



Analyses of push factors of emigration among students from five European countries

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Background

The emigration of young people from their home countries whether for a temporary or permanent stay in a foreign country may develop into significant socio-economic problems. An example of this problem dwells in the increasing numbers of Slovak young people who are leaving their home country to study abroad. The most popular country is the neighboring Czech Republic where more than 22.000 Slovak students left to study at Czech universities. In total, more than 14% of Slovak students study abroad which in comparison to other European countries is the 3rd highest number. In general, the most important factors pulling young students to study abroad are the very good conditions in the Czech Republic, a relatively high perceived quality of universities. Slovakia.

Brain drain – a migration process which refers to the big outflow of highly educated and skilled young people migrating from less devno additional cost for Slovak students, closeness and no language barrier. Moreover, students' perception of Slovak universities regarding their quality is low. Therefore, the trend of leaving abroad, especially among highly skilled young people, may significantly affect the social and economic situation in eloped countries to the more developed may represent a serious social and economic issue. Given the fact, it is important to understand the motivation (push factors) of students to move abroad. Beside traditional economic factors recent findings suggest, that the significant reasons for skilled migration are linked with education, social and cultural conditions but some may differ by country.

Materials and methods

This web based cross-sectional study explored data from: Belgium (N= 214, 68% F, mean age 21.8); Bulgaria (N= 411, 74% F, mean age 21.8); Hungary (N= 121, 62% F, mean age 24.3); Lithuania (N= 160, 80% F, mean age 20.0) and Slovakia (N= 313, 80% F, mean age 22.2).

Intention to migrate were measured by a 6 item scale as respondents were asked to evaluate each statement (e.g. How often you think about to leave your home country for long period? from (1) never to (5) always. The total score ranged from 6 to 36, where a higher score indicates a more positive attitude towards emigration from the home country.

Push factors of emigration plans: The questionnaire has been developed by our research team and presents two sets of questions which aim to measure perceived opportunities connected to living abroad (24 items) – push factors of emigration, which attract people to emigrate. The 24 items of push factors were subjected to principal axis factoring (PAF). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was 0.84 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance. PAF revealed the presence of five independent components (openness, social security, work and career, culture and language, education).

The linear regression (stepwise) were used to explore the associations among intentions to migrate and push factor aim to identify most consistent predictor.

Results

Table 1 Comparisons of emigration intentions among students in five European countries

Country	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Belgium	214	6.00	30.00	14.26	5.40
Bulgaria	396	6.00	30.00	14.19	5.76
Hungary	116	6.00	30.00	15.56	6.25
Lithuania	160	6.00	30.00	15.47	5.56
Slovakia	313	6.00	30.00	15.67	5.73

Almost 25% of students has an intention to migrate for a longer time period (more than one year) ranging from 13% in Belgium to 30% in Hungary (Table 1). Factor analysis confirmed five independent push factors (openness, social security, work and career, culture and language, education). Belgium students differ to all other samples as they intentions to migrate were associated with language, work and openness. Regarding all other countries only work and language in Bulgarian sample were linked with intentions to migrate (Table 2).

Table 2 Relationship among emigration intentions and push factors by country.

Country		Beta	p-value
Belgium	work and career	.245	.000
	culture and language	.277	.000
	openness	-.202	.003
Bulgaria	work and career	.241	.000
	culture and language	.107	.046
Hungary	work and career	.385	.000
Lithuania	work and career	.228	.004
Slovakia	work and career	.233	.000

Conclusion

The results of this study showed that types and importance of push factors differs by country. Motives associated with better work and career conditions were identified as most significant regarding intentions to migrate. Other significant push factors such as language and openness were identified only among Belgian students.

Message 1

There is significant amount of highly educated young adults with intention for long term migration.

Message 2

Motives associated with better work and career conditions were identified as the most significant regarding intentions to migrate

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