

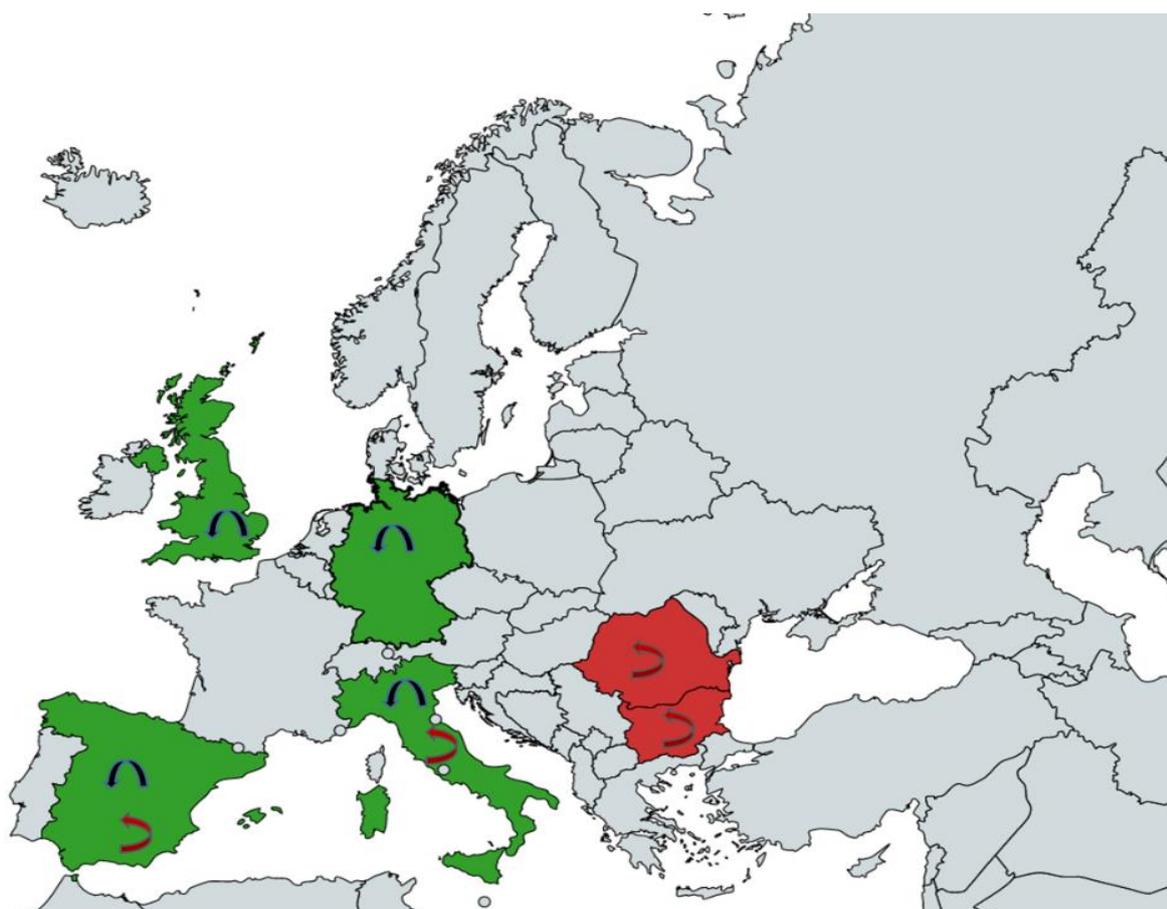
Cross-country findings of the individual factors for migration

Siyka Kovacheva and Radka Peeva

INTRODUCTION

This briefing presents selected findings from the comparative report on the individual factors for migration under WP4 of the Growth, Equal Opportunities, Migration and Markets (GEMM) Project. It draws upon qualitative interviews with two types of migrants: ‘actual’, people who are already living in a foreign country and ‘potential’, people who plan to migrate in the near future. A third group of interviewees comprises of experts working in private and public recruitment agencies. The whole sample consists of 154 interviews conducted with Bulgarian, Romanian, Italian and Spanish migrants and experts in the UK, Germany, Italy and Spain. We first present the main aspects of the comparative analysis and then focus on some of the most interesting findings.

Migration flows studied in GEMM*



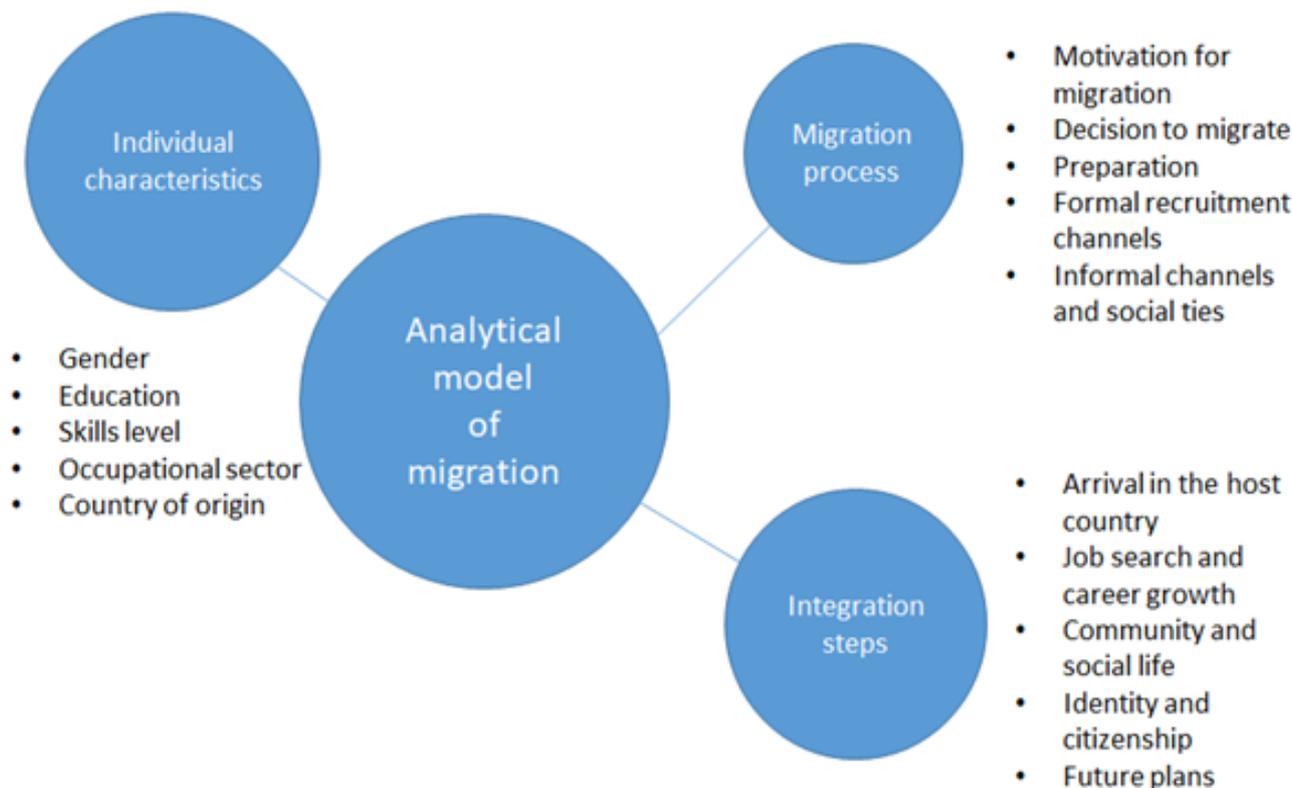
*Red arrows indicate outflow, dark ones – inflow.

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Analytical model for the cross-country comparisons

Climate of reception and institutional factors in the country of arrival



Research questions

- What motivates different groups of migrants for mobility?
- What factors explain their choice of the destination country?
- How do migrants prepare for this radical change in their life circumstances?
- What are the formal and informal channels for mobility?
- What groups of migrants predominantly use which mobility channel?

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Main findings

- There is a great diversity of motivations for migration which cannot be solely explained by macro-level factors such as high unemployment rates. Social inequalities stemming from ethnicity, educational and skills level, economic sector, types of occupation as well as gender often have different impact depending on the context of the sending and receiving countries
- Better labour market opportunities are factors important for all types of migrants but often migrants choose the country of arrival based on very little knowledge about the norms regulating employment and social security. The lack of language proficiency is a significant barrier to mobility in the European labour market.
- Migrants from Italy and Spain more often look for better career opportunities in Germany and the UK while migrants from Bulgaria and Romania are motivated more often by income differences and tend to accept jobs below their educational level. Highly skilled health professionals such as doctors from all countries choose the destination when they find that it offers better career opportunities, while the nurses (medium skill level) from Bulgaria and Romania tend to accept starting in low skilled caring jobs.
- The image of particular cities acts as an attractive force for migrants. London and Berlin are seen as global cities offering high quality of work and life and a variety of multicultural experiences entice mainly young Europeans who are not only in search of better job opportunities, but also a better lifestyle and the possibility for autonomy and adventure.
- Lengthy preparation of numerous documents such as university diplomas, training and skill certificates is a major challenge, particularly in sectors such as health care and construction, which most need a mobile workforce.
- Public agencies regulate a tiny share of the mobility stream in the European labour market. Private agencies in some of the countries have a somewhat higher success in recruiting and serving prospective migrants but still most migrants prefer to use informal channels such as friends, relatives and neighbours.

Policy Recommendations

- encourage cooperation between public and private recruitment agencies, including within the EURES network, in a view to best use their potential of providing suitable information and advice for prospective and actual migrants;
- set up welcome structures in the countries of arrival providing language courses, information on labour market and labour legislation, information and advice regarding social norms in the host communities, information and advice regarding the social protection and the health system;
- support community projects aiming at facilitating social adaptation of migrants, protecting their rights and helping them reconcile their work and family responsibilities.
- to increase the investment in foreign language teaching in public schools as well as in various forms of long-life learning outside the regular school curriculum.