

Why Lithuanians Migrate to the UK, Germany and Norway?

V. Kumpikaitė Valiūnienė, M. Lukauskas, and E. Agoh

Abstract—This paper presents Lithuanians' emigration reasons evaluating economic and noneconomic push-pull factors in the main destination countries in Europe. 449 respondents from the UK, 365 from Norway and 104 from Germany filled questionnaires online. A study was conducted in fall of 2015. Too low wages (economic) and personal life conditions (noneconomic) in Lithuania were highlighted as the most important push factors and higher incomes (economic) and relatives living in those countries (noneconomic) were depicted in all analysed countries.

Index Terms—Lithuania, international migration, migration reasons, push-pull factors.

I. INTRODUCTION

People use to leave their homes in search of better life in their homeland and abroad [1]. However, migration is more popular in some countries in comparison with others.

According to Streeten, [2] small and big countries differently respond to changing economic conditions. There are many works studying different groups of countries [3]-[6]. Studies have shown that small countries are usually less flexible in absorbing shocks and this could influence migration. One of such countries is Lithuania – the European Union (EU) country with less than 3 million residents. The case of this country is presented in this article.

The purpose of this paper is to present the main emigration reasons of Lithuanians' leaving to the three most popular destination countries in the EU: the UK, Norway, and Germany.

Scientific literature analysis, statistical data analysis, and quantitative study were developed to reach the aim of this article.

This paper is divided into the following parts. Migration flows in the EU is analysed firstly. Then Lithuania and its phenomena of emigration are presented. Research model, instrument, and survey's results are described. Finally, conclusion part is conducted.

II. MIGRATION SITUATION IN EUROPE

A. Migration Flows in the EU

Migration flows in European countries differ. Some countries face big inflows of foreigners and others suffer from loss of their citizens. Statistical data of net migration per 1000 in the European Union countries is presented in Figure 1.

In accordance with those data, we could see that Luxemburg takes a leading position in terms of migration. The second place is taken by Cyprus followed by Austria, Sweden, and Germany in 2014. Refugees' crises, which expanded in Europe in 2015 made an influence on the increase of migration countries in the biggest and the most developed EU countries. However, almost a half of the EU members have negative net migration flows. It means that they have more leavers than comers into the country. Such situation has a negative impact on the welfare of the state, in consideration to the decreasing birth rates, demographic changes, aging of the population, decrease of labour force, etc. Most of the new EU Members, including Lithuania, deal with the process of emigration. Studies show that migration happens due to economic reasons, in transition or less economic developed countries [8]-[12].

The study of socio-economic factors on international migration in rich and poor EU countries using panel data analysis highlighted some differences [11]. Mihi Ramirez, [11] divided the EU countries into rich and poor based on their median GDP per capita value as splitting criterion (GDP USD and GDP PPP-adjusted).

TABLE I: CONNECTIONS AMONG ECONOMIC FACTORS AND MIGRATION FLOWS IN THE EU COUNTRIES

Factors	Poor countries	Rich countries
Earnings	Positive	Negative
Long-term unemployment	Negative	Negative
Economic freedom	Positive	Positive
Inequality	Negative	Positive
Foreign direct invest	Negative	Negative
Poverty line	Positive	Negative

In majority cases of Mihi Ramirez's study, [11] the rich countries have positive migration flows with exception to Spain and Ireland while poor countries have negative migration with an exception to Malta, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia. In addition, it should be mentioned that the new EU members, which joined the EU in 2004 and later are in the list of poor countries. However, two old EU members are also in the list of poor countries. Those countries are Greece and Portugal and they are facing economic problems. Results revealed the positive and

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negative impact of depicted economic factors on migration flows in rich and poor countries of the EU (see Table I).

B. Migration situation in Lithuania

As Fig. 1 shows Lithuania took one of the leader's position in emigration among the EU members in 2014. It should be mentioned that, Lithuania faced emigration from 1990, when it got Independence from the Soviet Union. Its migration flows from 2000 are presented in Fig. 2. It is seen that emigration is much bigger than immigration in Lithuania

during the presented period. Emigration rates increased after Lithuania joined the EU on the 1st of May of 2004. The other increased wave of emigrants could be fixed when economic crises started in Lithuania in 2009. In addition, it should be taken into account that Lithuania is one of the smallest of the EU countries with a population of 2.9 million in 2016. Its population decreased almost by 1 million since 1990.

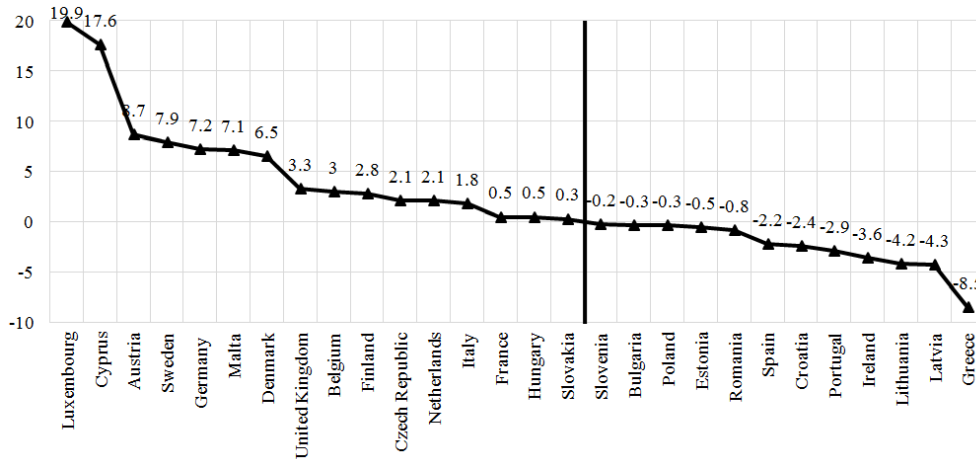


Fig. 1. Net migration in the EU in 2014 (persons per 1000 citizen) [7].

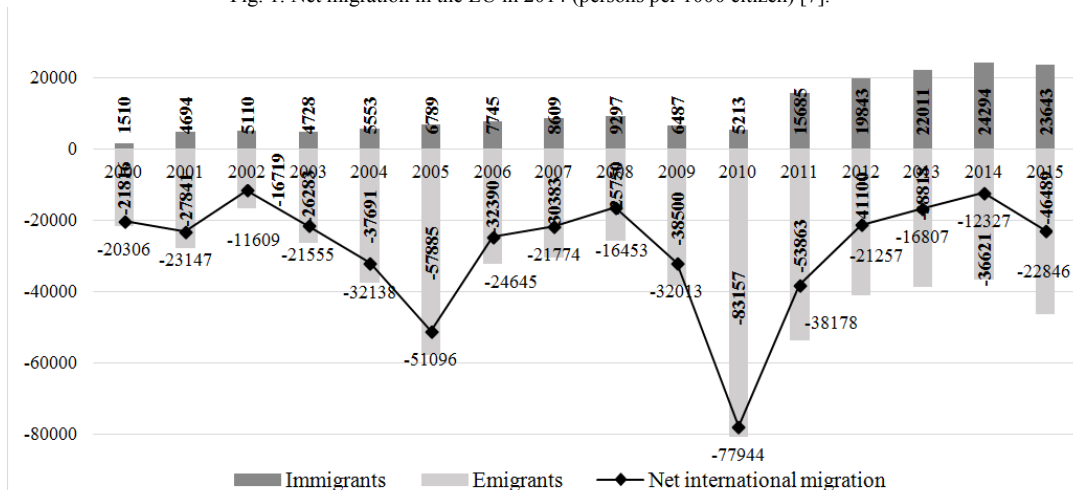


Fig. 2. Lithuanian migration flows in 2000-2014, number of persons [13].

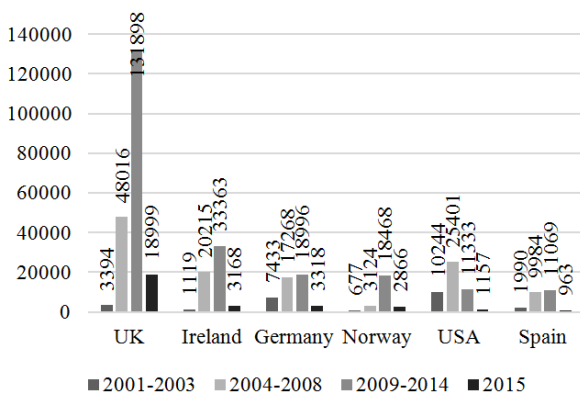


Fig. 3. The main six destination countries of Lithuanian emigrants [14].

Usually Lithuanians prefer to migrate to developed European countries and to the USA. The main six destination countries of migration for Lithuanians during 2001-2015 are presented in figure 3. The USA was the most attractive before 2004, when Lithuania joined the EU. As Lithuania becomes a

member of the EU and Schengen zone, its citizens can easily travel and work within majority of European countries not requiring any visas or permissions. Therefore, popularity of the USA for migration decreased.

However, Lithuanians requirement visas traveling to Commonwealth of Independent States. According to statistical data (see Fig. 3), the biggest number of Lithuanians moved to the UK. It is counted that 147.1 thousand residents migrated to the UK during 2004-2015 [13]. In addition, Norway (not the EU member) started to be attractive after economic crises.

III. STUDY ON LITHUANIANS' MIGRATION REASONS

A. Theoretical Background

Research shows that migration mostly happens due to economic reasons, in transition or less economic developed

countries [11]. 10 Therefore, this increase migrant social networks in sending countries and migration's flows [15]. Seeing situation that Lithuanians emigrate already more than 25 years and take leading positions among European countries, it rises the questions: "Why?" "What are the reasons for migration?" The majority of studies were based on statistical data analysis. For example, a study based on regression analysis of economic statistical data [7] highlighted that the unemployment rate, Gini coefficient and Tax Freedom Day all have a significant impact on the rate of emigration in Lithuania. However, it is still the lack of quantitative studies, evaluating personal reasons of migration of Lithuanians'.

PUSH FACTORS	PULL FACTORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too low wages in Lithuania • Wage differences and income inequality • Low Lithuania's economic development • Price politics • I was unemployed • Unemployment level • Not enough new work places • Taxes system and the burden of it • Noneconomic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal life conditions • Study and education system • Not enough cultural centres, museums • Social conditions • The level of health care • Environmental conditions • Family reasons • Political corruption in Lithuania • Intolerance of personal attitudes, discrimination • Intention to spread your culture and religion • Wish for changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better opportunities to get a job • Lower costs of living • Higher incomes • Lower taxes • Noneconomic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • A large number of Lithuanians in this country • Relatives living in this country • Possibility to self development • The distance from the homeland • Political stability • More attractive weather • Better conditions of health care • Higher tolerance • This country's prestige • Higher possibility for self-realisation

Fig. 4. Push and Pull factors used in the study.

The push and pull theory is the most popular and used for explanations of migration reasons [16]. Pull factors are those factors that attract individuals to a destination country or region [17]. Therefore, personal reasons based on push and pull factors were taken for this study.

Based on analysed scientific literature economic and noneconomic factors were highlighted [18]. These factors are presented in Fig. 4.

B. Description of Study

Based on push-pull theory and the most popular destination countries for Lithuanian emigrants, research model is presented in Fig. 5

Respondents could select several matching factors. Percent of positive answers were calculated for every country. Cross tabulation analysis among factors and countries were used for this study. The study was conducted in Fall of 2015. Emigrants from Lithuania in three countries are presented in this case. 449 emigrants (81 percent females) from the UK, 365 Lithuanians (75.3 percent females) from Norway diaspora and 104 (84.3 percent females) from Germany participated in the study. It was planned to compare all five

main destinations in Europe. However, a number of responses from Ireland and Spain were small. Therefore this data was not included for analysis.

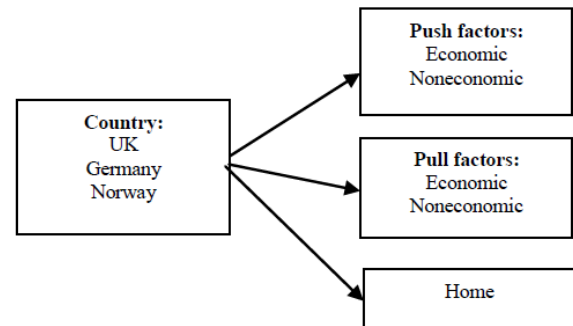


Fig. 5. Research model

C. Results of the Study

TABLE II: RESPONDENTS BY THEIR PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

	United Kingdom	Norway	Germany
Army	0.3%	0.6%	0.7%
Manager	4.8%	7.0%	5.4%
Specialist	15.3%	25.2%	22.8%
Technicians and younger specialist	6.3%	6.7%	8.1%
Office employees	7.8%	5.5%	4.7%
Services' employee and sellers	25.1%	22.1%	21.5%
Qualified specialists of agriculture	0.8%	0.6%	0.7%
Qualified workers and masters	3.8%	7.6%	6.0%
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	2.0%	3.6%	1.3%
Unskilled workers	5.8%	5.8%	6.7%
Self-employed	1.3%	1.5%	0.7%
Studied	12.1%	6.7%	10.7%
Unemployed	4.2%	1.5%	1.0%

Analysing emigrants according to their previous occupation, one-fourth of them were specialists and moved to Norway and Germany (see Table II).

TABLE III: EVALUATION OF PUSH-PULL FACTORS FOR LITHUANIAN EMIGRANTS IN THE UK, NORWAY AND GERMANY

	United Kingdom	Norway	Germany
Economic push factors			
Too low wages in Lithuania	61.5%	63.8%	63.3%
Wage differences and income inequality	37.4%	38.4%	39.2%
Low level of Lithuania's economic development	28.4%	22.3%	14.2%
Price politics of products	33.6%	24.4%	35.5%
I was unemployed	7.8%	9.0%	7.8%
Unemployment level, too low employment opportunities	23.4%	18.6%	25.9%
Not enough new work places	14.0%	11.0%	18.7%
Tax system and the burden of it	24.1%	21.4%	20.5%

Noneconomic push factors			
Personal life conditions	39.0%	37.8%	37.3%
Study and education system	24.9%	6.6%	14.5%
Not enough cultural centres, museums	2.9%	1.1%	3.6%
Social conditions	14.0%	15.6%	25.3%
The level of health care	4.0%	4.4%	13.3%
Environmental conditions	3.3%	9.0%	8.4%
Family reasons	17.8%	30.4%	25.3%
Political corruption in Lithuania	22.7%	21.9%	19.3%
Intolerance of personal attitudes, discrimination	6.7%	3.8%	4.8%
Intention to spread your culture and religion	1.6%	.8%	.6%
Economic pull factors			
Better opportunities to get a job	42.3%	27.9%	39.8%
Lower costs of living	14.7%	1.9%	15.7%
Higher income	47.9%	68.2%	53.6%
Lower taxes	7.6%	1.6%	4.2%
Noneconomic pull factors			
Language	38.3%	5.2%	22.9%
A large number of Lithuanians in this country	5.3%	3.6%	1.2%
Relatives living in this country	39.6%	47.7%	43.4%
The distance from the homeland	7.8%	6.3%	6.0%
Possibility of self-development	37.6%	27.4%	34.9%
Political stability	11.4%	17.5%	22.9%
More attractive weather	2.7%	3.8%	9.6%
Better conditions of health care	5.8%	7.7%	25.9%
Higher tolerance	24.5%	25.5%	28.9%
This country's prestige	7.3%	13.7%	15.7%
Higher possibility for self-realisation	31.6%	25.2%	35.5%

Those countries were more attractive for qualified workers and masters. However, the UK was the most attractive for services' employee and sellers (it is on the second place in Norway and Germany) and students. Almost the same percent of unskilled workers (around 6 percent) selected all destination countries. In addition, the UK was more attractive for unemployed persons.

We could see differences among respondents keeping differently their homes homeland and destination country. 73.9 percent of emigrants from the UK, 71.1 percent of emigrants from Germany and 'just' 56.4 percent emigrants from Norway keep their destination country as their home country. Therefore, we see that Lithuanian diaspora in Norway is less connected with that country. It could be seen for two reasons: 1) emigration to Norway started and increased later, mostly after the economic crisis and emigrants live shorter there; 2) emigration reasons are quite different in Norway than in the UK, and Germany.

In addition, with previous question, respondents were asked for how long they spend time abroad without returning to Lithuania. It could be highlighted that; the period is shorter in Norway in comparison with other countries. Fifteen (15)

percent of respondents spend up to 3 months, and even 33.6 percent 4-6 months without returning. At the same time, around 20 percent spend more than 12 months in Norway without returning to Lithuania. Taking into account the UK and Germany, around 40 percent of emigrants spend more than 1 year not returning to Lithuania.

Table 3 presents evaluations of push-pull factors. Respondents from all countries selected too low wages in Lithuania and wage differences and income inequality as the most important economic push factors and personal life conditions as noneconomic push factor. However, one-third of respondents from the UK, and Germany highlighted price politics of products as the economic push factor. At the same time, just 24.4 percent of emigrants living in Norway told about that factor's importance. It could be understandable, as price level is high in Norway. People who were unsatisfied with social conditions of Lithuania preferred Germany for moving in comparison with other two analysed countries. In addition, more unhappy citizens of Lithuania because of its level of health care selected Germany. It corresponds with similar pull factor. Germany was selected because of its better conditions of health care almost by 26 percent of respondents. Weather that is more attractive, it was also more important selecting Germany in comparison with Norway and the UK. However, it was important for less than 10 percent of respondents.

Higher income was the most important pull factor for respondents from all countries. However, it was important for more than two-third of Norwegian respondents and about a half of emigrants in the UK and Germany.

Lower costs of living were important for 15 percent of respondents, who selected for living the UK and Germany. This factor had the second lowest evaluation for Norwegian respondents (less than 2 percent). Lower taxes was the reason to emigrate to Norway just for 1.6 percent, to Germany for 4.2 percent and to the UK for 7.6 percent of respondents. Language also was not important reason for Norwegian emigrants. However, it was important for more than one-third who selected the UK and for almost one-fourth, who selected Germany.

Lithuanian Diasporas in destination countries was not an important factor. It was the most important for emigrating to the UK and the least important for emigration to Germany. Those results correspond with the size of Lithuanian Diasporas in those countries. It could be mentioned also, that Germany was selected for its prestige by almost 16 percent and political stability by 22 percent of respondents. Those factors were less important for emigrants, who selected the UK and Norway as destination countries. However, the UK was selected because of its better opportunities to get a job (42.3 percent) and possibility for self-development (37.6 percent).

Summarizing, we could state that unqualified employees immigrated from Lithuania to the UK mostly. Specialists prefer Norway. In addition, the UK (25 percent) mostly and Germany (15 percent) are more attractive because of study reasons in comparison with Norway (6 percent). It is a bit surprising, that family reasons and relatives living in those countries were the most important for Lithuanian citizens in Norway, knowing that the biggest Lithuanian diaspora is in the UK.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study on Lithuanians' migration reasons to the UK, Norway, and Germany revealed and the main factor is economic conditions. It corresponds with other studies [8, 9, 11, 12] Too low wage in Lithuania (push factor) and higher income in destination country (pull factor) are the main economic reasons. Personal life conditions (push factor) and relative living in the foreign country (pull factor) were highlighted as the main noneconomic factors in studied countries. This demonstrates the existence of migration networks in explored destination countries [15, 19] Moreover, higher possibility for self-realisation was selected by one-third of respondents in the UK and Germany and one-fourth in the UK.

However, some differences were revealed among explored countries. The UK was more attractive because of its study and education system and a better opportunity to get a job.

Germany was selected because of its social conditions, health system, more attractive weather and political stability. In comparison with the UK and Germany, Norway was less attractive for its living costs, language and lower taxes. However, respondents selected it and Germany for their prestige and higher income more than the UK. Family reasons were very important for citizens leaving to Norway. Summarising, it could be concluded that besides economic factors, noneconomic factors are also important for a big part of respondents making a decision to migrate to the UK, Norway, and Germany.

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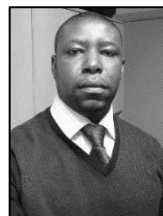
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