MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT
IN SERBIA

Mirjana Rašević
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### ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Common Country Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally displaced person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoI</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NES</td>
<td>National Employment Service of the Republic of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORS</td>
<td>Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEMIG</td>
<td>Project Managing Migration and its Effects in SEE-Transnational Actions towards Evidence Based Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDESA</td>
<td>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNECE</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPBILD</td>
<td>Peacebuilding and Inclusive Local Development – a Joint UN Programme in South Serbia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. INTRODUCTION

The understanding of the complex relationship between migration and development has changed in the last years, with initiatives from scientific and political circles to view migration comprehensively in the function of development of all the countries included in the migratory chain. United Nations (UN) first indirectly included migration in the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 8 for the 21st century, which was defined as Develop a Global Partnership for Development. In addition, UN directly supported this concept by establishing the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) in 2003, organising the First and Second Dialogue on Migration and Development in 2006 and 2013 and by establishing a Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in 2007.

Recognising migration as an instrument of development has led to a consensus on the need to include the phenomenon of migration in the development agendas, strategies and plans on global, regional, national and local levels. Mainstreaming migration in major economic growth documents and development initiatives is necessary both in the developing and developed worlds, that is to say it is important both for the countries of origin and receiving countries. A broader concept of interdependencies between migration and development is also an integral part of the new UN development agenda Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹ and the majority of its goals.

The study Migration and Development in Serbia is part of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Global Project Mainstreaming Migration into National Development Strategies aimed at supporting national governments and their partners to: improve registration, monitoring and processing data on migration; improve the use of human potentials of migration; as well as to direct migration management towards the increase of national development capacities, reducing the risks for migrants themselves, their families and communities of origin/destination. The project is to provide answers related to more efficient management of external migration, with a special focus on development and human rights. This four-year project is being implemented in eight countries, including Serbia, in the period 2014-2018. IOM is implementing the project in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

¹https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300
The Study on Migration and Development in Serbia has three main objectives. These are:

- To provide decision-makers with a comprehensive overview of the impacts of migration on national development priorities in different sector policies, as well as of national development policies and priorities in sector policies on migration and Serbia’s mobility model;

- To provide support to institutions in defining policy priorities and measures related to balanced mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in development policy;

- To support the development of realistic and proactive recommendations related to migration and development by defining recommendations on mainstreaming the phenomenon of migration in national sector policies.

The defined objectives are important to consider in many populations today, and seem particularly important in Serbia, where migration is not included in the policy, economic, academic or any public discourse in the measure expected. If migration is mentioned at all, it is to highlight ‘brain drain’ and move on. Immigration is not considered at all. The full potentials of Serbian diaspora are not acknowledged. The causes of a lack of perception of the complexity of migration issue should be sought in traditionalism, poor economic and social situation, general uncertainty, long-term isolation of the country, but also the lack of information. The potentials of migration for the country’s development are particularly not recognised, which also includes demographic revitalisation.

In accordance with the said objectives, the study is designed so that the introduction is followed by explanation of methodology, considerations of the links between the demographic and socioeconomic momentum of Serbia and the phenomenon of migration and vice versa, i.e. discussing the effects of migration on demographic and socioeconomic development of Serbia. An important part of the study is the critical analysis of adopted key national development and sector strategies, with a view of the method and content of integrating emigration/immigration and potential impact of this integration on the country’s development goals. Simultaneously, national strategies in which the phenomenon of migration has not been included, contrary to expectations, are listed. Further, mechanisms and measures for balanced mainstreaming of migration in national development and sector policies were discussed in focus groups and interviews with relevant individuals. Also, a set of recommendations is provided for national policy planning in order to better utilize the potential of migration with a view of development in Serbia. The study ends with concluding remarks.
2. METHODOLOGY

Definitions

Key migration terms used in this study are in accordance with the definitions provided in the Glossary on Migration published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2011). It defines migration in the following way: “The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification.”

For one of the basic terms, migrants, the 1998 United Nations Statistics Department Recommendations qualitative definition is used in addition to the one in the said Glossary, stating this is a person who moves to a country other than his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival the person will be a long-term immigrant.

Theoretical Framework

There is no universal theory to explain international migration. Instead of a universal theory, there is a generally accepted belief among researches in the area that there is a number of complex views related with this phenomenon. We will not consider authors’ concepts, but will provide an overview of two theories relevant for better understanding of the phenomenon of migration and the links between migration on one side, and demographic and socioeconomic development on the other, and consequently, more successful mainstreaming of external migration in different policies in Serbia. These are the Revised Push and Pull Model by Fassmann and Musil (Fassmann, Musil, 2014) and the Migration Transition Model: from emigration to immigration countries developed by Fassmann and Reeger (Fassmann, Reeger, 2012). The first of the chosen models enables a more complete understanding of the deterministic basis of individual decision on emigration/immigration, and the other of the stages of the migration process in Serbia, or the stages potentially awaiting our country.

**The Revised Push and Pull Model**

According to the classic push and pull model, all people are potential migrants if living conditions elsewhere are better than in the actual place of living and the cost of migration is lower than the gain which can be accumulated due to migration. The individual perception of the labour market related conditions is especially important, such as employment opportunities, level of income, speed of progress. However, today the perception of other conditions is becoming more and more important, such as the feeling of safety in an environment, social benefits, healthcare policy, the level of environmental protection, the level of democratic development, perspectives related to the future. This is why the individual’s knowledge of the potential destination country is important. In this respect, the importance of migrant connections contributing to the exchange of real information is also highlighted. According to this concept, the individual compares the total sum of positive and negative factors of their place of living with the total sum of positive and negative factors of another potential place of living in relation to the cost of migration. The negative factors related to poor conditions in the country of origin are often quoted in our literature also as push factors, and positive factors related to good conditions in the country of potential or real destination as pull factors.

The cost analysis of individual migration includes economic parameters such as the distance of potential destination and transport costs, entire body of legislation relevant for settling in the destination country, starting with the possibility of entry, through employment and protection of foreigners, to the citizenship procedure, but also the psychological cost of leaving the country of origin and coping in the new environment. According to Massey, the assistance and support available to immigrants from established migrant networks clearly lowers the cost and risk of migration (Massey et al., 1998).
The authors of the revised push and pull model, in addition to Massey’s insight, indicate that Lee (Lee, 1966) underlined that individual factors were also important for making the decision on migrating. Namely, the choice of factors related to the area that are evaluated and especially their evaluation depends on the individual, their personality, value system, stage of life, a number of personal circumstances and high level of knowledge. Lee states that the decision to migrate is never completely rational. He simultaneously stresses the importance of the factors of inertia, which is natural and needs to be overcome in the process of the move. In addition to Lee’s considerations, Fassmann and Musil also include the model and thesis by Stark (Stark, 1991) on the importance of adopted family strategy for the decision on migrating.

The revised push and pull model provides the most complete general insight in international migration. This is the reason why it has been chosen as theoretical framework for the Study one of the objectives of which is to better understand external migration and links between migration and development. The main weakness of the model is that it does not include certain push and pull factors in making the final decision on emigration/immigration as well as the differences between individuals with different socioeconomic characteristics on the issue.

The revised model can also be applied to the macro level (Fassmann, Musil, 2014). Migration from one region, country to another region, country is in direct proportion to the difference in attractiveness, particularly related to labour market circumstances, welfare and social benefits, and indirectly proportional to obstacles such as distance, cost of transport and political barriers. In defining the labour market demand, the authors stress the importance of other macro factors, such as the age structure of the population in the country of destination, market segmentation and the economic development cycle that characterises it. These factors influence migration directly, but also indirectly through public opinions and destination country strategies. Namely, a country can open its doors to migrants and present itself as an attractive living destination.

**Migration Transition Model: from emigration to immigration countries**

The model is based on empirical findings related to the change of direction in migration flows in conditions of long-term birth crisis in a country and consequently intensive ageing of its population. The concept developed by Fassmann and Reeger (Fassmann, Reeger, 2012) is based on the idea that the public opinion and legal system of such a country adapt to the new situation and develop immigration management mechanisms. In addition to demographic changes, the economic factors in the environment are also important, related to labour market structure and economic development cycle.
The starting position in this model is described as the moment when emigration is still higher than immigration or when the migration balance recorded is zero. In the next, middle or transitional phase, the former emigration state becomes the new immigration state. Changes are based primarily on demographic and economic reasons. Authors stress that this phase of different duration is characterised by the attempt of decision-makers to ignore the new situation, which causes delays in legislation changes. Even so, this phase moves to the next one, called adaptation or post transformation phase. The main characteristic of this phase is more or less awareness of immigration as necessity.

Although shown schematically, as any model of this type, the migration transition model “is useful to have in mind the dynamic process of possible changes in the relationship between emigration and immigration” (Fassmann, Musil, 2014) as well as the reasons explaining them and experiences accompanying them. Having in mind this model, Lesinska (2012) points out that the countries of West, South and East Europe are “old”, “new” and “future” immigration countries.

Sources of information

The focus of the Study is on sound considerations of set objectives, based on different types of evidence. It starts from a selected theoretical framework to better understand the phenomenon of migration, and considers the mutual relations between migration and development in Serbia, as well as balanced integration of the phenomenon of migration in national development and sector strategies. Study results are aimed at decision-makers.

To discuss the impact of development on migration in our country and vice versa, the data from the census and vital statistics have been used, the source of which is the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) and data in the Migration Profile developed by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (CRM). Simultaneously, findings from different national demographic and socioeconomic studies have been considered. In addition, relevant respectable reports from national and international sources have been used. The results from a number of projects on migration, its causes and effects have presented an important source for elaboration on these topics. We have focused primarily on the projects implemented in Serbia. A number of conference reports and proceedings on migration have been used. It should be noted that data for Serbia has been used excluding data for AP Kosovo and Metohija.

The part of the study related to the assessment of the extent to which migration is mainstreamed in key national development and sector strategies, and in the first step
lists all Government strategies adopted since 2001 to date or about to be adopted, selecting 14 strategic documents that are expected to include the phenomenon of migration judging by their subject matter. Next, each separate strategy is analysed based on the answers to the following questions: Is migration included in the document? If yes, how was it integrated? The answer to this question includes the presentation of the integration, critical analysis of the content of integration and the evaluation of the effects of integration of emigration/immigration on the country’s development goals. If it is not, why was it expected that migration would be included in a certain strategy? In this respect, the following development and strategic documents of the Government of Republic of Serbia have been analysed:

- National Millennium Development Goals in the Republic of Serbia
- National Sustainable Development Strategy
- Strategy and Policy of the Industrial Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011-2020
- Strategy for Support to the Development of SMEs, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the Period 2015-2020
- Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2024
- Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investments
- National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020
- Social Protection Development Strategy
- Republic of Serbia Public Health Strategy
- Strategy on Development of Education in Serbia by 2020
- Strategy on Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2016-2020 – Research for development
- Employment Policy and Social Policy Reform Programme in the process of EU Accession
- National Strategy for Youth for the period 2015-2025
- Official Statistics Programme for the period 2016-2020

Moreover, a discussion was organised in three focus groups about the mechanisms for balanced mainstreaming of migration in Serbian development and sector policies in late

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January and early February 2016. Groups were mixed, consisting of experts, practitioners and decision-makers. The discussion was organised based on five pre-defined questions, which were introduced with a short clarification. The following questions were asked:

Remittances, cash transfers from emigrants to people close to them in the country of origin, certainly contribute to a better life of the recipients. Simultaneously, there is a macroeconomic and social benefit from this type of resource. However, it is the desired objective of the majority of countries with a significant participation of remittances in GDP to have them proportionately contribute to the country’s development. Which sustainable mechanisms should be established by the country in order for the remittances to be considerably more in the function of development in Serbia?

Serbia is a country with a growing number of highly educated and highly skilled individuals working/staying abroad. In addition to the clearly negative effects, this could also represent a capital for Serbia. Successful and integrated professional migrants are as a rule motivated and have the resources (knowledge, skills, ideas, money, contacts) to contribute to the development of the country of origin. Which instruments can the government use to encourage transnational activities of experts in diaspora?

Universities in Serbia, especially Belgrade, in former Yugoslavia, used to attract foreign students from the region as well as those from unallied countries. Some of them stayed to live and work in our country after finishing their studies. It seems to make sense even today to insist on attracting foreign students and promoting their stay in Serbia. In what way could Serbia again become a regional educational centre and keep foreigners after graduating on its labour market?

Serbia is traditionally a country of emigration, and in the near future it could be a country of significant immigration of returnees and foreigners. Migration transition in Serbia, as well as the issues discussed, includes deep socio-economic reform in the country and political stability. Experiences of the countries that transitioned from emigration to immigration countries tell us that the policy response was delayed. Which developmental and sectoral solutions should be used to move towards migration changes that would assume a higher number of returnees and foreigners moving into Serbia?

The final question was: Which realistic and proactive recommendation on this topic would you offer for further development of any national development or sector strategic document?
Two interviews were also conducted based on the same five questions with important individuals that did not participate in the focus group research. The synthesis of the full discussion in three focus groups and the discussion during interviews was used as the most important source for determining the realistic and proactive recommendations for national policy development with a view of better utilization of the migration potential in the function of development in Serbia.
3. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC MOMENTUM IN SERBIA AND THE PHENOMENON OF MIGRATION

Both selected theoretical concepts, the application of the Revised Push and Pull Model on the macro level and the Migration Transition Model highlight the importance of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of a population for the phenomenon of emigration/immigration. In this sense, this Chapter presents an overview of the empirical findings related to basic population components and those important for the present economic, social and cultural contexts relevant for understanding the migration model in Serbia. This has been done in three ways. In addition to classic demographic indicators, research findings supplementing them and results of different population projections, it presents the public opinion relevant to emigration/immigration and different information reflecting the level of development in the Serbian society.

Demographic challenges

Serbia is facing a number of serious demographic issues. The most important are childbearing far below generation replacement, intensively postponed birth of the first child, depopulation, excessive population ageing and negative migration balance. These are interconnected in various ways. The natural and mechanical components of population development are in relationship through the shared part of the deterministic base and effects (effects of a phenomenon directly impacting a different phenomenon and vice versa), but are also connected through a policy response aimed at improving Serbia’s demographic future.

Childbearing crisis

The analysis of the average number of live births of 33 generations of women that have left the fertility period of life at the time of the 2011 Census, shows that Serbia is facing a phenomenon of insufficient births and long-term stabilized births at a low level of 1.8 child per woman (Chart 3.1). However, looking at the average number of live births of the generation of women at the end of their fertility period at the time of the 2011 Census, as well as the widespread childbearing postponement, enables us to predict an end to the stabilized low level of completed fertility in Serbia, and its drop below the level of 1.8 children per woman (Rašević, 2015a).

Chart 3.1 Average number of live births for the generations of women born between 1930 and 1975, Serbia, 2011 Census.
At the time of the 2011 Census, a total of 74,666 women were registered in Serbia, or nearly one-third of all women, who were between 30 and 34 and had not given birth. Due to special processing of the recorded sociodemographic data, their profile is available to us, through a set of most common characteristics among the participants (Table 3.1). An average participant of this subpopulation declared she was Serbian (86%), she was living in a town (78%), not living with a partner (73%), she was employed (64%) and she completed college or university education (48%) (Rašević, 2015b).

Table 3.1 Sociodemographic characteristics of women without children ages 30-34, Serbia, 2011 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of women ages 30-34</th>
<th>Participation (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nationality</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbian</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian/Muslim</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegrin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional affiliation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>De facto marital status</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not living in common law partnership or marriage</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in common-law partnership</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living in marriage</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete primary education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highschool education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College or university education</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic activity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property income</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-makers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of residence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban settlements</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other settlements</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rašević, 2015b
Postponement of the birth of the first child for a later age is an important cause of the low level of fertility today. Especially when there is a relatively high proportion of women between 30 and 34 of age who have no children. Although still in childbearing age, it can be expected that a number of them from different reasons, such as the physiologically reduced fertility, secondary infertility, higher psychological cost of marriage and childbearing in advanced years or not entering marriage because of illness, will not be able to fulfil their projections on the desired number of children.

Research results give additional warning about the transition of attitudes starting with individuals’ expectations for the government to reduce the financial cost of parenting through cheap loans for addressing housing issues of families with children and better care for the children of working mothers so that there would be more births in 1990s (Rašević, 1995), to the insisting of youth today on difficult to achieve preconditions for childbearing, such as financial and psychological security and good partner relations (Rašević, Sedlecki, 2011). Although they value parenthood highly and wish to have more than one child, female students at senior years on three faculties of the University of Belgrade insisted on having basic risks under control before they could have a first child (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Attitudes of University of Belgrade female students on the necessary requirements for having a first child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical Faculty</th>
<th>Pharmaceutical Faculty</th>
<th>Faculty of Political Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Good health</td>
<td>Good health</td>
<td>Good health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Desire for child</td>
<td>Desire for child</td>
<td>Desire for child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Financial independence</td>
<td>Stable partnership</td>
<td>Financial independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> Employment</td>
<td>Financial independence</td>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> Stable partnership</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Stable partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> Family support</td>
<td>Family support</td>
<td>Flat/house in possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong> Optimum life age</td>
<td>Optimum life age</td>
<td>Family support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong> Flat/house in possession</td>
<td>Flat/house in possession</td>
<td>Career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong> Marriage</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong> Career</td>
<td>Career</td>
<td>Optimum life age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong> Local community support</td>
<td>Local community support</td>
<td>Local community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong> Social policy measures</td>
<td>Social policy measures</td>
<td>Social policy measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong> Car in possession</td>
<td>Car in possession</td>
<td>Car in possession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The students scored offered potential requirements for childbearing with 1 (very important) or 2 (important and not important) or 3 (not important). The importance of each variable was scored with medium value of the score.

Source: Rašević, Sedlecki, 2011.

The results of the 2011 Census as well as later in-depth studies indicate that the childbearing crisis in Serbia will deepen and simultaneously uncover that the space for policy action in relation to increasing the fertility level is relatively small. In particular, the question of the broader effects of classical population policy measures
predominantly implemented in Serbia remains open. These are the child allowance and paid maternity leave after childbirth. Therefore, it is important to reduce not only the economic, but also the social and psychological cost of parenting through support of modern forms of partnership between women and men and assistance with attaining the work-life balance as well as balance between childbearing and education.

Depopulation and intensive population ageing

Long-term insufficient number of births is the main driver of depopulation and deep changes in the age structure of the population. In the last intercensal period, 2002-2011, it is estimated that the population of Serbia was reduced by a minimum of 367 and a maximum of 422 thousand, with the migration component contribution between 15% and 26% (Nikitović, Predojević Despić, Marinković, 2015). The trend of registering negative population growth rate continues. Thus the number of live births in 2014 was by 34.8 thousand less than the number of deaths. Simultaneously, 2014 was the twenty-third year in a row recording negative population growth in Serbia. In relative terms, population growth rate in 2014 was -4.9 per thousand, i.e. it was virtually unchanged in relation to the previous calendar year. Contrary to that, Europe as a whole recorded zero population growth, and Bulgaria with negative rate of around six per thousand was the only among all EU countries to record a lower rate than Serbia (Pison, 2015).

Serbia is among of the areas where the demographic ageing process reached high proportions. The process of population ageing started from the top of the age pyramid (increased number of elderly) and the base of the pyramid (decreased number of youth). The result today is that the number of people over 65 years of age in Serbia is by 24% higher than the number of people under 15. Around 1,276 thousand people in Serbia is aged 65 and more. With the participation of the elderly in the total population at 17.8%, Serbia is among the oldest populations in Europe (Pison, 2015). Average age of Serbian population registered by the 2011 Census was 42.2 years.

The results of the projections by different authors indicate that towards the middle of this century Serbia will be a less populated and older country than it is today (Nikitović, 2009; Penev, 2013; Republički zavod za statistiku, 2014). In the following decades Serbia could not avoid the decrease in size and the ageing of population even if it attained the rehabilitation of fertility or attained zero migration balance (Chart 3.2). The research of policy scenarios, however, shows that “the decreased population decline can be best achieved in the short and midterm by implementing policies directed at increasing net immigration, while in the long term it is nearly equally well achieved by implementing pro-immigration policies, or those that aim at increased fertility rates. The successful implementation of both policies simultaneously nearly doubles the effect of individual policies” (Nikitović, 2013).
Chart 3.2. Population of Serbia in the period 1961-2002 (Census results) and projections for the period 2010-2060 (by variants)

Source: Penev, 2013.

Negative migration balance

In the Law on Migration Management\(^3\), in accordance with EU Regulation 862, external migration is defined as migration of duration or expected duration of over one year. Data availability and quality analysis on external migration in Serbia, performed within the SEEMIG Project\(^4\), has shown many problems in this sphere. Namely, the highest number of indicators on international migration flows can be accessed based on the Ministry of Interior (MoI) records, but it in fact relates only to foreign nationals. Limited availability of migration data from MoI records does not allow the analysis of all desired indicators relating to immigrants. The number of Serbian citizens – returnees from work/stay abroad, is not known on the annual level. Database on emigration flows of Serbian citizens does

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\(^3\) Official Gazette RS, No. 107/12

\(^4\) SEEMIG aimed to better understand and address longer term migratory, human capital and demographic processes of South-East Europe, as well as their effects on labour markets, national and regional economies. The project was implemented in eight countries in the period 2012-2014. The Institute of Social Sciences, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and Municipality Kanjiža were Serbian partners that participated in its implementation.
not exist, considering that the citizens who leave to work/stay abroad mainly do not unregister from their place of residence (Institute of Social Sciences, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2013).

Assessment based on corrected results on the total number of people in Serbia derived from the 2011 Census, for comparability with the 2002 Census and data on population growth in the last intercensal period, indicates a net emigration between 6 and 11 thousand persons annually in the period 2002-2011 (Nikitović, Predojević Despić, Marinković, 2015). It should be also noted that based on the data of available immigration statistics of the main destination countries for Serbian nationals, net emigration loss of Serbia in the period 2008-2011 is estimated to have averaged 15 thousand annually (Kupiszewski, Kupiszewski, Nikitović, 2012; Institute of Social Sciences, 2013). Having in mind both estimates, it can be assumed that in the first half of the observed period the negative migration balance was lower due to better economic circumstances in Serbia, and that it increased from 2008, because of the abolishment of visas for Serbian citizens in the majority of European countries (Nikitović, Predojević Despić, Marinković, 2015).

On emigration

Serbia is traditionally a country of emigration. In addition to Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Sweden, to which people with primary and high school education go, and overseas countries that are interesting for students and highly educated persons, popular new destinations are Italy (attractive for those with high school) and Great Britain (popular with the most educated youth). Among new EU countries, the most important destinations for Serbian citizens are Slovenia and Hungary. A representation of emigration from Serbia was based on Eurostat data and available national statistical offices data (Kupiszewski, Kupiszewski, Nikitović, 2012; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015).

Censal data on Serbian emigration, even with a relatively high non-coverage of our citizens living abroad, still represent the best source for examining the socioeconomic characteristics of this population and their territorial origin. The 2011 Census registered 311.4 thousand individuals in emigration, which is by a quarter less than the 2002 Census. The causes for such a big reduction of the number of citizens working/staying abroad are numerous. According to authors Jelena Predojević Despić and Goran Penev (2014), the main causes are: the method of registration – through households in the country, boycott of Albanian ethnic minority, new remote destinations, considerable number of applicants for asylum, so-called fake asylum seekers and intensive emigration of highly educated individuals, who are as a rule less covered by the census. However, regardless of the insufficient coverage of the emigrant contingent, the quoted authors, as well as other authors (Stanković, 2014; Bobić, Vesković Andelković, Kokotović, 2016) agree that emigration from Serbia was less intensive during the last intercensal period than during 1990s.
The participation of emigrants in the total population in 2011 was 4.2%. The relevant information for 2002 was at the level of 5.3%.

According to the results of the 2011 Census, more than one-half (53.7%) of registered citizens in the emigration pool, resided in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The found dispersion of receiving countries for our citizens should be highlighted as well as the participation of over 6% of those residing in former Yugoslav republics.

Among the emigrants that originated from Serbia according to the 2011 Census, the highest number were persons working abroad (53,1%) and their family members (36,4%) who were there as dependents. Students participated in the emigrant contingent with a share of 3.9%. Men prevailed among the persons working abroad and women among family members. Among the students there was somewhat more female persons.

Consistently in the registered emigrant contingent by far the highest share, 80.5%, were persons of ages 15-64, followed by children under 14 (16.2%) in the structure of this contingent, and the smallest share were elderly of 65 and more years of age (3.3%) (Chart 3.3).

Chart 3.3. The participation of external migrants and resident population of Serbia in large age groups, 2011 Census.

In addition to the considerably better age structure, the education structure of the emigrant contingent is also better in relation to the population in the country. The 2011 Census registered among emigrants aged 15 and above 6.0% of persons with no or uncompleted primary school, 27.5% of persons with completed primary school, 38.8% emigrants with high school were registered and 15.7% with higher education. The identified education structure of registered emigrants in 2011 was better than the same
structure registered by the previous Census.

The distribution of external migrants in accordance with the length of stay obtained from the 2011 Census differed from the relevant distribution registered by the previous Census in the domination of persons that had been abroad for under 4 years (42.3%). This can be explained by methodological and organisational solutions of the 2011 Census, increased departure of asylum seekers, negative effects of the global financial crisis in Serbia and receiving countries, and/or possibly by circular migration (Stanković, 2014). Persons that had been abroad between 5 and 14 years participated with 26.5% and those that had been outside the country for 15 and more years participated with a share of 31.2% in this structure (Chart 3.4).

Chart 3.4. The participation of emigrants from Serbia according to the length of work/stay abroad, 2011 Census

![Chart 3.4](image)

Source: Stanković, 2014.

Serbs dominated in the 2011 registered emigrant contingent, with their relative participation being considerably lower than the relative participation in the resident (regular) population of Serbia (61.9% and 83.3% respectively).

In the registered emigration contingent, more numerous are those who departed abroad from non-urban settlements in relation to the persons who left from urban ones (57.8% in relation to 42.2%).

The results of the 2011 Census have shown no new zones of high emigration. These are still the areas in Central and Eastern parts of Serbia (the so-called CIS zone consisted of 14 municipalities) and in South West Serbia (the so-called JZS zone with 5 municipalities). The share of the registered population that emigrated from the CIS

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5 These are the following municipalities: Bor, Despotovac, Golubac, Kladovo, Kućevo, Majdanpek, Malo Ćrnice, Negotin, Petrovac na Mlavi, Požarevac, Svilajnac, Veliko Gradište, Žabari and Žagubica.

6 These are the following municipalities: Novi Pazar, Priboj, Prijeponje, Sjenica and Tutin.
zone in the total population of this zone was 18.8% and the share of the registered population abroad from the JZS zone in the total population of this zone was identified at 10.0%. It is simultaneously assumed that municipalities Bujanovac and Preševo, as in the year 2002, could be characterised as the third “hot” emigration zone, but because of the boycott of the Albanian ethnic minority this could not be proven (Predojević Despić, Penev, 2014).

Current employment of Serbian citizens abroad is regulated with the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance. According to this law, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, National Employment Service (NES) and employment agencies are the main channels for legal employment of our citizens abroad. Those that are employed in this way have the right to at least equal treatment based on labour relations as the citizens of the country of employment. NES and the mentioned agencies, in addition to employment agency outside Serbia, are also responsible for providing information about the conditions and opportunities for the employment of migrants and potential migrants.

In addition to the mentioned legal provisions, there is a number of bilateral agreements on labour migration with destination countries, including the latest agreements with Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Libya, as well as special ones with Germany and France. Former Yugoslavia signed some of the agreements that are still valid today. Also, Serbia has adopted a number of international conventions in this sphere. Although international cooperation in the area of labour migration aims to promote legal migratory flows, fully informed migration and social protection of labour migrants, it is one of the factors among many that influence the decision to leave the country (Manke, 2010). This type of agreement is classified under the so-called meso-level push factors (Pavlov, 2011).

The last agreement was signed in mid-2013 between the Government of Serbia and France about the mobility of youth. The agreement between these two countries promotes the mobility of students and young professionals aged between 18 and 35 years, with the aim of professional development and learning about new places during a maximum of two years, with equal access to labour rights as the citizens of the country of destination. It is stipulated that the annual exchange volume may not exceed 500 persons.

According to the Migration Profile, over one thousand workers was employed through NES and employment agencies at the request of foreign employers in 2014.

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8 On 31 December 2014, 71 private employment agencies in Serbia were registered (Government of Serbia, 2015).
9 There are seven migration service centres in Serbia established under NES for information provision to migrants and potential migrants (Government of Serbia, 2015).
Simultaneously, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs registered that Serbian employers posted around a thousand workers to work temporarily abroad, by way of detachment (Government of Serbia, 2015).

**On immigration**

Between the last two population censuses, according to the results of the 2011 Census, 67.6 thousand persons moved into Serbia from abroad, out of which nearly one-third was from Bosnia and Herzegovina (31.0%). Among other countries, Montenegro should be mentioned (17.2%), Croatia (9.1%) and Germany (8.2%). On the national level, immigrants from additional eight countries represented a share of between 2.0% and 3.0%. In addition to those that have moved in from European countries, there were also those that moved in from the USA and China (Nikitović, Predojević Despić, Marinković, 2015). Information on immigrants is not precise, because it only includes persons registered to whom foreign countries presented the one before last place of residence at the moment of recording.

Immigration towards Serbia in the recent period, in accordance with the census data, primarily consisted of Serbian nationals that moved from surrounding countries, returned from foreign countries mostly as retired, but there were also those who wanted to continue their careers in the homeland. There were also forced returnees among the immigrants. Foreigners presented a minority in the immigrant population. Only one in four registered immigrants in Serbia from abroad (13.8 thousand) after 2002 was a foreign national.

When talking about current immigration flows, according to the latest published data in the Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia for (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015), the biggest influx of foreigners in 2014 was, as in the previous two years, from China, Russian Federation, Romania, Macedonia and Libya. 12,490 persons from these countries were registered. Their share in the total population of foreigners was at 49.5%.

The main reasons for immigration of 7,337 of those that were granted temporary residence in Serbia for longer than 90 days for the first time in 2014 were family reunification (41.6%) and work (41.7%). Women were mainly coming for reasons of family reunification, and men for work. Every tenth person (10.1%) was granted the first residence permit for education purposes in our country.

In 2014, there were 5,035 permanently settled foreigners in the Republic of Serbia, which is a significant decrease in relation to 2013, when 7,793 were registered. As in the previous years, in 2014 the majority of foreigners were permanently settled on the grounds of marriage (83.6%).
There were 769 foreign nationals in NES records on 31 December 2014. Among them, almost two-thirds were in the age group of 30 to 49 years (63.9%) and, also, more than two-thirds were with no education or with the lowest level of education (68.9%).

Unlike the long tradition of entering bilateral agreements to regulate labour migration of Serbian citizens in destination countries, it is important to note that the Law on Employment of Foreigners in Serbia was adopted as late as November 2014. The most important articles of this Law are articles 4, 9 and 24. According to this Law, a foreigner employed in Serbia has equal rights and obligations in relation to work, employment and self-employment, as well as insurance in case of unemployment, as the citizens of the Republic. Employment of foreigners is possible provided they have approval for temporary stay or permanent residence and work permit. This law sets out the conditions and procedures for issuing personal work permits and work permits. The Government can adopt a decision to limit the number of foreign nationals issued work permits in case of disturbances in the labour market.

Based on Readmission Agreements, 5,398 persons were returned to Serbia in 2014, in relation to 7,516 in 2013 and 6,740 in 2012 (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2014; Vlada Republike Srbije, 2013). The majority of these persons returned from Germany and Hungary.

In 2014, according to MoI records, 16,500 asylum seekers were registered, which is over three times more than in the previous calendar year. Among these, the majority came from Syria and Afghanistan, followed by Eritrea and Somalia. However, out of a total of 16,500 expressed intentions to seek asylum, only 388 persons or 2.4% submitted the application for asylum. In the period between 2010 and 2014, the number of expressed intents for asylum increased over thirty times (from 520 in 2010 to 16,500 in 2014). Simultaneously, a reverse tendency related to the share of asylum seekers that submitted the request for asylum was registered (41.4% in 2010 in relation to 2.4% in 2014). Submitting requests for asylum does not mean one really wishes to seek asylum. Thus in 2014, the Office for Asylum made 6 decisions approving the applications for asylum, 12 decisions denying applications for asylum and 325 conclusions on stopping the procedure because after submitting the request, asylum seekers left the Asylum Centre.

The situation with irregular migration is well illustrated by two sets of information. In 2014, 7,354 persons were discovered illegally present in Serbia. This represents a considerable increase, by 2,632 persons, in relation to 2013. Also, 8,238 illegal entries into Serbian territory were prevented, which was nearly at the same level as the previous calendar year.

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10 http://www.minrzs.gov.rs/lat/aktuelno/item/1562-zakon-o-zaposljavanju-stranaca
Serbia is facing and will be facing irregular migrants more and more because of its geographical position, that is, because of its border being also largely external border of the EU. The highest number of migrants entering Serbia illegally, submit applications for asylum after arrest and are referred to one of the centres for asylum seekers. However, the majority of foreign nationals who enter Serbia illegally, do not wait for a decision, because they, also illegally, proceed to one of the EU countries.

An average asylum seeker in Serbia in 2013, based on 53 interviews conducted in the Asylum Centre in Banja Koviljača, is a man (90.6%), 26.8 years old, single (67.9%), from Syria (20.8%), without prior migration experience (94.3%), coming from urban background (92.4%), with completed high school (69.8%), speaking at least one foreign language (69.8%) and considered to be poor (92.5%). This research also confirmed the findings of other studies showing that migrant networks play a big role in the selection of the country of final destination (relatives and friends living there), but also information accessed through the Internet (Lukić, 2014).

Even with the continued trend of decrease in the size of refugee population, in 2014 around 44 thousand refugees were living in Serbia, out of whom 32 thousand had come from Croatia. In the same year, over 200 thousand persons displaced from AP Kosovo and Metohija were registered. According to both the number of refugees and the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), Serbia was the first in Europe in 2013.

**Perceptions of international migration**

With the aim to understand the perception of immigration in Serbia, seven expert interviews were conducted. Representatives of the government, unions and chamber of commerce were interviewed, an expert for migration in a relevant NGO, as well as three professors with Faculties of Geography, Economics and Philosophy of the University of Belgrade. The view that migration is not present in political, economic, academic and public discourse in general was by far predominant among the interviewees. Even if migration is mentioned at all, brain drain is highlighted and then moved on. Immigration is not even considered. The causes for not understanding the potential of mainstreaming migration in the country’s development programmes, according to experts, should be sought in traditionalism, unfavourable economic and social situations, general insecurity, the country’s isolation and similar, but also in the lack of information (Institute of Social Sciences, 2013).

Two studies are particularly important for the public opinion perceptions in Serbia related to international migration.

One of the aims of the representative research conducted in November 2010 in Serbia
was to determine the emigration potential of our society (Bačević et al, 2011). 1,090 respondents over 18 years of age were surveyed. In addition to the general sample of 880 respondents, another 210 persons from a special sample were interviewed, made up of returnees from foreign countries, that is, the persons that spent at least six months out of the country during any time in the past for any reason.

The results showed that, in a hypothetical situation that Serbia has already become EU member, one in four respondents (26.4%) from the general sample would “surely” look for employment in another EU country. “Probably”, the next offered modality as answer to the question asked, was chosen by one in six surveyed persons (15.2%) from the general sample. Or in other words, 41.6% of interviewees from the general sample demonstrated manifest or latent preparedness to look for employment outside of Serbia. Returnees in Serbia from abroad expressed manifest preparedness to look for employment in a different country (one in three respondents) in relation to the general population (one in four participants). However, if we look at the accumulated manifest and latent preparedness, then there is almost no difference between the general sample and special sample in relation to the preparedness of the respondents to find employment outside of Serbia (41.6% and 42.4% respectively).

Respondents under 30 years of age expressed particular preparedness to do so (high school and university students), active persons, unemployed, persons from large and poor families, those that believed that stay abroad had positive effects to the people from here, as well as pro-West oriented respondents (Chart 3.5).

Chart 3.5. Relative participation of respondents that would seek or probably seek employment in an EU country (in %), Serbia, 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student population</th>
<th>Politically most potent (index)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents from households with 7 and more members</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers and technicians with high vocational education</td>
<td>Generation 30-49 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly educated</td>
<td>Household income up to RSD 10,000 a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think that stay abroad has a positive impact on our people</td>
<td>Skilled and highly-skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-West oriented</td>
<td>Total sample average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Politically least potent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content (index)</td>
<td>Completed only primary school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homemakers
Convinced in the success of the authorities in the country (Index)
Do not believe in positive effects of staying abroad (Index)
Respondents from two-member households
Single people
Agricultural producers
People over 50 years of age
Pensioners

Source: Baćević et al., 2011.

Potential emigrants to EU countries were asked also whether they would plan to leave the country alone or with families. More than one-third of respondents would go abroad alone (35.2%), and more than one-fifth of participants would go only with the intent to have the family join them later (22.3%), which implies, that at least at the beginning, the majority of new emigrants would live in EU countries without their family members. 27.6% of participants would emigrate together with their families.

The majority of potential emigrants surveyed would stay abroad between one and three years (26.3%) or more than three years (24.1%), but not few participants expressed the readiness to work outside of Serbia until they retire (18.8%) or to forever stay in one of EU countries (11.5%). Only one in sixteen respondents or 6.2% of interviewed individuals would like to work abroad for less than one year.

The public opinion perceptions on immigrants in Serbia can be well seen by answering the question (What should the Government do with the people coming from less developed countries to work here?”) asked in the European Value Study, in the fourth
wave conducted in 2008. According to the results, the attitudes in the general population in Serbia towards migrants vary. There were 27.4% of registered completely open views (“Whoever wishes to may come”), 29.2% considers that immigrants can come if they already have a job in Serbia, and 34.9 interviewees stated that the number of immigrants should be strictly set in advance. One in twelve respondents (8.4%) was, however, absolutely intolerant, feeling that the Government should forbid foreigners to come and work here. It is possible that qualitatively different attitudes would be registered, that is, somewhat more unfavourable attitudes towards migrants if the research was conducted today, having in mind the issues raised in public on the topic of Serbia facing a migrant crisis.

Socioeconomic framework

The socioeconomic momentum of Serbia will be shown by using the two latest analytical reports. These are the Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in Serbia and the United Nations Common Country Assessment for the Republic of Serbia (CCA Serbia). The first document is a Government of Serbia Document from September 2014. The second document was accepted by the government in mid-2015. In addition to the population, they include a number of important economic and social themes. Both documents were prepared to determine priorities of action in the coming period based on situation. Their aim conditioned that the findings reached through a quantitative approach be in the majority of cases compared with relevant data from other countries. We will shortly present the most important findings. On the macro level they can contribute to answer the question of why our country has a high emigration and low immigration potential.

The summary of the Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in Serbia highlights the following findings.

According to the SILC, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in the Republic of Serbia stood at 24.6% in 2012, the highest rate compared to the 28 European Union Member States.

A total of 42.1% of the population of the Republic of Serbia (three million people) is at risk of poverty or social exclusion as a combination of three different factors (risk of poverty, low work intensity and severe material deprivation). This is considerably above

11 http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/


13 CCA Serbia document was acquired owing to the kindness of the staff in the United Nations Population Fund in Serbia. It will soon be published at http://www.unesco.org/new/en/venice/undafcca/
the average for the 28 European Union Member States (24.8%). This value is also higher than in the Member States with the exception of Bulgaria and Romania.

According to both indicators of inequality of income distribution (Gini coefficient and income quintile share ratio), inequality in the Republic of Serbia is higher than in any European Union Member State.\(^\text{14}\)

The impact of social transfers on reducing the risk of poverty is insufficient and significantly lower than in the European Union. In 2012, social transfers (excluding old-age and survivors’ pensions) reduced the at-risk-of-poverty rate by 21.7%, compared to a 34.4% reduction in the European Union.

Regional disparities in the Republic of Serbia are among the highest in Europe. Out of a total of 145 municipalities and towns, 46 are extremely underdeveloped, 23 of which are classified as devastated areas, i.e. municipalities with development level below 50% the national average.

The youth activity rate has been recording a protracted downward trend, and the youth unemployment rate has surged since the onset of the crisis – from 35.1% in 2008 to 49.4% in 2013. In addition to being unemployed and inactive, a significant number of young people did not participate in education or training – approximately 150,000 (19.5% of the total number of young people aged 15-24) in 2013. The unemployment rate of older workers has been growing in recent years, as well as the unemployment rate of persons with lower levels of education.

Although allocations for education as a percentage of GDP in Serbia are similar to those of other European countries, our educational system still has lower outcomes in relation to the international average, and education on all levels is still directed at the transfer of academic knowledge, with a visible low level of development of general and key competences of youth.

95.8% of the population in the Republic of Serbia is covered by mandatory health insurance. Despite the adequacy of the regulatory framework, inequalities in health and

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\(^{\text{14}}\) The Gini coefficient measures inequality in the overall population, with values from 0 to 1 (0-100%), whereas the value of 0 denotes full equality of consumption/income of all individuals, and value 1 total concentration of expenditure/income on only one individual. In 2013, the value of this coefficient in Serbia was 38.7.

The quintile share ratio S80/S20 measures total equivalent consumption/income of the upper and lower quintiles. The upper quintile represents 20% of the population disposing of the highest equivalent consumption/income, and the lowest quintile 20% of the population with the lowest equivalent consumption/income. Thus defined indicator only measures changes in the upper/lower quintile of equivalent consumption/income. In 2013, its value in Serbia was 9.8.

http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/rs/socijalno-ukljucivanje-u-rs/statistika/nejednakost/
health care between vulnerable categories (population in remote rural areas, persons with disabilities, socially vulnerable persons and members of certain ethnic groups, or minorities) and the majority population persist in the Republic of Serbia. The indicators of efficiency in the health care system show lower values than those in EU countries, at the level of primary, secondary and tertiary health care alike.

The Roma population is still subjected to discrimination, particularly in relation to access to social and health care, employment and adequate housing.

The CCA Serbia analytical document provides a synthesis of the situation in the economic sphere. It says that Serbia is currently facing challenges of economic growth, underdevelopment of rural areas and regional disparities, high presence of environmental polluters, high unemployment rate, low level of investment, low level of competitiveness of the private sector, overburdened public sector and increased public debt. A considerable presence of the government in the economy was also highlighted, as well as public enterprises suffering great losses. It was particularly underlined that organised crime was one of the factors with a negative impact on the doing business in Serbia.

The achieved socioeconomic development of Serbian society in the context of explaining migratory movements in/from Serbia can also be presented in a different, comparative way. This includes positioning Serbia on relevant global lists. One of the most important reports in this respect is related to the value of the Human Development Index (HDI). This index represents a summary measure for evaluation of long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: long and healthy life, access to knowledge and descent living standard. On the HD list for 2014, with the value of this indicator being at 0.771, Serbia ranked 66 out of 188 countries and territories. Croatia, a country that Serbia can be compared to, among other things, because of the similar population size, ranked 47.

In addition to Serbia’s ranking on the HDI list, we will present its ranking on two more lists. The first is related to the Transition Report of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The progress of transition countries is measured by nine indicators including the most important elements of the market

15 Long and healthy life is measured through life expectancy. Access to knowledge is measured through: i) mean number of years of education among the adult population, representing an average level of attained education during life for persons over 25 years; and ii) expected number of years of education for children at the time of starting school, which is total number of years expected for children at the time of starting school under the condition that existing patterns of enrollement rates for concrete ages remain the same during the entire duration of life of the child. Living standard is measured over gross domestic income per capita expressed in constant international dollars converted by using purchase power parity rates.

http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/sr/home/library/poverty/izve_taj-o-humanom-razvoju-2014-rezime-.html

The reasons for emigration/immigration

How are the separate macro indicators of the socioeconomic situation in Serbia diffused through an individual’s mind and may be linked with their decision to emigrate from a country or immigrate to it? Further in this chapter we will show research results based on attitudes of individuals relevant for understanding the phenomenon of migration in our country. But before we do that, we should mention the views of Melegh (Melegh, 2012), who believes that the global position of the country of origin and the country of destination is an important factor influencing the decision to emigrate/immigrate, based on research findings showing that the individual has a very clear idea on this issue.

Recently, two empirical studies have been conducted, the findings of which enabled the authors of the IOM project Study on Emigration and Immigration of Serbia’s Citizens with Particular Focus on Youth to determine the main factors for the potential migrants’ leaving abroad, as well as the motives to come to Serbia and return to the country from abroad (Bobić, Vesković Anđelković, Kokotović, 2016).

The first research is *Territorial Capital in Serbia: Structural and Action Potential of Local Development* implemented by the Institute of Sociology and Social Research of

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17 Indicators are: privatisation of large companies, privatisation of small companies, enterprise restructuring, price liberalisation of, liberalisation of the trade and foreign exchange rates, competition policy, bank reform and interest rate liberalisation, capital market and non-banking financial institutions and overall infrastructure reform. Each indicator is measured according to the standards of developed market economies, showing synthesised assessment of progress achieved in a certain area, based on different data, descriptive information and analyses. Transition indicators have values of between 1 and 4.3, where 1 represents small or no change from rigid centrally planned economy, while the value of 4.3 represents a standard of a developed market economy.

http://www.sef.rs/uporedna_ekonomija/metodologija-evropske-banke-za-obnovu-i-razvoj.html


the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade in six towns in central and northern part of the country during 2013 and 2014.\textsuperscript{20} In the second research, implemented by the Centre for Free Elections and Democracy in two rounds in 2010 and 2013, within the PBILD - South Serbia UN Joint programme Strengthening Capacity for Inclusive Local Development in South Serbia and Promotion of Peace Building in South Serbia, surveyed the citizens of the Jablanički and Pčinjski Districts.

In both studies, the push factors were identified through an open question related to the local community issues that concern the respondent the most. Unemployment and unsatisfactory economic situation were singled out in the participants’ responses as the priority issues in all six towns and both districts. The basis for the mapping of the pull factors were answers to the question on the reasons of possible moving. The main motive to move to a foreign country with respondents from both studies would have been a better job in the sense of better salary, working conditions and professional advancement. The second most frequent responses were the reasons given related to the perception of the respondents that other societies enable a more comfortable, peaceful and healthier, or better quality life.

Research findings demonstrated that there is no difference in the push factors related to the environment of origin and pull factors related to the destination country among the subpopulation of youth (15 to 30 years) and the general population. Youth in all six towns and both districts also singled out unemployment and economic difficulties as the main problems of the environment they lived in. Simultaneously, better working and living conditions were highlighted as the main motives for potential moving to another country. As the authors of the said study particularly stressed, no respondents in this age group mentioned education as a potential reason for emigration.

The results of the said research confirm that the reasons from the economic circle are the predominant potential motives for emigrating from Serbia today, both among the general population and the population aged between 15 and 30 years. These findings are in accordance with the research results implemented in 2009 on a large sample among the younger part of the Serbian diaspora (surveyed individuals under 30 years of age) about the reasons that largely influenced their individual decisions to leave the country. Namely, “opportunity to find a better paid employment” and “opportunity to find any employment” were rated by the highest number of participants as a very important or important motive for emigration given on a list of potential reasons (64.2% and 62.5% respectively) (Baird, Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2010).

The economic factor is an important and potential and realistic reason to leave the

\textsuperscript{20} The case study method was applied during the conception and implementation of the survey. The results were representative on the level of each of the six towns that were included in the study.
country, regardless of age, but also education of Serbian citizens. This is shown by the survey results\textsuperscript{21} on the reasons that predominantly influenced the decision of highly educated individuals to leave Serbia for Canada and United States of America (USA) in the 1990s. At a distance of ten and more years, the respondents most often stated the uncertain future, negative outlook for children’s future, low living standards and war as the main reasons for emigration. That is, the economic reasons were the main or important integral part of other prominent reasons (Despić, 2015).

Even beside the fact that the economic factor is very important for making the decision on emigrating in our country, it is also possibly a socially acceptable motive to leave the country and an individual rationalization for other reasons. Especially, if we are talking about the motives of highly educated persons, experts and talents after 2000, to emigrate from Serbia, other non-economic reasons should also be considered, such as professional and individual self-realisation.

The motives for immigrating from abroad were, according to the results of the study conducted in six towns in Serbia, work, education, marriage and refugee status. These four reasons were given with different frequencies in different towns. Among the given reasons there was also the refugee status, because the majority of respondents that moved from abroad came from former Yugoslav republics (Bobić, Vesković Andelković, Kokotović, 2016).

The study conducted in South Serbia, surveyed returnees from abroad. In Pčinjski District, by far the most frequent reason for returning to the country was related to problems around acquiring work or residence permit in another, foreign country (main reason for 56.7% of respondents). In Jablanički District, nostalgia was the most frequent reason for return (26.9%), followed according to frequency by family and personal reasons with 19.2% each (Bobić, Vesković Andelković, Kokotović, 2016).

Mirjana Morokvašić (2011) discussed the motives to return to Serbia after 2000s with younger people aged between 25 and 40 years who were successful in the USA, Canada, Australia, Austria, Germany, France, Norway and Sweden. Their individual motives were different in nature: elderly parents, need to live in the country of one’s ancestors, accepting a partner’s decision, insisting on a more acceptable concept of living in Serbia, Belgrade’s cosmopolitanism. Still they all primarily wanted to participate in the economic and democratic development of the country. However, many of them were facing problems related to recognition of diplomas, insufficient efficiency of the society, professional stagnation and unacceptance of returnees. Some of the interviewees left the country again. The results of this qualitative research are a warning, showing what a complex and relative option the return to Serbia is.

\textsuperscript{21} 430 people were surveyed through an online questionnaire located on the Internet during 2008.
4. THE EFFECTS OF MIGRATION ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SERBIA

The previous Chapter discussed the demographic and socioeconomic momentum in Serbia. This was, on one hand, to explain the factors influencing the current migration model here, and on the other to understand the demographic framework and social context determining the space and provide recommendations for mainstreaming migration in various strategic documents. In this Chapter, however, with the focus on the effects of migration on development in Serbia, this phenomenon must be observed over a longer period of time. Most often time is needed for the long-term effects of population phenomena, including migratory movements, to exhibit. The key limitation when discussing this topic is that it has not been not studied much. Therefore, treating it will be based mainly on a qualitative approach and discussion on some of the effects of external migration, primarily emigration out of Serbia.

Migration in a time perspective

Serbia is traditionally a country of emigration. Migratory movements represent one of the important characteristics of the history of the people living in this area. Emigration began, according to Cvijić (1966), with Turkish conquest in the XIV century, because of retaliation as reaction to the resistance of rebels and the feeling of uncertainty among the population. It was a part of life of a large number of landless farmers between the First and Second World Wars, and is also present in the modern age.

One of the national reports drafted within the SEEMIG project related to the development of international migration in Serbia in the period 1950-2013 (Institute of Social Sciences, 2013). It observes, based on analysis of several indicators, the period of international migration in Serbia over nearly six decades from several angles, showing the full complexity of the migration issue and social circumstances in which it was developing.

The first viewpoint in the Report related to a number of crisis situations in continuous succession, first in former Yugoslavia and Serbia as its part, and then in Serbia. It started with a series of economic and social reforms that only at the end of 1980s led to a delayed start of the process of transition in the country at the time, through the break-up of Yugoslavia that was initiated in 1991, followed by war and international sanctions, and subsequent collapse of the economy and blocked changes to the socioeconomic system, to comprehensive political and economic reforms initiated in
2000, with a rapid increase of BDP per capita and repeated negative cycle of development due to the 2009 world economic crisis and its effects on Serbia.

In addition to the succession of serious crises in the country, emigration was influenced, as noted by the Report authors, also by the government’s attitude toward this phenomenon. It was extreme, from rigorous to liberal, and did not include a complex migration policy. Namely, the Report underlines that after the end of the Second World War, the communist regime almost entirely prevented legal international migration. The exception in Serbia was the controlled emigration of the majority of the Germans left (beginning of 1950s) and Turks, i.e. Islamic population (based on the 1954 Balkan Pact). Until mid-1960s, emigration was only possible based on bilateral agreements with other countries. In mid-1960s, strict limitations for moving abroad were revoked, employment and emigration completely liberalised, and efforts invested to, through bilateral international agreements, protect the rights of Yugoslav citizens “temporarily” working abroad. The liberalization was accompanied by an expansion of external, primarily economic, but also political migration. The number of emigrants increased continuously (up to the level of 270 thousand persons in 1991), followed by a significant increase during 1990s (there were 415 thousand according to the 2002 Census). The 2011 Census recorded their decrease by over 25% in relation to 2002. However, based on available data of the main receiving countries, it can be concluded that the number of emigrants from Serbia is considerably higher.

Serbia was also analysed in the Report from the viewpoint of a receiving country for forced migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia (over 600 thousand according to the Refugee Census in 1996). Before and during the 1999 NATO military intervention, over 200 thousand internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Kosovo and Metohija came to Serbia.

The authors of the Report (Institute of Social Sciences, 2013) also touched upon the issue of migration movements in the future. They estimated that Serbia would record a negative migration balance at the level of 15,000 individuals annually, before EU accession. Serbia’s EU accession would have a very important effect, i.e. large-scale emigration would occur, of explosive, but relatively short nature, as did happen with the emigration flows of Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians and Slovaks after the 2004 EU enlargement. However, it is considered that emigration from Serbia after EU accession would be relatively smaller in scale in comparison with the occurrences in the period 2004-2009 in the former socialist countries that became new EU members, because a great majority of individuals belonging to the post-war baby boom generation will have retired by then. After a short period of very intensive emigration caused by EU accession, it would be realistic to expect a rapid decrease of net migration loss, and finally, some 10-15 years later, a turnover to positive net migration. In this regard, the importance of immigration from countries outside the EU will probably grow over time,
because the economic and social development of Serbia would contribute not only to a decrease in emigration, but would also encourage immigration into the country.

**Demographic consequences**

Considering migration in a historic perspective is important because it seems that the long-standing tradition of emigrating from this area has made it a part of the value system and cultural circle in certain local environments and social structures. It also influenced the establishment of distributed migrant networks that reduce, as was already highlighted, the social, economic and psychological cost of leaving the country on the individual level. Analysing migration tendencies in the past, present and future is particularly important when discussing the demographic effects of migration.

Population effects of the long history of emigration from Serbia have not been studied enough. Even if the issue was raised, it was mostly reduced to quoting the number of people who emigrated from our country. This is important information that is also very difficult to determine. However, the number of persons that emigrated from Serbia is significant. The number of emigrants must have influenced the reduced number of permanent residents in Serbia. This did not affect population size only directly. It also affected it indirectly. Serbia directly lost the people who emigrated, but also indirectly their children when they were leaving together and/or the children born in a different, foreign country.

In addition to the effects related to population size, emigration has also affected the scope of insufficient childbearing and population ageing, which are a reality in Serbia. Namely, it is in the nature of the emigration process that predominantly young people leave the country of origin. In representing the basic structures of registered individuals in the emigration contingent in 2011, it was demonstrated that the younger age group of the population is working/staying abroad, in relation to the age structure of the resident population of Serbia. The most important difference between these two structures is related to the considerably higher relative participation of persons aged between 20 and 39 years in the emigrant contingent (38.3%), in relation to the entire Serbian population (26.6%).

Also, the previous Chapter presents research results based on the 2011 Census findings on the maintenance of the previously determined, during earlier population censuses, emigration zones in Serbia. It was shown that the share of the registered population that emigrated from the so-called CIS zone, consisting of 14 municipalities in Central and Eastern parts of Serbia, in the total population of this zone was 18.8%, and the share of the registered population abroad from the so-called JZS zone, 5 South West Serbia municipalities, in the total population of this zone was determined at the level of 10.0%
(Map 4.1) (Predojević Despić, Penev, 2014). It is impossible to expect that moving to work/stay abroad from certain parts of Serbia on such a scale would not have serious effects on their demographic development.

Map 4.1. The share of persons abroad in the total population of municipalities, Serbia, Census 2011

The demographic development of certain local communities was particularly threatened because of the emigration flows. Namely, the results of bringing the analysis down to a lower level of observation, the level of municipalities in the so-called CIS zone, show that one-third of the population of municipalities Malo Crniće, Žabari and Kučevo was abroad at the time of the 2011 Census. Simultaneously, a quarter of the inhabitants of municipalities Negotin, Petrovac na Mlavi, Veliko Gradište, Kladovo and Svilajnac were abroad, as well as one-fifth of the inhabitants of municipalities Despotovac, Golubac and Žagubica. In the so-called JZS zone, the relative participation of emigrants in the total population size in the municipality varied from 13.1% in Tutin to 8.4% in Priboj (Stanković, 2014). It is assumed that there is also a high relative participation of persons working/staying abroad in the municipalities Bujanovac and Preševo, which made the third emigration zone in Serbia according to the 2002 Census (Predojević Despić, Penev, 2012), but their level could not be determined because of the last boycott of the Census by the Albanian population. The previous Census determined a very high share of 23.1% of persons working/staying abroad from Bujanovac and Preševo in the total population of this zone of emigration. An especially high participation of the
population abroad was registered in municipality Preševo, where in 2002, more than one in four inhabitants (27.3%) was abroad (Predojević Despić, Penev, 2012).

A more complete picture of the demographic effects of the determined high participation of persons working/staying abroad recorded by certain municipalities in Serbia in 2011, could be attained if the analysis also included the length of stay of emigrants from these environments abroad. But regardless of the suspicion in the accuracy of data on the number of years of working/staying abroad for the registered persons presented in the previous chapter, this finding enables determining the relations between the observed phenomena and tendencies in their movement (Stanković, 2014).

Table 4.1. Persons working/staying abroad according to the time of leaving the country and type of settlement they left from, Serbia, 2011 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of departure abroad</th>
<th>Republic of Serbia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>313,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2011</td>
<td>175,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-2001</td>
<td>89,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1990</td>
<td>28,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1980</td>
<td>16,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1970</td>
<td>2,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 and before</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stanković, 2014

If we accept this opinion, we can also apply it to the similar data related to the time of departure of persons working/staying abroad. In this sense, the following result of the 2011 Census is important for our topic. It is related to the distribution of persons working/staying abroad according to the time of leaving the country and type of settlement from which they emigrated. The results show a domination of emigrants that went abroad from non-urban settlements in all time periods in relation to those that emigrated from urban settlements (Table 4.1) (Stanković, 2014). The most convincing domination was determined for the period 1971-1980 and the period 1981-1990 (70.7% and 72.3% respectively). It coincides with the biggest decline in the total agricultural population size in the intercensal period 1971-1981 (index 61.9) and with the significant decrease of its share in the overall population from 42.7% in 1971 to 17.3% in 1981 (Radivojević, 2006). The presented finding has opened the issue of economic effects of emigration and the analysis of the educational structure and professional composition of emigrants. These are important issues for considering the effects of the phenomenon of migration that will be treated in this Chapter.
Effects on the labour market

It has been underlined that there are three territorial zones in Serbia characterized by high shares of the population registered in 2011 as working/staying abroad in the overall population of each of the zones and that the emigration of such a high number of persons threatened their demographic developments. However, a simple analysis based on the unemployment rate\(^{22}\) in the municipalities in these zones, does not show that high emigration has had effects on the local labour market. In the so-called CIS zone, in 2011 unemployment was registered below the national average (11.2% in relation to 22.4%, respectively), which can be explained by the advanced process of population ageing in the municipalities in this zone. On the contrary, in the so-called JZS zone characterized by a younger age structure of the population of predominantly Bosnian/Muslim nationality, in 2011 high rate of unemployment was registered, high above the national average, at the level of 30.9% (Institute of Social Sciences, 2013). The economic factor, unemployment and low living standard surely presented great motives for a high number of individuals to leave these areas of Serbia and go to work and stay abroad. In addition to personal and family economic benefit, reduced pressure on the labour market in the situation of high unemployment and consequently less social tensions are the possible macro benefits in local communities in the mentioned emigration zones.

However, when considering the links between migration and the labour market, it is particularly important to discuss the effects of emigration of higher numbers of persons of certain professions. For years health professionals have been leaving Serbia to go to various countries in and outside Europe, mostly Germany. Health professionals, as many others, were leaving to Germany also based on the Agreement on Detachment with Germany, entered into in 1988 between SFRY and Germany. This Agreement was frozen in 1991 and renewed in 2001. In January 2013, the National Employment Service of the Republic of Serbia and the German Federal Employment Agency from Nürnberg entered into the Agreement on Agency in Temporary Employment of Serbian Health Professionals in Germany.\(^ {23}\) Although there is demand for certain specialists in Serbia, primarily paediatricians, anaesthesiologists and radiologists, especially outside of Belgrade, there is long-term unemployment of doctors, dentists and pharmacists in

\(^{22}\) Unemployment rate is expressed as relation between the number of unemployed individuals and number of inhabitants between 15 and 64 years.

\(^{23}\) The Serbian Medical chamber issues a Good Reputation Certificate. This Certificate is used by a doctor to prove they are a member of the Chamber, and that they have not been convicted of a grave criminal offence, including such against a person's health. It is a certificate that is necessary for the doctor to be able to work abroad. The Certificate is issued in English, but because of great interest of doctors for working in Germany, also in German. In 2015, 940 doctors asked for the document.

our country as well as health professionals with high or higher education level.\textsuperscript{24} In October 2015, the NES records registered as many as around 24 thousand of unemployed health professionals.\textsuperscript{25}

However, unemployment of doctors is not the only cause of emigration of this category of professionals. Recently published results of a research that included around 500 doctors, showed that almost one in two employed doctors in Serbia had thought/were thinking of leaving the country. The working conditions, such as poor buildings, lack of adequate equipment for modern procedures, little possibility to improve skills were ranked higher than low income as reasons for potential emigration (Krstić, Ljubičić, 2015).

This is one of the typical examples of the highly educated and highly skilled persons’ leaving to work/stay abroad, in the education of whom the state/society invested significantly. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development assessed that developing countries invest on average 20,000 USD in the education of individuals with tertiary education (UNFPA, IMP, 2004). Investment in the education of medical doctors and specialists must be considerably higher. These findings raise several issues, among which the basic being – why is there no national strategy in Serbia for the development of human resources in the health sector? However, emigration of health professionals reduces the pressure on the labour market which cannot absorb the professionals of this profile.

By leaving the country, professionals in general, under the assumption that they found employment abroad in accordance with their qualifications, keep their professional capital and build it further in more developed environments. This is a potentially positive side of emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals, in the sense of the possibility of return of this population or circular migration, which would present a very clear benefit for the labour market in Serbia. By returning, professionals, in addition to new knowledge, also bring new technologies, new work techniques, new contacts, new ideas, and often directly invest in the country of origin which contributes to the economic development.

\textsuperscript{24} In the Programme of employment and social policy reform in the process of EU accession, the needs for specialists were listed as deficient in the following branches of medicine: vascular surgery, chest surgery, radiology, radiation oncology, nuclear medicine, pathology, medical microbiology, clinical biochemistry, clinical pharmacology, transfusion medicine, child and adolescent psychiatry, palliative care, cardio surgery and anaesthesiology, reanimatology and intensive treatment. The causes of existence of the expressed need are complex and cannot be reduced to the emigration of doctors of these specialties. The same programme also states there is an insufficient number of medical nurses, especially in hospitals that provide adequate care to patients.

The opposite example relates to the professionals from the information technology sector. Despite of the demand for this profile in the country, and their importance for the development of Serbian economy, they leave Serbia in high numbers mostly because of higher earnings abroad and better opportunities for professional advancement, and consequently because of the unmet needs of the local labour market, the cost of work of these professionals in Serbia has increased (Institute of Social Science, 2013). It is possible that there will be a deficit of other professions on the labour market in our country as an effect of emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals in combination with the retirement of the baby boom generations born in 1950s that is yet to come. In this sense, the finding highlighted in the mentioned research on migration of health professionals is illustrative (Chart 4.1), related to the structure of employed medical doctors in Serbia (Krstić, Ljubičić, 2015). Out of a total number of specialist doctors, 28% is older than 55 (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015). Simultaneously, emigration largely decreases the size of the labour force in the country of origin, which is not a negligible effect in the long term.

Chart 4.1 Number of employed medical doctors aged between 35 and 55 years, Serbia, 2003-2013

Immigration of foreigners is small scale in Serbia, precisely because of the labour market situation. Therefore, foreign labour force cannot be competition for our citizens on the labour market. Immigrants’ education structure is such that foreigners cannot even make significant contributions to the transfer of knowledge and experiences from other places. Asylum seekers can be a significant solution for the structural unemployment in Serbia, because it has already been noticed that, although not on a
large scale, asylum seekers illegally perform the work that the local population refuses, especially in agriculture.  

**Emigration of highly educated individuals**

With examples given in the previous Chapter we opened the question of the effects of emigration of highly educated individuals, or experts, researchers and talents from Serbia. In the discussions on this topic, often the words such as brain exodus or drain are used. This terminology is not adequate because it creates antagonism between highly educated and other emigrants, as well as between the highly educated individuals that have left Serbia and those that remained in the country. However, the use of these terms is proof that this topic is painful for the Serbian society, and that on emotional basis primarily negative effects of the emigration of highly educated persons are perceived. This is understandable, having in mind the number and tendencies related to emigration of highly educated individuals from Serbia.

The 2011 Census registered over 41 thousand or 15.7% of persons working/staying abroad with college or university education level. It is possible that this share is even higher, because for a relatively high number of registered emigrants (12.0%), education was not known. Colleague Stanković (2014) believes that among around thirty thousand of emigrants with unknown education level, it is the most educated ones that make the majority.

The number of the most highly educated persons working/staying abroad increased by 7 thousand or by one-fifth in the last intercensal period. In relation to the persons with higher education registered in 1971, the number of the most highly educated persons at the end of the first decade of the 21st century, increased by over eleven times. The information presented reflects, among other factors, a better educational structure of the Serbian population and greater demand in the receiving countries for highly-skilled labour force.

When analysing the regional background of the registered most highly educated persons in the emigrant contingent in 2011, we need to highlight the example of the Belgrade Region. The Belgrade Region as the most developed region had the lowest share in the total number of emigrants from Serbia (only 15.6%). On the other hand, nearly one in

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26 Views expressed by several participants, including NGO representative dealing with asylum seekers when discussing the impact of migration on the labour market in Serbia in the focus group organised by the SEEMIG project.  

http://seemig.eu/index.php/downloads-project-outputs/2-uncategorised/131-downloads-project-outputs-focus-groups
two emigrants with university (46.5%) and one in four with college (28.5%) originated from the Belgrade region (Stanković, 2014).

In the most highly educated emigration contingent the 2011 Census registered over 31.5 thousand persons with higher education level. Among them there were 11.0% of persons registered with master’s and 6.8% with PhD degrees. The high majority of our emigrants with higher education (15.8%) are in the USA. Next on the list, by the share of Serbian citizens with higher education working/staying abroad, is Germany (10.4%), followed by Canada (7.1%), Switzerland and the UK (with 5.2% each). The highest number of registered emigrants with master’s and PhD levels are also in the USA (21.8% and 31.7%, respectively). In addition to the USA, the highest share of our scientific elite is settled in Germany, the UK and Canada. In these four countries, almost one-half of emigrants from Serbia have master’s (44.7%) and more than half PhD (57.6%) degrees (Stanković, 2014).

Distribution of emigrants with college and university education by length of stay abroad, registered by the 2011 Census, shows that there was by far the highest share of migrants (42.8%) that stayed outside the country between 0 and 4 years. This information should be taken with reservation, having in mind the already stated reasons related to this result of the 2011 Census.

The professional composition of active emigrants by their vocation gained through the 2011 Census is not realistic, because data are missing for as many as 38.7% of emigrants. The two results received are striking having in mind the results of the 1971 Census. There is a minimum number of farmers and affiliated workers working/staying abroad (0.6% in the structure). Contrary to this, there is a high share of professionals and artists in the recorded emigrant contingent (20.0%). The respective shares of four decades ago were 48.4% and 5.3%.

The phenomenon of the emigration of highly educated individuals from Serbia is more widespread than presented by the last population census, having in mind the limitations of this instrument. When considering this issue, the number of students studying at foreign universities is also important. In the emigration contingent, the 2011 Census registered more than 12 thousand students studying abroad. The highest number of students were registered in the USA, with nearly 16% enrolled in undergraduate or PhD programmes in this country.

For the purposes of all the research related to the Diaspora Virtual University, colleague Filipović (2012) created a base of 6,400 PhD holders and PhD students in Serbian diaspora in August 2011. The data were accessed using different channels, such as the Internet, personal communication, academic and research sources, relevant public programmes and organisations, but also through registration of Serbian diaspora experts.
with a specially designed website. Having in mind their spheres of education, Filipović concluded that Serbian diaspora was present in nearly every professional field there is.

The motive for emigration of highly educated persons, or experts, professionals and talents from Serbia on a macro level can be divided into four groups: 1) political context including the degree of democratization; 2) level of economic development related primarily to living standards and business environment; 3) social climate related to appreciation of individual knowledge and skills and 4) the position of science in the sense of the degree of development, status of science in the society, working conditions, institutional support, financial transfers (Pavlov, 2011). The mitigation of circumstances on the national and societal levels that determined the decision of not few of the most educated individuals to leave abroad, requires precisely the engagement of the most educated Serbian citizens in the fields of economy, culture, science, and politics in development in Serbia.

In the international literature, the effects of migration of highly educated persons, highly skilled persons, professionals and talents are most often observed from the perspective of receiving countries. The effects related to the countries of origin are rarely comprehensively analysed, possibly because this challenge is largely faced by developing countries with limited research capacities and lack of resources for systematic examination and evaluation. It is similar with the consideration of this challenge in Serbia, too. Here it is also more difficult because of the lack of data about our diaspora.

The exception is Canada, where the emigration of experts to the USA is a very important issue. The results of conducted empirical research have shown negative effects of this type of emigration to economic growth, productivity, innovation, living standard of citizens, tax system, and social and health protection programmes in Canada. Moreover, direct losses of the country’s investment in education, health, productivity and general wellbeing of citizens that have left Canada were estimated as high (Iqbal, 2004).

However, ways should be considered of how to try to mitigate or turn to advantage for the country of origin the negative effects or macro losses caused by the emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals. Typical examples of this would be positive effects of return migrations and ways to encourage these processes, as well as the benefits and possibilities to apply transnational approaches in order to link individuals or groups from diaspora with individuals and institutions in the country to work on specific tasks. An important initial role in this is with the country of origin.

Remittances from foreign countries
The largest body of material on the effects of migration as well as the links between migration and development is related to the consideration of cash remittances from foreign countries (Skelodon, 2008). Remittances, cash transfers from emigrants to their connections in the country of origin are a significant benefit for the recipients and communities with a high share of this resource in the GDP. Remittances improve the quality of life of the recipients and are simultaneously an instrument to establish a macro economic and social benefit on the local and national levels. Even when the recipients spend the remittances exclusively to meet elementary everyday needs, this money transfer, increasing the demands for goods and services, has wider economic effects in the local community. Investing remittances in the recipient’s education, their health, construction of house/purchase of flat, purchase of land or to start a business is at the same time investing in the future, both of the individuals and their families, and investing in the human capital and development of the country.

Hence remittances are considered in the literature as an instrument for reducing poverty and social tensions in the society, an important source of foreign currency in the countries of emigration and a significant GDP generator. Massey and colleagues estimated that each additional dollar sent by migrants to Mexico increases the GNP by 2.9 dollars (Massey et al., 1998). However, several examples clearly indicate that remittances cannot support developmental changes in a society in which there is no progress in the reform of the economy, improvement of transfers and communications, results in the fight against corruption, improvement in education, as well as health and social protection (Carling, 2007).

In addition to the undoubtedly positive effects, remittances can also have a number of negative effects. They can cause the recipients and the country to become passive, as well as dependent on micro and macro levels from this type of transfers. Summarizing the findings of different studies implemented in South European countries, Massey and his colleagues have concluded that remittances, as a rule, are primarily spent on building houses or purchasing other durable goods rather than invested in business. If the money is invested in starting a business or entrepreneurship, this is done most often in big towns rather than the place of origin, thus not mitigating the differences between urban and rural areas (Massey et al., 1998). The relationship between remittances and emigration is also complex. If remittances are considerably helping the economic development of the country, then in the long term they can also affect reduced emigration from the country. However, more often signs of success, such as new houses in the places of origin of those that emigrated, encourage others from the environment to follow the same migration model (Stalker, 2000).

A proactive intervention of the country is therefore important to invest the money coming from emigrants in a larger extent in the future of the family and society, that is,
in the education of recipients, business start-ups, country’s development projects and similar. In this sense, remittances are emphasized in strategic documents (for example in Turkey) or action plans (for example in Albania). As many as 18 states gave a positive answer to the question of whether they facilitated the use of remittances for the country’s development in current policy/programme(strategy) in the research implemented among 45 member states of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The aim of the research was to determine the achievements and challenges 20 years after the adoption of the Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994. This programme was adopted by the representatives of 174 governments (UNECE, 2013)

According to the latest study of the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, published in January under the title *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2015 Revision*, the number of international migrants (persons born in a different country than the one they are living in) reached 244 million worldwide (including also 20 million refugees) in 2015, which represents a share of 3.3% in the total world population. In parallel, the World Bank published the report *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016: Third Edition* by the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) and World Bank Group, according to which migrants sent 601 billion US dollars to their families in the country of origin in 2015.

The same group estimated that Serbian emigrants sent 3,632 million USD to their connections in Serbia. According to this source, in the period between 2007 and 2015, 34,937 million USD arrived in Serbia by way of remittances. The report places Serbia second among the countries of Europe and Central Asia according to the absolute amount of the estimated influx of remittances in 2015. Ukraine is by far ahead of Serbia with 6.2 billion USD in remittances. According to the World Bank estimates, the share of remittances in Serbia’s GDP was 8.4% in 2014. This indicator has still not been evaluated for 2015. In the period between 2007 and 2014, the average estimated annual share of this type of personal transfer in the GDP was at 9.0%. The highest value of the share at 10.9% was estimated for 2009.

The National Bank of Serbia (NBS) estimates annual influx of remittances in the country. These estimates are necessary because studies have shown that a part of this transfer arrives to Serbia through informal channels. Thus the IOM study on the Swiss-Serbian remittances corridor on a sample of 600 migrants from 2006 showed that 75% of transfers were going through informal channels (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015).

29 http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS
Within informal transfer, personal delivery was by far predominant (87%). This is probably part of tradition. Money from Switzerland was also delivered through coach service (19%) and through registered mail (5%), possibly because of the lack of trust of the emigrants in Serbian financial institutions. The World Bank study on the German-Serbian corridor demonstrated that 50% of migrants use informal channels to send remittances (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015).

NBS as a rule estimates the annual influx of remittances at a clearly lower level than the World Bank. NBS estimated the influx of remittances in Serbia in 2015 at the level of 2.8 billion EUR, according to an article published in the daily Politika of 01 February 2016. According to the same source, the annual influx of remittances since 2001 was regularly higher than annual amount of direct foreign investment. The exception was 2006, when the majority share of Mobi 3, one of the mobile phone operators in government property, was sold to Telenor. The largest part of the influx of remittances comes to the country from Serbian emigrants from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France (Vlada Republike Srbije, 2015).

Chart 4.2. Influx of remittances in million EUR from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France. Serbia, 2007-2014

So far, representative research has not been implemented in Serbia, related to remittances and profile of recipients and senders. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) conducted a representative research during 2014-2015 on remittances that were widely defined as total private cross-border transfer from persons living or working in any country in the world towards persons in Serbia (SORS, 2015). The target group included households receiving remittances. Framework for the sample was set based on the 2011 Census on the number of registered households with close family

members abroad. The research was based on interviews conducted over the phone with one family member. Research covered 6,867 households in Serbia. It focused on remittances received over the last 12 months.

The results of this research have shown that over 250 thousand households, or relatively observed, one in ten households in Serbia, received remittances. Having in mind the number of people sending remittances, main countries from which the remittances arrived were Germany (27.5%), Austria (15.0%) and Switzerland (7.5%).

An important result of the study was that only 43.6% of total cash remittances from abroad were transferred to the country using formal channels, in relation to 54.5% of remittances delivered personally or through relatives and 1.9% of remittances that reached the beneficiaries through coach drivers.

In addition to the channels through which the remittances come to Serbia, the focus of this research was also on the structure of their spending. The results have shown that remittances were largely used to meet the costs of life and basic needs (69.8%). Spending the money for food, utilities, petrol, cigarettes, clothes and shoes (79%) prevailed in the structure of this item, while far less money was spent on home appliances, health care and education or entertainment (7.3%; 16.4% and 6.0%, respectively). Research results have shown that investments in purchasing, building or renovating flats/houses were ranked second in the share of spending the money from remittances (26.0%). The smallest shares of the received money through these transfers were used to invest in business (2.9%) and savings (1.2%). The information obtained showing that 97.7% of total business investments related to agricultural production is also important (SORs, 2015).

In recent years the traditional understanding of remittances has changed. Starting from the understanding that it was money sent by migrants to their families at home, to a broader understanding of remittances as the transfer of resources from an individual in one country to an individual in another country (World Bank, 2005). In addition to cash remittances, the importance of the so-called social remittances has also been increasingly underlined. Namely, in addition to money, gifts and grants, emigrants can offer knowledge, skills, ideas and contacts in the country of origin, through the return to the home country or through various forms of transnational activities, such as transnational entrepreneurship, sponsoring student mobility or young researchers, or the provision of various expertise.
Balanced mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in strategic documents of a country includes the existing reciprocities between migration and development. Simultaneously it represents a tool for coherent policies (IOM, 2015) on migration and development in the broadest sense. The assumption for the application of this concept is the existence of evidence both on the mutual impact between migration and development, as well as the assessment of migration mainstreaming in the adopted relevant national and strategic documents. In the previous Chapters of the study, demographic and socioeconomic momentum of Serbia were addressed, and the phenomenon of migration as well as the effects of migration on demographic and socioeconomic development in Serbia. In this Chapter, however, the study will analyse the mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in the development and sector strategic documents of the Serbian Government. It will discuss the (lack of) inclusion of the phenomena of emigration/immigration and mobility in the key current government documents in the area of development, economy, employment, social policy, health, education, science, youth and public administration. That is, it will provide a critical overview of the method and content of migration mainstreaming in these documents and its possible impact on the country’s development goals. Several strategic documents were also adopted in Serbia related to migration management focusing on addressing particular issues. They will not, however, be the subject of analysis in this study. The challenges related to migration must be addressed in a context broader than an isolated approach.

**National Millennium Development Goals in the Republic of Serbia**

The National Millennium Development Goals in the Republic of Serbia document was adopted by the Government in 2006. The phenomenon of migration was not included in the National Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, achieving these goals through selected tasks could have an influence on the reduction of emigration flows from Serbia. Simultaneously, although the document does not recognize neither positive nor negative effects of migration on the achievement of the set MDGs, in reality they

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exist. The most prominent is the link between migration and attainment of the first goal of this document defined as “Halve the total population poverty rate and eradicate hunger in Serbia by 2015”. Poverty is not only an important pull factor contributing to emigration, but also the financial resources sent by the emigrants to their connections in Serbia directly improve their economic status. However, simultaneously, the emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals in significant numbers, impedes the development of the country, but besides the money, more organised use of knowledge and skills of the Serbian diaspora could contribute to higher employment in Serbia and consequently to the reduction of poverty. The phenomenon of migration could also have been proactively included in one of the tasks related to the achievement of the national MDG 8, defined as “Develop global partnerships for development”.

**National Sustainable Development Strategy**

The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) was adopted in May 2008. This document is a real umbrella document. Namely, the aim of the NSDS, as highlighted in the Introduction, is to balance and bring together the three key sustainable development pillars: sustainable development of the economy, trade and technology, sustainable development of society based on social balance and environmental protection with rational use of natural resources. The Strategy defines sustainable development in the broadest possible sense as a goal-oriented, long-term, continuous, comprehensive and synergetic process, influencing all aspects of life (economic, social, environmental and institutional) on all levels.

NSDS starts from the desired vision of Serbia in 2017 adopted at the National Conference with over 130 representatives from different institutions. Key priorities for the country’s development and sector sustainable development goals with instruments and activities are defined in order to attain the presented vision. They are general in type, suitable for high civilization standards, touching upon a number of issues more specifically raised and elaborated in more detail, with concrete, actionable responses in the development and sectoral strategic documents, adopted during the development of the NSDS or its adoption by the Government.

Among the commitments defined in the Strategy, some are related more and some less to the topic presented here. The commitments presented in the NSDS related to industrial development, development of small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurship, foreign investments, employment, social security, public health, education, science and technology policy, equal opportunity policy, population policy, etc. are in accordance with the topic. Having this in mind, these commitments shall be further discussed in relation to relevant strategic documents. Especially because the
majority of them were created having in mind the principles and priorities of this Strategy.

The phenomenon of migration has been directly included in the Strategy in several places. The third key national priority, related to human resource development, highlights the need to prevent emigration of experts by creating better working conditions. Then in the SWOT analysis, listing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for sustainable development in Serbia, the continued brain drain after 2001 is listed as internal weakness. Consistently, one of the aims of the population policy of the country is set as eliminating the factors influencing brain drain and creating favourable conditions for the return and/or investment of diaspora in Serbia. It should be highlighted that the prevention of emigration of highly educated individuals and eliminating the factors that influence this is not a realistically set priority of the Strategy, nor population policy goal. However, it is also important that emigration is recognised as a phenomenon that should be mitigated in the aim to achieve sustainable development in Serbia.

NSDS highlights the integration of national minorities as an important factor for the development of the country. The explanation makes it clear that the integration relates to autochthonous rather than new national minorities, or immigrants. Ethnocentrism is also recognised as an issue, and it is stressed that it is important to place the creation and nurturing of the concept of cultural diversity understood as the component of European identity in the centre of the affirmation of cultural identity in Serbia, which starting from local and regional, includes the national, but is not limited to it.

In addition to NSDS, four more strategies relevant for economic development have been adopted in Serbia. These are the Strategy and Policy of the Industrial Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011-2020, Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period 2015-2020, the Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia in the period 2014-2024 and the Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investments. All four documents highlight that the goals are defined in the function of sustainable development of Serbia.

The Strategy and Policy of the Industrial Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011-2020

The Strategy and Policy of the Industrial Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011-2020 was adopted in June 2011. This is a document based on different types of evidence. From those related to the new global context, new development paradigms, new industrial policy concept, through priorities highlighted in the Europe
2020 document, to the findings of analysis on the problems of industrial development in Serbia. It is a development document, because it presents the ways to achieve the main goal defined as the creation of new competitive sustainable industrial structures in Serbia, not only in industry and economy, but also science, education, employment and social policy. It is simultaneously a reform document, because it advocates for implementing in-depth changes that are to develop in three phases:

1. Revitalization and regeneration,
2. Restructuring and reengineering, including technological modernization of export areas, and
3. Development and competitiveness, the change of industrial technological profile, that is, the change of focus of industrial production from predominantly low technological sphere to the sphere of high technologies.

The importance of protecting the environment in this process is particularly emphasized through the promotion of cleaner production and reduced pollution and environmental pressures. This is mentioned because the developed environmental awareness in a country makes it better to life in, and it is an increasingly important factor in making migration-related decisions.

The implementation of the Strategy, including the implementation of one of the most important specific objectives, related to new, good quality and well-paid production jobs, would contribute to fast-tracked socioeconomic development of the country and social cohesion and would consequently have an impact on reducing emigration from and increasing immigration in Serbia. In addition, the phenomenon of migration is also directly integrated in the Strategy. First, the SWOT analysis of the industrial situation in Serbia, recognises the potential for influx of remittances from the diaspora as one of the external opportunities, chances. Next, around ten ways are listed for strengthening of the national innovation system under the considerations of innovations as drivers of industrial development of Serbia. Higher international mobility of researchers and improved cooperation with the scientific diaspora are listed as important ways of creating discoveries that would then turn into successful commercial products. Also, intensified cooperation, through special programmes, with our researchers in the diaspora, especially those who have built successful careers in industrial production companies, is highlighted as an important mechanism for successful transfer and dissemination of knowledge. Or in other words, the Strategy acknowledges some of the potentials of Serbian diaspora, which can contribute to the development of industry in Serbia. In addition, NSDS authors single out the strong drain of young researchers abroad, because of better circumstances for research and personal development, as a threat to innovative policy in Serbia.
Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period 2015-2020

The Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period 2015-2020 was adopted in March 2015. It represents further building on existing Serbian policy in this area. The document is largely based on the principles of the The Small Business Act, representing the framework for development of small enterprises in the EU.

The strategic vision expressed as development of entrepreneurship and competitiveness, based on private entrepreneurship initiative, knowledge in innovation, with the aim to strengthen domestic micro, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs sufficiently to be able to respond to the pressure of the competition on the joint EU market and contribute to improving the standard of living in Serbia. In order to attain the vision, six strategic goals are defined: the improvement of business environment; the improvement of access to sources of funding; continuing development of human resources; strengthening sustainability and competitiveness of enterprises and entrepreneurs; promoting access to new markets; and developing and promoting the entrepreneurial spirit and encouraging the entrepreneurship of women, youth and social entrepreneurship.

The phenomenon of migration is not included in this document. It was selected for analysis believing that it should at minimum include the transnational forms of economic activities of migrants, foreigners or returnees to Serbia, as well as emigrants from Serbia doing business with the country of origin. Transnational entrepreneurship is a concept that needs to be promoted and supported, because it represents an important resource for the country’s development.

The Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia in the period 2014-2024

The Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia in the period 2014-2024 was adopted in July 2014. The document aims to establish the basis of new policy for the development of agriculture and activate developmental potentials of rural areas. The Strategy starts with a situation analysis and presentation of the challenges in this sector, or area. In the part related to human resources, it is highlighted that rural economic development is hindered by low quality of labour force without entrepreneurial skills and consequently low foreign investments, which in turn causes the population to leave, especially more educated individuals, and so resources are diminished and chances for development reduced. Hence the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas is set out as one of the five strategic development goals. In
its explanation, it is highlighted that it is necessary to create favourable living and working conditions for youth and keep them in rural areas. The achievement of the objectives set by the Strategy includes the implementation of a number of different listed interventions, including those related to the strengthening of rural social capital. The following activities among them seem particularly important:

- Organising local action groups
- Promote organisation in cooperatives
- Strengthen regional cross-border cooperation
- Increase accessibility of social services to the rural population
- Improve the social status of agricultural workforce
- Reduce rural poverty and improve the position of deprived rural populations
- Include small farm households in support systems and
- Promote women and youth entrepreneurship in rural areas

The achievement of the discussed goal and other Strategy goals would certainly contribute to the development of agriculture and rural areas of Serbia. Consequently, internal and external migration of youth from rural areas would be reduced, which would also have positive return effects on development. Strategy developers insist on keeping youth in rural areas, not opening the issue of return of those who left to work/stay in bigger places in the country or abroad, or integration of foreigners in the function of rural development and development of agriculture in Serbia. The Strategy does not mention circular or seasonal migration.

### Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investments

Many countries make efforts to attract foreign investments, considering they have an important role in creating new jobs, increasing exports, transfer of business technology and knowledge, increased competitiveness, improved total production and overall economic growth and development. The Government of the Republic of Serbia was also guided by this when it adopted the Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investment in March 2006, as a means to create a favourable climate and framework to attract, keep and expand export oriented new direct foreign investments in the Serbian economy.

The Strategy focuses on progress in four areas. The pillars of the Strategy are 1) regulation reform 2) strengthening institutional capacities and developing cooperation on government and municipal levels in order to facilitate business development 3) activities and initiatives on promoting competitiveness; 4) developing campaigns in the country for better understanding of the importance of foreign investments and clearly oriented international marketing programmes. Although it seeks in-depth changes, that is, wider economic reform, this document lists several key advantages making Serbia an
attractive destination for foreign investments. Advantages include the geographic position, natural resources, good education system, experience in engineering/production and low cost of labour. A high number of highly educated individuals, experts and talents that have left Serbia to work/stay abroad, is not recognized as the country’s advantage in this sphere.

Serbian diaspora is mentioned in the document only on page 72, in relation to the institutional framework for the implementation of the Strategy, and efforts to establish a one-stop-shop for investors where they could get the required permits and resolve requirements related to regulations on the foundation and operation of their companies.

Namely, in the explanation for forming such an organisational unit, it is highlighted that this is a need of both foreign investors and Serbian entrepreneurs from diaspora. Further on, completely misplaced in the Strategy and therefore matter-of-fact and artificially, it is highlighted that entrepreneurs from diaspora can in addition to investing in the country’s economy help to promote economic cooperation with Serbia, among the people of Serbian origin and their business partners in the countries in which they live and work.

**National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020**

The National Employment Strategy for the Period 2011-2020 was adopted in May 2005. Active employment policy is important in any population, especially in Serbia, fighting serious unemployment for a long time and being traditionally a country of emigration. An important reason for leaving the country for many individuals is finding any employment, followed by finding better paid employment abroad, with better working conditions and possibility for faster professional advancement. Therefore, it is important that the Strategy goal was defined as providing support to employment and reducing the gap between the labour market indicators in Serbia and the European Union, by using the Agenda for new skills and jobs, an important instrument of the Europe 2020 document.

The phenomenon of migration is directly integrated in the Strategy first within the demographic challenges. Namely, it is underlined that Serbia is facing all types of migration: external and internal, forced and voluntary, legal and illegal, migration of highly skilled and unskilled workers, immigration and emigration. However, priority was given to the problem of emigration as one of the causes of depopulation, reducing the scope of the working contingent of the population and population ageing. The danger of increased emigration of young educated professionals and skilled workers to EU countries for economic reasons is specifically underlined. The gaps in labour market supply and demand in Serbia, that is, the lack of skilled labour force with developed
competencies and skills that would match the demands of the employers, is particularly stressed under educational challenges in the Strategy.

Through consistently presented demographic and educational challenges, the phenomenon of migration is also included in the first strategic goal of the Strategy, related to employment policy. In the explanation of this goal, the importance of migration management in Serbia is highlighted, in accordance with the long-term needs of economic development and labour market flows. In this respect it is underlined that new solutions are necessary, which can include promoting immigration of younger and educated workers, primarily from neighbouring countries.

The phenomenon of migration is also included in the third strategic goal defined as improving institutions and developing the labour market. It initiates the legal solution related to employment of foreigners and broadening the network of migration service centres with NES, which are to provide information, advice and guidance to migrants and potential migrants, in order to reduce the risk of illegal migration as well as to promote the Fund for employment of marginalized youth (including, among others, returnees in the process of readmission and refugees). All three ideas listed have already been implemented.

The phenomenon of migration is also included in the plan of activities for the operationalisation of the mentioned and other strategic goals only by stating that special programmes and active employment policy measures should be directed at refugees and returnees from foreign countries. The activity plan sets out that each year a National Action Plan for Employment is defined. Thus in September, the Government adopted the National Action Plan for Employment for 2016. It includes as a new measure for the development of the mobility programme concept for unemployed individuals searching employment through engagement in seasonal works. The Ministry of Labour, employment, veteran and social affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports and National Employment Service are listed as responsible for this activity. The Budget of the Republic of Serbia and IOM are to provide funds for the implementation of this programme.

**Social Protection Development Strategy**

Social Protection Development Strategy was adopted in December 2015. Having in mind that this is an umbrella document in the sphere of social protection, we have decided to comment on it in the Study. The beginning of the Strategy underlines that an efficient social protection system should follow the country’s economic and social development. Efficient social protection system was defined as a system supporting
vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups, who need organised assistance from the community and the state, as well as citizens who are not able to secure their existence through economic activity.

The development of integral social protection is consistently set as the main aim of social protection system reform, in which social actors in the most efficient way use the existing and develop new resources through available, good quality and diverse services, in order to preserve and improve the quality of life of vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups, enable them a productive life in the community and prevent dependence on social services. The set goal and its achievement through special and individual reform objectives also includes the support to certain sensitive groups of migrants or individuals that have come to Serbia, by determining their needs and providing a good quality and efficient programmatic response within the integrated social protection system.

It is important to note that the implementation of the Strategy, that is, the full implementation of a number of defined measures, activities and mechanisms related to a more efficient system of cash assistance, developing networks of available services in the community and introducing the quality assurance system in social protection, would contribute to a clear step forward in the improvement of the social status of citizens in Serbia. We believe this would reduce emigration flows from and increase immigration flows into Serbia, because social benefits and the degree of social protection and security in the country of origin in relation to the country of potential destination or in the receiving country in relation to the country of origin, together with a number of other elements, have an impact on making the individual decision on external migration. Health and health care policy is also an important push or pull factor, when an individual is assessing the quality of life in a place. Garza (2008) specifically underlines the importance of having developed comprehensive social services for migration management.

**Republic of Serbia Public Health Strategy**

Republic of Serbia Public Health Strategy was adopted in March 2009. We present this strategy because on one hand this is a document setting out the global framework for action and identifying new directions, leaving room for addressing old and new challenges in the area of public health. On the other hand, this Strategy is related to a number of activities in the area of public health, some of which are particularly important for the issue of migration. Primarily, this is support in providing equal access to the necessary health care and development and training of human resources in public health.
The principle of equal access to health, prevention of disease and health assistance for migrants and their families without discrimination is set out in a number of documents. The most important are the World Health Organisation (WHO) Resolution on migrant health and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and IOM study International Migration, Health and Human Rights (IOM, 2015). Highlighting this requirement was based on evidence that insufficiently educated migrants, as well as migrants without documents were facing a series of barriers related to access to health protection, especially good quality health protection (IOM, 2015).

In the Republic of Serbia Public Health Strategy, the promotion, development and support to actions for the improvement of health status of socially vulnerable groups of population is defined as a special strategic goal. It sets out the following two specific objectives: increase access and availability to health services for socially vulnerable groups of the population and develop actions directed at socially vulnerable groups to overcome barriers (cultural, linguistic, material, physical) for accessing health and other types of assistance. Certain categories of migrants certainly fall under an especially vulnerable group. However, they are not, and neither are other groups from this circle, listed as a population group that this strategic goal refers to.

Another strategic goal in the Strategy, development and education of human resources in the area of public health, indirectly refers to the issue of migration. It defines several specific objectives, such as education, licensing, continued education and development of health workers’ skills necessary for multidisciplinary and multi-ethnic work in public health. This strategic goal is underlined, because the results of the latest research, as pointed out in the previous Chapter, have shown that doctors rank high the lack of opportunity for continued education as reason for potential emigration from Serbia (Krstić, Ljubičić, 2015). Therefore, it is important that there is strategic commitment of the government to strengthen the professional competencies of medical doctors.

**Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia 2020**

Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2020 was adopted by the Government in October 2012. The beginning of the Strategy presents the context in which it is developed and the purpose of the document. We will quote two paragraphs directly related to migration.

“Today, education in Serbia faces numerous challenges in scientific, humanistic, social and other developments, great technological changes, the real revolution, globalisation and general mobility of everything that can move, from the capital to the cultural patterns. Circumstances arising in the environment of the Republic of Serbia in the European
Union (hereinafter referred to as “EU”), make clear that the country needs a very thoughtful, organised and high-quality development of education because it is one of the key conditions for the development of Serbia towards a society based on knowledge and capable of providing good employment opportunities to the population. These circumstances warn that, otherwise, the Republic of Serbia would remain on the European outskirts, with low competitiveness, little attractive to the investments in sectors that create new higher value, subject to further emigration of talented and creative people, and with silent capacities for the development of a democratic and equitable society. These circumstances call for a harmonisation of the education system in the Republic of Serbia with the European educational area.”

Or in other words, the Strategy underlines that the increase of coverage, quality, relevance and efficiency of the educational system is a condition for Serbia’s development and the resulting decrease of emigration, especially the emigration of highly educated individuals from the country. Strategy authors do not believe that the socioeconomic development in Serbia will increase immigration flows toward the country. This is directly stressed in the part of the document related to Strategy foundations and the need to insist on educated labour force in the conditions of the described foreseeable demographic future of Serbia, which will be characterised by depopulation, “emigration of high-quality working population from the Republic of Serbia is expected to continue to a greater or lesser extent, while no one can count on a significant immigration of such a population to the Republic of Serbia”.

The Strategy starts with mobility as an important challenge for the Serbian educational system. Mobility is according to this document also an important lever, in addition to including research, innovation and entrepreneurship, for the development of higher education here, because it contributes to its quality, increases the competencies of teachers and students and offers them better opportunities for employment. Mobility is insisted on all levels of higher education and for each of them a number of activities contributing to mobility is defined. Within, however, the joint framework for the development of higher education, the following activities seem important:

- Higher education institutions shall, for the purposes of advancement and development, internationalise their activities through joint study programmes, international research projects and student, teacher and researcher mobility;
- Mobility policy in higher education shall be based on different measures to provide financing of mobility, availability of infrastructure, complete recognition of the results of and support during studies, and foreign students will be enabled efficient approval of student visas and addressing other issues of importance for their life in Serbia (health care, accommodation, meals and other);
- Opportunities for mobility shall be created in all three higher education cycles, in the structure of study programmes and programmes for acquiring shared
degrees with foreign universities, and bound the higher education institution to issue to each student with at minimal cost a diploma supplement in English or another foreign language;

- Completely define and specify, as soon as possible, the policy of mandatory training of teachers (through post-doctoral visits) and doctoral students at foreign universities;
- Accredit, through a special procedure, study programmes that are offered to foreign students (in English, another foreign language or in Serbian);
- Higher education in Serbia has the potential, with its quality and capacity, to attract large numbers of students from the region, because there are no language barriers for most students, and in order to use these opportunities, we should organisationally and financially support the fields of education where we already have satisfactory competitive status, or those in which such a status is yet to be developed;
- By 2020, formulate and fully implement specific policies, actions and measures to improve international competitiveness and recognition of the Serbian higher education, which, as a result of this policy, is expected to improve the position of universities in the Republic of Serbia on credible international rankings or in the region.

Within actions and measures related to mobility during academic studies, it was specified that students’ leaving Serbia to go study in the countries of the European higher education area should be supported, in the duration from one semester up to one year. It is highlighted that there should be a tendency to include at least 10% of foreign students in basic and master academic studies. PhD studies, however, should be developed with the aim to share at least 10% of study programmes with foreign universities and at least 10% of study programmes in English or other foreign language and that one in five students should participate in the mobility programme. Within the SWOT analysis that was done as basis for development of PhD studies, brain drain was listed as internal weakness, and EU countries’ strategy to attract the most talented students to PhD studies as external threat. This fact, as well as the comment that the cost of studies in some European countries are symbolic (page 102), are probably some of the surrounding circumstances called upon the developers at the beginning of the Strategy with the aim to improve the education system in Serbia as much as possible.

Two solutions are also presented in the Strategy, which could support reduced emigration, or increase the immigration of highly educated individuals, professionals and talents into Serbia. This is the government support in 1) establishing business incubators in higher education institutions in order to commercialise the ideas of teachers and students and 2) form centres of research/educational/economic excellence.

The Strategy on Scientific and Technical Development of the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2016-2020 – Research for Innovation was adopted by the Government of Serbia in March this year. The mission of this Strategy is to establish an effective national research system integrated in the European Research Area, which, through the development of innovation, contributes to economic growth, social and cultural progress, raising the citizens’ standard of living and quality of life.

In accordance with the mission presented and a particularly reformative character of the document, the following strategic objectives of the Strategy are defined:

- Establishing an effective management system for science and innovation in the Republic of Serbia;
- Encouraging excellence and relevance of scientific research in the Republic of Serbia;
- Strengthening the connection between science, economy and society to encourage innovation;
- Ensuring excellence and the availability of human resources for science and economy and social affairs;
- Improving international cooperation in the field of science and innovation;
- Increasing investment in research and development through public funding and encouraging the investments of the business sector in research and development

The achievement of the defined objectives entails that researches live and work in a dramatically different environment than it is in Serbia today. Or in other words, scientists work in a country in which science is promoted, valued socially and financially supported. Excellence and relevance of research for societal development is also encouraged and mechanisms to implement the results of the work exist. Scientist mobility in the country is enabled, between different sectors and between institutes and universities, but also mobility from Serbia abroad and vice versa. Researchers are provided with high-quality research equipment and infrastructure. Moreover, science in Serbia is included in the European Research Area and European Research Infrastructure Consortium. Young researchers have the supported related to educational and research activities, mobility, but also acquiring skills of interest for further career development in research and innovation, and also in other sectors. Young science doctors are provided with competitive funding of small-scale projects they could manage. Under such circumstances, fewer researchers would leave Serbia to work abroad. Simultaneously Serbia would become attractive for returnees from foreign countries and foreign researchers.
The phenomenon of migration is also directly included in the Strategy. First, in the part related to the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the existing scientific and innovation system of Serbia. Namely, the emigration of highly educated people from the country was listed as the first of five presented threats.

Second, in the part related to support to businesses (technology and business incubators, spin-off companies, and science technology parks) and support to innovation, it is underlined that this is the way to create a great number of new jobs and keep the youth in the country.

Third, the phenomenon of migration is largely included in elaborating the fourth objective set as ensuring excellence and the availability of human resources for science and economy, in several ways. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development will encourage the return of young researchers that completed PhD studies in foreign universities and give them priority access to projects of general interest or let them manage small-scale projects.

Strengthening cooperation with the diaspora is singled out. The Ministry will undertake special measures to include renowned scientists from the diaspora in the education and science system, through their participation in doctoral studies, then the undergraduate studies, their involvement in advisory bodies and committees, as well as in the process of the review of national projects, and if they want to come back and continue their scientific career in the Republic of Serbia, participation in national projects from the programme of general interest and the management of those projects.

In parallel, the Strategy presents a commitment to a completely open research space in Serbia, based on researcher excellence, which would include the engagement of foreigners at universities and institutes through international public calls. This commitment entails the existence of research visas and residence/work permits for researchers.

Simultaneously, it has been recognised that doctoral schools should be formed in areas with excellent research environment (excellent equipment, research results and internationally recognized staff) with the aim to attract students from the region and other students from abroad. It is also stressed that foreign students must be enabled efficient approval of student visas and addressing other issues of importance for their life in Serbia, such as health protection, accommodation, food and other.

The issue of introducing the mobility of researchers is initiated as a good evaluation element and factor influencing employment and attainment of academic degrees. In this context, the adoption of a national strategy on the mobility of foreign and domestic students, teachers and researchers is announced.
Among the indicators defined for monitoring the achievement of the strategic objective related to human resources also list those relevant for annual monitoring of mobility to/from the scientific area of Serbia, such as the number of researchers from the diaspora participating in national programmes, the number of researchers who have achieved mobility abroad, the number of foreign students in doctoral and other academic studies in the Republic of Serbia and the number of foreign researchers on projects.

The Employment and Social Reform Programme (ESRP) in the Process of Accession to the European Union

The ESRP\(^{33}\) is before adoption by the Serbian Government. The first part of this strategic document provides the analysis of a number of key challenges faced in the area of labour market, human capital and skills, social and child protection, health care and health system and the pension system. These also present some issues related to migration. Thus in the area of labour market the effects of insufficient childbearing and negative migration balance (the negative impacts of reduced participation of working population in the total population in the next thirty years on economic growth, increased pressure on the country’s social systems due to continued population ageing process), unregistered money transfers from abroad as one of the causes of grey economy, but also high unemployment and structural unemployment as important push and pull factors for emigration/immigration of the population from/in Serbia. In the area of human capital and skills, it is underlined that there are no effective mechanisms to ensure student mobility and that the process of recognition of diplomas from outside of Serbia is complicated, expensive and formal. In the health sphere, the hyper production of health professionals is mentioned due to inappropriate enrolment policy in health schools and universities, and consequentially high unemployment of youth with this background. However, emigration of health professionals from Serbia is not emphasized. Simultaneously, the measures for mitigating the challenges presented because of the links to migration are listed in the second part of the document. However, it should be pointed out that for the highlighted negative effects of depopulation and ageing, there are no measures sought that would relate to increased immigration in Serbia, nor are the potentials of Serbian diaspora recognized in the function of higher employment or better education in the country. Certainly the implementation of the proposed reforms in the employment, education, social and health policy would contribute, if not to the establishment of a different migration

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http://eupregovori.bos.rs/algovori-o-pregovorima/analize/1463/2016/03/15/program-reformi-politike-zaposljavanja-i-socijalne-politike-esrp-.html
model in Serbia, then certainly to decreasing migration and increasing the return of Serbian citizens working/temporarily staying abroad.

National Youth Strategy for the Period 2015-2025

The National Youth Strategy, adopted in February 2015, lays down, as underlined in the introduction, the activities of all youth policy actors towards the improvement of social position of young people and the creation of conditions for full achievement of their rights and interests in all areas. This document refers to persons between 15 and 30 years of age as youth. It highlights that the Strategy is a result of agreement between all stakeholders. In addition to a broad consultative process, several thousand youth participated in the development of the document in different ways. The findings of the external evaluation of the previous National Youth Strategy were also taken into account. The secondary analysis of different research on youth in Serbia was provided in order to base the Strategy on more complete evidence.

The document defines nine strategic goals. We will list them all, because their achievement would mean the reduction of youth emigration and strengthening of return flows by mitigating push factors of different nature and achieving the desired circular mobility model. These are:

1. Employability and employment of young women and men
2. Quality and opportunities for acquiring qualifications and development of competencies and innovation of young people
3. Active participation of young women and men in society
4. Health and well-being of young women and men
5. Conditions for the development of youth safety culture
6. Support to social inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion
7. Mobility, scope of international youth cooperation and support for young migrants
8. System of informing young people and knowledge about young people
9. Consumption of culture and participation of youth in the creation of cultural programmes

Each strategic goal is preceded by a situation analysis in the country, documenting the need to define it. Strategic goals are elaborated through a number of specific objectives and a number of groups of measures, also listing institutions responsible for their implementation. The financial framework and indicators for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the goals and measures are not an integral part of the Strategy. However, the Strategy determines the mechanism of implementation, including the obligation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports to report on this subject to the government every year.
Only the situation analysis in the country in relation to the second strategic goal: quality and opportunities for acquiring qualifications and development of competencies and innovation of young people, includes the issue of migration. Namely, it highlights that a large number of highly educated young people have left or wish to live the country, and that for this reason the task of the Strategy is to find a way to “to motivate young people to develop professionally and personally and invest their knowledge and skills in social, economic and cultural progress of the country”. Specific goals and measures under this strategic goal relate primarily to the educational process itself, that is, to the content adequate for the needs and demands of both the individuals and the society, equal access, inclusion of vulnerable groups and support to talented and gifted youth.

Several representative or in-depth studies have shown the manifest or latent preparedness of youth to find employment and/or live outside of Serbia. Some of them have also emigrated from the country. Hence the issue of emigration and return of young people from abroad, should be an integral part of the explanation and for the first strategic goal related to improved employment of youth as well as the third goal in relation to the response to difficulty to attain independence because of the poor economic position and undeveloped housing policy for youth.

Strategic goal seven is related to youth mobility, the scope of international cooperation between young people and support to young migrants. Four specific goals are specified with a number of additional measures to achieve this goal. Three of these refer to youth mobility. These are: improved economic, cultural and administrative preconditions for mobility of young women and men; provided conditions for enhanced youth mobility and promotion of international youth cooperation; and improved prevention and fight against irregular migration of young women and men and support for young migrants. 28 measures are defined for these three goals.

Immediately after the adoption of the Strategy, Action Plan for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy for the period 2015-2017 was adopted. The plan sets indicators for the achievement of the three mentioned goals related to external youth mobility. These are the number of youth using support measures, the share of youth that participate in mobility programmes and international cooperation and the number of developed programmes, respectively.

The Programme of Official Statistics over the period 2016-2020

The Programme of Official Statistics over the period 2016-2020 was developed by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia in cooperation with other responsible statistics generators, and adopted by the National Parliament in June 2015. Its integral
part is the Strategy of Official Statistics Development in the Republic of Serbia over the period 2016 – 2020\textsuperscript{34}. The Strategy lists priority activities to be implemented on the level of several areas of statistics.

Demography and social statistics chapter includes external and asylum migration, residence permits and illegal migration as priority activities to be developed. In line with this, the overview of expected results of official statistics, includes planned activities for the coming period to establish external migration statistics (immigration, emigration, gain and loss of citizenship) and asylum related statistics, work permits and illegal migration. In parallel, the planned period for indicators is provided. Indicators will be produced on annual level, except for indicators related to asylum, which will be processed on monthly, quarterly and annual levels. The signing of Memoranda of Cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and Commissariat for Refugees and Migration is planned for the implementation of the listed activities.

The foreseen activities are in accordance with the serious needs expressed for the production of good quality data on migration into/from Serbia, which are in line with the Law on Migration Management\textsuperscript{35} which envisages the formation of a unique system of collection, organisation and exchange of data on migration between relevant government bodies. This requires to harmonize definitions on migrants and monitored characteristics between the existing, but also to introduce additional, partial registries. In this way, a step forward has been made in the sphere of migration data, although the team of researchers and statisticians dealing with this issue believed that the best solution would be to form a population Registry (ISS, SORS, 2013). This Strategy also lists a number of planned activities in other areas of statistics, which shall enable the creation, monitoring and evaluation of development policy and different sector policies in Serbia to be based on better evidence.

\textsuperscript{34} Programme available at http://webrzs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Public/PageView.aspx?pKey=316

\textsuperscript{35} Official Gazette RS, No. 107/12.
6. TOWARDS BALANCED MAINSTREAMING OF MIGRATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECTOR POLICIES

The term balanced mainstreaming has so far related primarily to the gender equality issue. Today it is increasingly used in the context of links between migration and development (Wickramasekara, 2015). Balanced migration mainstreaming in the political agenda and national development documents is an important way to acknowledge the links between emigration/immigration and development. These links are at least threefold. So far it has been underlined that emigration is the manifestation of insufficient development of a population and that the emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals is loss to a country of origin and gain for the destination country, from a development perspective. In the last ten years or so, it has been believed that efficient management of international migration can bring considerable gain to all the countries included in the migratory chain (UNDESA, IOM, 2012). Simultaneously, migration needs to be observed as an integral part of not only the national, but also the global development process (Castilla, 2008). However, it cannot bring about development by itself (Skeldon, 2008).

Unlike the previous Study Chapters based on secondary analysis of different evidence important for determining the interrelation between migration and development in Serbia, that is, the critical analysis of the inclusion of emigration/immigration in key strategic documents of the country, this Chapter is based on the results of the conducted qualitative research. As was underlined in the methodology, the method of choice was focus groups. Three successive series of interviews were conducted on the topic of Migration and Development in Serbia.

The focus group method is usually used when the research topic is relatively new. This qualitative research method enables the collection of a higher number of targeted observations in a short timeframe. Simultaneously, its main advantage is that the participants during the interview reason, argument, defend rather than only give their own attitudes and opinions. The participants are in social interaction with each other more than with the moderator of the discussion. An important characteristic of the method is that the analysis of discussion results is based on processing verbal statements and presenting the non-verbal expressions of the focus group participants (Đurić, 2005; Pavlović, Džinović, 2007). This method was combined with the interview method.
Report from the discussion in three focus groups on the topic Migration and Development in Serbia

Events that could have had an impact on the discussion

The discussions were led at the moment when elections in Serbia had been announced on all levels of government. We feel that this did not have an impact on the discussion, because there was not much uncertainty with regards to election results. It was expected that the current leading party would be the decisive factor in constituting the new government after the elections.

However, the focus groups were organised at the time of the biggest migrant crisis in Europe. The migrant crisis marked the year 2015 and is expected to continue in 2016. According to UNHCR information, more than one million refugees arrived to the old continent fleeing from war, violence and persecution in the countries of origin during 2015.36 The most affected were people from Syria, South Sudan, Iraq and Central African Republic.

Several hundreds of thousands of refugees passed through Serbia on their migrant route towards the EU. The Minister for Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Aleksandar Vulin, said in early 2016 that even 600 thousand migrants had moved through Serbia.37 Serbian PM Aleksandar Vučić underlined in an interview after returning from this year’s World Economic Forum in Davos on 22 January that migrants presented a big problem for even much wealthier countries than Serbia, and that at the moment it could take in up to 5,000 refugees for a longer period of time.38 After returning from a donor conference for Syria in early February, the PM asked to avoid spreading panic and xenophobia, and stop bidding on how many refugees Serbia would take.39 Namely, on the day before his statement, 3 February 2016, the front page of the Daily Politika published an article under the title: “Balkans – the Last Stop on the Migrant Caravan?” on the potentially dangerous situation for Serbia during the current migrant crisis.40

The time and place of focus group meetings

37 http://mondo.rs/a862811/Info/Drustvo/Vulin-migranti-broj-u-Srbiji.html
38 http://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/vucic-o-migrantima-prvi-put-sam-zabринut-za-ono-sto-ce-se-zbivati/76mfvk9
The first and the second focus groups were held on 28 January, and the third focus group on 12 February 2016 in the Art Hotel in the centre of Belgrade, providing all the necessary conditions and instruments for organising such an event. The duration of the focus group discussions was even, around 150 minutes. The discussions were recorded in order to make a transcript of the discussion. After the end of the workshops lunch/dinner was organised, where informal discussions on the topic continued.

**Discussion topic and questions**

As already presented, the main topic of the discussion related to migration and development for balanced mainstreaming of emigration/immigration in key development and sector policies in the function of development in Serbia. Each focus group discussion was preceded by the presentation of the moderator and the participants. Then the moderator, in this research, Study author, briefly presented the project and the direct aim of the discussion and started leading focused group discussion based on five pre-defined questions. The moderator respected different attitudes of the participants, with awareness of different working environments they were coming from.

Each of the five questions was briefly elaborated on. The questions were defined having in mind the findings in previous research steps, but primarily the space for mainstreaming migration in strategic documents of the country, determined through critical analysis of the national strategies, programmes and plans. Migration was considered as integral part of the development process, and not as manipulative tool leading to development (Skeldon, 2008). The questions related to remittances, transnational activities, attracting foreign students and preparation of the country for increased immigration. The fifth question was open for brainstorming with the aim to select one public policy recommendation for each discussed topic.

A total of 28 people participated in the focus groups – 8 participants in the first, 8 participants in the second and 12 participants in the third focus group. In addition to this, two interviews were also conducted.

**Discussion participants**

The specificity of the conducted research is that experts, practitioners and decision-makers participated in each focus group. Those participants were selected that could contribute with their knowledge and experience to a better quality discussion in a small group on the topic Migration and Development in Serbia from different aspects.

We invited the following researchers among experts:
Scientific Advisor with the Institute for International Policy and Economy from Belgrade. Authority for population migration, with special focus on scientific Serbian diaspora. The author of a number of event materials, articles, chapters in monographies, as well as books on the topic. Regularly appears commenting in press.

Scientific Advisor with the Institute for Educational Research from Belgrade, psychologist by background, who among other things wrote two sections and was one of the editors of Mobility and emigration of professionals: Personal and social gains and losses published in 2011 by Group 484 and the Institute for Educational Research.

Professor with the Sociology Department of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, whose research includes the latest co-authored publication Study on external and internal migration of Serbian citizens with particular focus on youth published by IOM in 2015, who is also the teacher of the Migration and Sustainable Development course at master academic studies of sociology.

Professor with the Faculty of Economics, University of Belgrade, and Deputy Head of the National Council for Higher Education. In addition to a remarkable scientific background in the sphere of theoretical physics and operational research and financial economy, he is also dedicated to the development of educational programmes in finance in Serbia and the region. He spent a number of years studying and working abroad.

Long-term director of the Centre for Economic Research with the Institute of Social Science in Belgrade, who worked on a number of projects in theoretical and applied economics. Among other topics he addressed inequality, labour markets, corruption, poverty, regional development and social policy.

The Director of the Institute of Economic Sciences in Belgrade. Human resource management, economy of labour and structural reforms are the main areas of his scientific and research efforts. He led the implementation of a number of projects in the Economics Institute and the Institute of Economic Sciences.

Researcher with the Institute of Economic Sciences in Belgrade, working on active labour market policies and the current migrant crisis.

Vice-Dean for Teaching Activities of the Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade. Engaged as teacher with the Demographics study group. Her research opus includes a co-authored book Policy Scenario - Demographic and migration trends of the future (case study Šumadija and Pomoravlje) in 2016, published by the Faculty of Geography.

Expert with the Centre for Demographic Research with the Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade. Deals with the models of population dynamics, population migration and
spatial aspect of demographic phenomena. Author of two books and co-author of *The Impact of Demographic and Migration Flows on Serbia* published by IOM in 2012.

Expert from the Centre for Political Research and Public Opinion of the Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade. The colleague is an expert in contemporary political relations, European integration, democratic institutions, political culture, human rights and majority-minority relations.

The category of practitioners in three focus groups included the representatives of the following NGOs:
- Executive Director of Group 484, organisation with systemic approach to the issues of forced migration and migration in general
- Programme Director of the Centre for Social Policy, active, inter alia, in the area of child and family protection, social assistance and social protection services
- Member of the presidency of the Serbian Association of Demographers, whose main activities are related to popularizing demography
- Member of the Serbian City Club, providing a network of contacts for Serbs that wish to build a career in London and in the recent years for those who wish to return to Serbia
- Associate with the Forum for Ethnical Relations, organisation that aims to promote ethnic relations, prevent ethnic conflicts, build trust, mitigate and resolve conflicts
- Research Coordinator with the Centre for Education Policy, providing expert support to decision-makers and practitioners in education policy development, implementation and evaluation
- Director of SeConS, group of experts contributing with their knowledge and experience to the long-term socio-economic development and improvement of living conditions of individuals and social groups in Serbia and the region

The following individuals participating in decision-making were part of the discussion: Deputy Commissioner and two officers with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration. The Commissariat implements activities related to: proposing to the Government the goals and priorities of migration policy; proposing to the Government measures to achieve the positive effects of legal migration and combating illegal migration; monitoring the implementation of migration policy; providing the state government, autonomous province and local self-government units with data relevant to the development of strategic documents in the field of migration; proposing projects in the field of migration management within the scope of their work and the preparation of the annual report to the Government on the situation in the field of migration management.
Assistant Director of the Republic of Serbia Public Policy Secretariat. The Public Policy Secretariat, inter alia, plays a major role in providing expert assistance to the Government in attaining its priorities, providing assistance to the Government with development and coordination of public policies and the coordination of the process of the development of strategies and other planning documents.

Assistant Minister for Employment with the Ministry for Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs. The Ministry implements government activities also related to: employment in the country and abroad; referring unemployed citizens to work abroad; improving and promoting employment; strategy, programme and employment policy measures; propose and monitor the implementation of strategies in the area of migration on the labour market; participate in entering contracts on employment with foreign employers.

Director of Republic Institute for Social Protection. The ISP is included in the implementation of reform projects and programme activities with the aim to achieve an integral social protection model in Serbia.

Advisor to the President of the Chamber of Commerce and Officer with the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce presents the commercial interests before the Government, supports domestic and foreign companies and improves economic cooperation with foreign countries.

Deputy Ombudsman and Officer with the Ombudsman department of experts. The Ombudsman protects and promotes the respect for human and minority rights and freedoms of citizens by controlling the work of public authorities.

Representative of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit. The SIPRU is in charge of strengthening the Government’s capacities to develop and implement social inclusion policies and provide support to line ministries to develop and implement social inclusion policies.

Two interviews were also conducted with persons that were noticed to be missing in the focus group discussions. Hence, the study included the expert with the Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, in economic geography and economic demography, human capital theory and socioeconomic aspects of families and households. An interview was also conducted with the professor of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Belgrade, whose research focuses on agricultural policy, rural economy and rural development policy.

The atmosphere of the discussions
Focus group discussions were conducted in good atmosphere that enabled open exchange of opinion and suggestions for respect of different attitudes. There was no need for any major interventions by the moderator in neither of the three focus groups. All the participants had previous experience with this qualitative research method.

**Discussion analysis**

A summary of the focus group discussion and interviews conducted is given below.

**Question 1: Which sustainable mechanisms should be established by the country in order for the remittances to be considerably more in the function of development in Serbia?**

**Discussion Summary**

In the introduction to the question, the definition of remittances was given and it was underlined that they certainly contributed to improving the lives of recipients, together with realising macro-economic and social benefits. It was highlighted that the majority of countries with serious share of remittances in the GDP wished they contributed to the country’s development measurably.

The question was discussed long and lively in all three focus groups. Although this question was asked the first, it seemed it was not opening the discussion and that it would not include the majority of participants in the discussion. Contrary to expectations, almost all participants joined the discussion, experts, practitioners and policy makers. During the discussion a series of topics emerged. The discussion included the issues of what development was, what general assumptions for investment in development in Serbia there were, followed by the sense of discussing the role of the government related to the money received for private purposes, as well as the lack of data on remittances and recipients. In addition, the discussion brought up ideas related to the mechanisms to be established by the government so that remittances would be considerably more in the function of development in Serbia.

Academia and NGO representatives were extremely critical in discussing this issue, first underlining that Serbia did not have a clearly defined development policy, that is, that areas that should be developmentally supported were not prioritized, such as education or agriculture. Second, the discussion participants highlighted a number of serious factors hindering the investment of remittances in development or having the diaspora invest in the development of Serbia at all. In this respect, several participants mentioned
the expressed mistrust in the government and its institutions and non-existence of the rule of law, as the main obstacle for investment in Serbia.

The majority of participants, not only experts, but also the NGO representatives, as well as policy makers, highlighted that too little was known about the remittances to be able to respond to the question adequately. It was underlined that not only was there a disharmony between the assessment on the level of remittances and their participation in GDP in different sources, but it was also not known in what scope they came in through informal channels, the number of families receiving them, the age and educational profiles of remittance recipients were unknown, as well as whether they were received primarily by the urban or rural population; there were no data on average size and scope of cash received by the individual/family through this type of transfer, nor those related to the structure of spending remittances. Hence the conclusion of many participants was that it was necessary to conduct focused research in order to receive data related to remittances and those that receive them.

In addition to the listed uncertainties and obstacles of different nature making the responding to the questions asked difficult, several participants in the discussion mentioned its adequacy. The representative of one NGO underlined that assistance to family to survive was the chief motive for someone who went to work/stay abroad to send remittances. Therefore, she did not see the point in thinking about remittances being linked more to development than spending. Also, as economist, she could not accept the concept of there being special institutional incentives for development investments funded from remittances. One of the participants from the sphere of policy makers believed that also from the human rights perspective it was not acceptable to have special incentives to invest the funds originating from remittances or our diaspora or foreigners in relation to financial development initiatives of Serbian citizens.

The colleague economist highlighted that it was not only unconstitutional but also difficult to determine the money coming from remittances in order to be able to use some mechanisms to influence it being invested in development. The government role, according to him, consisted primarily of creating an environment favourable for investment and entrepreneurship, strengthening all its institutions and regaining the trust of citizens lost through different projects, including the loan for the recovery of Serbia, as well as the collapse of banks.

Attention was called during the discussion to remittances entering the country through informal channels due to tradition, but also the intent for the end user to remain invisible, because of the possibility to access the right to assistance provided by the government through different social programmes.
However, many participants agreed that this topic was worth discussing. The participant from the policy makers’ side said that she knew national strategies well, and that public policy documents did not, and should, contain serious treatment of the institution of remittances.

What was concretely proposed as answer to the question asked?
Educating citizens in general on the importance of investing funds in formal and additional education or investment in relation to spending; education on developing feasible business plans; promoting electronic sending of remittances, promoting self-employment, forming a development-investment bank; deducting income tax from a part of the money from remittances arriving through formal channels invested in the education of remittance recipient/family member or in development projects; offer transparent concretely elaborated investment projects; support donations in general and especially those related to higher education, science and culture; set stimuli for investing money from remittances transferred through banks for formal and additional education as well as starting small and medium enterprises, workshops, crafts shops, self-employment, especially self-employment of women; promote best practice examples.

Several participants highlighted the importance of the local self-government in finding the ways to invest the funds from remittances in different forms of development. One of the experts saw the role of the local self-government in recognising what meaningful development in their environment was for the people sending remittances, or those receiving them. The representative of one of the NGOs underlined that, for example, if somewhere remittances are received most by the elderly, models of public-private partnership related to services for home assistance for those in advanced life stages. The discussion also highlighted the positive example of the municipality Čajetina in Zlatiborski District, which gives subsidies to farmers if they are buying a calf, inseminating a cow, planting a certain number of raspberry seedlings, constructing a greenhouse. A colleague gave the idea that it would be good to connect the policy of incentivising the investment of remittances with agriculture development policy.

Different attitudes of two experts were presented on the role of homeland associations. While one researcher felt they made sense especially if talking about the association of people who went abroad from the same area, the other was convinced this was not an efficient way to connect with the professional part of the diaspora.

It should be mentioned that there were also opposite opinions related to the flow of scope of remittances in the future. That is, whether the significance of remittances is to grow in the future because it is difficult to stop emigration from Serbia, or this type of cash transfer from abroad would decrease because more and more often entire families leave the country.
Question 2: Which instruments can the government use to encourage transnational activities of experts in diaspora?

Discussion Summary

The first question related to cash remittances sent by emigrants to their families in Serbia. The second question focused on the so-called social remittances, capital (knowledge, skills, ideas, contacts) and money of highly educated and highly skilled people that emigrated from Serbia in the function of their potential transnational activity. Transnational activities are more and more synonymous of diaspora and their links with the country of origin. They represent the participation of those that went to work/stay abroad in the economic, social and political life of the country of origin. This was highlighted in introduction to the second question in the focus groups. Whereas, only for this question, several examples of transnational activities were given, such as transnational entrepreneurship, participation in the classes in higher education institutions or different expertise.

All three focus groups underlined the importance of forming a database on Serbian diaspora, primarily in its professionals and entrepreneurs. It was discussed that a register, in addition to data related to what experts who have left Serbia are doing and where, would also be good to contain their attitudes related to personal motivation for transnational activity in general, as well as those related to interest in concrete areas of linkages. It was stressed that thus far there had been several partial ad-hoc attempts to establish such a database. In this sense, it was stressed that the register should be developed institutionally, in the form of tasks and duties.

In the discussion related to making a database on diaspora, a very important issue was raised. It is related to reducing diaspora in practice down to those citizens in diaspora working/staying abroad who reported their national identity as Serbian. The concept of ethnic diaspora, rather than the concept of diaspora made up of citizens originating from Serbia, is counterproductive for encouraging transnational activities of, for example, the developed diaspora in Turkey of citizens originating from Sandžak.

Second step toward the implementation of transnational activities, according to discussion participants, would be to inform the professional part of the diaspora on our system, possibilities for investment and/or participation in different programmes and projects, forms of mobility support and similar. An integral part of information sharing could also be a catalogue of best transnational practice examples, including successful transnational companies, but also the register of successful people in Serbia and good practices implemented by them in the area of economy, education or science.
It would only be in the third step, as believed by the focus group participants, that contact should be established with certain individuals in the diaspora and offer them concrete cooperation, from investment in a developed investment project, through guest lectures, participation in classes or research projects, to asking them for expert services in special situations.

Additionally, it is important that our institutions be open for cooperation with the diaspora. Especially educational and scientific institutions. One of the focus groups discussed at length about whether as a society we were mature enough for proper competition or not and whether there were chances for advancement in a next-to-closed university and institute space, such as it was in Serbia.

A participant of the focus group from the academic sector agreed that it was important to raise the quality of education and research for the benefit of the society in Serbia, but the need to have our experts from the diaspora, for example, as guest teachers at universities is most often not implemented because of the lack of resources. The discussion proposed establishing a fund on the government level, as a solution for this and similar situations, such as, for example, the need for expertise, that would provide grant funding for visits of professionals from Serbian diaspora.

Two positive examples were also given during the discussion. One was from Serbia, related to the information technology sector. The other example was from Bosnia and Herzegovina, which established an academy of doctors from this country and doctors who had left it to work in prestigious clinics in the USA. Each summer this organisation hosts an event for exchange of knowledge and experiences and discussion of issues related to addressing concrete challenges in diagnostics and treatment.

The discussion also pointed out to a problem related to transnational activities. This is also a difficult problem to solve on the current level of development in Serbia. It relates to the differences in the frame of reference that we have here, and the frame of reference in relation to rights and values in developed countries adopted by diaspora members during their adaptation to the life outside the country of origin.

The answer to this question also stressed the importance of establishing an investment-development bank in Serbia as important pillar and driver of development.

**Question 3: In what way could Serbia again become a regional educational centre and keep foreigners after graduating on its labour market?**

**Discussion Summary**
The question was asked because universities in Serbia, especially in Belgrade, used to attract foreign students from surrounding countries as well as those from unallied countries. Some of them stayed after finishing the studies to live and work in our country.

A number of participants from all three spheres of action participated in the discussion on this question, stressing that it was necessary to meet a number of prerequisites for the Belgrade University, together with other universities in Serbia, to become attractive for foreign students, with the possibility of some of them staying in our country after graduating.

The majority of participants in the focus group stressed that there was no developed labour market in Serbia, and that the development of the labour market was a very important requirement both for their studying and especially for staying in Serbia after graduation. Additionally, it was stressed that the labour market in Serbia was not even open to foreigners. There is resistance to accept any competition. One of the discussion participants said that this resistance was based on understandable fear, because it is realistic and justified in unstable times and unstable country such as Serbia over a long period of time.

Also, concrete prerequisites related to the idea of the University of Belgrade as a regional education centre were discussed. The discussion stressed first several important assumptions to be ensured by the schools themselves. These would be the study programmes (their content and transparency), cost of studies and possibility to organise and accredit programmes in English. It was stressed, for example, that it would be necessary to have the analysis of costs of the studies on all levels with different universities for example in Budapest, Sophia, Bucharest and Vienna, in order to be competitive in this respect.

It was warned that educational institutions should have the imperative to develop in the sense of raising the quality. If not, it would not only be difficult to attract foreign students, but, because the process of Serbia’s EU accession would at some point include budget funding of studies abroad, more and more youth from Serbia would leave to study at better foreign universities. However, it is difficult to achieve the quality of higher education in circumstances of it being closed and nepotism (found by the participant from the decision-maker sphere), or universities being untouchable and conservative (underlined by one of the NGO representatives).

However, the opinion of the participants was also that the country should commit to this issue in order to be able to increase the number of foreign students in an organised manner. In this sense it was underlined that the government must know whether it wanted and could give out scholarships, credits or loans to foreigners wishing to study
in Serbia. Also, the government would have to decide towards which students and in what scientific areas it would want to encourage studies in Serbia.

The expert in political science reminded everyone that according to our Constitution there was the obligation of special care of the Serbs in the region. Therefore, universities in Serbia have special quotas for enrolling students from the Republic of Srpska, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina who declare themselves as Serbs, and they are funded from the Budget. He argued that this principle should be extended to the citizens of the countries in the region regardless of their ethnicity. His opinion was that this should not be observed as expense but as investment in the future. There were a number of examples of successful individuals who studied in Belgrade, returned to their countries of origin and maintained business connections with Serbia and helped Serbia in different ways. One of them is the current Chinese Ambassador in Belgrade.

The question of facilitated granting of students’ visas was also posed. It was clarified during the discussion by the representative from the decision-makers’ group, that this issue was addressed in the same way it was approached in EU countries. Namely, the law enables foreign students coming at the invitation of a university in Serbia to be granted visa on a period of 6 months. The visa is then extended when they start Serbian lessons and complete the process of recognition of their previous diplomas to continue studies in Serbia. The law even provides that the foreign student may get a work permit for a certain number of hours that would not jeopardize their studies, that is, a maximum of 20h per week.41

The discussion also provided a best practice example related to the Medical School of Belgrade University where foreigners have for a long time been studying in special study groups in English, so the education of health professionals in Serbia is mentioned as a profitable activity. Their example could be followed by others, especially technical schools in Serbia. One of the experts also mentioned the example of Romania, where doctoral studies for young people from Arabic countries were established, as multiple benefits had been found.

Unexpectedly, the discussion on this topic initiated the issue of a lack of institute for studying migration in Serbia, or a department for migration with one of the universities. This would be multidisciplinary studying of migration, as this is a demographic, sociological, legal, economic, political and philosophic issue. However, there is the problem with multidisciplinary studies in general in Serbia, because it raises the issue of professional classifications of graduates.

41 Official Gazette No. 128/14
The discussion on this topic also stressed how important it would be to have such an institution, because we were missing people with a vision on the topic of migration and development, based on facts and data. This is an important reason why government officials do not think much about migration-related activities, especially from a modern perspective. The representative of one of the NGOs underlined that it was difficult to understand that there were no such institutions, as we were a country with long tradition of facing emigration from the country and experience with many forced migrants in the past two decades.

**Question 4: Which developmental and sectoral solutions should be used to move towards migration changes that would assume a higher number of returnees and foreigners moving into Serbia?**

**Discussion Summary**

In addition to experience with the immigration of refugees and a large number of IDPs in the last decades, Serbia is traditionally a country of emigration. However, the question was asked with the belief that socioeconomic development would help reduce emigration from and increase immigration toward Serbia. Demographic assumptions for a migratory transition of this type has for a long time been Serbia’s reality. Simultaneously, the experiences of the countries that changed the migration model or travelled the way from countries of immigration to countries of emigration, show that the political response has been delayed.

The discussion posed the question again of Serbia not having well established strategic directions of the country’s development and the development of different sectors. A participant from the NGO sector recalled that Serbia insisted on reindustrialisation, without having infrastructure, working class or ideas. Several times it was mentioned during the discussion that Serbia had no human resource development strategy. In parallel, it was stated that the majority of the local self-governments had no development programmes. A participant from the decision-makers’ sphere, stated his opinion that in the majority of cases in practice there was a problem with implementation of good strategic solutions, as well as that because of inefficient and ineffective spending, chances were often missed to address important issues related to the integration of Roma or returnees in line with Readmission Agreements.

The question of development aspects of the current migrant crisis and the profile of migrants who would stay in Serbia remains open. Could they accelerate development? Do we have the opportunity to receive them if we have problems with refugees, IDPs and returnees? In relation to this topic, unemployment in Serbia was mentioned, but also structural unemployment as well as the fact that some form of business, as a rule, developed around migrants.
However, in the direct response to the question asked, both experts and policy makers and NGO representatives stated that Serbia had land and agricultural production potential, but not the workforce to realise it. Examples were given on fruit and vegetable wasting because there was no one to pick them. Also population prognoses were presented related to the reduction of the working population in the immediate future. It was additionally underlined that with the coming of investment, also come the workers of missing profiles.

During the discussion, the widespread rejection of foreigners in Serbia was also mentioned. Examples were given illustrating this. The most convincing illustration was that since 2011 it was impossible to implement the Government’s Decision on building a new asylum centre. Citizens were protesting against the opening of a new asylum centre, or demonstrations were organised to close the existing asylum centres. It was underlined that this resistance or xenophobia was caused by a fear of change. However, as was underlined by the discussion participant from the sphere of policy makers, the government’s response to the fear should have been planned and systematic. But, there should first be awareness of the need of immigration. One of the present experts said that even in her academic setting there was a high negative charge towards the statement of fact that a better demographic future for Serbia would mean it had to achieve a positive migration balance.

In one of the interviews attention was turned to two realistic potential groups of immigrants. These were foreigners that would largely come with their companies, especially from the sector of professional services (consulting, banks, insurance agencies, audit agencies, advertising, legal representation, information technology sector), as it can be expected also that more and more asylum seekers would become permanent residents of Serbia.

The needs of these two groups of persons vary a lot, and their integration could deepen the existing gap between the rich and the poor and lead to an even greater polarisation on the labour force market. This is why the government would need to act responsibly in order to prevent that their efforts to meet the needs of future immigrants lead to even greater social tensions.

**Question 5: Finally, which realistic and proactive recommendation on this topic would you offer for further development of any national development or sector strategic document?**

**Discussion Summary**
The last question prepared for discussion in small groups was envisaged as brainstorming, meaning that each participant would directly propose one recommendation related to the topic of migration and development for some of the national strategic documents. However, it should be underlined that the majority of participants elaborated on their proposals. Some of the recommendations were general and did not refer concretely to a specific sector. Some of ideas were possible to synthesize in one recommendation. Having in mind this fact, as well as that the majority of discussion participants tried to present an attitude that would not be repeating what had already been said in the group, i.e. that there were similar ideas in all three focus groups, we will list them without references to the proposers. If the attitudes repeat what was already presented in response to the previous questions, they are not given below and neither are the attitudes that relate to advocating for in-depth economic and political reform in Serbia.

Among the recommendations presented, it seems particularly important to set out the following:

- Single coordination of public policies in general, especially those referring to the phenomenon of migration
- Implementation of adopted development and sector strategies, programmes, plans
- The change of perception on migration, that is, respect for the needs and the potentials of emigration/immigration on all levels
- Include the topic of migration and development in all public policy documents
- Appoint a person with the task (mandate) to take care of balanced mainstreaming of migration in key national development and sector strategies
- Migrants are not a single group and different sector strategies should define objectives and measures related to specific groups of migrants
- Use experience of Serbia with the admission of a large number of refugees and IDPs in the migrant policy
- Promote personal accountability for own life among youth
- Promote youth mobility
- Develop awareness on education being a serious product on the European education market
- Open the education and science systems both for returnees and for foreigners in order to improve the quality of education and science in Serbia and to develop Serbia
- Cancel the recognition of diplomas acquired at universities on the Shanghai Ranking. Several exceptions should be defined, and recognition of diplomas from medical and legal schools outside of Serbia required
- Support the Diaspora Virtual University
- Adopt the strategy for linking the labour market and education system in Serbia
Link government and scientific institutions in the function of better policies in general, especially related to development and sector-wide solutions related to migration and development.
7. PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for public policies in Serbia that follow, are the result of, primarily, the conducted focus group research, with the participation of experts, NGO sector representatives and policy makers, as well as the interviews conducted for the needs of this study. In addition, the findings of the previously presented analysis of the mutual impact of migration and development in Serbia were taken into account, as well as the critical review of national development and sector strategic documents, plans and programmes. Further, recommendations of several studies published by IOM were consulted, including those published by their Mission in Belgrade. Among these, the following stand out: *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Policy Agendas* (IOM, 2005) and *White Paper – mainstreaming migration into local development planning policy and beyond* (IOM, UNDP, 2015). We also studied the World Bank document titled *Leveraging Migration for Financing Development*.\(^\text{42}\) Also, in relation to improved migration data, the findings of the SEEMIG project were taken into account (ISS, SORS, 2014).

The recommendations of this study are meant as a form of support for balanced mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in national policies. Although the majority of recommendations have been elaborated in more details in the previous chapters, they are synthesized here and listed of easier availability and greater visibility. Recommendations given in the studies that dealt with labour migration policies in Serbia (Manke, 2010) or External and Internal Migration of Serbia’s Citizens with Particular Focus on Youth (Bobić, Vesković Andelković, Kokotović, 2016) have not been repeated. Recommendations that are an integral part of the adopted national strategic documents as objectives/activities/measures have not been repeated either. We could not avoid different levels of generality of the recommendations that follow. One of the reasons is insufficient knowledge that needs to be broadened with targeted research. Finally, we should stress here that important recommendations of general character (rule of law, institution building, labour market development and similar) related to the socioeconomic situation in Serbia from the focus group research have not been included.

Recommendations for public policies in Serbia are the following:

**Conceptual and strategic**

1) Examine the complex mutual, positive and negative, impacts of migration and

\(^\text{42}\) blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/files/special_topic.pdf
development (demographic and socioeconomic)
2) Acknowledge the multidirectional movement aspect within the phenomenon of migration
3) Adopt a human resource development strategy in Serbia
4) Define Serbian migratory policy principles
5) Accept the principle of balanced mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in key national development and sector strategic documents
6) Mainstream the phenomenon of migration in a balanced way in the public policy documents, based on cooperation between the government administration, scientific and research institutions and NGOs
7) Mainstream the phenomenon of migration in a balanced way in public policy documents based on sound quantitative and qualitative data
8) Ensure unified coordination of public policies in relation to the phenomenon of migration

**Strengthening institutions**

9) Strengthen the capacities of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration to mainstream migration in key national development and sector strategic documents
10) Strengthen the capacities of the Republic Secretariat for Public Policy to ensure public policy coordination in relation to the phenomenon of migration
11) Strengthen the capacities of the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region
12) Strengthen the capacities of institutions producing data on migration and research institutions dealing with migration issues
13) Strengthen the capacities of NGOs focusing on migrants

**Improving data and support to research**

14) Establish a Population Registry
15) Form and maintain national database on professionals and businesses in the diaspora (mapping, professional profiles and interest in some form of cooperation)
16) Continuously implement research on remittances and profile of recipients and senders of remittances
17) Provide special project funding for the research on the phenomenon of migration in the function of defining certain public policies

**Remittances and development**

18) Disseminate information on the costs of different options of transferring remittances through formal channels with special emphasis on e-banking
19) Promote and encourage investment in formal/additional education or establishment of small/home businesses by linking remittances and crediting in cooperation with banks
Encourage investments in the country of origin

20) Raise awareness of diaspora about the importance of investing money in investments rather than spending
21) Establish special financial incentives for diaspora investing in investment projects
22) Promote the idea of donations among the diaspora and encourage donations through various financial and non-financial incentives
23) Promote best practices on diaspora investments

Encourage transnational activities of the diaspora

24) Inform the professionals and businesses in diaspora on the opportunities and support related to transnational activities
25) Develop a catalogue of successful examples of transnational activities
26) Establish contacts with certain members of the diaspora to establish concrete forms of cooperation
27) Establish a fund to connect diaspora scientists with scientists, institutions and businesses in Serbia
28) Support transnational entrepreneurship through special financial incentives

Increase the attractiveness of Serbian universities

29) Adopt the law on regulated professions
30) Link the labour market and the educational system in accordance with adopted documents
31) Cancel the procedure for recognition of diplomas from foreign universities on the Shanghai Ranking
32) Promote openness of higher education institutions to the employment of returnees and foreigners
33) Support the Diaspora Virtual University
34) Establish a fund for the mobility of teachers and students
35) Set quotas for budget funding of citizens from neighbouring countries
36) Enable foreigners studying in Serbia to apply for credits or loans

Preparation for major immigration into Serbia

37) Create positive climate around immigration, develop tolerance and acceptance of immigrants in Serbia
38) Establish programmes for integration of returnees and foreigners in order to enable them to fully utilize their potentials
International migration is a growing phenomenon, both by scope and complexity, pervading nearly all the countries in the world. The relation between migration and development is complex. In recent years, in addition to the topics such as viewing emigration as an error in a population’s development, considering the leaving of highly educated and highly skilled individuals as a loss to the country of origin and a gain for the receiving country and stressing the importance of the influx of cash remittances from abroad, migration is more and more often analysed in the function of socioeconomic development. Development not only of developed but also of developing countries. Impetus for the new paradigm comes from theoretical considerations of the phenomenon of migration and development, findings of conducted empirical research in various populations, as well as in political circles. The United Nations have an important role in the formulation and implementation of a broader perspective on the mutual impact of migration and development.

The study Migration and Development in Serbia has aimed to provide an overview of the demographic and socioeconomic momentum and migration model, review different effects of migration, critically analyse the integration of migration in key national development and sector strategic documents and define recommendations in the function of balanced migration of this phenomenon in public policy agendas. The revised push and pull model by Fassmann and Musil (Fassmann, Musil, 2014) and the Migration Transition Model: from emigration to immigration countries developed by Fassmann and Reeger (Fassmann, Reeger, 2012) were selected as the theoretical foundations for the study. The first of the chosen models enables a more complete understanding of the deterministic basis for the individual decision related to emigration/immigration, and the second to see the phases of the migratory process that Serbia is in now or potentially will be.

The emphasis in the study has been on qualitative consideration of the topic, but based on different evidence, including the findings of the conducted qualitative research. Critical analysis of 14 relevant current documents adopted at the highest level was conducted. By reviewing the listed topics, we have attempted to identify both limitations for development, as well as discuss the potential space for using migration in the function of the country’s development. In this sense, we have identified some of the possibilities to turn emigration-related losses into potential gains and raise the issue of using immigration potentials for development, including demographic revitalization. Study results are aimed at decision makers. We will try to summarize them below.

Migration movements represent one of the important qualities of the history of the people in this area. Serbia is traditionally a country of emigration. It still records a clear
negative migration balance. However, there are demographic assumptions, that childbearing crisis and its effects related to population ageing and open depopulation, will not only continue but exacerbate in the time that comes, for the change of migration flows from emigration towards immigration. These changes are not supported by the existing reach of socioeconomic development in Serbia. The country is facing a series of political, economic, social and cultural challenges provided in the study, explaining why Serbia still has a high emigration and low immigration potential, as well as to what extent return to Serbia today is a complex and relative option.

The main limitation when considering the effects of external migration, primarily emigration from Serbia, is that it has not been studied enough. Even so, we can conclude that emigration must have had an impact on the reduced number of permanent residents in Serbia. Emigration did not have only a direct impact on the population size. The impact was also indirect. Serbia directly lost the people who emigrated, but also indirectly their children when they left together and/or those born in a different, foreign country.

Particularly the large-scale leaving to work/stay abroad from specific parts of Serbia, the three so-called hot emigration zones (Predojević Despić, Penev, 2012), had to leave serious effects on their demographic development. Simultaneously, in addition to the personal and economic gain of the family, the reduced pressure on the labour market in circumstances of high unemployment and consequently reduced social tensions are the potential macro benefits in the local environments from the mentioned emigration zones.

A special issue are the effects of emigration of a large number of highly educated and highly skilled individuals, or experts, researchers and talents from Serbia. We still cannot speak of labour market disturbances caused by emigration from the country of large numbers of individuals of certain professional profiles, including the emigration of health professionals. However, the mitigation of circumstances on the national and societal levels that determined the decision of not few of the most educated individuals to leave abroad, requires precisely the engagement of the most educated Serbian citizens in the fields of economy, culture, science, and politics in development in Serbia. Simultaneously, by leaving the country experts in general preserve their professional capital and build on it in more developed environments. This is a potentially positive side of emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals in terms of the opportunity for return of this population to the country or circular migration or different forms of transnational networking and activities.

In addition to potential benefits related to social remittances, cash remittances coming from emigrants to their connections in Serbia are particularly important. Estimated amount of cash remittances is significant both in absolute and relative terms. The
amount of remittances is estimated because a considerable share of this financial transfer arrives into Serbia through informal channels. In addition to this finding, the results of representative research conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS, 2015) demonstrated that remittances are by far used largely to meet the costs of living and basic needs with regards to investing in the education of recipients, their health, better living space or for starting business which is simultaneously investment in the future of both the individual and their family, and the investment in the human capital and the country’s development. However, even when recipients spend remittances for everyday needs, this has wider economic effects in the local community.

Balanced mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in the country’s strategic documents takes into account the existence of a reciprocity between migration and development. Simultaneously, it represents a tool for coherent policy making (IOM, 2015) in the sphere of migration and population development understood in the broadest sense. Critical analysis of the mainstreaming of migration in key development and sector strategies in Serbia is provided in detail in a special chapter of the Study. General conclusion is that the implementation of these documents would reduce emigration flows from and increase immigration flows into Serbia. Simultaneously, the mainstreaming of the phenomenon of migration in relevant documents is of a different degree and quality, starting from its lacking (for example in the Strategy for Supporting the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness for the period 2015-2020), or being formally integrated (for example in the Strategy on Promotion and Development of Foreign Investments), or that the phenomenon has not been fully integrated (typical example is the Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2014-2024), to what we feel is well-integrated with awareness on limitations and potentials of migration in the strategies related to the development of industry, education, as well as scientific and technological development.

As research conducted for the needs of this study, three focus groups were organised, with a total of 28 participants, and two interviews were conducted on the topic of migration and development in Serbia. The discussion was based on five predefined questions. In each group, experts, representatives of relevant NGOs and policy makers participated in the discussion. The conducted research and published targeted interviews, first of all, made it possible to define concrete and realistic recommendations for balanced integration of the migration phenomenon in national policies. A total of 38 recommendations for public policies in Serbia are presented, divided according to purpose on conceptual and strategic, those that refer to strengthening institutions, improving data and support to research, followed by sets of recommendations on remittances and development, encouraging investment in the country of origin and promoting transnational activities of the diaspora, with further eight recommendations defined with the aim to increase the attractiveness of our
universities and finally, recommendations are provided related to preparations for more immigration into Serbia.
LITERATURE


http://seemig.eu/index.php/downloads-project-outputs-policy-recommendations


