Foreword

Welcome among the readers of SEEMIG Newsletter, the first one from a series of five over the project's lifetime. In this issue you will find an overview of the SEEMIG project itself written by the Lead Partner. You can also have a close insight into one of the most lively debates we had on our first conference. You will learn some basic facts about migration in the region and find out what the Municipality of Sfântu Gheorge in Romania is doing in the SEEMIG project.

The English newsletters will always be followed by editions in national languages of the partners. To subscribe to the newsletter or share your comments and ideas, visit our website **www.seemig.eu** or write to **info@seemig.eu**.

Demographic Research Institute Team
Hungary

Project overview

What is SEEMIG?

Overall SEEMIG aims to provide reliable data on migratory, labour market and demographic processes in South-East Europe. The main concern of SEEMIG is that there is a dramatic need to improve migration and related statistics in order to assess the inter-related migratory, demographic, human capital and labour market processes better. Therefore the main objectives of SEEMIG are to collect existing data and to enhance data production concerning migration-related processes, in order to base policy and strategy recommendations on improved evidence. For this purpose we the project teams have developed a complex strategy.

Why do we have this project?

Migration is an issue with increasing importance in the 21st century. This is no news, but maybe the general public is not aware of how many other social processes are also affected by migration. Declining and/or low fertility in most European countries is a draw for inward migration, while the end of large scale fertility differentials will also end the migration push from traditionally migrant-sending countries in the long run.

At the same time, we are facing labour market problems, structural changes in the economy, long term loss of jobs and long term tensions in the labour markets which can be further complicated by migration. The negative attitude that several European societies have about migrants is certainly due to an extreme sense of social competition in a changing social environment.

South-East Europe is an area of particular interest. Not only because this has been a region perceived as problematic, but also because it shows largely diverging developmental patterns during the last 60 years and it faces varying implications.

In terms of migration and economic wealth there are countries always about the average wealth in the world which followed the overall European patterns and became an immigrant country out of an emigrant status (among others Italy, Hungary, Austria). There are countries which followed the exact opposite trend and they became an emigrant country (Moldova and Ukraine) parallel to their decline of relative wealth or countries which remained emigrant and relatively poor countries throughout the period (Albania, Romania).

Why are we having these differences? Why are we having an increasing dependence on remittances in many post-communist countries of South-East Europe? What are the long term regional, national and local implications? And how can we follow and measure these processes and how can we influence them on the basis of better evidence? Burning questions and SEEMIG is one attempt to help relevant political communities to find answers which help most of the effected social groups.

Attila Melegh – project manager
Béla Soltész – deputy project manager for project partnership
SEEMIG Management Team
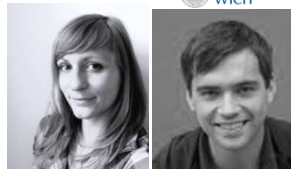*Hungary*

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HUNGARIAN CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

THE HUNGARIAN CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE IS THE LEAD PARTNER OF THE PROJECT, COORDINATING THE ACTIVITIES OF 27 PARTNERS FROM 10 COUNTRIES.

SOUTH EAST EUROPE
Jointly for our common future

SEEMIG

Programme co-funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION

TRANSNATIONAL ACTIONS TOWARDS EVIDENCE BASED STRATEGIES

'THE CONCEPTUAL PAPER WILL IDENTIFY DEFINITIONS AND CATEGORIZATIONS AS A COMMON BASIS FOR SEEMIG.'

What are we doing in SEEMIG?

- We create a conceptual approach for the analysis and the measurement of longer term migratory, demographic, labour market and human capital processes.
- We create historical country profiles to see what tendencies have existed, what mechanism can be detected and what future we can extrapolate.
- We review existing data systems and create a more coherent, transnational database for migration and migration related statistics in South-East Europe.
- We collect new types of data on emigration in two countries based on innovative pilot surveys.
- We review population projections and make new ones for two countries, in order to provide data on how South-East Europe's population will be affected by migratory processes.
- We perform foresight exercises to provide strategies on local, national and regional levels.
- We help local, regional and national authorities and other stakeholders to conceptualize and implement strategies concerning migration management and data collection.

Current affairs of SEEMIG

universität wien

The University of Vienna

 - Department of Geography and Regional Research (UNIVIE) is leader of the conceptual work package of the project which aims to provide a common theoretical and analytical framework and understanding of migration, labour market und human capital patterns and processes in general and especially in the SEE region. This activity will guarantee a sound basis as well as serve as continuing guidance for

the further activities of SEEMIG. As such, activities in this work package are already well under way.

Conceptual background

UNIVIE is currently elaborating a conceptual paper identifying definitions and categorizations as a common basis for all further SEEMIG activities. Furthermore, this study will highlight conceptual and theoretical considerations regarding linkages between migration, human capital and labour market and macro analytical effects of migration such as development and remittances.

Data requirement

As a second output, a data requirement paper is also currently under preparation – it will be dedicated to challenges of measuring the aforementioned processes, but also of identifying relevant indicators. Both outputs will be finished by early 2013.

Historical analysis

The third output will be launched in December 2012: the 'dynamic historical analysis of migratory processes' will compile country reports. Those reports will illustrate developments regarding migration, human capital and labour market in the participating countries in a historic perspective, including also an overview on current development as well as national policies and perspectives. The unified analysis will be finished in late 2013.

Apart from this, UNIVIE coordinates the multi-disciplinary panel of experts which will accompany SEEMIG as a sounding board during the whole project's lifetime - providing external expertise and securing the appropriateness and relevance of common activities.
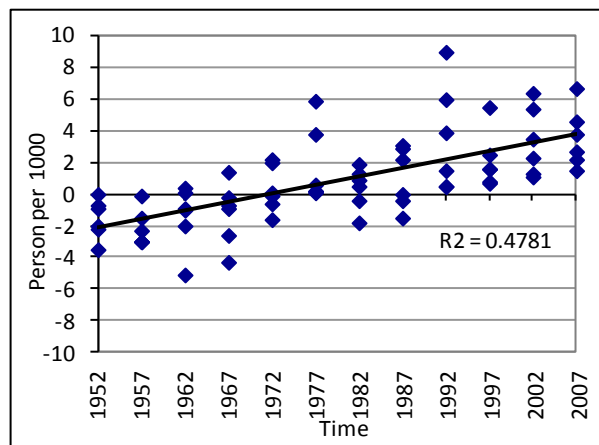
University of Vienna Team
Austria

More about UNIVIE

The Department of Geography and Regional Research stands for interdisciplinary research. The thematic focuses of the working group for applied geography, spatial planning and research are anchored in the following areas: spatial research and spatial planning, urban research, economic geography and demography, migration and integration.
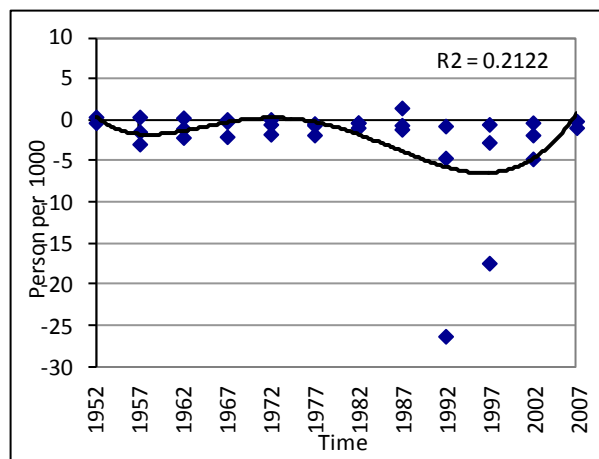
The spatial perspective concentrates on the national and European context, with a focus on Central and South Eastern Europe. The UNIVIE team mainly contributing to SEEMIG currently consists of four persons: Professor Heinz Fassmann, Kathrin Gruber, Alois Humer, and Elisabeth Musil.
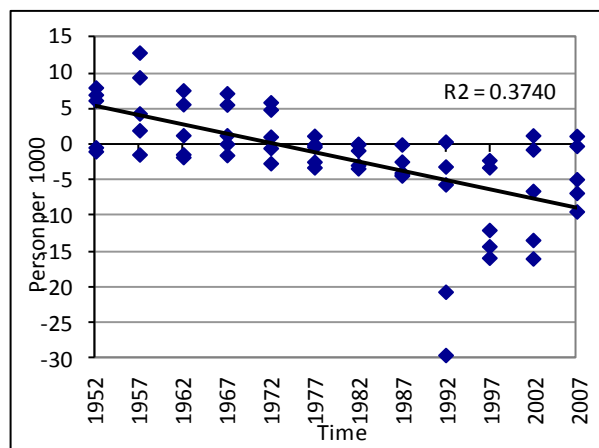
http://raumforschung.univie.ac.at/

Data: Developmental patterns in South Eastern Europe 1950-2010

Type 1: Net migration over time in countries becoming immigrant countries. All datapoints in type 1. five-year intervals marked by midpoints, 1950-2010 Source: WPP, 2010 revision

Countries in this type had a negative migration rate in the 1950s which became positive parallel to the process we can observe when looking at the whole continent. This is a gradual and linear development pattern. Type one contains South and Central European countries outside the Balkans and the post-Soviet countries: Italy, Greece, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary. Concerning the relative global position, these countries have been always above the world average since the 1960s in terms of GDP per capita.

Type 2: Net migration over time in countries remaining emigrant countries, All datapoints in type 2, five-year intervals marked by midpoints, 1950-2010 Source: WPP, 2010 revision.

During the 1950s and early 1960s these countries, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and Turkey were rather similar to that of the countries starting a transition toward immigration, but already in the very beginning some of the countries were producing relatively large scale emigration. This is a non linear development pattern as it has got cycles. Later, during the late 1960s and early 1970s the state socialist countries, like Romania and Bulgaria seemed to follow the transition like in type 1, but they could not 'succeed'. These countries have occupied a different global position as they never (or just for a shorter period) got above the world average level in terms of GDP per capita.

Type 3: Net migration over time in countries becoming emigrant countries, All datapoints in type 3, five-year intervals marked by midpoints, 1950-2010 Source: WPP, 2010 revision

Countries in the South Western segments of the previous Soviet Union (Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan) produce a very different linear developmental pattern. In the 1950s and early 1960s, some of these countries were immigrant countries and they became emigrant countries after the great shock of the collapse of state socialism. These countries also experienced a great decline in their relative position to world average GDP per capita, some of them fell from 120% to less than 50%.

Attila Melegh

Net migration

Net international migration* is defined as a difference between immigration and emigration. In the absence of data on immigration and/or emigration, it may be estimated as a difference between total population change and the natural increase:

Net migration = P(t+1) − P(t) − Natural increase,

where natural increase is the difference between live births and deaths. The resulting estimate is composed of the actual net migration and the error of population and natural change measurement.

Migrant (short-term)

'A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least three months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends or relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage.'

OECD, 2012

Migrant (long-term)

'A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure, the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival, the person will be a long-term migrant.'

OECD, 2012

Debate

Doable or impossible: approaches to emigrant registration

Can we collect accurate data on emigration at national and cross-national level? It turned out to be a million dollars question during the conference on 'Migration, Demography and Labour Markets: Long term Processes and Linkages' as the main debate was focused on the appropriate approaches to data-collection on emigration. The variety of stakeholders, i.e. local authorities, representatives of civil society, experts of statistical institutes contributed to pour into the debate different point of views and opinions based on research, working experience and first-hand expertise related to this issue.

Local authorities maintained that the main problem on emigrants' data-collection has to do with the lack of convergence among the systems used in different countries. This makes data harmonization and comparison difficult. To that struggle adds the employment of various sources to collect data, which harms the reliability of the latter. Another problem raised by local authorities was the lack of funds to conduct targeted data-collection on emigration as this is not an integrated element in the periodical data-collection mechanisms. However, the prevailing opinion among local authorities was that a legal framework should be enforced to make emigrants responsive to registration and participative in other data-collection activities.

The view of local authorities was challenged by civil society representatives, who maintained that more should be done on motivating emigrants to get registered. The 'stick' of law enforcement should be combined with the 'carrot' of offered services. By receiving needed additional services, emigrants may be more motivated to interact with local authorities at all levels on data-collection. For civil society, emigrants have to get convinced that it is worth disclosing private information in exchange of services received.

However, the most lively debate went on between the academics. Prof. Fassmann of the University of Vienna argued that the statistical registration, regardless its limitations is the necessary prerequisite to address the issue of international migration.

According to Prof. Fassmann the register-based approach is '…different from census as it does not provide a snapshot of the population (every 10 years) but a continuous updating of the residence population based on mandatory administrative procedures such as registration of: resident population; entries/exit at the border; labour and residence permits.' This offers the opportunity of reliable, accurate and up to date information.

Such statement was challenged by Prof. Endre Sik of Eötvös Lóránd University, Budapest who maintained that the most adequate approach to tackle this problem is to '…develop new sources of information using innovative survey and modelling techniques such as harmonized longitudinal panel surveys, survey based natural experiments, etc.' These steps, explained Prof. Sik have to be combined with in-depth but non-representative surveys of special migrant groups and processes (using innovative sampling and interview techniques) as well as non-survey based methods (such as non-participant observation) as the basis of estimation.

Both academics agreed however, on the diagnosis, considering the situation of emigration's data-collection as problematic and underlining the need of urgent interventions at the local, national and transnational level for improving the situation. For an afternoon long debate this agreement was a good conclusion but the main question remains: which would be the best approach to emigrants' data collection? SEEMIG staff hopes to have more answers as the project evolves.

Gert Guri
University of Trento, Italy

WE HAVE TO 'DEVELOP NEW SOURCES OF INFORMATION USING INNOVATIVE SURVEY AND MODELLING TECHNIQUES SUCH AS HARMONIZED LONGITUDINAL PANEL SURVEYS'

'MORE SHOULD BE DONE ON MOTIVATING EMIGRANTS TO GET REGISTERED. THE 'STICK' OF LAW ENFORCEMENT SHOULD BE COMBINED WITH THE 'CARROT' OF OFFERED SERVICES.'

Professor Heinz Fassmann has been teaching and researching at the University of Vienna since 1994. He is a professor for Applied Geography, Spatial Research and Spatial Planning at the Department of Geography and Spatial Research, Vice-Rector at the University of Vienna, furthermore managing director of the Department of Urban and Spatial Research and chairman of the Committee of Migration and Integration at the Austrian Academy of Sciences and chairman of the National Expert Council for Integration.

Professor Endre Sik (DSc) is a lecturer in Sociology at the Department of Minority Studies at the Social Sciences Faculty of the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest and project manager at TÁRKI. His major research fields are migration, informal economy, network capital and discrimination.

What can local governments do?

Although many research projects and studies focused on the massive out-migration the country has been facing for decades, Romanian authorities still have not developed a comprehensive strategy which would deal with the demographic, socio-economic and cultural issues that arose. Moreover, Romanian national authorities forecast a growing immigration flow following the momentum when the country joined the European Union in 2007, but no mid-term or long-term strategies were developed to prepare national, regional or local authorities to deal with new challenges. Local authorities have no official responsibilities regarding migration issues, but at the same time they already struggle with labour force migration, integration of immigrants and a whole set of social problems closely linked to migration. SEEMIG project partner Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe is more or less in the above described situation. It is located in the very centre of Romania, in the economically underdeveloped region of Szeklerland, and it is often described as a satellite town of Brasov, one of the country's largest and most developed cities situated only 35 km away.

According to data offered by the latest census, in the past 10 years the community of approximately 61.000 have lost about 10% of its inhabitants, of which only a part can be explained by the natural demographic processes, the rest of the loss might be put on internal and international migration's account. In the lack of the necessary capacities there is unfortunately no way to tell the share of international outmigration in this loss. In the late 80s and in the first decade of the post-communist era this region faced one of the highest out-migration rates in the co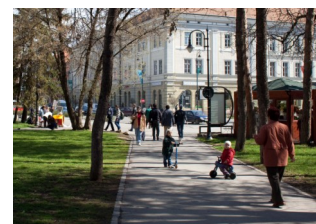untry, but by now the flow has slowed down well below the national medium level. In addition, the long lasting Romanian trend of the rural-urban migration started to be replaced by a reverse trend from cities to towns, villages and suburbs, this is an ongoing process in the area of Sfântu Gheorghe, too. Again: to what extent this process has affected our town we cannot tell. Being a community of moderate emigration, meanwhile still not being a target for immigrants, the Municipality tries to focus on returnees from all around the world. In the past couple of years the local authority attached more and more importance to these issues alongside the continuous development of the economic, social and cultural infrastructure. There have been elaborated and partly implemented ideas and plans to welcome returnees and also to integrate immigrants. These attempts will be part of a future, more comprehensive strategy which needs to be put together as soon as possible. The municipality is very confident that the benefits of the SEEMIG project will show up in the strategy making, planning and policy-making process in the following period. By the end of the project the local authority of Sfântu Gheorghe aims to be prepared to use new data, tools and knowledge for a better understanding of the needs to be met regarding migration. Also, it will rely on ideas, good practices and information disseminated throughout the implementation of the project. SEEMIG is a great opportunity for a wide range of local and regional authorities from all over South East Europe to gain and to share knowledge regarding migration, with the close assistance of prestigious institutions and experts.

Gergely Buja
Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe
Romania

www.sfantugheorgheinfo.ro

'IN THE PAST 10 YEARS THE COMMUNITY OF SFÂNTU GHEORGHE HAVE LOST ABOUT 10% OF ITS INHABITANTS.'

'BY THE END OF THE PROJECT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AIMS TO BE PREPARED TO USE NEW DATA, TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS TO BE MET REGARDING MIGRATION.'

More local partners

Besides the Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe, five other local administrative bodies are part of the SEEMIG Partnership:

District administration of Montana, Bulgaria
Municipality of Pécs, Hungary
Harghita County Council, Romania
Municipality of Kanjiža, Serbia
Town council Turčianske Teplice, Slovakia

TRANSNATIONAL ACTIONS TOWARDS EVIDENCE BASED STRATEGIES

Event highlights - Launching Conference in Bratislava

Seventy-five professionals and invited experts took part in the Launching Conference of SEEMIG. The gathering entitled 'Migration, demography and labour markets: Long term processes and linkages' was held in Bratislava, 19-20 September 2012. The conference was opened by Mr. Tibor Papp, Director of Infostat, host organisation of the conference. After the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mr. Branislav Bleha greeted conference participants, the welcoming session concluded with Mr. Attila Melegh's introduction of the project. Representative of the Lead

Partner highlighted that SEEMIG is not only important for the participating countries but also for the entire EU. The first day's programme focused on central themes of the project with experienced scholars presenting related research findings from the fields of demography, migration, labour market and human capital. Recurring theme of the presentations was whether or not a convergence in the main demographic trends, such as fertility, mean age at birth, number of marriages etc. can be detected in Europe and whether it is convergence or divergence that we can expect for the future. Answers given to these questions varied depending on the specific phenomena studied, the approach applied and also the methodology used. The second session was devoted to trends and developments in migration. Attila Melegh pre-

sented the historical trends of migration and economic wealth as linked to each other in SEE countries (see Data section on page 3), then Irina Molodikova provided us with an overview of the key migratory trends in the post Soviet Union. In his carefully designed study József Böröcz demonstrated how most of the post- socialist countries of the former Soviet bloc have recently become highly dependent on migrant remittances. The third session of the Conference dealt with methodological problems, where mainly complexities concerning issues related to definitions and registration of migrants in the European countries were discussed. Presentations in this bloc highlighted notable discrepancies in the administrative as well as other statistical data collection systems. Presentations provoked lively debates on the possible ways

of improving data collection in the field (see the Debate section on page 4). The final session of the conference focused on some specific aspects of migration. Ágnes Hárs for example argued that the recent increase of migration in Hungary has still not produced a significant share of emigration in a regional comparison. In the last presentation of the day Robert Nadler introduced the Re-Turn project, a programme that aims at promoting return migration in the Central European region. The conference received extensive media coverage in the Bratislava TV. For slides of the presentations, visit the SEEMIG website.
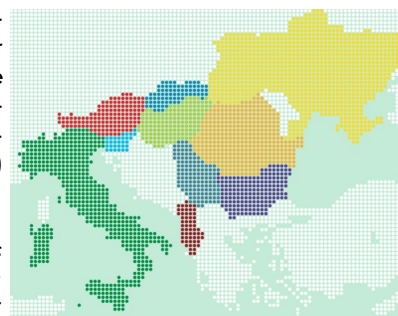
Infostat Team
Slovakia

SEEMIG is a strategic project aiming to better understand and address longer term migratory, human capital and demographic processes of South-East Europe, as well as their effects on labour markets, national and regional economies. SEEMIG relies on a wide network of partners. Research institutes, universities, statistical offices and local government bodies from eight countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia) and observers from further three countries (Albania, Georgia, Ukraine) are involved.

The project is funded under the third call of the South East Europe Programme.

The South East Europe Programme aims to develop transnational partnerships on matters of strategic importance, in order to improve the territorial, economic and social integration process and to contribute to cohesion, stability and competitiveness of the region. In addition, the SEE Transnational Cooperation Programme actively seeks the full participation of non-Member States in the programme area benefitting from the external Pre-Accession Assistance and the European Neighbourhood Policy funding. The programme area is located at the South Eastern edge of the Union, where several accession candidate countries and potential candidate countries as well as third countries engaged in the EU partnership framework are concentrated, thus going far beyond the external borders of the EU.

www.southeast-europe.net

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