

Why do they stay when they are not supposed to?

Reconsidering the push-pull theory

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INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Most migration theories seek to explain why people move, and very little attention is paid to the factors that may hinder migration. We argue that – besides the forces that push and pull people towards migration – restraining and repelling factors should also be considered. Accordingly, our research questions are as follows:

- 1) Which factors can explain the lack of migration intentions?
- 2) To what extent can certain restraining and repelling forces account for the willingness to migrate?

DATA & METHODOLOGY

Our analysis is based on data deriving from the survey *Migration plans in Hungary among the 18-40 aged population* carried out in 2013 by HDRI*. 1464 individuals were interviewed, and the sample represents the indicated population with respect to age, sex, education and settlement type. In addition to descriptive analysis, we use logistic regression to test the impact of some restraining and repelling factors.

* The project was founded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA 101458 PD).

MAIN RESULTS

NON-PLANNERS: PATRIOTS & RELUCTANT STAYERS – BASIC DIFFERENCES

Not only migration planners (32.7 per cent) and non-planners (67.3 per cent) can be identified, but the latter can be broken down into two subgroups: *patriots* (38.3 per cent) who have never even thought of going abroad, and *reluctant stayers* (29.1 per cent) who have already considered migration, but are held back by certain factors. The characteristics of the persons belonging to the three categories differ in many dimensions.

Socio-demographic groups	Proportion of given socio-demographic groups			
	Patriots	Reluctant stayers	Planners	Total population
Aged 18-24	20,0	18,4	36,4	25,7
Male	45,3	53,8	51,8	50,5
Married and living with spouse	37,9	34,7	18,5	30,4
Living in village	34,8	25,6	25,6	29,2
Having higher education degree	21,7	26,2	20	22,5
Unemployed	8,0	9,9	13	10,3
Working in the public sector	26,2	15,7	15,4	19,5

FORCES HINDERING MIGRATION PLANS

The biggest restraining forces for reluctant stayers are clearly related to clinging to current life situation, as well as sticking to the smaller and broader home environment. Objective factors, such as insufficient qualification, poor language skills and the lack of contact persons abroad play a less important – but not at all negligible – role.

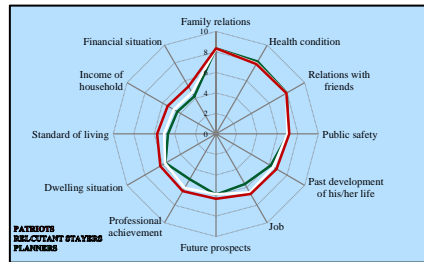
Average assessment of the role of certain factors in not planning migration (scale 1-5)			
Clinging to family	4,4	No connection with expatriates	3,3
Clinging to friends	3,7	Poor language skills	3,2
Clinging to current way of life	3,7	Fear of being disrespected	3,1
Clinging to Hungary	3,6	Too much administration	2,9
Clinging to neighbourhood	3,5	Insufficient skills/qualification	2,8
Fear of uncertainty	3,5	Not knowing where to start	2,5
Family situation	3,4	Health conditions	1,7
Insufficient amount of money	3,4	---	---

THE ROLE OF SUBJECTIVE FACTORS – SATISFACTION, ASSESSMENT OF THE RISKS AND COSTS OF MIGRATION AND MIGRATION EXPECTATIONS

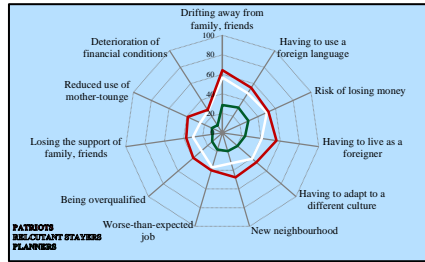
The three categories – planners, reluctant stayers and patriots – significantly differ in subjective dimensions, as well. They have somewhat different levels of *satisfaction* with certain – but not all – dimensions of life.

Divergence is greater when considering the *costs and risks of migration*; however, planners and reluctant stayers show more akin features than the two groups of non-planners. Similar pattern is found when examining the opinion on how one's life would be changed after migration.

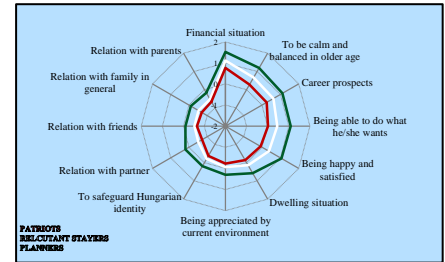
SATISFACTION WITH CERTAIN DOMAINS OF LIFE (average, scale 0 to 10)



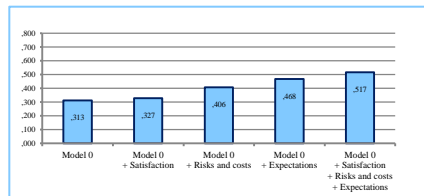
ASSESSMENT OF COSTS AND RISKS OF MIGRATION (percentage of responses, .It constitutes a big problem')



MIGRATION EXPECTATIONS (average, scale -2 [would worsen a lot] to 2 [would improve a lot])



THE ADDED EXPLANATORY POWER OF SUBJECTIVE FACTORS – RELUCTANT STAYERS (Nagelkerke R Square values)

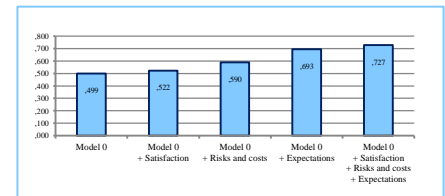


EXPLAINING THE LACK OF MIGRATION PLANS

Using logistic regression we tested whether the effect of subjective factors are evincible after controlling for other variables (see table below). Results clearly show that being a reluctant stayer or a patriot (vs. a planner) is not only influenced by migration expectations, the perception of risks and costs of migration and the level of satisfaction with current life, but these three factors have an important explanatory power as well.

Variables included in Model 0		
Age	Economic activity	Former experience abroad
Marital status	Language competency	Health conditions
Educational attainment	Livelihood situation	---
Type of settlement	Contact person abroad	---

THE ADDED EXPLANATORY POWER OF SUBJECTIVE FACTORS – PATRIOTS (Nagelkerke R Square values)



CONCLUSIONS

In a number of dimensions reluctant stayers are more similar to planners than to patriots. The refinement of the dichotomous (planner vs. non-planner) classification is recommended.

The home country does not only push its citizens towards migration, but also holds them back. The pulling force of a decent life abroad is not at all unequivocal, and can be cancelled out by the repelling force of the perceived costs and risks of migration.

The widening of the analytical framework of the determinants of international migration may result in a better understanding on why people move – or stay in their homeland.