

The study was conducted in the context of Kosovo, more specifically with communication and migration experts working in government institutions, and the qualitative method was used for the realization of interviews. Results show that the government has taken positive steps towards development and implementation of the communication strategy, but migrants are not sufficiently informed about policies that protect their right to reside in a third country and return and reintegrate in their original country.

Keywords: communication, migration, policies, integration, information

**REPORT ON THE ISSUE OF THE MIGRANTS IN NORTH MACEDONIA'S MEDIA.
AN EMPIRICAL STUDY.**

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Abstract

Media communication to a considerable extent creates our perceptions about the reality, which is a reason why people appreciate media. The media has a big impact on our perception regarding immigrant groups and the reality about how they live together. Communication has its own role in the social recognition and acceptance of the immigrants and their chances for integration in the society. The purpose of this study is to basically convey the role of the communication in the context of the immigrants, to clarify problematic areas and to show some possible ways to overcome them. To this end, we have collected empirical data and analysed the same from the perspective of how reporting the news and media use represent a serious problem and challenge. Thus, we have tried to answer some of the following questions: How are immigration-related topics reported in the media? How are people with migration backgrounds represented and articulated in the public? To what extent can migration-related problems be communication (mediated)? Which media do they use? How do the mainstream media report on people with migration backlines? What kind of an overall picture they show for immigration opportunities and difficulties? Our perceptions and observations are that people with an immigration history hardly get a word in the media - even when the journalist talks about them. Various media in North Macedonia - public and private, newspapers and portals (from January to April, 2022), both Albanian and Macedonian, have been analyzed about the issue of how the immigration and immigrants are reported. The expectations from the results are to create an overall picture about how the situation of the reporting of the immigrants in the country is, and how the same can serve for further studies. In addition, this can be used as a basis for creating a framework about the problem of the immigrants and how the same can be better treated from the social and political angle.

Key words: Media, Media reporting, Immigrants, North Macedonia

POLITICAL ECONOMIC CRISIS AND MIGRATION IN YUGOSLAVIA AFTER TITO'S DEATH ACCORDING TO CIA REPORTS

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Abstract

The CIA in its analytical report on the former Yugoslavia after the death of its leader, the communist dictator Tito, presents in detail all segments of the Yugoslav crisis. In the early 1980s, the country would enter a spiral of economic sinking, accompanied by the rise of nationalisms such as the Serbo-Croatian rivalry, the unrest in Kosovo and the imbalance in investment at the federal level. The CIA will also analyze Yugoslavia's relationship with the Soviet Union since the breakdown of relations in 1948, as well as economic and political relations with Western countries. These deepening crises reflected in the migration of the population to Western countries who would seek political and economical asylum.

CIA concludes that: "Tito's death have created doubts about the country's ability to overcome domestic political disputes and rivalries in the interest of maintaining the economic viability and cohesiveness of the state as a whole. The USSR is not likely to see the Western financial initiative as intended or liable to bring about changes so fundamental that they would undermine this Soviet objectives. Consequently, Moscow is not likely to see the initiative as a challenge to which it must react directly. "

Keywords: CIA reports, Yugoslavia, political crises, economical crises, nationalism.

ERASMUS + STUDENT AND TEACHER MOBILITIES AS A FORM OF CIRCULAR MIGRATION: DEVELOPMENT A THEORY OF INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP CHANGE ON THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL BURCH UNIVERSITY

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Abstract:

This study tests the well-established theory of Erasmus+ mobilities serving as significant inflection points in beneficiaries' lives, strengthening their academic success and employability prospects, as well as effecting value changes and altering their personal outlooks on a sample of 90 outgoing student exchanges and 60 outgoing teacher exchanges, both randomly selected, between the 2016/2017 and 2020/2021 academic years at International Burch University. Students' academic success, using the variable of grades, were tested with a paired t-test to determine statistical significance. A similar sample of students who didn't benefit from a mobility were also analyzed using a paired t-test as a control group. Teachers' experiences abroad also didn't translate into an improvement of their teaching style, measured by student satisfaction surveys, or a significant number of new collaborations, measured by joint research endeavors or project proposal development. This result was also compared to a control group of teachers who didn't benefit from a mobility. There was no statistically significant difference in either case. Furthermore, 18 unstructured interviews were conducted with mobility beneficiaries (eight students and 10 teachers) to identify the perceptions and effects of time spent abroad on their development, including in academic, career, and personal value contexts. The results indicate that beneficiaries generally failed to actively capitalize on the potential of the mobility whilst abroad and students spent the majority of free time travelling, but students nonetheless function as multipliers in their microcosms and are able to effect value change, primarily in terms of minimal satisfaction standards. Furthermore, attending mobilities in a familiar host environment tends to decrease the impact thereof.

Keywords: Erasmus+ mobilities, teacher, student

SESSION III: SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, HEALTH AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MIGRATION

Chairman: Diturije Ismaili

- 1) Cartographic visualization of migrations using Inverse Distance Weighting (IDW) interpolation method: A case study on Municipality of Prishtina (Kosovo) / Albert Berila, Florim Isufi, Mimoza Dushi
- 2) The Impact of Emigration on the Natural Population Growth and the Aging of the Population in the Republic of North Macedonia / Izet Zeqiri
- 3) Exploring Depopulation of 12 Cities in BiH: A Study of Academic, Economic, Electoral, and Environmental Effects / Amer Kurtovic dhe Alija Kozljak
- 4) Correlating Sectoral Employment Statistics to the Emigration Rate: Building a Model on the Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina / Amer Kurtovic
- 5) Ukraine's war: Economic implications in North Macedonia / Rilind Ademi, Zana Beqiri Luma, Bujamin Bela
- 6) Migrants' and refugees' health status and healthcare in North Macedonia: A Literature Review / Urime Demiri Shaipi

CARTOGRAPHIC VISUALIZATION OF MIGRATIONS USING INVERSE DISTANCE WEIGHTING (IDW) INTERPOLATION METHOD: A CASE STUDY ON MUNICIPALITY OF PRISHTINA (KOSOVO).

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Abstract

Geographic visualizations have played a very important role—since ancient times—long before computer visualizations became popular. Since then, it has evolved continuously to this day. Now, the use of modern geographical visualization offers many new opportunities to better and more accurately understand spatial phenomena. Usually, diagram maps and/or choropleth maps are used to make cartographic visualization of migrations. The disadvantage of these methods, but also other methods similar to them, is that they fail in any way to present the population as a continuous spatial phenomenon—people exert their influence at every point of living space, regardless of whether they live or act directly on it. This paper aims to present the internal migration of the population as a continuous spatial phenomenon in Prishtina and to present the cartographic visualization of the migration of each municipality (individually) that constitutes the Republic of Kosovo. The other purpose of this paper is to establish the principle on which the IDW method is based—Tobler's First Law: "Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things". The results of the study showed that from the total population that had emigrated within the national borders from one municipality to another (196,429 inhabitants), Prishtina had benefited more with about 45,905 inhabitants (over 23.1% of the population of Prishtina came from other municipalities). Of the total number of emigrants who had emigrated to Prishtina (45,905 inhabitants), they were not from the farthest and largest municipalities but from municipalities that are on the administrative border with Prishtina, strengthening the principle on which IDW operates, that the impact is reduced by increasing the distance. The main value of this paper lies in the introduction of the method of spatial interpolation in the cartographic visualization of migration.

Keywords: cartographic visualization; internal migration; spatial interpolation; Inverse Distance Weighting; Municipality of Prishtina

THE IMPACT OF EMIGRATION ON NATURAL INCREASE AND AGING OF THE POPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The demographic potential of a country is the main prerequisite for development and for creating any policies and projecting future economic, political, educational, health and similar development. The population is one of the most important factors in the socio-economic development of any country. Though our country has been challenged with negative demographic trends such as: the increase of migration, the decrease of the newborn children or the decrease in the birth rates due to the so-called tempo-effect or postponement of births and marriage at an older age and the intensification of the demographic aging, where the proportion of older people is increasing in the total population.

Having in consideration the upper mentioned factors we have come to data analyses and results that show us that the total number of the emigrants is 550.000 which consists 30% of our population, calculated regarding the final census in North Macedonia of 2021. We have also been able to come to understanding throughout the implementation of this study that the negative rate of the natural increase of the population is happening due to the number of marriages that have decreased by 25.6% in the last 10 years; the median age of the women's first marriage is 27, while for men is 29.7, which in comparison to the previous decades have changed a lot, and which also brings us to the following finding that this continuous trend brings along, which is: an increase of first-time mothers at 30-34 years of age and a decrease of younger mothers at age if 20-24. While on the other hand, the difference of the births and the number of mortality rates is decreasing significantly which tells us about a population natural decrease happening.

The 2021 census showed that, compared to 2001, the total population in the country has decreased by 185,834 people (9.2%). Non-residents were predominantly from the western part of North Macedonia, respectively Albanians from the cities of Gostivar, Kichevo and Struga hold the highest percentages of migrants.

Keywords: natural increase, census 2021, migration,

EXPLORING DEPOPULATION OF 12 CITIES IN BiH: A STUDY OF ACADEMIC, ECONOMIC, ELECTORAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

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Abstract:

Depopulation, both through forced population transfers as a result of war happenings and emigration, is a key challenge faced by both Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rest of the Western Balkans but also developed countries such as Japan. Scholarly thought in this vein has focused on developed countries at the expense of developing countries. Therefore, this study aims to fill that research gap by exploring the academic, economic, electoral, and environmental effects of depopulation of the 12 most depopulated cities and towns throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, taking as referent years 1991 and 2013 when the last two censuses were conducted and published. The 12 cities and towns in question have lost over 360,000 people over the 20 or so years, representing an average decline of over 20,000 people or 25% of their initial population. This data is juxtaposed to academic (e.g., number of university graduates as a share of population), economic (e.g., average salary), electoral (e.g., party loyalty), and environmental (e.g., agricultural yield per unit of land) using qualitative comparative analysis to develop a rationalist theory of the effects of depopulation. The results indicate that depopulation is inversely correlated with academic and economic effects but positively correlated with electoral and environmental effects. This strengthens the argument that depopulation is, in fact, brain drain as the likely drivers of positive change leave and political power becomes concentrated in the less able, which generally lead poor policies. The theoretical implications are significant, as the study provides a normative framework that can be used to indirectly assess the severity of depopulation and points to an increased urgency to fight depopulation and adopt active measures to counter the effects thereof. As a socially conscious quasi-experiment, the model is used to model a projection of post-2013 trends and juxtaposed to data collected and published by the BiH Agency for Statistics.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, depopulation, effects, QCA

CORRELATING SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS TO THE EMIGRATION RATE: BUILDING A MODEL ON THE CASE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Abstract:

This study attempts to approximate the emigration rate of Bosnia and Herzegovina by repurposing sectoral employment data published monthly by the BiH Agency for Statistics, in line with EUROSTAT methodologies, to correlate it to changes in the active labor population between 2014 and 2021. Although the developed model can accurately quantify the number of workers who have left the workforce, it cannot do the same for the number of emigrants in this specific case due to a lack of official statistics. Nonetheless, the model can help in deducing the number of working-age people who have emigrated by controlling for the inactive population and including data on the birth and mortality rates, new enrollments in elementary school, VAT collection rates, and new construction projects to serve as predictors. It rests on theoretical postulate that the annual difference between the active population, once controlled for relevant factors, is the emigration rate. Predictors reinforce the correlation factor between the two variables by repeat testing the theorized link. Since BiH lacks reliable official data on the emigration rate, preventing the identification of causal links, the model was calibrated on the cases of six EU member states to strengthen reliability.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, correlation, emigration rate, sectoral employment statistics

UKRAINE'S WAR: ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS IN NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which began on February 24, has resulted in a full-blown war. The Western world's condemnation of Vladimir Putin's actions has been reflected, among other things, in the implementation of significant economic sanctions against the Russian regime. It is still too early to tell how the conflict's repercussions will fully unfold, but the initial economic consequences are already being felt. The crisis in Ukraine significantly changes the macroeconomic context at the international and national level. The first expectations for North Macedonia are that the impacts will be negative for economic growth and positive for inflation. The purpose of this paper is to give an initial look at some of the important economic indicators that have emerged as a result of the Ukraine-Russia war. The deterioration of trade and financial issues with these countries and the effects that have been caused will be the focus of our analysis.

Keywords: Ukraina, war, North Macedonia, Russia, inflation, trade.

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES HEALTH STATUS AND HEALTHCARE IN NORTH MACEDONIA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

North Macedonia has been a country of transit and destination for migrants since 2000. Transit countries may face common problems but to a higher degree than destination countries. It is important that the transit countries provide optimal healthcare for migrants. The review aims to provide insight regarding current migrants’ and refugees’ health status, and their rights and access to healthcare in North Macedonia.

Methods

The literature review included academic articles, non-governmental organization and government reports, as well as 2015 and 2020 Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) questionnaires from North Macedonia. Documents in English and Macedonian language from 2000 onwards were reviewed.

Results and discussion

The literature reviewed shows that the legal framework in North Macedonia is largely in line with EU standards. However, with an overall assessment of MIPEX of 42/100, the country’s integration policies are below average in Europe. Only documented migrants and asylum seekers have unconditional access to health services. However, they have little-to-no targeted information or support to access health services. Undocumented migrants’ access to health services is problematic and underused. The emergence of Covid - 19 has brought new challenges that necessitate further strengthening of the institutional capacities to deal with migration influx. Administrative requirements, language difficulties, discriminatory practices and refusal of care, as well as poor coordination among the different stakeholders are plausible factors that obstruct the provision of healthcare for migrants and refugees.

Conclusions and recommendations

The situation concerning migrants’ and refugees’ health status and access to healthcare in North Macedonia has gradually improved. However, there is a further need to improve access to health care and to fully respect and protect the human rights of migrants and refugees. Research on migrants’ health and their own view on access and barriers to healthcare is essential.

Keywords: Migrants, Healthcare, Refugees, Policy, Republic of North Macedonia