

Third Annual Conference  
of the Western Balkans  
Migration Network

A search for that special place  
under the sun in modern  
Europe: migration in the  
twenty first century

Book of Abstracts

Zagreb, May 25–26, 2018

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#### **Publisher**

The Institute of Economics, Zagreb  
Trg J. F. Kennedyja 7, Zagreb, Croatia  
<http://www.eizg.hr>

#### **For the Publisher**

Maruška Vizek, Director

#### **Third Annual Conference of the Western Balkans Migration Network**

“A search for that special place under the sun in modern Europe: migration in the twenty first century”

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ISBN 978-953-6030-52-1 (Ekonomski institut, Zagreb)

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## **FRAGMENTED AND FLUID MOBILITIES: THE ROLE OF ONWARD MIGRATION IN THE NEW MAP OF EUROPE AND THE BALKANS**

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In contrast to the traditional framing of international migration as a move from an origin country (as an emigrant) to a destination country (as an immigrant), followed perhaps by a return to the origin country (as a return migrant), the current map of European migration has become much more complex and fluid. Increasingly there is a tendency to talk about mobility instead of, or alongside migration, especially when documenting and discussing intra-European moves. One recurring aspect of the evolving complexity of European migration patterns is the phenomenon which I prefer to call onward migration, but which is also known by several other names as well – including transit migration, step migration, repeat migration or second-time migration. Onward migration can be distinguished from transit migration in that the latter term implies a process of 'passing through' (even though the transit migrants might well 'get stuck'), whereas the former term refers to a more strategic choice to onward-migrate to a subsequent destination after a certain length of time in the prior destination.

After a review of the existing case-studies of intra-European onward migration involving both refugees and 'economic migrants', including the various driving factors involved (economic opportunities, kinship networks, greater host-society tolerance etc.), the second part of the presentation will be a study of Albanian migrants who have onward-migrated from Greece to the UK in the wake of the Greek economic crisis. Research is based on in-depth interviews with such onward migrants in London and Brighton. They are seen to be rational-choice decision-makers who are pushed out by the Greek crisis yet who, nevertheless, become nostalgic for Greece rather than for Albania.

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## **CHALLENGING THE NOTION OF EUROPEAN 'PERIPHERIES' FROM BALKANS TO BALTICS: MIGRANTS AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY WORK**

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Migration governance, and governance of emigration and diaspora in particular, lies in an intersectional field between internal and foreign affairs. However, while the internal side is more understood (although still incompletely), the ways how migrants may shape foreign policy, or become subjects of foreign affairs, is less known. Only recently migration scholars have begun engaging with theories of diplomacy in more nuanced understanding of migrants as public or lay diplomats.

In this paper I will analyse cases from the 'far ends' of European Union and its fringes – Western Balkans and Baltics, and how higher skilled migrants engage into emigration and diaspora politics by taking up roles or by being seen as public diplomats. In particular, I will analyse topics of skills and education, innovativeness, competitiveness and security. These cases are necessary contextual in terms of regions and diverse notions of 'periphery' and how various actors see what the 'periphery' mean. Higher skilled migrants may see themselves as from 'periphery' but due to their migration or return experience, migrants reposition themselves as 'central'. This shift brings along important and potentially positive consequences in power regimes and claims of 'voice' among government players, migrants and local populations but also gives rise to new conflicts and challenges of who is entitled to influence and shape policies related to migration and diaspora.

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## **TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL SPACES AS FACILITATORS OF MIGRATION: SOCIAL TIES AND MOBILITIES ACROSS CROATIAN BORDERS**

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Recent dramatic surge of emigration from Croatia initiated an intense debate in the Croatian academia and the public about the causes of such development. Academic and public discourse on emigration is dominated by the economic explanations and by the arguments invoked from the old migration models, e.g. push-pull, wage differentials, human capital etc. Economists and journalists particularly favour uneven regional development, unemployment and falling legal obstacles since Croatia's accession to the EU, as the main explanatory factors for a surge in emigration from Croatia.

While economic factors and diminishing legal obstacles undoubtedly play an important role in accelerating emigration from Croatia, participants in the discussions on the reasons for the proliferation of emigration regularly neglect the role of existing and emerging transnational social spaces (TSS) in facilitating migration. Already before Croatia's accession to the EU more than 300.000 Croatian citizens, as well as significant number of naturalised migrants from Croatia, lived and worked in the affluent EU countries, most notably Germany, Austria and Sweden. Further on, emigration potential of Croatian citizens was also quite high even before Croatia's accession to the EU and included 90.000 probable emigrants (Božić and Burić, 2005). Previous data on Croatian citizens' friends and relatives in the EU countries, their inclination to use social capital in order to emigrate (Božić and Burić, 2005) as well as on increasing remittances (4,3% of Croatian GDP in 2015 and 5% in 2017, EUROSTAT) present a good indicator that Croatian migrants are actively involved in building and sustaining transnational social spaces. Further on, the use of new social media platforms has generated TSS which are comprised mostly of migrants and probable migrants who were originally not socially bound by obligation, reciprocity or solidarity (Faist, 2000), but who nevertheless, developed strong social networks after discussing and "meeting" within these platforms. There are, e.g. several very active Facebook groups with thousands of users which are dedicated to enabling a smooth emigration for mostly young Croatian potential migrants, primarily to Ireland but also other European countries.

By the beginning of the 21st century TSS are being recognised as potentially the most important parts of transnational transmission belts (Faist, 2000). Contemporary research proves that TSS play an important role in explaining migration patterns between particular EU countries (Wahlbeck, 2015). We shall therefore concentrate on the role of TSS in facilitating emigration from Croatia, as well as on previously construed TSS, particularly by immigrant and ethnic minority groups, and their role in facilitating other forms of mobility across Croatian borders.

**Key words:** transnational social spaces, migration, Croatia.

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## **ENABLING INTEGRATION THROUGH ACCESS TO INFORMATION: THE OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION SERVICES FOR MIGRANTS IN THE DANUBE REGION AND BEYOND**

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The diversification of migration flows and their increase at the level of the EU in recent years have brought about new challenges related to the integration of migrants and migration management/policies both at the EU as well as national, regional and local levels. Although access to information is recognised as one among the basic human rights, especially in times of crisis, affected populations and displaced people in particular often have no formal avenues to neither seek nor obtain correct and reliable information. In this respect, it comes as no surprise that also international migration organisations (e.g. the IOM, European Migration Network) have in their policy documents stressed the need to improve migrants' access to information. Effective and efficient provision of information to migrants is of crucial importance not only in relation to their arrival and stay, but is also a cornerstone for their future integration and empowerment in the countries of arrival. Nevertheless, experiences in providing information to migrants vary significantly across different national, regional and local contexts. Historical migration developments and trends, institutional frameworks and the wider socio-political context influence not only the level of such access, but also migrants' everyday strategies in gaining meaningful information. Alternative means to access information, for instance the influence of ICT have in recent decades altered the ways in which information is conveyed, understood and used. It is no exaggeration that such a need is very much apparent also in the countries of Central and South-East Europe that are faced with significant immigration and/or emigration flows, influencing also their demographic composition and demographic, labour market and social policy outcomes. In this vein, the proposed contribution analyses the experiences of migrant integration in selected countries of the Danube region (Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Serbia, Slovenia and Slovakia). Drawing on best practices pertaining to migrants' access to information across varying national contexts collected within the transnational INTERREG project DRIM (Danube Region Information Platform for Economic Integration of Migrants) and connecting them to the current socio-political and institutional developments in these countries, the text argues for access to information as a precondition to integration of migrants.

**Key words:** migrant integration, information, Danube region.

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## **INTERNAL MIGRATION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL IN ALBANIAN POST-SOCIALIST SOCIETY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG INTERNAL MIGRANTS AND LOCALS IN KAMZA CITY**

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Internal migration significantly increased in Albania after 1991 when it changed its political system. During the years of socialist system, this phenomenon was limited and strictly controlled by the government. The collapse of the totalitarian regime and the lengthy process of post-socialist transformation were followed by high internal mobility which changed population distribution and impacted interaction among them. Migration theories mainly focus on objective advantages of migration with a special emphasis on income, standard of living and employment opportunities. Limited studies deal with internal migration in developed countries, in general, and in developing countries, in particular. Even though insufficient attention has been paid to internal migration in the literature, scant research is conducted about the role of internal migration on social capital among internal migrants, in general, and between internal migrants and locals, in particular. Some authors argue that internal migration deepens group boundaries and restricts interaction among them. Some others examined relationship among internal migrants in the host society and their friends, relatives and family members back home. Very few studies examine the level of social capital among internal migrants and locals in the host society. Such studies are very limited in Albania.

The main purpose of this comparative study is to examine the level of social capital among internal migrants and locals in Kamza city. Its main research question is: What is the level of social capital among internal migrants and locals in Kamza city? Its main hypothesis is that internal migrants and locals have different levels of social capital. These differences are linked with several factors including personal characteristics, demographic factors, migration decision, migration purpose, length of stay in the host society and migration distance. This study will use primary data collected in Kamza city in a random sample composed of 400 locals and 400 internal migrants aged 19 years and above. These data were collected during the period March – April 2018 through face-to-face structured interviews.

**Keywords:** internal migration, social capital, bonding and bridging.

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## INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PROTECTING UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

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Due to social disruption and war events, in recent years, the number of migrant children arriving in the EU has increased dramatically, often being unaccompanied children.

Unaccompanied children represent a particularly vulnerable group of children because of exposure to risks and are often victims of extreme violence, exploitation, and trafficking in people, as well as physical, mental and sexual abuse. They are threatened by the risk of marginalization, being dragged into criminal activity and radicalization. They can disappear or get separated from the family, and girls are particularly vulnerable to forced marriages or attempts of trafficking. The protection of children represents the protection of the EU's values, the protection of human rights and dignity, and the protection of unaccompanied children is the implementation of the European Union's law, international humanitarian law and the rights of the child, and is therefore a priority in the proceedings.

Violating the rights of unaccompanied children include a lack of security, food and access to services such as health care, education and accommodation; separation from parents, exploitation, injury, and even death.

These children grow up in our societies becoming future EU citizens, so we make significant efforts to protect this group of children adequately and to respond to all challenges.

In this sense, the cooperation of all systems responsible for the protection of unaccompanied children, in handling and taking the prescribed measures in existing cases, is necessary in order to develop good practice and to avoid or prevent possible risks.

Examples of good practice indicate that an integrated and inter-sectoral approach, intensified inter-departmental co-operation, and exchange of experience and information is needed to improve the manner of action.

Starting from the abovementioned, comprehensive protection of unaccompanied children can only be achieved through a joint and co-ordinated action taken by the whole system and all stakeholders, from competent state bodies to civil society organizations.

**Keywords:** unaccompanied children, risks, integrated approach, inter-sectoral co-operation.

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## **MINORITY RIGHTS: UNITED NATIONS PROCEDURE AND INSTITUTIONS**

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The United Nations (UN) is made up of states. Created in 1945, the UN's main principles are to ensure international peace and security, to promote social and economic development, and to encourage respect for human rights. Although, human rights are one of the fundamental principles of the UN. The UN is only as effective as its member states allow it to be and, unfortunately, when it comes to issues of human rights – and in particular minority rights – the UN has not been as effective as it could be. Few issues in the history of the modern state have proved more vexing than the relationship between majorities and minorities. Even the definition of minorities is contested-so much so that most contemporary international legal instruments dealing with minority rights fail to include a definition of the rights holders. Whether it is about respect for minority rights or the maintenance of peace, the primary concern of governments tends to be the potential disruption that they expect, and fear, as a result of minorities asserting their rights. For purposes of this article, a precise definition is unimportant. It is necessary only to recognize that the defining characteristics of minorities, whatever they may be in a particular case, are sufficient "to set the group apart" from the rest of the society in the eyes of both the groups' members and outsiders. The aim of this article is to demystify the human rights mechanisms and procedures of the UN and to demonstrate how minorities can use these tools to promote respect for minority rights.

**Keywords:** minorities rights, UN mechanisms, security.

## **THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF REFUGEE: REFUGEE AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

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States have been granting protection to individuals and groups fleeing persecution for centuries; however, the modern refugee regime is largely the product of the second half of the twentieth century. Like international human rights law, modern refugee law has its origins in the aftermath of World War II as well as the refugee crises of the interwar years that preceded it.

The community of nations is responsible in a general sense for finding solutions and in providing international protection to refugee. This special mandate was entrusted to UNHCR. At the start of the 21st century, protecting refugees means maintaining solidarity with the world's most threatened, while finding answers to the challenges confronting the international system that was created to do just that.

The enormous changes and instability generated by the end of the Cold War are triggering new mass movements of people across the globe. These refugee exoduses are commanding the attention of high-level policy-makers not only for humanitarian reasons and because of the increasing numbers involved, but also because that mass displacements have for national security, international security and the emerging new world order.

The aim of this article is to describe the foundations and the framework of international refugee law, to define refugees and protection of refugees; as well as to help to bring into the mainstream of international relations and security studies an understanding of the strategic roots and consequences of refugee movements.

**Key words:** Legal Protections; Refugee; Security.

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## **HOW BIG IS THE POTENTIAL MIGRATION FROM ALBANIA?**

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Nearly three decades after the beginning of the post-socialist transition, international migration, and its economic, political and social consequences, remains an important issue in Albania. Presently, more than 1.4 million Albanian citizens, equivalent to nearly half the current population of the country, have emigrated. These data ranks Albania among the top countries in the world for the scale (as a percentage of the current population) and intensity of international migration. Such high migration flows are an expression of the high migration potential of the Albanian population, a potential that has increased in recent years. But how big is the potential migration from Albania?

The paper is based on the results of a survey with 1200 individuals across different areas of Albania, conducted in the early months of 2018. The paper shows the desire of the Albanian population to migrate and the direction of potential flows. In addition to this indicator, which points to the people's general dissatisfaction with conditions in their country, the paper addresses also planning to migrate in the next three years. Moreover, the paper analyses the potential migration and the chances for it to be transformed into real migration. Some results of the survey are compared to those from another survey on potential migration conducted by the CESS almost ten years ago.

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## **EMIGRATION FROM KOSOVO AT THE BEGINNING OF XXI CENTURY- A CHALLENGE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT**

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Migratory movements of the population today have become an important social phenomenon which are characterized by significant implications for demographic, socio-economic, political developments, etc. Today they are very powerful determinants of the transformation of movement and the demographic structure as well as of the way of life of people both in the countries of origin and in the host countries.

Kosovo throughout the twentieth century and in the beginning of the XXI century was and remains a typical immigrant territory. The low level of economic development, unfavorable political situation and destruction by wars, are key factors for the emigration of the Kosovo's population.

The last decade of the XX century is characterized with numerous negative developments in all areas of life with deterioration of the: economic, social, political and security situation in Kosovo, which was manifested with negative impacts on demographic field manifested through massive emigration of the population.

The heavy situation followed by massive emigration, in particular among young generations, which had serious consequences in the demographic and economic spheres of Kosovo, causing declines in the overall population number, fertility rate and natural growth, increased participation of older age groups of the population, decrease of the number of students, etc., causing the largest demographic breaking in Kosovo.

Unfortunately, Kosovo even at the beginning of the XXI century faces the phenomenon of emigrations which are because of economic character as a result of the low level of economic development, high unemployment, especially among young people, very large differences in income compared with emigrating countries, etc.

In the focus of this paper there are the studies of emigration from Kosovo in the beginning of XXI century (2000-2016), which regarding the consequences remain big in the demographic, economic, psychological, family and political plan and so on. The fact that Kosovo throughout the history of demographic development has been and remains an emigrant country makes it necessary to undertake measures to put this phenomenon under control in order to maintain a sustainable demographic development for Kosovo in the future.

**Keywords:** emigration, population, Kosovo, consequences etc.

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## MIGRATION TRENDS AND PATTERNS IN MACEDONIA

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The scope and analysis of both migration and remittances is given an extensive attention from researchers and policymakers because of the increasing trends and their impact in the economy. Emigration from developing countries to West European countries is high and raising. The benefits of migration are allowing more finance to the families directly but there also costs for the families that may be of psychological aspect and may lead to moral hazard. Low skilled migration may alleviate poverty and improve labor market condition for the workers who stay and make pressure for the workers. International migration impacts the labor market by reducing labor supply a factor that is not renewable. The scope of this paper is the migrants trends and patterns in the case of Macedonia: a middle income country, a Candidate Country for European Union, multinational structure country, with high unemployment rate, and in recent years commonly discussed for political instability. The focus of the paper is analyzing migration data from State Statistical Office for the time period 2007-2016 as well as underlying possible consequences in the labor market. Accordingly, on 2005 and 2006 we have the first sharp increase in number of international migration from Macedonia and then on 2011 and 2012 we have the highest number of migration and the smallest number on 2003 respectively 2007. The trends of the emigrants reveal that there has been a change of the pattern of migrants from unskilled to skilled, the number of women has become more significant, the destinations have diversified while the main reasons for migration remain work, study or family union. Concluding policy makers are challenged to prevent brain drain with programs that regulate the labor market, possibly offering variable source of remuneration to qualified, productive and efficient employees in accordance with development strategies and labor market demand. Additionally policies should be addressed toward optimization of benefits of international migration and possibly minimization of negative consequences.

**Keywords:** migration, labor, policy.

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## INTENTIONS TO MIGRATE AMONG VET STUDENTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

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This paper draws on the work of Benassy and Brezis (2013) who have developed an interesting model in which low-wage economies that experience brain drain can be caught in a "development trap" in which emigration of human capital undermines growth in the domestic economy, offsetting any "brain gain" effects.\*\* Since 2010 the economies of the Western Balkans seem to have been caught in such a development trap with average rate of economic growth of about 1% per annum, far below that of comparable countries elsewhere in Europe. This paper investigates whether low wage expectations in the domestic economy have a positive impact on emigration intentions in the Western Balkans, potentially creating a development trap of the type identified by Benassy and Brezis. Much of the focus of analysis of brain drain in the Western Balkans has been on higher education graduates; however in this paper I focus on the intentions to migrate of vocational education and training (VET) students who are likely to have lower wage expectations in the domestic economy than higher education graduates. The VET segment of the labour force has much worse prospects on the labour market, but is a key demographic for future of the region. The analysis is based on a large-scale survey of more than 2,000 VET students carried out in 2013 in the six countries of the Western Balkans and in Croatia. The data show that after leaving VET school about one third of students have the intention to migrate. The intention to migrate varies across countries, being greater in lower income countries. The statistical analysis investigates the intentions to migrate as a function of family background, student characteristics, school experience, exam performance and field of study, and expected wages in the domestic economy. The econometric strategy is to use probit analysis to distinguish the factors that affect the probability of the intention to migrate. The paper identifies the direction and strength of the relationship between expected wages in the domestic economy and intentions to migrate among VET students in the seven countries included in the study. The comparative conclusions provide pointers for policy makers seeking to retain human capital in the region and escape potential development traps.

**Key words:** Intention to migrate, Vocational education, Western Balkans.

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\*\* Benassy, J-P and Brezis, E. S. (2013) "Brain drain and development traps", *Journal of Development Economics*, 102: 15-22

## **BLOCKED ASPIRATIONS AND EMIGRATION OF CROATIAN YOUTH**

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Providing an overall estimated volume of migration from Croatia is not easy. Official statistics show that in the newest period, especially after joining the European Union, Croatia faces an increasingly negative migration wave due to the consequences of the global economic crisis. In the last wave of migration (2006-2016) 163.073 inhabitants have emigrated. For the youth in Croatia, 2018 is marked by persistence of economic crisis, 'normalised' precarity and unstable prospects, which forces an increasing number of young people to leave the country in a search for better education and employment opportunities.

In this paper authors start from two research questions: first, how uncertainty of life prospect, especially in relation to the educational and employment outcomes, influences some aspects of young people's lives (push factors); and second, what are the migration aspirations of young people and what specific pull factors are responsible for potential leaving. To answer these questions, two methodologically complement researches were carried out, involving quantitative and qualitative insights. In order to understand position of the young people in Croatia and a degree of their vulnerability, this paper will present data resulting from the Shell Youth Studies, conducted on the nationally representative samples of young people (N=1 500) in 2012 and 2018. Shell Youth Study data include information on the respondents' socio-professional status, educational and professional aspirations, employment trajectories, working conditions, factors of finding and accepting a job, and migrations, enabling a dynamic analysis of young peoples' status, aspirations and vulnerabilities. Area of migration is covered by the instruments on the motivations, duration and experiences of previous emigrations, considerations of moving abroad in a certain time-period, constraints for moving abroad and desired countries of immigration. The quantitative data will be supplemented by the data gathered via focus groups (N=56) that collected insights on previous migratory experiences and current aspirations of young people. The data will show that socio-economic status of young people in Croatia is deteriorating, making young people more prone to long-term migration. Such processes leave the country without valuable human resources, which contributes to further downgrading of its status in comparison to other EU-member states. The analytical framework places the research data inside the analysis of socio-political changes and transformations that Croatian society and economy have undergone since accessing the European Union.

**Keywords:** youth, aspirations, Croatia, emigration.

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## EMIGRATION FROM SERBIA: FOCUSING ON THE YOUTH

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Serbia is a country with long tradition of emigration and with zones of substantial emigration. Although Serbia has become one of the main transit countries for refugees heading to the EU, only neglectable number of them stays. However, low but slowly increasing level of immigration can be perceived. Considering socio-economic transition in the country and low immigration rate emigration challenge is more evident in Serbia than in western economically development countries.

The focus of our paper is on youth emigration since they make important part of emigration contingent and potential significant demographic and human capital loss for Serbia. We consider youth as persons aged 15-29 that includes most of possible transitions over the course of life relevant for the youth migration. National Youth Strategy 2015-2025 applies the same definition pursuant to the Serbian Law on Youth. Based on the last two (2002, 2011) census data analysis and secondary source analysis we give an overview of emigration from Serbia with special focus on youth migration. We discuss youth migration as a specific developmental challenge for the country with numerous implications, aiming to emphasise the importance of this topic and the role of youth as a resource. We point to the need for developing adequate multilevel governance in order to transform youth migration from challenge to opportunity.

Youth migration makes continuously about 20% of emigration contingent from Serbia. The share of female in youth emigrant contingent is increasing while being higher than their share in the whole emigrant contingent. Young emigrants from Serbia are more educated than the same age population in the country. The brain drain ratio in 2011 shows the highest values for young emigrants. Young population, similar to other emigrants from Serbia, mainly stream to traditional countries of destination: Germany, Austria and Switzerland, where migrant networks have already been developed. Although young emigrants are predominantly from rural settlements there is a trend of increasing share of young emigrants from urban settlements due to shrinking of rural population and disturbance of age structure in rural settlements.

The 2011 Census data as well as qualitative research findings point to prevalence of economic motives for youth emigration from Serbia. Emigration of youth affects demographic and socio-economic development of the country. It influences further depopulation evident since 1992 as well as shrinking of the fertile contingent, declining and ageing of the workforce and human capital loss. Sharp increase in old-age dependency ratio is expected in the near future putting pressure both on government finances and governance structures on different levels.

Mitigating the negative impact of youth emigration requires cooperation of different governance levels. Given the findings on youth aspirations that point to the further youth emigration from Serbia as well as prevalence of short-term migration aspirations, policies which make it easy for young population to move back and forth between destinations are needed. They would foster brain circulation for bridging the developmental gaps.

**Key words:** emigration, demographic change, human capital, youth migration, Serbia.

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## DE-CONSTRUCTING VULNERABILITIES ALONG THE BALKAN CORRIDOR

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The paper explores the heterogeneity and complexity of contemporary refugee movements in Europe by analysing in particular the situation along the Balkan corridor. Complex intersectionalities between gender, age, ethnic affiliation, and other aspects reflecting the situation of individuals on the move are addressed. Acknowledging that the corridor along the Balkan route enabled a more "efficient" transit of individuals on the move towards Western Europe, the vulnerability of migrants in specific micro contexts along the corridor is addressed within two main frameworks. Firstly, we question the "hard" and impassable European borders and their remilitarisation along the corridor. In the second part, we analyse intersectional vulnerabilities of particular refugees, particularly by examining the gendered implications of contemporary refugee movements along the Balkan corridor.

Focussing on the construction of vulnerability of individuals and particular social groups of migrants, the authors explore the question how vulnerabilities are constructed through representations of suffering, and who is excluded from such classifications of vulnerable groups. For instance, narrow interpretations of vulnerability can have the effect of minimising women's access to assistance by insisting on a pre-existing and feminised notion of vulnerability and by constructing females and/or children as passive individuals and/or primarily victims, instead of being agents of social change. Furthermore, men as well, especially when not conforming to the heteronormative standards of masculinity, may also be viewed as facing multiple insecurities while being on the move. The authors argue that a more careful analysis of the experiences of both men and women may help, at least to some extent, to overcome the stereotypes of the "dangerous migrant male" and the "vulnerable" female, which continue to prevail in the media and political discourses

Unlike restrictive policies, which reduce mobility, we perceive migrations as autonomous processes. The paper challenges the policies of selecting migrants based on their legal status, using restrictive borders and the transfer of the external borders of the Schengen area into the internal territories of the member states - in this case along the Balkan corridor. On this basis, the authors argue for a more liberal migration/refugee regime, which at the micro-level would not criminalise individual refugees and, at the macro-level, would not act against basic democratic standards and solidarity in addressing migration and asylum policies in Europe.

**Key words:** intersectional vulnerabilities, migrants and refugees, Balkan corridor, gender.

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## **POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE "REFUGEE CRISIS"**

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In the forefront of most current discussions on migration is the "refugee crisis" with its emergence and temporal location in summer 2015 and its geographical location in the European countries divided into two blocks: the Western Balkans and the EU. As the puzzle is hard to put together if pieces are missing, this paper explores what the missing pieces and those left out upholding the notion of the refugee crisis are. I argue that the coining of the refugee crisis is misleading while it has moved the focus from the on-going political and the crisis of governance within the European Union, as well as it has placed a heavy burden on refugees themselves.

Therefore, this paper focuses on the two simultaneous streamlines. The first one discusses the "broken refugee system" (Betts and Collier, 2016) and the EU's exclusionary politics of asylum (De Genova et al., 2016). The second one entails the positionality of the hybridity of the Western Balkan countries in the current migration management set-up and the geopolitical web. Within the latter, I discuss two additional layers: Western-Balkans countries transition from peripheral to central location of poor migration management, and the specific Croatian positionality as the country of a shared location between the Western Balkans and the European Union with a specific role of the (pre)Schengen border-line/space guard. As De Genova et al. discuss: "Indeed, over the course of 2015, European responses to the arrival of people in search of asylum has been increasingly characterized by a politics of containment, aiming to block migrants and refugees prior to entering the territory of EU member states, at the "pre-frontiers" of "Europe." (2016)

This paper intends to contribute to the understanding of the migratory political geography of Europe accounted for the convoluted asylum and migration policies that face the urge of changing its face before more lives are lost and suffer in lack of fundamental dignity.

**Keywords:** refugee crisis, broken refugee system, Schengen border-line/space, Western Balkans and migration management.

## **SOUTHEAST EUROPE AND GLOBAL LABOUR MARKET IN RETROSPECT, 19<sup>TH</sup>-21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURIES**

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The paper will provide a broad outline of issues related to the migration policies contributing to or affecting the integration of Southeast European region into European and global labour market. This general topic will be considered in periods marked by primacy of globalizing trends, such as those of the so-called first (1871-1914) and second globalization (1990s-present time), but also those of deglobalization processes triggered by the violence of the WWI, and later on facilitated by economic nationalism of interwar period, WWII and Cold War restrictive policies in domain of the freedom of movement of people (1914-1990).

The study will investigate to what extent particular Southeast European countries or provinces were integrated into this global scheme of development. Surprisingly, this was not always the case. Often, their governments went against the tide of global markets.

For instance, Serbia (in 1911) and Bulgaria (in 1907) introduced harsh emigration controls at a time when throughout Europe and America others could travel freely without passports, let alone other forms of surveillance, controls, or paperwork. From this point of view, the underdeveloped Balkan countries seem to have been a vanguard in the policy of restriction and control over the freedom of movement, policies which would later be imposed at the global level.

Socialist Yugoslavia, on the other hand, in the midst of cold war migration constraints maintained almost an unrestricted, yet regulated, freedom of labour emigration. Again, in post socialist transitional era, much of former Yugoslav area (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia), experienced passport and visa restrictions in time of great liberalization of the former Eastern European countries.

In domain of the topics surrounding the first globalization, high rates of Croatian and Slovenian overseas emigration can be taken as a model in which South European migration pattern followed global developments. This applies also to restrictive policies imposed by interwar Yugoslavia. This model provides a good example of "integration" if this term can be used under the circumstances. Ironically, the only global system to which this country might have been fully integrated was that of trade tariffs and restrictions on the freedom of transport and movement, imposed on the rest of the world during and after World War One.

The paper will briefly outline patterns of the current migration policies in the region and the way these correspond with the dynamics of global migration movements. Main patterns of change and development in rates and character of migration will be presented by charts, tables and other illustrations.

**Key words:** emigration, restriction, (de)globalization.

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## **ACCEPTED OR NOT? SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA IN CROATIA**

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More than two thirds of people born abroad who live in Croatia (2011 census) were born in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The significantly high number of immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina is the result of intensive labour migration during socialist period and the migration caused by the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even though the immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina pose a significant proportion of overall Croatian immigrant population, they have rarely been the subject of scientific research in Croatia. In this paper the special accent is attached to their experiences within the dimension of social integration and considering the perceived sense of belonging to Croatian society. This paper is based on the results of empirical research which aimed to examine selected quality of life dimensions of adult Croatian citizens, born in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who immigrated to Croatia. The survey was conducted in the City of Zagreb in 2014 on a convenience sample (N = 301). In the first part of the presentation some general characteristics of the researched population have been analysed within the specific context of Croatian society. Further on the results related to the immigrants' sense of belonging to a social environment and perceptions of social status are presented in regard to selected characteristic of respondents (age, gender, education, socio-economic status). The obtained results showed that, on average, the immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina feel very accepted in the local community, and their origin has not been perceived as an obstacle to acceptance and adaptation to the social environment. In their judgment they respect family and traditional values more than the local population, and they appreciate Croatia more than its "indigenous" people. Furthermore, they show a higher level of sense of belonging to the city and the country in which they live as opposed to the country of origin. The differences based on the socio-demographic characteristics revealed that female respondents feel more offended by the negative stereotypes about people from Bosnia and Herzegovina than do the male respondents; the youngest respondents feel the most able to adapt to social environment in Croatia and the most educated respondents disagree to the most that they were not accepted because of their origin. The results of the study lead to conclusion that immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who are by their ethnic affiliation mostly Croats (93%), are the "untypical" immigrants in Croatia – they feel accepted and have strong sense of belonging possibly due to better symbolic fit in the Croatian society and due to long tradition of labour migration and migration aimed at better education opportunities.

**Keywords:** immigrants from Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, social integration.

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## **IDENTITIES OF HIGHLY EDUCATED RETURNEES IN SERBIA**

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The paper explores data collected through interviews with 50 highly educated returnees in Serbia carried out in 2017. Our main goal has been understanding and interpreting personal and collective identities from the perspective of our citizens with migratory experiences. Therefore three conceptual paradigms were applied: first, primordial ones – advocating for full preservation of national identity irrespectively of the influence of varying cultures, customs and values; second – constructivist one, claiming that migrants sustain core 'nutshell' national identity, which is still in the process of re-making/re-creating as a result of transnational social ties; and the third one, presupposing that all migrants build up hybrid identities, which are in constant flux but yet not having been grounded in any specific culture. We expect most of our respondents to fit into the second type, due to several main reasons. Firstly, it is hard to expect that national identity may stay unchanged after migrants' admission into educational system of destination countries and their subsequent endeavors in creating social bonds with scientists and scholars all over the world. Secondly, upholding of national identity to homeland has apparently brought about their willingness and plans to return and thus contribute to homeland development. It should also be highlighted that when it comes to returnees' sense of belonging there were differences observed in comparison to other two groups: non migrants, who have never moved and diaspora members, who stayed in their places of destination.

Key words: identity, diaspora, transnationalism, highly educated returnees.

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## **MIGRATION EXPERIENCE AND GENDER GAP IN LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

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The main aim of the paper is to examine the effect of migration on the gender gap in labour force participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This paper used household budget survey data and estimates the model of female labour force participation, controlling for migration experience, in a country which recently experienced displacement of around half of its total population and mass return of around 500,000 people mainly from Western Europe. The research is based on two competing hypotheses. First is based on research by Basic (2014) that provided evidence of increased labour force participation of women in Bosnia that were economically empowered through migration. Second is based on work by Kondylis (2008), who found that migrants in Bosnia lack social capital required for accessing the labour market. Specific contribution of each the opposing factors is measured by distinguishing between internal displacement and international migration. Probit regression model is estimated for the entire sample, urban and rural areas. The empirical evidence presented in this paper should contribute to understanding the effect the migration experience and "social remittances" have on the change in gender gap in labour force participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Keywords:** migration, labour force participation, gender gap.

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## **RETURN MIGRANT AS AGENTS OF CHANGE-FROM MIGRANTS AND SEASONAL WORKERS TO JOB CREATORS**

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This research gives an overview of return migration in Albania in recent years and analyses the re-integration dynamics that accompany this process. It analyses the impact that the return migrants have as agents of change in the home country's development and how state institutions and other public bodies are prepared to face the increased numbers of the returnees. The paper is based on national data from the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as secondary data collected from archives, official documents and direct interviews with return migrants. It sheds light on the heterogeneity that characterizes the categories of returnees by analyzing their respective needs in Albania and other various factors shaping the patterns of reintegration of returnees. It was the fall of the communist regime in Albania in 1990 that started the massive migration of Albanian population. During communism there were sporadic tentative attempts to migrate, sometimes successful, but many others who failed in their endeavors to leave the country were punished, their familiars as well, which served to deter others who wanted to escape for a better life. Nowadays Albania has one of the world's highest emigration rates, relative to its population, at 3.3 migrants per 1,000 people, and a total migrant population of more than 1.25 million in 2014, according to UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs data. The recent economic crisis depressed Western European labour markets and led to a significant increase in the number of return migrants in Albania. This paper brings facts and figures that both in short and long term return migrants bring benefits to their country by increasing income per person and raising living standards. They transfer new skills, diverse talents and expertise. Return migrants give a new impetus to their home labour market development and technology advancement and they can be a real stimulus to the development of the local community when they invest their savings in small businesses, use their gained skills and know-how and create additional jobs.

**Keywords:** return migrant, integration, labour market.

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## HOW CAN MIGRANTS CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS IN SERBIA?

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The aim of this research is to explore how migration contributes towards the development of rural communities through remittances and the involvement of the migrants in community development projects. This paper has in focus the inter linkages between internal and international migration since they are often triggered by similar economic, social, and political factors, and they offer similar obstacles and potentialities for development. The idea of the paper is to offer an insight into dynamics of, both internal and international migration, observing the past and current migration trends in selected region in Serbia – East Serbia which is traditional region of migration. Data were obtained using mixed methods approach comprising quantitative data from population censuses and internal migration statistic complemented with semi structured interviews and questionnaire surveys. This research shows how migration determinants and impacts affect contemporary rural change and rural development. For the purpose of the paper we selected several municipalities within this area which are geographically very close but characterized with different migration patterns. That could point out that even in areas located in close geographic proximity heterogeneous migration patterns can evolve and that could be a valuable resource for policy-makers. A better understanding of the interrelationships, similarities and differences between internal and international migration can help to design the most effective policy orientations valid to foster the development potential of this area.

**Key words:** internal migration; international migration, returnees, mix methods; rural development.

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## **ALBANIAN MIGRANTS' PRACTICES OF COPING WITH CRISIS: CONSIDERATIONS AND DILEMMAS ABOUT SECOND MOVE FROM GREECE AND ITALY TOWARDS A NEW DESTINATION**

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Onward migration to and within Europe has recently gained the attention of scholars who have criticized the assumption that international migration consists in a move from the home to a destination country. Most scholars have focused on migrants' motivations for onward migration, and how onward migrants mobilise their capital to settle in a new destination country. However, little is known about the ways in which migrants negotiate the decision to move to a second destination. Migration scholars have often underscored the significant role of the family or the household as decision-making unit and consider that individuals' decision to migrate is not always based on factors linked to income maximization. Drawing on empirical material of 61 in-depth interviews with Albanian male construction workers in Italy and Greece, I suggest that although unemployed (or under-employed) male migrants have considered about re-emigration as a practice to cope with crisis, decision to move and settle into a new context is taken by the household. Focusing on migrant construction workers' considerations about onward mobility and attempts to leave the first destination, I show that onward migration decision may be shaped by family members' needs, desires and expectations for the future. I argue that factors connected to women's employment, children's education, together with lifestyle considerations influence migration decision. Hence, it is possible that onward migration become a response to the crisis undertaken by the male migrants, who leave the family behind, or the desire and attempt to move to a new destination result in the creation of new transnational patterns across Europe. Differences between Albanian immigrants in Italy and Greece are associated to the migration policy in these two countries, as well as the geographic proximity between the first destinations countries and other EU destinations.

**Keywords:** Albanian migrants, Construction, Migration decision-making, Onward migration, Italy, Greece.

## **A COUNTERFACTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF REMITTANCES ON POVERTY IN KOSOVO- AN EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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Kosovo is of the poorest countries in Europe, with 29.7 percent of the Kosovar population living below the national poverty line, and an estimated 10.2 percent reported as extremely poor. Migration and remittances have been an effective mechanism for mitigating poverty, as well as a coping mechanism for disadvantaged households with no or little employment and earning opportunities. The high dependence of households on remittances suggests that poverty rates would be much higher without the safety net provided through migration and remittances. This paper analyzes the impact that remittances and migration have on the poverty in Kosovo, in a hypothetical case, without remittances and migration using data from the Household Budget Survey 2011. The study developed counterfactual consumption estimates for remittance recipient households through the use of econometric estimations to predict the consumption of households in the case of no remittances. Due to the potential presence of selection bias, the paper uses a two-stage Heckman-type selection procedure which suggests that there is no selection bias. This estimation enables comparing the poverty rates, observed and predicted, in Kosovo and also across the regions. The results support the hypothesis that remittances increase the consumption of recipient households. The poverty rate would be higher for a considerable proportion of households in the case of no remittances. The poverty rates would increase particularly in rural areas.

**Key words:** Poverty, Migration, Remittances, Kosovo.

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## INTERNAL MIGRATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN MONTENEGRO

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**Abstract:** The topic of internal migration has been somehow neglected by researchers and authors who are dealing with the issue of migratory movements and relocations, and this "research invisibility" is additionally influenced by difficulties with the measurement of internal migration itself. Internal migration is usually seen as an important driver of socio-economic development and a way to create undoubtedly greater prosperity. Therefore, questions like what happens to internal migrants after they immigrate, how migration is reflected on their personal well-being and eventually what kind of discomfort in their new environment they encounter as internal immigrants – are quite rarely set up, especially by policy makers dealing with migration issues. In this presentation, I would like to briefly present the internal migrations in the territory of Montenegro, especially focusing on migrations of young people in the contemporary temporal and social context, particularly those most common route – from the north to the south of the country. By using the qualitative method and the in-depth interview technique on the example of several young people who migrated to the capital, in a form of case study, I will try to point out the obstacles and discrimination they encounter in everyday life because of their status of "others", as a consequence of their "different" geographical origin and cultural background. Taking into account symbolic geographical polarization on "the north" and "the south", I will try to contextualize the obtained data and link it to the broader socio-cultural, political and economic context. In order to create a more complete picture, I will take into account the discourses and narratives of native residents of the capital related to the young internal immigrants. This case study aims to contribute to a better understanding of migrations within one country, including negative aspects that are often ignored by authors and policymakers, by showing that the concept of "otherness" does not only exist in relation toward non-citizens and "foreigners" from abroad, but also in relation to the natives from the "other" part of the country.

**Key words:** internal migrations, Montenegro, young people.

## **ECONOMIC CRISIS AND MIGRANT'S RESPONSES: THE CASE OF ALBANIAN WORKING MIGRANT WOMEN IN GREECE**

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This paper focus on the effects of economic crisis and austerity policies on the labour market of Albanian migrant domestic workers in Greece. The politics of austerity have targeted employment regulation, seeking to increase worker precarity, lower wages and allow employers to make more demands on their workers. On the one hand, the domestic sector is insulated from the effects of the crisis, since there is no formal regulation to dismantle, and effects on overall employment levels are ambiguous. On the other hand, the notion of crisis has a powerful effect on the imaginations of both workers and employers, shifting the balance of power in negotiating the employment relationship.

Our goal is to refine our understanding of how "unregulated" markets are structured by moral economies which serve both to soften but also to legitimate hierarchical power relations. Because regulation in the domestic work sector in Greece is weak, it has provided employment opportunities for migrant women who do not always have legal status, and who face discrimination in more regulated sectors. As Näre points out, the domestic sector is not a free-for-all of unregulated markets, but is rather regulated by a moral economy, which sets out the rules of market engagement (Näre 2011). However, we find that while the moral economy provides a set of norms for operating in the labour market, it is also a cloak of legitimization for exploitive work relations, which is cast aside relatively quickly when power relations change.

In Greece, where segmentation had always been very strong, the crisis was experienced as a downward adjustment of wages and rising work intensity. This renegotiation is accepted by the Albanian migrant women as necessary, because of the individualist, market-based narrative around which they have constructed their migration experience. Their market narratives intersect with narratives about gender roles, allowing and encouraging Albanian migrant women to take pride in their exploited status in the work world, both because it is a survival mechanism for hard economic times, and in some cases because it brings power in the home relative to their often (recently) unemployed husbands.

**Key words:** Moral Economy, Albanian Migrants, Greece, Economic Crisis, Austerity Measures.

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## **RETURN MIGRATION: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM KOSOVO**

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Return migration represents an important facilitators to economic development, particularly for countries with large outmigration. Literature points to three main channels through which return migrants can facilitate the economic development of their home country: the first channel is through their accumulated financial capital which can be invested upon return and facilitate the transfer or adoption of new technologies; second, through utilisation of acquired knowledge, skills and familiarity with latest technologies; and thirdly, the augmented social capital of return emigrants, through establishing new networks and challenging and displacing traditional norms and values, can stimulate economic development. This paper examines determinants of return migration to Kosovo, a country with high level of emigration. Findings derived from this investigation are supportive of the NELM approach, indicating that Kosovars who initially emigrated for economic reasons were more likely to return and current employment status did not significantly affect their probability of return. A further novel finding is that of a non-linear relationship between age and the probability of return. In line with the network theory approach, the longer the migration duration the lower is the probability that a migrant will return, suggesting that there may be a significant premium in the home country from the acquisition of human capital in the host country, hence the greater willingness to return. In contrast with most previous research, more educated migrants are found to be more likely to return as are those migrants that acquired additional education whilst abroad. Confirming one of the propositions of the transnationalist theory, the obtained results suggest that the stronger the family ties of a migrant measured by frequent visits and regular communication with their home country, the more likely the migrant is to return. There is no evidence that gender, labour market status, location of household in home country i.e. rural/urban, whether a migrant remits or not influence the propensity to return. Empirical results indicate that return migration may be an important contributor to economic development in Kosovo, hence government should develop policies to strengthen the potential contribution.

**Keywords:** migration, gender, NELM.

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## **FACING FEAR: CONCEPTUALIZING HOME, BELONGING AND THE "EMOTIONAL CITIZENSHIP" OF DIASPORA RETURNING TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

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This paper examines the case of voluntary return migration to a post-conflict society, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the returnee, given a viable alternative of livelihood and a well-integrated social presence abroad, freely chooses to go back. The initial claim of the paper is that the motivation for this type of return is primarily emotional and, although the much researched (Brown, 2014) emotion of "patriotic love" is certainly part of the returnees' emotional landscape, other emotions play an equal, and in some cases more important, role. I argue that fear is a key emotion constituting the returnees' daily experience of BiH citizenship and I identify the three dimensions of fear to be: ethnic discrimination, economic uncertainty and the abuse of political power. The returnees' continued life and work in the home state represents an act of remarkable courage, the success of which is not because of the state structure envisioned by the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), comprising the current BiH Constitution, but in spite of the obstacles it presents. My argument is based on a grounded theory method of analysis of 35 in-depth interviews conducted with members of the Bosnia and Herzegovinian diaspora/transmigrants, who have voluntarily decided to return and settle in BiH.

The unifying conceptual framework of my study is citizenship, also seen as a "prism through which to address the political" (Nyers, 2007, p. 3), and more specifically its emotional dimension, conceptualized through home and belonging. This perspective on citizenship builds on the foundations set by George Marcus, inspired by David Hume, who presents a treatise of the connection between citizenship and emotions, radically asserting that, contrary to the conventional view in political theory, emotions enable rationality and good citizenship, mainly because they foster democratic action. The emotional dimension of citizenship has been further theorized by geography scholars, such as Elaine Lynn-Ee Ho and Lucy Jackson, both of whom employ the concepts of home and belonging as instrumental to our understanding of citizenship. Although these concepts have been developed with contributions from feminist scholars, geographers, social psychologists and anthropologists, a thorough analysis of the theoretical connections between citizenship and emotions is still in its initial stages. Also, an analysis of the actual, specific and distinct emotions comprising home, belonging and, thus, the emotional dimension of citizenship, is gravely missing. My study aims to fill this gap in the literature by creating a robust theoretical nexus between citizenship, home, belonging and a set of context-specific, 'political' emotions.

**Key words:** emotional citizenship, home, belonging, return migration, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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## **ROMANI MINORITIES IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE 2015/16 REFUGEE CRISIS**

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The European continent went through an important transformation in the light of increased refugee movements between the summer of 2015 and spring of 2016. The media as well as some policy makers dubbed this period as a refugee crisis. Some scholars have argued that the refugee crisis was not caused by the increased refugee movements, but by the inability of the European Union to live up to its own standards of human rights. Besides the question of human rights some scholars have argued that the refugee crisis had had a 'spill-over' effect on the broader politics of diversity in Europe. The broader discussions on the politics of diversity in Europe also concluded that the most marginalized European citizens were affected: those belonging to different Romani minorities. This stance was taken by the report published in October 2016 by the Council of Europe entitled *The Situation of Roma travellers in the contexts of rising extremism, xenophobia and the refugee crisis in Europe*. The report highlighted two dangers Roma are facing in the post refugee crisis Europe. First, the enhanced debate on the politics of diversity also contributed to the rise populist right-wing extremism; besides refugees, extremists often have Roma as their main targets. Second, as the policies shift to accommodate the diversities connected to the position of refugees, policies for integration of Roma receive less attention, which leaves Roma even more marginalized than before.

This paper scrutinizes the findings of the Council of Europe and looks at whether the discourse of the refugee crisis intersected with the position of Roma in the countries that were located on the Western Balkan route: Greece, The Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria and Germany. It looks at what media, political and legal discourses on the politics of diversity and specifically on the position of Roma as citizens that appeared in the context of the refugee crisis. The paper agrees with previous conclusions that in times of significant transformations (such as the collapse of socialism, the EU enlargement, etc.) the position of Roma becomes highlighted. However, it also argues that the way, how the position of Roma as citizens is influenced cannot be compressed into a unified narrative. In order to understand it more comprehensively, different local contexts need to be taken into account, which can be described as the myriad of invisible edges of citizenship. While the refugee crisis once again reconfirmed (but also created some new) precarious legal statuses of many Roma as citizens or migrants, it also showed that Roma cannot be simply portrayed as vulnerable and passive victims of transformative events in Europe. They also participate in them and co-create them. The research aims to show this also through the narratives of individuals who identify themselves as Roma and had taken an active role during the refugee crisis both voicing the opinions about refugees and acting on different sites.

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## ADVOCACY & POLICY PANEL

### RESPONSES TO REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS ON THE BALKAN ROUTE: WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Since 2015, organised state and supranational responses to the large numbers of forced migrants, refugees and asylum seekers travelling along parts of the so-called "Balkan route" in search of safety and protection have been nothing short of scandalous. Securitised responses, the building of walls and fences, passing the burden and the blame from one country to another, inhumane treatment and different interpretations of legal judgements have tended to dominate at the expense of co-operation, responsibility sharing, timely and consistent support, and a humane response. At the same time, activists, NGOs, and volunteers have offered a necessary front-line response, witnessed and chronicled human rights abuses, and advocated for both a more coherent, humane and effective response. There seems little prospect of a quick end to the waves of forced migrants seeking protection although the nature of the movement will continue to change, sometimes at short notice and sometimes in unpredictable ways. Most of those seeking refuge will not be able to return to their destroyed homes and communities for many years, if at all. In addition, most continue to see the countries of the Western Balkans as hot spots or transit points rather than final destinations.

This panel will explore what lessons can be learnt from the experiences of the last few years and what policies are needed, and how they can be implemented, to change things. In particular, the panel allows for reflections from activists on the front line and those campaigning for a more humane response across the European Union, as well as a balance between the responsibilities of EU Member States and those neighbours currently seeking accession. To what extent have asylum seekers and forced migrants become the new pawns in the geo-political game between Brussels and the aspirant member states of the Western Balkans? How have responses varied in different countries at different times? Are there any examples of lessons which can be learnt and good practices which can be translated or scaled up? How far is a different Europe possible in relation to the refugee and asylum regime? What are the short-, medium- and long-term changes in policy that are needed and how can these be brought about.

Moderator: **Drago Župarić-Iljić**, Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, Zagreb

Panelists (in alphabetical order):

- **Vedran Horvat**, Institute for Political Ecology, Zagreb
- **Julija Kranjec**, Centre for Peace Studies, Zagreb
- **Asja Korbar**, Are You Syrious, Zagreb
- **Maria Giovanna Manieri**, Advisor, Greens in the European Parliament





ISBN 978-953-6030-52-1



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