INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS***IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. EDITORIAL NOTE***

International migration, triggered by globalization and economic integration, is a dynamic and complex demographic phenomenon, with multiple facets and implications. The movement of individuals at the global scale is generated by an increasing variety of reasons, such as the individuals' need for jobs, inequalities in health, well-being or income across regions, but also war, civil strife or climate change. However, economic associated factors are still the main migration reason for the larger part of migrants as there are more than 150 million migrant workers in the world, according to the latest estimates. The economic implications of migrations are of high relevance at individual, regional and macro level, as proven by a large literature on migration economics.

Europe has witnessed strong dynamics of migrants, mostly after the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007. The proportion of migrants from the new member states in Europe remains smaller than that of non-EU27 migrants (Kahanec, Zaiceva and Zimmermann, 2009). They are primarily economic migrants, while migrants from the Non-EU countries are mainly asylum seekers, the two groups having different economic outcomes in destination countries. Moreover, the return migration is still less studied (Roman and Goschin, 2012), even if it has become sizable.

The implications of the European migration flows go beyond the economic effects on sending and destination countries. European migration is characterized by significant outflow drains of mainly young and skilled people. The brain drain raises new issues (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012) in the countries of origin, mostly when it is related to professional categories of strategic relevance for society, such as healthcare staff.

Current trends related to circular migration, sustainable development, changes in migration gender or skills composition, well-being or recent restrictions imposed to physical mobility by the COVID-19 pandemic, reshape the migration landscape and suggest the need for revisiting the existing evidence on the impact of migration.

The papers in this issue contribute to a better understanding of the recent developments related to European migration by providing an updated picture on the new relevant impacts migration has at individual and country level. Migration is recently depicted by various national and international surveys allowing for a more and more detailed analysis of the phenomenon. Even if migration itself is a liquid process and it is not instantly captured by the data provided by national statistical offices, various data providers from academia or research institutes offer comprehensive data regarding the effects or perceptions on migration and migrants. Using a variety of data, ranging from individual observations to panel macro-data, the statistical methods applied in the following papers are also of interest. The panel data analysis is applied, but also ordered probit, factor analysis or modified gravity models. The seven papers cover specific aspects of the recent migration in European Union, or in specific sample countries. Therefore, the case studies presented in various papers include countries such as Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, Austria, Finland, Hungary, Romania, or Sweden alongside the European Union.

The *economic implications* of migrants are often related to labor market, as migration fills the need for labor in many countries. In their paper, Nienaber et al. show that migration experience is also a way for reducing youth unemployment and increasing employability in the case of youth from six European countries. The paper uses the theory of Fugate et al. (2004) for defining the following dimensions of employability: personal adaptability, social and human capital and career identity. The positive effect of mobility on employability is explained using a data set of 5272 individuals and cluster analysis. The co-authors show that permanent migration is however not the long-term aim of most of the mobile young people, since generally the mobiles choose to return to their home countries after one or more stays abroad.

Sustainable development is a strategic aim for all European countries. The study elaborated by Elena Prada approaches migration from the perspective of the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The study proves a bilateral relationship between migration and SDGs. Not only that migration can influence the achievement of sustainable development, but, at the same time, it is itself influenced by how well the SDGs are attained.

Economic factors have a decisive impact on the selection of the destination countries. Romanian migration is one of the largest and dynamic outflows in Europe, as currently more than 3.5 mil. Romanians are living in another European country (Anghel et al., 2018). In their paper “*Explaining recent Romanian migration: a modified gravity model with panel data*”, Iordache and Matei assess the selected economic and demographic variables’ impact on the volume of Romanian emigration to the European Union (EU) during 2010-2017. The analysis was done using gravity models with fixed effect and random effect. The results show that the economic and demographic factors have a significant influence on the emigration’s destination. Also, the socio-economic and demographic situation in the host country determines the outflow migration from Romania.

Two papers are connected to one of the most significant facets of migration, *brain drain*. Highly-educated migrants represent a key factor in fostering innovation, productivity and economic growth, along with promoting a bilateral knowledge transfer between origin and destination country. The paper “*The effects of highly-educated immigrants on innovation in three developed European countries*” by Elena-Alexandra Sinoi, investigates the effects of highly-educated immigrants on the number of patents. In a comparative approach, three developed countries are analysed: Austria, Finland and Sweden. The main finding of this paper is that highly-educated immigrants, representing external factors of innovation, have a positive and significant impact on the number of patent applications in all three receiving countries. Moreover, financial support in Research and Development and investments in human capital serve as internal factors of innovation and also contribute vastly to the enhancement of innovation.

In the case of health professionals, brain drain produces critical effects, as the lack of medical staff and the overloading of the remaining personnel. Romania’s health system is in continuous reform, facing for over 3 decades a shortage of employees (Botezat and Moraru, 2020). Moreover, specialists and young physicians migrated and their return is less probable without being supported by strong policy measures (Roman and Goschin, 2014). In their paper, Apostu and Vasile describe the recent characteristics of Romanian physicians, using administrative data.

In many cases the main trigger for migration is related to the quality of life and to increasing the life satisfaction and happiness. In their paper “*Life Satisfaction and Migration - What Relationship?*”, Ciorbagiu, Stoica and Mihaila show that immigration has a net positive impact on subjective well-being, instead of being a threat on well-being. The statistical and econometrical evaluation of the connection between life satisfaction and other determinants, grouped in categories such as demographical, socio-professional, economical highlights a series of general and specific influences. Subjective well-being is associated with an improvement in the areas of life satisfaction, especially with the standard of living and family life. The authors show that important aspects for personal well-being are good health, a reduced risk of psychological depression and chronic physical and mental problems.

The final paper in this special issue treats the impacts of the recent COVID-19 pandemic on European refugees. More specifically, the paper aims at analyzing how the European migrants from the MENA countries are affected by COVID-19. Based on the results of an online survey, Cimpoeu et al. highlight the perceptions of the way the pandemic has affected one of the most vulnerable categories in a society, refugees. The results emphasize that unemployed refugees, students, but also migrants who find it difficult to live on their present income are most worried about the COVID-19 crisis. Also, women are more worried than men about the health impacts of the pandemic.

In summary, this special issue provides a range of perspectives on the most recent outcomes of migration in Europe, tackling some economic implications, brain drain and social effects related to migrants' well-being, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on refugees. As the papers in this issue show, the volume of European migration has increased in the last decade, after the economic downturn in the aftermath of the global financial crisis; however, migration will be influenced by the mobility restrictions in the pandemic context and new potential effects and patterns will emerge.

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