

Multi-faced Transformations

Multi-faced Transformations:

Challenges and Studies

Edited by

Elena Danilova, Matej Makarovic
and Alina Zubkovich

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INTRODUCTION

Transformative processes occur worldwide and can be subjected to various interpretations from different theoretical perspectives. Despite the end-of-history rhetoric surrounding the subsequent transitions from state socialism to democracy and neo-liberal capitalism, the countries of East-Central and Eastern Europe, and Asia, from those that have experienced a spiral of economic decline to those that have acceded to the European Union, remain in a state of transformation. How do social changes, large and small, occur? Social institutions and organizational and cultural structures often seem durable to the point of inertia, yet change can happen both gradually and very quickly. Classic sociological interests in social transformation tended to focus on “big” changes: crises, revolutions, and long-term economic and social development, whereas relatively small institutional changes can produce unpredictable and ambiguous challenges for individual societies and require constant research, monitoring, and theorising regarding received data.

The concepts introduced in the late 20th century, such as “late modernity” or “second modernity”, or within theories of modernization, propose that contemporary societies are a clear continuation of modern institutional transitions and cultural developments. However, while social and political transformations in Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century clearly followed the model provided by the Western (representative) democracy and the market, the situation seems to be less clear in the second decade of the new millennium.

Recent trends and challenges are becoming less unambiguous than those of any single linear model of transition, and thus require systematic studies. The structural determinants of the economic, political and cultural changes that these societies are undergoing must be highlighted. However, if a one-dimensional picture in which global structures are seen to overdetermine local context and actions is to be avoided, the structural perspective of human and symbolic flows has to be augmented and corrected by a more activist perspective, one that also stresses the increasing role of local contexts and the power of local institutions vis-à-vis global structures. Moreover, if the possibility of a counter-hegemonic

challenge of neo-liberal capitalism is to be conceivable, perspectives must be shifted and it must be shown that global structures are increasingly dependent on local actions and that the coordination of local actions, which are directed against the global system, can lead to its transformation.

Scholars have observed multi-faceted social changes in many areas of social life in different countries. There are specific areas of research that simultaneously seem to be on the periphery of discourse and yet are more debatable than it may at first seem. There are no simple explanations for the transformation of economic and social policies, but a wide range of factors elucidated by different analytic frameworks (in particular institutionalism) help explain countries' differing trajectories over time, including path-dependent or path-breaking policies, ideas and discourse that frame the reform efforts in these countries.

The historical and comparative methodologies once reserved for the study of major transformations are increasingly deployed today in the study of a much wider variety of social fields and their institutional patterns, and their practices – from political shifts, social movements, and economic changes, to organizational and inter-organizational network structures, social fields and their dynamics and interactions, and shifts in patterns of action and culture. The studies presented examine the nuances of transformations in particular fields and particular countries.

Understanding these different dimensions of continuity and change, not only in social institutions, but also in the lives of people, has been realized in this collection by exploring the different aspects of relevant transformations. In recent decades, scholars have become increasingly concerned about the challenges of multi-faced transformations in relation to several areas: economic development, migration and inequality, cultural aspects, and the formation of identities. Nevertheless, the researchers interested in these diverse topics share a conviction that the study of institutions and social fields, in relation to culture and practice, can yield new discoveries about the shared dynamics that drive change.

This volume adopts an interdisciplinary approach and delves into economic and cultural development and social changes that have occurred and are of interest for a broad audience of academics, civil society, and policy makers. The borders of these transformations are not be limited to the European space, but cover a broader understanding of European culture with the possibility of inclusion of the issues dealing with the transformations in Post-Soviet countries, the Western Balkans and the

Middle East. These are voices from the parts of Eastern Europe and non-Western societies that often remain less known.

This book is divided into four sections: the first seeks to illuminate issues related to migration studies with a special focus on cross-border and return migration. It is difficult to overestimate the importance and reality of the given issue in contemporary science. The section starts with the contribution of Nikolai Genov, who introduces a synthesized explanatory model for the study of the border-migration phenomenon. At a time when an extremely heterogeneous and complex diversity of cross-border circulation is observed, contemporary science still lacks a synergetic research strategy that can take into account the different parameters of international migration. Genov presents an alternative approach that avoids the common trap of one-dimensional deterministic explanatory strategies and introduces a new conceptual model instead. The introduced conceptual framework allows for a systematic conceptual model of policies focusing on the management of the broad variety of types of cross-border migration.

Moving from the introduction of the new conceptual model, the contributors to the next paper, Andreja Primec and Darja Boršič, share the results of their research dealing with the issue of return migration in Slovenia. They focus on the legal status of immigrants and seek to understand to what extent the immigration policy measures support the reintegration of the highly educated population group to the Slovenian environment. The authors show how the transformation of emigration and immigration trends, together with the expected changes in the demographic landscape in Europe, have led to the adaptation of the new immigration policy in Slovenia. Primec and Boršič come to the conclusion that Slovenia has to focus on promoting the immigration of innovative individuals. In order to attract the given category, the government should implement a number of economic reforms enriched by the proper positioning of the Slovenian businesses as a hospitable environment for high-skilled immigrants and return migrants.

While the legislative aspect of immigration policy in Slovenia is the focal point of the second chapter, Darja Boršič and Asja Pehar seek to analyse the very similar problems of returnees in the next chapter. They are interested in the opinions of Slovenian companies and entrepreneurs on the benefits that the returnees may bring to the economy. The authors held in-depth interviews with the employees of small, medium-sized and large companies who might benefit from employees with experiences gained

abroad. Their study reveals unexpected conclusions: the vast majority of the interviewees do not see any special benefits that return migrants may bring if recruited, except the knowledge of foreign languages. Moreover, Boršič and Pehar show that no representative sample of returnees exists when analysing Slovenian companies and, therefore, conclude that the emigration of the high-skilled cohort is still higher than immigration.

The second section of the book represents the scientific findings in the field of economic transformations occurring in different corners of Europe, starting with a continuation of the national focus on Slovenia and continuing with a case study analysis of Lithuanian and Georgian privatization.

Despite a clear trend towards the global domination of the market economy, market-based economic systems have been significantly challenged by the global economic crisis, because of which different varieties of capitalism generated various responses of differing levels of success. Economic globalization has remained both an opportunity and a threat to the development of more cohesive societies and communities from the local to the global level. While the markets left to their own devices may produce unbearable risks, having national and transnational authorities intervene in them may be no less risky, for instance in terms of generating new moral hazards, particularly among economic elites.

Socially responsible banking is the focus of the contributors of the opening chapter. Sabina Taškar Beloglavec and Tjaša Štrukelj research socially responsible practices in Slovenian banking systems. The research proves the existence of the niche of social responsibility and suggests proposals for policy makers and practice.

The transformations of the centrally planned economies after the break-up of the communist bloc to market orientation were implemented through rapid privatization processes in Eastern and Central Europe. Giorgi Todua thus aims to analyse the differences of privatization processes of state-owned assets in Lithuania and Georgia in the period of post-socialist transformations. Both countries underwent high unemployment rates and hyperinflation; in addition to the similar economic problems, Georgia experienced civil war and separatist conflicts that aggravated the crises. The author demonstrates the reasons for Lithuania's successful privatization program in comparison to Georgia's and demonstrates the leading factors that have determined Georgia's setback.

The third section of the book deals with the cultural processes of the identity constructions and their implementations into public spaces, in particular into museums.

Globalization and modernization have not produced a unified value system, but rather a complex combination of different cultures, values and norms exposed to different (both converging and diverging) transformations while significantly influencing one another in clearly asymmetrical ways due to the impact of phenomena including mass media, mass culture, and mass migrations. We are thus inevitably confronted with the uneasy coexistence of fundamentalism and postmodernism, universalism and relativism, homogeneity and heterogeneity, preservation and change. Consequently, the management of social transformations is supposed to consider a delicate balance between diversity and unity.

The findings presented in the first chapter of this section contribute to the analysis of the European identification possibilities; the second chapter demonstrates how different strategies of historical constructionism may exist in the same institution and what forms of commemoration policy they actualize.

Thus, the study by Tea Golob and Matej Makarovič demonstrates that national identity remains an important feature in people's lives but, being subjected to contemporary global processes, it has to co-exist with occasionally actualized multiple supranational identities. With the application of the fuzzyset analysis, the authors were able to extract political, economic and traditional patterns influencing the transformation of national identity. Golob and Makarovič have also proved that both thick and thin cultural characteristics play a certain role in maintaining the two dimensions of national identity in a cross-national comparison.

In the next chapter, Alina Zubkovych analyses the museum as a space of competing representations. She takes a single museum as a case study and demonstrates how differences in the actualization of material led to the construction of various narratives inside the same institution. The socialist period is used as the primary focus of analysis. Her research contributes to the further development of the contemporary museum theories that are often predisposed to the existence of a single dominant narrative in each museum. She illustrates, via the usage of visual analysis and semi-structured interviews, the existence of the multi-paradigmality of the expressions that allows for the co-existence of both dynamic

postmodern critical reflections about the chosen period and a fixed and reduced Yugo-nostalgic narrative.

The fourth section, titled: “Transformation of inequalities”, contributes to the understanding of the multifaceted-ness of latent inequalities. Very different in focus, these papers nevertheless illustrate the common problem that determines the structural characteristics of the contemporary world: the horizontal and vertical inequalities as a phenomenon and the lack of an overwhelming theoretical model for studying them.

For the example of Japan, Zi Wang shows how deeply rooted gender inequalities continue to be reproduced in the contemporary conditions of a postindustrial economy. He presents a complex set of structural factors that influence the unequal distribution of power, for which the national wage system, the division of labour, and the state policy of feminist initiatives are taken into account. The analysis of the given factors represents the requirement to revise the modernization theory, as it does not properly reveal and explain gender conditions in the contemporary world.

Susanta Kumar Mallick, in the last chapter of this book, demonstrates the empowerment practices that led to the marginalization of vulnerable groups. As a case study, he takes the Odisha region, a territory in India, and shows how the local legislative rules maintain the reproduction of power relations and gender inequalities. Through the analysis of constitutional provisions and rural governance practices, Kumar Mallick demonstrates the discrepancy between the proclaimed normative rules and their implementation. The caste relations become the quintessential example in this regard, as the author shows in his paper.

This volume adopts interdisciplinary approaches and delves into social, economic, and cultural transformations. It provides an overview of the broad aspects of contemporary social processes occurring in the landscapes of Europe and abroad.

Modernization as an aspect of transformations has not produced a unified value system, but a complex combination of different cultures, values and norms exposed to different (both converging and diverging) transformations, while significantly influencing one another in clearly asymmetrical ways due to the impact of the phenomena, such as mass media, mass culture and mass migrations. Consequently, the management

of social transformations should be considered a delicate balance between diversity and unity; we hope that the given volume will contribute to the further understanding of the ongoing social processes from the diverse perspectives demonstrated in this book.

PART I:

**TRANSFORMING MIGRATION:
PREDICTING SOCIAL EFFECTS**

CROSS-BORDER MIGRATION: EXPLANATORY SCHEMES AND STRATEGIES FOR MANAGEMENT

NIKOLAI GENOV
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED SOCIAL STUDIES

Abstract

Cross-border migration is becoming increasingly relevant throughout the world in economic, political, cultural and security terms. The phenomenon is rather complex; therefore, explanatory approaches corresponding to its complexity and dynamics are to be expected. In contrast, the comparative analysis of well-established conceptual models (classic economic theory, the new economics of migration, dual labour market theory, etc.) leads to a different conclusion. Although diverging in their disciplinary backgrounds and explanatory aspirations, the analysed conceptual models covering cross-border migration are, as a rule, one-dimensional and deterministic. They have paradigmatic handicaps preventing them from adequately describing and explaining cross-border migration flows. Creative synergies of available concepts and further conceptual developments are needed for cognitive and policy-related purposes. The new synergetic explanatory approach can only be multi-dimensional and probabilistic. The implication is that the generalized conceptual frameworks should allow for combinations of variables referring to specific situations in the countries sending and receiving cross-border migrants. This is the first condition for adequate descriptions, explanations, and forecasts, as well as the effective management of cross-border migration. The second condition is the consequent application of the synergetic and probabilistic approaches in the study and in the management of processes linking the societies sending and receiving cross-border migrants.

Introduction

Cross-border migration flows are becoming increasingly relevant throughout the world in economic, political, and cultural terms, as well as concerning domestic and international security. The first and most obvious piece of evidence concerns the rapidly increasing numbers of international migrants. They attempt to escape the low quality of life or the suffering in their countries of origin and to attain prosperity and security in other countries. Modern means of communication and transportation, liberalization of political regimes, and improvements in international relations facilitate cross-border movements. Migration experts at the United Nations registered a steady increase of migrants in all major regions of the world (International Migration Report 2013:1):

Table 1.1: Changes in the international migrant levels worldwide (millions)

Area/ Year	1990	2000	2010	2013
World	154.2	174.5	220.7	231.5
Developed regions	82.3	103.4	129.7	135.6
Developing regions	71.9	71.1	91.0	95.6
Africa	15.6	15.6	17.1	18.6
Asia	49.9	50.4	67.8	70.8
Europe	49.0	56.2	69.2	72.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.1	6.5	8.1	8.6
Northern America	27.8	40.4	51.2	53.1
Oceania	4.7	5.3	7.3	7.9

The phenomenon of cross-border migration is quite old, and it has accompanied all efforts to establish and maintain state borders. However, new elements in the recent developments in international migration are being witnessed, including the concentration on a few destinations, accompanied by a diversification of the countries of origin and the corridors of movement of migrants. Eastern Europeans have joined the migration flows coming from the poorest countries most affected by political turbulence, as well as by religious and ethnic intolerance. The major destinations of the migration flows are the affluent, politically stable and culturally tolerant North American and Western European societies. The increase in the migration flows between countries in the global South

is another significant recent phenomenon (European Commission 2011; Talani 2012; International Migration Report 2013: 2).

Cross-border migration flows are rather heterogeneous; the majority consist of temporary or long-term labour migrants searching for jobs or for better quality jobs. Low-educated manual workers account for the bulk of labour migrants, but the group also includes increasing shares of skilled workers and specialists, as well as highly skilled professionals. The people in these latter segments of international migrants are not motivated to migrate by hunger or unemployment, but primarily by the search for better conditions for their professional development. In contrast, most refugees and asylum seekers have existential problems in their countries of origin. These problems compel them to move to other countries by legal or illegal means, often putting their lives at risk. Yet another relevant group of cross-border migrants consists of students. The transformation of tertiary education into a widely desired goal has intensified the flows of young people searching for better, cheaper or more promising university studies. In many cases, the background intention of the cross-border students is to stay in the host country after completing their tertiary education there. Some other specific groups of cross-border migrants consist of people searching for effective medical treatment, of migrants motivated by prospects for family reunion, or of migrants who are moving back to their countries of origin (Koser 2007; Geddes 2011).

These heterogeneous migration flows challenge borders, legal orders, labour markets and life in communities in both the sending and receiving societies, as well as domestic and international security. Given the rapidly growing numbers of international migrants and the appearance of new areas and corridors of international migration, its causes, processes and effects increasingly require well-focused theorizing. This is vital for conceptually guided empirical research and is a basis for professionally designed and implemented policies for the management of international migration.

Challenges raised by cross-border migration

The countries of Western Europe are among the largest recipients of international migration flows. Consequently, immigration is typically regarded as an important issue or even as the major issue there. In reality, all European countries are both countries of origin and host countries of international migration. The real issue is the movement of large groups of

labour migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers from various parts of the world towards Western Europe with the intention to stay there. A substantial share of the immigrants in this part of the continent stems from the Eastern European member states of the European Union or from its Eastern Neighbourhood (Fassmann, Haller & Lane 2009; Black et al. 2010; Geddes & Money 2011). Italy is the country in the European Union that has recently attracted the largest amount of immigrants. The net international migration in the country reached 2.8 million during the 2005–2011 period (Cox 2013: Fig. 1). The share of immigrants from diverse regions of origin in the total population varies significantly from one European country to another. Between 2007 and 2009, only 3.6% of the new immigrants to Austria originated from North Africa and the Middle East. The share of immigrants from this region reached 14% of all immigrants in Italy during the same period (Dustman & Frattini 2012: 33).

The economic, social, political and cultural consequences of large-scale immigration to Western Europe are numerous and diverse (Barrel, Fitzgerald & Riley 2010). Usually, the problems caused by immigration and immigrants are accentuated there. As a result, in almost all countries in this part of the continent, there are political parties or movements advocating restrictions on cross-border migration or measures fostering the integration of migrants. The reasons for the anti-immigration political platforms and policies are well known. The problems related to immigrants and immigration affect all dimensions of the lives of the newcomers and the lives of the host communities. Immigrants need accommodation, which should be financially affordable for them. Refugees and asylum seekers need financial support during the long period required for the clarification and regulation of their status. Over the long run, the issues include the legalization of the stay of immigrants and their search for jobs if they obtain permission to apply for jobs. If this is not the case, local administrations have to respond to the efforts of immigrants to obtain jobs in the shadow economy.

Large groups of immigrants need occupational training and re-training. The difficulties in their acculturation, including the learning of the local language, accompany the legalization of their residence in the host country and their search for sources of income. The establishment of stable links to the new social and cultural environments raises various difficulties for many immigrants. The attempts to resolve the related issues by using irregular means are more common among immigrants than comparable irregular activities among the native population. The European experience

shows that the full inclusion of immigrants into the economic, political and cultural systems of the host countries takes decades. In some cases, it takes a span of two or three generations. The major reasons are cultural and economic; throughout Western Europe, a new pattern of social and economic stratification has evolved (Black, Natali & Skinner 2005). Its basis is the substantial difference between the income levels of the native population in the host countries and those of the immigrants. In addition, the differentiation of incomes clearly divides immigrants stemming from member states of the EU and from other states (Dustman & Frattini 2012: 46).

The application of OECD indicators of quality of life on educational outcomes might well exemplify one specific, but rather significant, issue in the countries hosting large groups of cross-border migrants. In 2013, the educational outcomes received 4.8 points in Italy and 6.4 points in Austria on a 10-point scale. In an intriguing contrast, the educational outcomes in Slovenia received 7.5 points (OECD 2013). One can only explain the advantage of Slovenia by the low share of immigrants from the developing world in the population of the country since it has yet to become a popular destination for immigrants. This situation will change (Lanzieri 2011: 18). The current problems with the educational outcomes cannot be underestimated, because they will have tangible impacts on the quality of the future labour force.

It would not be correct to present the situation concerning immigration and immigrants in Western Europe as dominated by economic, political and cultural problems, including domestic and international security issues. There are current and future needs of the economically advanced societies in the region that only migrants can satisfy. The demand for a highly educated and trained labour force is omnipresent. Some of the potential immigrants meet these requirements. The policies of the EU countries and of the European Union itself concerning this segment of the immigration flows remain underdeveloped in comparison to the sophisticated policies applied by the classic immigration countries, such as Canada and Australia, for attracting well-educated and trained immigrants. Some jobs in the economically advanced European societies are not attractive to the native labour force today and will be less so tomorrow. Properly regulated immigration can meet the requirements of these segments of the labour market. The native population in the European Union is rapidly aging and shrinking. This process raises profound questions concerning the guarantees of future pensions and the

sustainability of national health care systems. At least partially, the unavoidable immigration flows can offer a resolution to these issues. Other arguments in favour of well-managed immigration refer to the American example of the higher readiness of immigrants to take the risk of innovations, as well as to their role in linking the business activities and markets of the host country and their countries of origin.

While some of the above positive impacts of immigration on the societies of the European Union might be debatable, the demographic arguments in favour of intensive immigration to the countries of the EU are beyond question. The inflow of migrants is vital for the demographic balance of its aging societies; without immigration, the population of the EU will most probably decline to a level of slightly above 400 million in 2060. Immigration from countries outside the EU would enable its population to stabilize at a level slightly over 500 million in the middle of the current century (Lanzieri 2011: 6). The positive effects of immigration on the demographic development of the European Union as a whole will vary from country to country. Most Western European countries will be winners in the competition to attract human capital, although current population projections show a sobering demographic development in Germany (United Nations 2014):

Table 1.2: Population development in selected EU-15 countries 1990–2060, thousands

Country	1990	2000	2010	2020	2040	2060
Austria	7,670	8,020	8,402	8,716	9,202	9,439
France	56,846	59,213	63,231	66,570	71,523	74,635
Germany	80,487	83,512	83,017	81,881	76,354	68,416
Greece	10,161	10,987	11,110	11,079	10,858	10,332
Italy	56,832	56,986	60,509	61,386	60,816	58,499
UK	57,214	58,951	62,066	65,600	71,001	74,695

In contrast to the expected positive demographic development of the Western European societies (Table 2), the Eastern European members of the European Union have different prospects. They will only peripherally profit from the expected immigration wave to the EU. Given the already accumulated experience, they will continue to be donors of human capital to the economically advanced, western part of the EU (Bélorgey et al. 2012: 15). The population projections lead to the conclusion that most East

European countries will face a substantial shrinking of their population due to emigration (United Nations 2014):

Table 1.3: Population development in selected Eastern European EU member states 1990–2060, thousands

Country	1990	2000	2010	2020	2040	2060
Bulgaria	8,821	8,001	7,389	6,827	5,611	4,573
Croatia	4,794	4,475	4,338	4,183	3,821	3,394
Hungary	10,385	10,224	10,015	9,799	9,213	8,678
Poland	38,150	38,351	38,199	38,158	35,840	32,305
Romania	23,372	22,388	21,861	21,226	19,056	16,427
Slovenia	2,004	1,990	2,054	2,099	2,060	1,967

The small migration inflow into the societies of Eastern Europe will come from economically underdeveloped societies. The newcomers will not improve the quality of the Eastern European host countries' labour force, but will probably influence it in a negative way. The quality of the labour force has already been affected and will continue to be affected in the same way by the massive emigration of people from the young, best-educated, ambitious and most entrepreneurial segments of the population. Therefore, the Eastern European EU member states are and will remain losers in net international migration (Lanzieri 2011: 18). In contrast to the situation in Western Europe, the key current and long-term issue in Eastern Europe is emigration, which does have some positive features and outcomes. The right to change one's place of residence in a country or from country to country is a basic human right. It is a valuable part of the freedoms fostering human initiative and creativity. In economic terms, if the current emigrants had stayed in their native Eastern European societies, unemployment would have become unbearable there, possibly resulting in social unrest. Eastern European emigrants send large amounts of remittances to their countries of origin, thus making possible the survival or better quality of life of their relatives. Although it is difficult to test this assumption, in economic theory it is widely assumed that emigration fosters increases in salaries and wages in the countries sending migrants. Some of the emigrants manage to collect advanced occupational experience (human capital), to accumulate financial capital, and to establish networks (social capital) when working abroad. Returning to their country of origin, the returnees possessing these assets have the potential to become successfully self-employed. At a minimum, they

might invest their accumulated financial capital, thus enhancing the international competitiveness of the national economy.

However, the realities of emigration are rather controversial, and necessitate reducing the expectations concerning the positive effects of emigration on the countries sending migrants. Once having invested time and energy in attaining occupational positions abroad, emigrants rarely make the decision to return. In addition to their attained occupational status, a major factor hindering their return is the socialization (or, potentially, the re-socialization) of children. Having been socialized abroad by attending schools and universities there, the children usually determine the decision of the parents to stay abroad forever or at least until retirement age. Over time, immigrants develop new social networks in the host country and lose the links to social networks in the country of origin. Even events like the recent economic crisis and related unemployment rarely motivate emigrants to return to the countries from which they came. The typical major reason for staying in the new home country in times of economic recession and unemployment is simple: the unemployment benefits, social benefits and child allowances in the affluent host countries of international migrants usually provide them with higher incomes than the regular salaries and wages in their poorer countries of origin. In addition, due to the regional and global characteristics of economic recessions, they affect both the countries sending migrants and those receiving them.

These factors and developments prove the politically motivated statements about the possible or desirable massive return of emigrants to their Eastern European countries of origin to be false. The brain-drain and the drain of the valuable labour force (“brawn-drain”) from the new Eastern European member states or from the new European Neighbourhood turn out to be irreversible. The effects are multidimensional. Whole regions in Eastern European societies are already depopulated or the trend towards depopulation is predominant. Regarding the loss of human capital, the situation is critical. Eastern European countries have already lost, or continue to lose, the human and social potentials of well-educated young people, which are very much needed for the stabilization and development of their societies. In the cases of some nations, the destabilizing effects concern the changes in the ethnic composition of societies marked by massive emigration. Their impacts on the stability of families, on family life, and on the socialization of the children remaining in the country of

origin are very well documented (Toth, Munteanu & Bleahu 2008; Sandu 2011).

The potential or real relevance and effects of the remittances the emigrants send to their countries of origin are a matter of intense discussions. Potentially, the remittances might be one of the key factors for the desirable fostering of the economic and social development of the migrants' countries of origin. From 2011 to 2013, Bulgarian emigrants sent remittances higher in volume than the foreign direct investments in the country (Budapest Business Journal 2013). These transfers could be a substantial source of productive investments, depending on local legislation, governmental measures and the absorption capacity of the national economy. However, the global experience concerning remittances is a source of many controversies in this respect (de Haas 2007; Gianetti, Federici & Raitano 2009; International Migration and Remittances 2013). In most cases, only a small portion of remittances is used for productive purposes. With variations from country to country, the major part of the remittances typically covers the reproduction and development of human capital: education and health care, housing, consumption and entertainment. All these ways of spending remittances invigorate national economies, as fresh money enters the economic cycle. However, the mechanism of fostering emigration in order to send/receive remittances tends to bring about and reproduce a vicious circle of sending more and more migrants to receive larger and larger amounts of remittances. Studies have established the fact that this vicious circle rarely strengthens the national potential for the development of the countries sending migrants. Most frequently, remittances tend to undermine the national potential for development due to the loss of very much needed human capital. Thus, remittance flows tend to reproduce the underdevelopment of the countries of origin of the migrants, because they tend to strengthen the economic and political dependence of the societies sending cross-border migrants (Vogiazides 2009: 12). Like many other assumptions and conclusions in the context of international migration, this invites careful testing on a case-by-case basis.

Population projections regularly include the variables of migration inflows and outflows. However, unlike the trends in fertility and mortality, the trends of immigration and emigration are rather difficult to project, although they are crucially important for population projections and for studies on the impacts of population change. The major reason for the problems with the forecasting of migration is the difficulty in the prognostication of economic and political fluctuations. This is a serious

scientific and practical challenge, because international migration has substantial impacts on the major societal subsystems of production, including services, the labour market, education, health care, the pension system, etc., in both the countries receiving migrants and those sending them. Therefore, the social policies needed for managing the migration flows should be based on the combination of population projections for scenarios of no immigration or emigration, modest immigration or emigration, intensive immigration or emigration, or with both intensive immigration and emigration. The policy scenarios can also vary depending on the intended or implemented intervention factor (no state intervention, modest state intervention, or intensive state intervention). In all these different cases, the key condition for the adequate design and successful implementation of efficient policy scenarios is the development and coherent use of conceptual backgrounds.

Conceptualizing international migration

Given the intensive challenges raised by cross-border migration (di Giovanni, Levchenko & Ortega 2014), the efforts to develop and apply policies for managing it also intensify. However, the design and use of policy scenarios are only rarely based on well-elaborated conceptual frameworks. Moreover, it is common knowledge that there is no coherent theory of international migration. There are only partial conceptual schemes, which have been developed and applied mostly in isolation from one another. These conceptual schemes rely on disciplinary traditions or on the visions of leading theoreticians. The related empirical studies stress specific actors, structural levels or components of migration flows. At the same time, it is common knowledge that reliable explanations of cross-border migratory processes cannot be achieved by using the conceptual resources of single scientific disciplines (Favell 2008). Satisfactory results cannot be achieved by focusing the analysis on a single structural level or on a single component of migration processes. The resolution of the task requires a differentiated synergetic theory that incorporates a variety of assumptions and perspectives. The desirable multi-dimensional theory should conceptually bridge structures and processes in the societies sending and receiving international migrants and include intermediary actors and processes in the explanations.

The efforts to develop comprehensive conceptual frameworks of the study and management of international migration may rely on some available “building blocks”, including the concepts of “push” and “pull”

factors of international migration. The comparative analyses of some other conceptual schemes (Massey et al. 2005; Castles, de Haas & Miller 2014: 25f.) might also serve as valuable orientation. The following analysis aims at achieving new conceptual syntheses.

The *neoclassical economic theory* is most often applied in studies of the causes, processes and effects of international migration. The core of the theory seems to be scientifically sound. The level of salaries and wages and the conditions of employment undoubtedly vary from country to country. The potential migrants from the less affluent societies are motivated to take risks and to cover the costs of their migration to societies marked by better working conditions and by a generally better quality of life. If many so-motivated individuals decide to migrate, then the supply of labour in the societies of origin of the migrants decreases. The supply of labour in the host countries increases. Thus, the individual decisions to move to work abroad bring about a new economic situation in the domestic and international labour markets. The balance of supply and demand of labour can be restored by changes in the local levels of salaries and wages. According to the theory, they tend to increase in the countries of origin of the international migrants and decline in the host countries. The aggregated macro-economic effect comes about as an unintended outcome of the decisions of individuals to invest effort, time and money in order to achieve better status by joining the flows of international migration (Borjas 1989).

As attractive as it might seem, the neoclassical economic theory of international migration has limited explanatory power, because it is based on unrealistic assumptions. These include an idealized liberal regime of border crossing and an idealized liberal regime of unregulated labour markets in the countries hosting international migrants. The impressive fence separating the liberal American national labour market from the millions of Latin Americans willing to move from Mexico to the United States is a vivid falsification of the assumption about unrestricted border crossing. The Schengen Agreement in the EU defines strict conditions for the entrance to the European Union by non-EU citizens. As to the assumed liberal regime of access to positions in the labour markets, the conditions in the EU and worldwide largely deviate from the ideal construction of the neoclassical economic theory. National laws and international agreements tightly regulate national labour markets. The regulations control access to the labour markets and the related issues of wages, taxation, welfare benefits, etc. Some regulations might attract immigrants, or at least

segments of the migrant flows. In other cases, the regulations are intended to discourage international migrants.

Given the advancements of the global trend of individualization, it is refreshing to observe the still debated *new economics of labour migration* (Abreu 2012). This theory relies on the assumption that the decision for international migration is not always taken solely by rationally calculating individuals. The decision might be made collectively. The collective decision to send members of the family, household or community to work abroad could follow various considerations. In some cases, the motivation predominantly refers to the need to increase the aggregated income of the collective. This motivation is very common in conditions of a collective struggling for survival. Under conditions allowing relative affluence, the decision to send members of the collective to work abroad might refer to rather different considerations. The leading one could be the desire to diversify the sources of income of the collective as insurance against the decline or evaporation of other sources of income.

This interpretation of international migration came about as a “grounded theory” resulting from empirical research on rural communities. Like many other “grounded theories”, this one has explanatory power in specific local contexts. However, neither its guiding assumption nor the implications of the explanatory model are generalizable as theories. Due to ongoing global individualization, the collective patterns of social organization and decision-making are increasingly being replaced by ever more differentiated and broader spaces for the autonomous orientations, decisions and actions of individuals. Moreover, due to the increase in the educational level, a rapid increase in the capacities of human individuals to competently make autonomous decisions and take actions is observed (Genov 2012: 10f.). In countries where the market economy and democratic politics predominate, the new economics of migration can hardly find application as an explanatory model, because its basic assumptions do not correspond to realities. Nevertheless, some ideas of the new economics of migration might become building blocks of the emerging comprehensive theory of international migration. This only peripherally applies to decisions of households, clans or rural communities. The potentially useful ideas concern the increasingly relevant international labour migration organized by collective actors, such as firms in the construction industry, or in cases of outsourcing of industrial enterprises (Yomogida & Zhao 2010).