

# 1 EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION IN HUNGARY AFTER THE REGIME CHANGE – BY INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

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After regime change, border restrictions were lifted, the state control of foreign travel ended, and the countries of Eastern Europe again became part of the international migration flows – although to a differing extent. In Hungary, increasing emigration over the last nearly ten years and the large wave of refugees since 2015 directed public discourse and attention to the phenomenon of migration. Public debates focused on low outmigration and the lack of migration propensity just over ten years ago, and prior to that on the relatively high immigration by regional comparison.

What is the real extent of emigration in Hungary, when and how did it change, and what position does the country occupy within the increasing Eastern European emigration? Does immigration offset emigration? This introductory chapter examines the changes observed in Hungary using descriptive statistics, and contrasts these to processes that have taken place in other Eastern European countries. Using comparative statistics it is shown how migration developed in other Eastern European countries, where factors that determine migration changed in a similar way and context. The first, longer part of the chapter examines emigration, the second part discusses immigration, and the final part draws out some relevant conclusions for Hungary.

## Outmigration from Eastern European countries

### *Changes and expectations*

The return to the permeability of borders after regime change created new opportunities in immigration, emigration and return migration for residents of Eastern European transition countries. Migration was no longer a one-off and unidirectional occurrence. Instead, with open borders constant flow, out- and return migration became natural. Due to the substantial economic disparities among regions, economists in the early 1990s – after earlier controls on foreign travel had been lifted – predicted a strong migration pressure and flows from Eastern European transition countries towards more developed regions of the world (*Layard et al.*, 1992). The unifying of Europe and the possibility of the opening up of European Union labour markets for nationals of Eastern European countries created East-West migration expectations within Europe and it triggered actual migration from Eastern Europe towards the more developed countries in Europe already during the period of preparation. The gradual dismantling of administrative barriers to mobility

made it easier – and thus encouraged – movement within Europe compared to other regions, and also reduced the financial and non-financial burden associated with migration.

The possibility of free movement in reality meant the freedom of labour allocation – as set out in Harris & Todaro's classic model – within the single European labour market via migration (*Harris–Todaro*, 1970). Studies that estimated the extent and characteristics of migration based on GDP differentials between economies (*Bauer–Zimmermann*, 1999, *Boeri–Brücker*, 2001, *Dustmann et al.*, 2003), as well as those that explored migration intentions and possibilities, predicted large variations in mobility across countries. The majority of studies examined the economic impact the gradually increasing access to the labour market (*Boeri–Brücker*, 2005, *Baas–Brücker*, 2008) and then actual migration (*Kahanec–Zimmermann*, 2010, *Kahanec*, 2013) on receiving countries. In the potential receiving countries regulations controlling migration, particularly restrictions on employment, put limitations on the freedom and intensity of processes, while the period preparing for European Union accession was characterised by labour migration regulated by bi-lateral agreements (*Hárs*, 2003). When a free market in labour commenced in 2004, a strong flow of labour migration began towards possible destinations.

According to the Accession Treaty of the European Union the 15 EU Member States could restrict the free movement of labour from the eight new Member States (EU–8), with the exception of Malta and Cyprus for a period of up to seven years. Only three countries opened up their labour market in May 2004: the United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden. The majority of the countries took partial advantage of the seven-year transitional period and opened their labour markets gradually, while Germany and Austria bordering the Eastern regions of the European Union took full advantage of the transitional period, postponing free movement of labour until May 2011. During the transition period there were restrictions on the employment of EU–8 nationals in the affected countries. After the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, only the EU–8 countries opened up their labour market (with the exception of Hungary) for Romanian and Bulgarian workers, followed by Denmark, Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Hungary two years later. The other EU Member States delayed the introduction of free movement until 2014.

The following will examine the intensity of this process, the size of migration, as well as differences between countries, composition and trends.

#### *About the data*

The international comparison of emigration is made harder by the limited availability and reliability of data. Immigration statistics are available in destination countries, and outmigration from sending countries can be estimated using so-called *mirror statistics* – the stock of migrants in receiving countries. Therefore, for the extent of emigration *cumulative mirror statistics* were calculated by destination country – on the basis of available data on the num-

ber of outmigrants from particular countries. In the period after the regime change, a large proportion of emigration from Eastern European countries took place within Europe, and this has especially been the case since the EU's enlargement. Therefore it is probably not too flawed to limit the analysis of outmigration in the post-regime-change period to East-West migration flows within the EU.<sup>1</sup>

The global (UN and OECD) data sources include migration defined on the basis of birth country. This shows a much higher migrant population than statistics calculated on the basis of nationality and also includes a significant migrant population from outside Europe, which can be misleading. Around 70–90 per cent of people born in the EU–8+2 countries and living in the main destination countries outside Europe (United States, Canada, Australia, and Turkey in the case of Bulgaria) emigrated a long time ago and were already citizens of the receiving country in 2000.<sup>2</sup> Between 2000 and 2015 The EU was the main destination of outmigration, and overall, the share of EU nationals increased by 20–30 per cent in the emigrant population.<sup>3</sup>

Two data sources were used to calculate cumulative mirror statistics by sending country: the 2011 population census and the annual statistics on the number of migrants from the EU–8 + 2 to the EU–15 by country.<sup>4</sup> The analysis focuses on long-term (intended to be more than a year) emigration. The emigrant population was defined as nationals of particular countries living abroad, supposing that this better captures recent emigrants with stronger links to their native countries. The cumulative mirror statistics were calculated from databases available on-line, by identifying nationals for each sending country who were registered in an EU–15 country, and then these values were added.<sup>5</sup> The census data is more reliable, it indicates the emigrant population in 2011 (foreign nationals living in the particular country). The annual population data are from the register of migrants who live a particular country. This is suitable for longitudinal analysis, although there are gaps in the data; however, by filling in these gaps the data can be made suitable for comparative analysis.

Mirror statistics can be calculated using annual matrixes generated from the number of people relocating from specific sending countries to more developed EU countries for a longer period of time (usually at least one year). Given that the matrixes must be complete and the online databases have gaps in various countries, data had to be computed and harmonised with the relevant population censuses. To fill in the matrixes, data reported by *Fic et al.* (2011) was used up to 2011, and corrected using the updated Eurostat data. Missing data from the last three years was imputed using the appropriate methods from that source. Missing information on people living in the United Kingdom was imputed by estimating the annual increase on the basis of national insurance numbers (NINO) issued to new migrants. Migration was assumed to be constant in countries where migration was small and not increasing. Even accounting for a small bias in the estimated values, the dataset provides a good estimate of trends. Migrants cannot be accurately harmonised in the data on migrant population obtained this way due to differences in data collection between the countries. However, this is not a problem for comparisons because that is the same year after year for each country.

1 The rules of free movement within the European Union also differ from migration in other directions, therefore it is useful to analyse it separately. For sake of completeness EEA countries with a similar labour market status, primarily Norway and Switzerland, were also included in the analysis where possible.

2 Author's calculation on the basis of OECD DIOC database.

3 Based on the UN migration database.

4 Despite the obvious opportunity, we did not use *European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS)* data to calculate mirror statistics, because they are available only in an anonymised format by nationality and place of birth of migrants.

5 Population census data available from: [ec.europa.eu](http://ec.europa.eu).

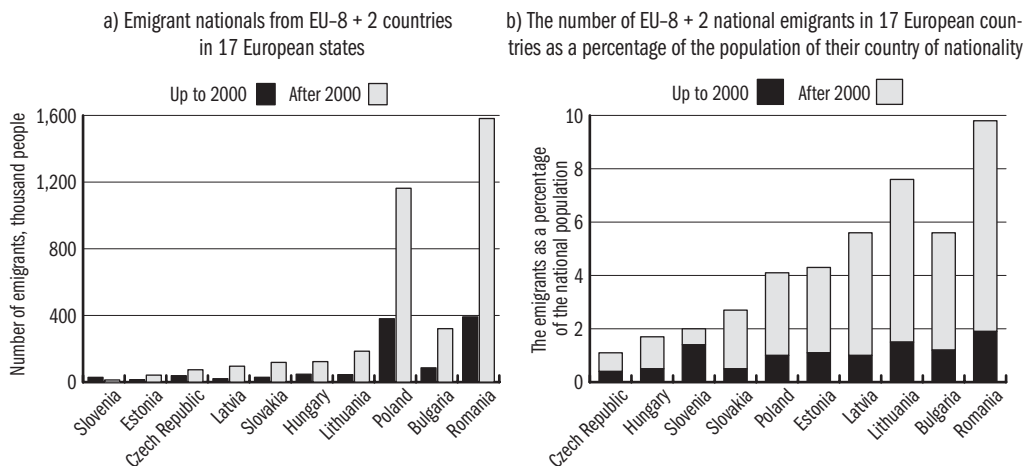
In the absence of good comparative data for migration flows, changes in migration are approximated using the traditional method and changes in stock are compared at different points in time; thus the data is limited to the description of the – ever changing – population of those legally residing and settled abroad at that particular time. This underestimates the total – short- or long-term – migrant population, and it cannot capture the totality of those involved in migration. The figures therefore provide the lower estimate of the number of long-term emigrants. The statistical comparison examines the extent of emigration and ratios. Motivations for emigration, composition and impact can be analysed on the basis of targeted research.

### *The size of the emigrant population*

Figure 1.1 shows the Eastern European migrant population residing in Western Europe by sending country in 2011, displaying pre- and post-2000 emigrants separately.<sup>6</sup> The analysis of the post-2000 period provides a more accurate estimate for the size of the migration flow. Part a) of Figure 1.1 shows the size of the emigrant population calculated on the basis of censuses in 2000 and 2011: the increase is substantial in this period. In terms of numbers, East-West emigration is completely dominated by outmigration from Poland and Romania.

<sup>6</sup> The classification of periods is defined by the date of the previous census. This classification is more or less suitable to examine the increased migration following EU enlargement and the free movement of labour separately from earlier periods.

**Figure 1.1: Emigrant population from the EU-8 + 2 countries to the EU-15 and two EEA countries before and after 2000, by nationality, 2011**



Note: The two EEA countries: Norway and Switzerland.

Source: Author's calculation based on 2011 population census data from the specific countries.

From the perspective of sending countries, the key question is what proportion of a country's population lives abroad. These proportions, relative to the size of the population in the 2011 Census, are depicted in part b) of Figure

1.1. The majority of those living abroad in 2011 arrived after 2000; the out-migration of the population was the highest in Latvia, Lithuania, as well as Bulgaria and Romania in the period 2000–2011. In Poland – despite the sizeable emigrant population – the rate of outmigration was moderate, alongside Estonia and Slovakia somewhat lagging behind, and it was low in the Czech Republic, Slovenia and also Hungary.

Above, the number of emigrants has been compared to the total population of each country using cumulative mirror statistics. However, the censuses suggest that 85–90 per cent of the emigrant population is aged 50 years or younger in all countries and therefore it is more accurate to compare the emigration rate to the under-50 population of the sending country. This way, the emigration rate is nearly one and a half times higher. In 2011 15 per cent of the Romanian working age population aged 15–49 years lived in Western Europe, and the same figure was 12 per cent among Lithuanians, nine per cent among Latvians and Bulgarians, more than six per cent among Estonians and Poles, and two to four per cent among Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, and Hungarians.

The census-based cumulative mirror statistics also show that the majority of the emigrant population is economically active, which is indicative of labour migration in line with earlier forecasts. The economic activity of migrants aged 15–64 years from Eastern Europe well exceeded the average activity rate of 60 per cent in the EU–15 after 2000. The activity rate of Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak, and Hungarian emigrants was especially high (around 80 per cent), however the rate of Romanians and Bulgarians was not much lower either (76–77 per cent). The activity rate of Czech emigrants stood at 75 per cent, and that of Estonians and Slovenians was somewhat lower (71–73 per cent).

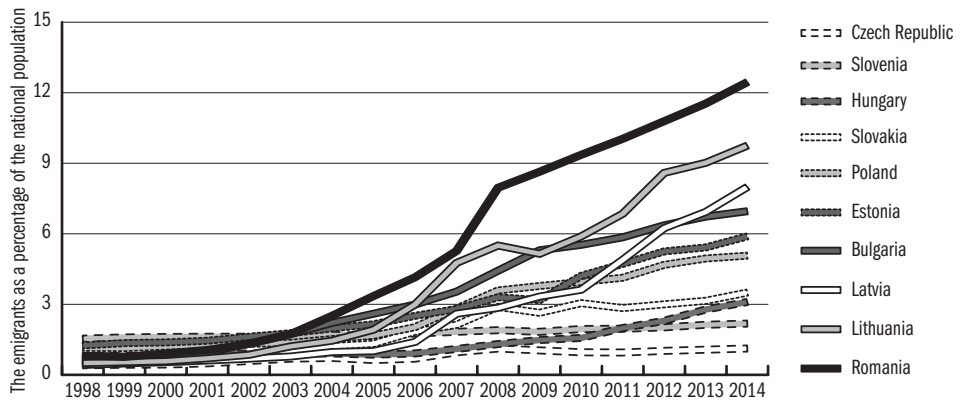
*The dynamics of outmigration on the basis of changes in the number of people residing abroad*

The observed country rates give a snapshot of the extent of migration from certain Eastern European countries in 2011. The cumulative mirror statistics calculated on the basis of population statistics indicate changes in outmigration over time. The data does not show how many people moved away and how many returned, but it does show net outmigration and how it changed. The proportion of the emigrant population within the national population by year and country is depicted on *Figure 1.2*. There was a rapid increase from each country after EU accession. While the proportion of Eastern Europeans living in Western Europe appeared to be around 1–2 per cent of the national populations according to statistics in 2004, this share increased in nearly all countries after 2004. However, the rate of the increase varies across countries.<sup>7</sup> Outmigration is especially intense from Romania, and among the Baltic countries from Latvia and Lithuania. They are followed by Poland, Es-

<sup>7</sup> The regularisation of migrants already residing (non-legally) abroad also contributed to the rapid rise in the statistics in 2004. The sudden increase in migration made the large population of non-registered migrants who had arrived earlier from countries with a high migration propensity visible; however this effect evened out over time.

tonia, and Bulgaria where outmigration is smaller but it is still sizeable and continuous. The Slovak emigration rate gradually fell behind, while that of Hungary increased to a similar level. The level of Czech and Slovene emigration remains low.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 1.2: The share of EU-8 + 2 nationals resident in EU-15 countries as a percentage of the population of their country of nationality (as on Jan 1st of each year)**



Source: Author's calculation on the basis of Eurostat data on the number of foreign nationals residing in the specific countries, missing data imputed using the methods described earlier.

The last 15 years can be divided into distinct phases: the period before the accession of the EU-8 countries (before 2004), the initial years of rapid growth in migration up to the crisis (2004–2008), the crisis (2008–2010), and finally the opening up of German and Austrian labour markets (after 2010). Although the rapid growth was briefly interrupted by the crisis, the trends seem fairly constant and the intensity of outmigration differed between countries in the different periods. Figure 1.3 shows annual average changes in emigration as a proportion of the total population of the country of nationality over time, calculated from cumulative mirror statistics.

There had been varying degrees of outmigration from the majority of EU-8 countries already before EU accession; however this suddenly soared after 2004, slowed down everywhere during the crisis, and then accelerated again after 2010. In the EU-8, the intense growth observed prior to the crisis continued in the Baltic countries; however in Poland and especially in Slovakia – where the economic developments were favourable – it remained below pre-crisis levels. The Czech Republic and Slovenia were largely unaffected by outmigration. The situation was also similar in Hungary at the time of accession; however migration intensified after 2010. The processes in Bulgaria and Romania are somewhat different. Outmigration was already substantial in both countries at the time of their accession to the EU in 2007,<sup>9</sup> this in-

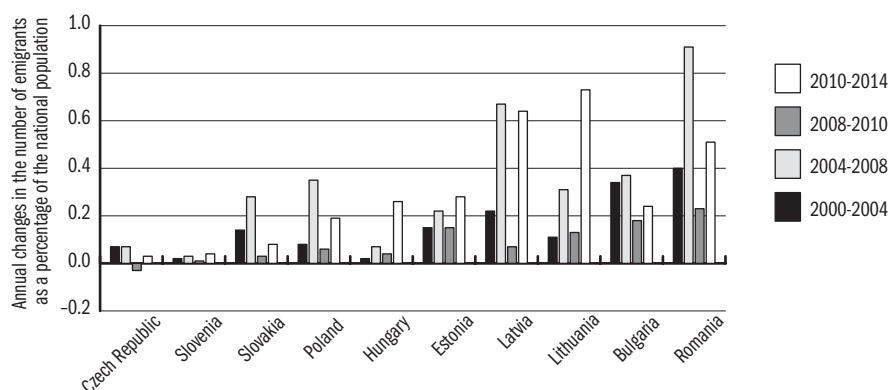
<sup>8</sup> In principle outmigration by country can also be estimated on the basis of the EU-LFS mirror statistics, even though access to non-anonymised data is not possible. Such calculations are presented by the *EU (2014)* – on the basis of 2013 LFS data – on the migration of the population aged 15–64 years; the results are very close to the calculations presented here.

<sup>9</sup> Labour migration to Spain, channelled by bilateral agreements, as well as labour migration to Italy legalised by irregular and repeated amnesties were also common (see also *Peixoto et al., 2012*).



creased even further, and then returned to a lower level after the crisis. This is probably due to the deteriorating absorption capacity of the main Southern European destination countries.

**Figure 1.3: Changes in the number of EU-8 + 2 nationals residing in EU-15 countries as a percentage of the total population of their country of nationality (Jan 1st of each year)**



Source: Author's calculation on the basis of Eurostat data on the number of foreign nationals residing in the specific countries, missing data imputed using the methods described earlier.

Outmigration from Hungary – unlike that from other countries – started late. The strong pull effect created by EU accession had a limited impact in Hungary; the crisis and its consequences, the reforms with inevitable cuts in the second half of the 2000s, as well as the measures of the ruling government since 2010 all combined together to encourage migration (*Hárs*, 2013). Although the size of emigration remained well below the high emigration rates observed in other countries within the favourable context of EU enlargement – on average around 0.4 per cent or more of the national population annually – it did however reach the rates that characterise countries with medium-intensity outmigration: an average rate of 0.2 per cent on an annual basis. Migration to the EU-15 represented 3.1 per cent of Hungary's population at the beginning of 2014, according to cumulative mirror statistics. After EU accession, between 2004 and 2014, the proportion of the Hungarian population living abroad increased by 2.2 per cent. Outmigration increased steadily after 2007 and started to accelerate after 2010; the rate of those who have moved abroad increased by 1.6 per cent between 2010 and 2014. The increase in the rate of outmigration observed after 2007 was moderate; however, unlike in the Czech Republic or Slovenia, it did not stop during the crisis. This modest increase was also noted in the Hungarian literature (see e.g. *Blaskó et al.*, 2014, *Hárs-Simon*, 2015).

According to the most reliable estimates calculated on the basis of information from the Personal Data and Address Register of the Central Office for Administrative and Electronic

Public Services (KEK KH), 335 thousand people in the population aged 18–49 years were settled abroad at the beginning of 2013 (*KSH NKI*, 2013). For the total population this represents approximately 3.4 per cent. Differences between the two estimates for a similar time period are adequately explained by differences in the content of the data, in particular the fact that the computed mirror statistics are limited to the main EU–15 region due to technical issues. The mirror statistics provide a lower estimate of outmigration, namely how many people are settled in the EU–15.

### *Migration, labour market, economic expectations*

Outmigration from the new EU Member States was primarily motivated by employment: work propensity and activity of emigrants was consistently high (*Kahanec et al.*, 2010). In addition to the potential wage gain associated with the economic differences between countries, the unfavourable labour market situation (the level of unemployment) in Eastern Europe, and economic prospects, country-specific characteristics also shaped the process of emigration.

*Figure A1.1 of Appendix A1* at the end of this chapter shows the changes of the main factors influencing outmigration in Eastern Europe by country, based on stylised facts: changes in unemployment indicate the labour market effect and annual GDP changes illustrate the economic prospects. The effect of substantial wage differentials between countries is assumed to be constant based on *Oblath* (2014).<sup>10</sup>

The structure of the economy transformed during the regime change and masses of jobs disappeared. Unemployment was high and employment prospects were unfavourable in most of the EU–8 countries during the first half of the 2000s. Outmigration quickly ensued in the context of high unemployment – over 10 per cent in the Baltic countries and in excess of 20 per cent in Poland and Slovakia – and the opportunities created by the free movement of labour and virtually unlimited labour demand in receiving countries. The high unemployment level started to decrease rapidly, however it soared again in the Baltic countries heavily affected by the crisis. This boosted migration again, which alleviated unemployment once more. The effect of the crisis was more moderate in Poland and Slovakia also stabilised relatively quickly; the net increase in outmigration slowed down, to which return migration also contributed. The fall in unemployment was accompanied by economic growth in Poland, the Baltic countries and Slovakia (*Kaczmarczyk et al.*, 2010, *Hazans–Philips*, 2010).

However, migration was not the cause, the improvement of economic indicators was determined by the economic growth cycles of these countries and the opportunities for outmigration simply coincided with these processes. Detailed analyses of labour market selection have also demonstrated for Poland and the Baltic States that labour over-supply fell as a result of migration and equilibrium in the labour market improved over the long run. This led to a tighter labour market, where labour supply

<sup>10</sup> The country studies that explore the impact and structure of outmigration in detail, also consider further issues such as demographic consequences, structural differences, as well as short- and longer term impacts (*Kaczmarczyk et al.*, 2010, *Hazans–Philips*, 2010, *Hazans*, 2013). These are not discussed here in detail due to limitations of space, only stylised facts are presented.



decreased, wages increased, and the conditions for modernisation of the economy were created (ibid).

The unfavourable labour market situation of Romania and Bulgaria had already set off a rapid outmigration before their EU accession in 2007; however this was not accompanied by a notable improvement in the economy: the GDP stagnated and outmigration was steadily increasing (Mereuta, 2013).

Heavy migration created structural deficits in the labour market, the impact of which depends on the structure of outmigration and the selection of migrants. Improvements in the economy or the labour market can be followed by return migration; the missing workforce can be replaced by return migration and immigration (this would be especially important in the Baltic States, where intense outmigration was sustained over a period of time). However, the return migration programmes of these Eastern European countries did not prove successful and immigration policies are also modest (Hazans, 2013, Kaczmarczyk et al., 2010, Kaczmarczyk, 2013, Mereuta, 2013).

In Hungary (as well as the Czech Republic and Slovenia that are not included in *Figure A1.1*), however, unemployment was low and outmigration moderate in the period following accession. Around 2010 the increase and consistently high levels of unemployment (adjusted by workfare) started to have an effect, while, as illustrated by the stagnation of the GDP, economic prospects did not improve either. The short history of Hungarian migration is closest to the Romanian and Bulgarian models in Eastern Europe: besides the stagnating economy and unfavourable labour market prospects, additional country-specific factors also influenced emigration. This suggests a steadily increasing migration in the short run. There is no prospect of economic changes that would realise the economic benefits of migration, would lead to market equilibrium and to the structural modernisation of the economy.

### *Direction and patterns of migration flows*

Migration flows, the net increase of annual migration by country are examined on the basis of mirror statistics (leaving out the Czech Republic and Slovenia again – see *Figure A1.2, Appendix A1*).

The direction of migration was determined by the migration opportunities that opened up following accession and the economic attractiveness of destination countries, as well as regional effects. The economic attractiveness and immediate opening up of the United Kingdom's (and Ireland's) labour market reshuffled the emigration patterns of EU-8 countries within a short period of time. Germany became one of the main destination countries everywhere, although the effect of restrictions on migration in the transition period is apparent prior to 2011; however, its attraction has been gradually increasing since that time. The direction of emigration from Romania and Bulgaria was different, towards the Mediterranean region.

The heavy migration shown earlier creates a double-hump graph in the Baltic States and Poland; the direction of migration was predominantly the United Kingdom and Ireland (in the case of Estonia the neighbouring Finland) in the first wave after 2004. After the crisis migration to Ireland stopped. The intense outmigration from Slovakia after 2004 was also heading towards the United Kingdom, and then it decreased gradually. Initially, the main destination country of Romania and Bulgaria was Spain (in the case of Romania also Italy to a smaller extent). Accession to the EU in 2007 quickly increased migration from Romania to Italy and from Bulgaria to Greece; however, the economic crisis in the following year shifted these directions.

Outmigration from Hungary was somewhat different from the mainstream: besides its low intensity it was also initially characterised by diversity. The main destination of the rapidly growing migration after 2010 became the United Kingdom. After the German and Austrian labour markets fully opened up in 2011 there was also a substantial increase in migration towards Germany, the traditional destination country of Hungarians. Overall, the intensity of outmigration is similarly large in both directions, and emigration to Austria has also substantially increased.

### Does immigration offset outmigration?

Immigration flows also started as the borders opened up in Eastern European countries after regime change. Among the motivating factors the economic pull effect of migration, tradition, networks, and the receiving environment were all important (*Wallace–Stola*, 2001). The expectations of economic growth in the post-regime change period strengthened the potential of these countries to attract immigrants. The migration process of Mediterranean countries served as a model, where outmigration turned into immigration (*Peixoto et al.*, 2012). *Arango* (2012) describes the transformation of Eastern European countries into a destination for immigrants – alongside the old immigration countries from Western Europe and the new ones from the South – from a general theoretical perspective. Similarly to the previous section, this part presents immigration to Eastern European countries – with special attention to Hungary – in international comparison using descriptive statistics.

### Data

The analysis uses census data and, similarly to the previous section, it examines long-term – for more than a year – residents by nationality, which provides a better estimate of recent immigration.<sup>11</sup> Shorter-term trends and flows are not visible, however population censuses provide more reliable *rates* for small samples.<sup>12</sup>

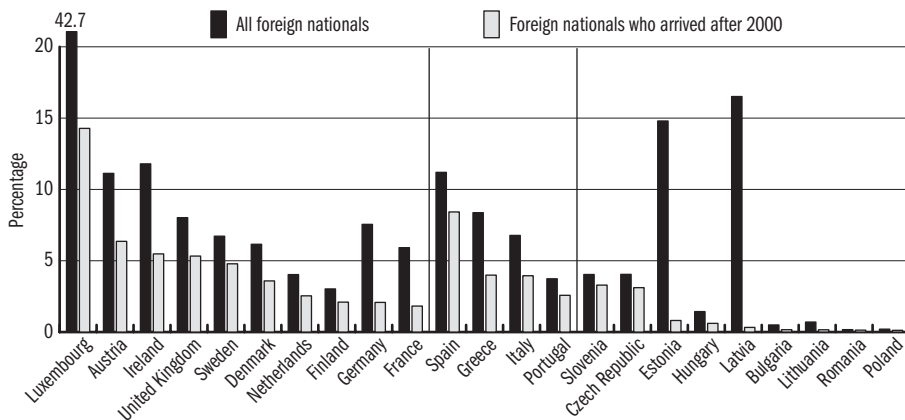
11 Immigration defined on the basis of nationality excludes new citizens naturalised on the basis of ethnicity from the migrant population.

12 The labour market survey is suitable for the analysis of immigration where the size of the migrant population is large enough; however, due to low levels of immigration and the inadequate weighting of the sample it does not measure the immigration of Eastern European countries reliably. For methodological difficulties see *CSO* (2015). Similarly to the previous section, [census data of EU Member States](#) available online was used to compare immigration.

### *Immigration – numbers and expectations*

Figure 1.4 shows the share of foreign nationals and those who arrived after 2000 within the total national population. The latter provide a more valid picture of recent migration. The rates are determined by the migration processes of each country. Three groups of countries were distinguished: Northern and Western Europe, Southern Europe, and Eastern Europe. In the first, the rate of immigration varies across countries; however a substantial long-term migrant population had already accumulated in all of these countries prior to 2000 and the influx has continued after 2000 as well. However, in the majority of Eastern European countries the proportion of the immigrant population is low. The real extent of the influx was influenced by historical changes and ethnic rearrangements prior to 2000; therefore the number of immigrants after 2000 gives a better estimate of actual migration and it shows that the increase in immigration has been very low in the majority of countries since 2000. *Drbohlav et al.* (2011) examined migration flows and stocks in detail using the cases of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The authors described immigration in Eastern Europe in the late 2000s as a slowly growing “embryonic” process, where changes are visible but small. Hungary, after substantial immigration in the years of regime change, fitted into the regional trend of moderate immigration (*Hárs, 2010*).

**Figure 1.4: Proportion of foreign nationals in the total population, total and post-2000 immigration in the EU states, 2011 (percentage)**



Note: Luxembourg's outlying number is not displayed in full, it is shown by a number at the top of the column. Immigration data for Estonia and Latvia also include non-citizen ethnic Russians, this shows virtual immigration (see *Lagzi, 2008*).

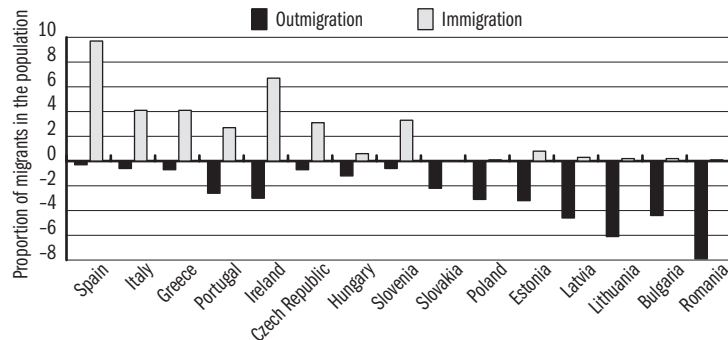
Source: Author's calculation on the basis of 2011 population census data in the specific countries.

Combined with modest immigration, as has been shown in the previous section, the rate of outmigration was significant and increasing rapidly in the

majority of Eastern European countries. Substantial outmigration can bring about shortages in the labour markets, and thus trigger immigration alongside an increase in local wages. Based on the short history of emigration, it can be concluded that although the wage effect exists, there is no visible immigration.

Figure 1.5 displays outmigration and immigration together in the EU-8 countries (and for comparison in the five, newly emerged destination countries in the EU). The change of trends seems obvious: immigration was more substantial in Eastern European countries where there was no outmigration. Slovenia and the Czech Republic were basically unaffected by emigration; however, the extent of immigration is comparable to rates observed in immigration countries. The picture is very clear in the new receiving countries: immigration was substantial in all of these countries and outmigration stopped after 2000. The processes are not simultaneous, immigration started with migration transformation, and can even be temporarily reversed if the economic conditions change.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 1.5: Immigration of foreign nationals after 2000 and the outmigration of local nationals in the EU-8 and the five new receiving EU states, 2011**



Source: Author's calculation based on 2011 population census data in the specific countries.

## Conclusion

The descriptive statistical analysis of migration by international comparison has shown that the rapidly growing rate of outmigration from – the late-comer – Hungary is (for now) below that of countries where this process had started earlier. Changes in the stock of migrants observed over time in the study could have taken place alongside smaller and larger migration flows.

When the migration pressure is strong, it is often assumed that the rapidly increasing outmigration is a unidirectional process. The overestimation of factors encouraging outmigration and the rejection of issues encouraging or forcing return migration are often behind this assumption. From the analysis of data of the main destination countries it can be concluded that in ad-

13 The migration transformation of mediterranean countries is discussed in detail by Peixoto et al. (2012).

dition to outmigration, the level of return migration is also substantial (see also *Chapter 2.7 of In Focus*).

Besides increasing outmigration, the level of immigration to Hungary is modest similarly to other countries in the region. The heavy influx observed at the time of the regime change plummeted (and the data used for the analysis does not distinguish naturalised immigrants). Previous research and the other chapters of *In Focus* present the structure and labour market implications of immigration, as well as its potential economic role.

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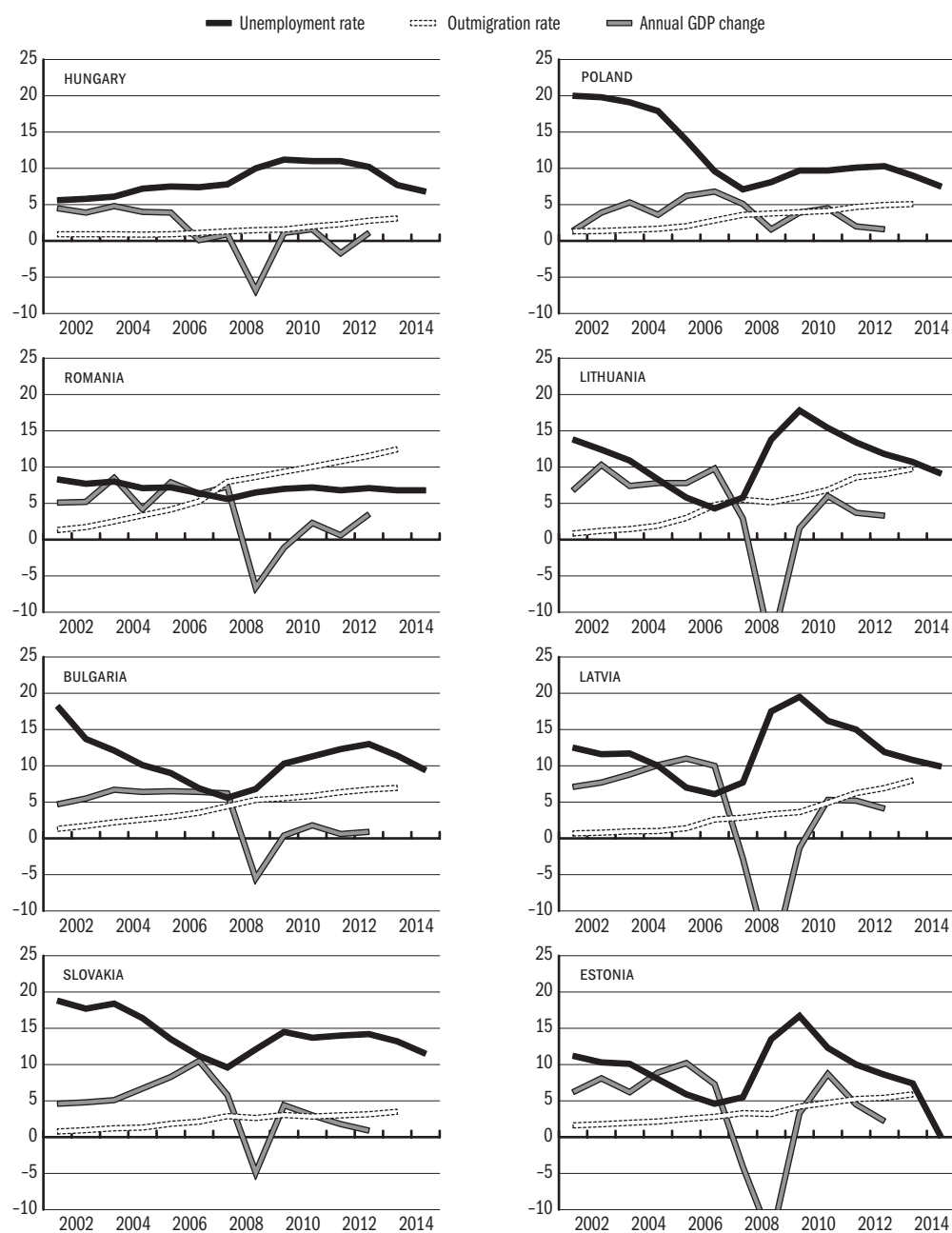
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## Appendix A1

Figure A1.1: Changes of the migration rate, annual GDP growth, and the unemployment rate, percentage



Source: Outmigration rate: *Figure 1.2*, unemployment rate and annual GDP change: *Eurostat*.

**Figure A1.2: Changes in the number of EU-8 nationals migrating to EU-15 countries by destination country, thousand people, as on January 1**

