

## THE FEMINIZATION OF LABOR MIGRATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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### **Abstract:**

The purpose of the article is to show the process of feminization of international labor migration in the European Union during first decade of 21st century. It also includes studies on the occurrence's aspects and typical concurrent processes. Common features connected with feminization of migration are: causes and effects of women immigration, job types which they apply for in host countries, possible danger awareness, and redefinition in the role of women in families. The reasons which initiated the feminization have their own beginning in economic situation of the female immigrants' countries. Condition of women's financial situation, development and bright future for family depend on those motives. Therefore the article analyzes them and points out from what the consequences arise and on whom they affect the most. The process of feminization is concomitant with side effects such as "euro orphanhood" and change in family model. In addition, the article brings up some history statistics and compares to the recent data.

*Keywords: feminization of migration, labor migration, employment, European Union, labor market*

## 1. THE CONCEPT AND TYPES OF MIGRATION

Migration is defined as a relative residence change taking place in geographical space. If it involves migration within a country it is called the internal migration, unless it occurs beyond borders then it is external migration (Latuch, 1985, pp. 308-309; Kawczynska –Butrym, 2009, p. 10). The abandoned area is an emigration area and the arrival one – immigration area (Cieslak, 1992, p. 48). People participating in population movements are both emigrants (in the country called a push or a domestic one) and immigrants (in the recipient country defined as a host or a country of residence).

Beside the diversification of spacial mobility determined by territorial scope, there are many possible classification criteria. Predominatingly they are pointed out as: time, cause, organization, legality, purpose.

In regard to time indicator, migration is divided into two groups: permanent and temporary. Permanent migration considers participants who intend to change the country of residence for longer period of time. On the other hand, in temporary migration there are three defined types: periodic, seasonal, swinging.

Periodic migration is defined as population movement which changes the actual amount of people being in the certain area, although it doesn't change the number of permanent residency. According to the definition recommended by the United Nations and the European Union, periodic migration applies to persons residing outside the country for less than 12 months and long-term type concerns those who are abroad for 12 months longer (Klos, 2006, p. 2).

Seasonal migration consists transferring from permanent to temporary residential place and coming back. Those movements are common during the same seasons of the year. Swinging migration is more frequent than seasonal type.

Due to the causes, there are specified kinds of migration: voluntary connected with free will, and forced owing to circumstances beyond one's control.

Taking under consideration the form, migration is divided into individual and group types (Cieslak, 1992, p. 248).

Moreover there is a matter of legality which differ the occurrence into: legal, illegal (irregular) and transitional period.

According to the main purposes there are economic and non-economic migrations.

## 2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION THEORIES

Since the times of Ernerst Ravenstein – the author of women's migration law from 19<sup>th</sup> century, economic motives have been considered to be a particular role in whole migration issue. They were perspicuously described in Ravenstein's theories where he focused on complexity of decision making (Makowski & Praszalowicz, 2004, pp. 21-28). The most essential are: neoclassic economics, new migration economics, market segmentation theory, global migration system.

In view of neoclassic economics, migration is a result of individual thoughts about profit maximization. In general, the main reason of migration is found in differences between countries development stage which determine the people's earnings and working conditions (Ibidem, pp. 21-28).

In opposite to neoclassic economics, new migration economics consider migration process in aspects of various markets, not merely labor market. Foreign education and advantageous capital placement are emphasized opportunities. What is more, the purpose of migration is to improve financial status of family and it also delegates its member to achieve this goal. This idea is called the conception of common decision making. It tells that the family is not only in favor of profit enlargement but also of minimize the risk and as a result the family accept the chain migration of its further relatives (Szczygielska, 2013, pp. 27-28).

In contrast to previous two theories, dual market idea points a different approach to macrosocial scope. According to this, immigration to developed countries is an answer to the need of modern global industrial economy which a vital feature is dual market functioning. Workers' high qualifications are demanded in countries with significant development level and consequently employees are paid higher than low-skilled immigrants who apply for underpaid jobs (Piore, 1979).

Global migration system arises from the modernization conception which assumes that capital transfer and proper role model of developed countries contribute to global progress. In consequence of implemented economic reforms, mobile manpower occurs and creates relationships between developing and developed countries to make transfers easy.

Certain kind of the conception is the theory of building international migration systems, changing in time with intensive goods exchange, capital and manpower between particular countries which are not necessarily located nearby.

Another variant emphasize on bilateral relations between emigration and immigration countries (Zlotnik, 1998). In this case the migration process is one of the types connecting both countries along with historical tradition, culture, politics and economy.

According to Immanuel Wallerstein's opinion, World (divided into the center, the suburbs and the semi-suburbs) experiences more extensive polarization. The center is spreading at the costs of suburbia, causing their intensive pauperization. Escape from the outskirts seems to be the only life strategy under the circumstances (Malek, 2011, p. 22).

Though migration system conceptions are formed at the macro level they include the individual factor. Migration decisions are always made based on knowledge and existing interpersonal relations.

### 3. INTENSITY AND MODERN LABOR MIGRATION TRENDS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Labor migration takes place when the cause of country abandonment is due to economic determinant. In regards to Florian Znaniecki's words: "Economic conditions are not direct incentives to migration. They have its meaning when a man realizes how his current situation is, he desires to make it better and then finds out what can be done to change it..." (Znaniecki, 1911, pp. 9-19). Therefore researchers divided migration decisions influenced by a wide range of circumstances into: push factors – connected with the country of origin and pull factors – with destination country (Pilch, 1984, pp. 14-17). Women migrants after subjective analysis are encouraged to take risk and thereby push factors become essential such as: low earnings, unemployment, unacceptable labor market situation and insecure future (Kawczynska-Butrym, 2009, p.52).

According to recent estimations, the feminization of labor migration is a phenomenon in the European Union and the gross in general migration rate is a proof of domination in population movements. In regard to Table 1, there are ten top countries with the highest migration rate. Among them, Germany is the country the highest rate nowadays, although in 2005 Spain was the leader with the climax in 2007. The economic development in Spain had great time from 90's to 2007 and consequently thousands of immigrants came to the country where only 1,8 mln people were unemployed versus 20,5 mln were well-paid employees mostly in building and constructing (Elteo, 2011). Such spectacular result was interrupted by economic crisis in 2007 and from now on the migration rate has been constantly decreasing.

**Table 1:** Migrants in top ten countries with the highest migration rate

Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Germany	707,352	661,855	680,766	682,146	346,216	404,055	489,422	592,175
United Kingdom	496,470	529,008	526,714	590,24	566,514	590,950	566,044	498,040
Italy	325,673	297,640	558,019	534,71	442,940	458,856	385,793	350,772
France	:	301,544	293,980	296,608	296,970	307,111	319,816	327,431
Spain	719,284	840,844	958,266	599,08	392,962	360,705	371,331	304,053
Poland	9,364	10,802	14,995	47,88	189,166	155,131	157,059	217,546
Romania	:	:	:	138,93	135,844	149,885	147,685	167,266
Belgium	132,810	137,699	146,409	164,152	:	135,281	144,698	147,387
Netherlands	92,297	101,150	116,819	143,516	122,917	126,776	130,118	124,566
Greece	:	:	:	:	:	119,070	110,823	110,139

Source: Eurostat, 2005-2012

One of the reasons why Germany has the highest migration rate in European Union is ageing of population which contributes to lack of employees in health care and elder care.

**Table 2:** The share of the population aged 65 or more in the European Union 2002, 2012

Country	Germany	UK	Italy	France	Spain	Poland	Romani a	Belgium	Nether- lands	Greece	UE-28
2002	17,1	15,9	18,7	16,0	17,0	12,6	13,9	16,9	13,7	17,4	16,0
2012	20,6	16,8	20,8	17,1	17,4	13,8	16,3	17,3	16,2	19,7	17,9
%	120,5	105,7	111,2	106,9	102,4	109,5	117,3	102,4	118,2	113,2	111,9

Source: Eurostat, 2002, 2012

According to the Table 2 above, UE-28 faces ageing of Europe which is caused by a decrease in fertility and mortality rate, moreover by a higher life expectancy. Those factors predominate in Germany where the growth in ageing population was the highest and still keeps such level. Therefore countries with high share of elderly are the most desirable destinations for women migrants such as: Italy, Germany, Greece, Spain, Belgium.

Due to the observation and research it became possible to point out some essential migration trends (Kilianski, 2008, pp. 99-10):

- Intensification – migration is more numerous than in the past
- Diversification – impossibility to estimate certain migration waves
- Globalization – more and more countries are becoming the source and the destination for migrants
- Feminization – increase of women part in migration rate which contributes to the change of its character

#### 4. FEMINIZATION IN LABOR MIGRATION IN THE EU

The concept of “migration feminization” means the significant feminine part and its character (Krawczynska – Butrym, 2009, p. 39).

**Table 2:** Male and female migrants in Europe

	2000		2005		2010	
	Number millions	Percent	Number millions	Percent	Number millions	Percent
Males	27,208	47,2%	30,609	47,5%	33,282	47,7%
Females	30,431	52,8%	33,790	52,5%	36,537	52,3%

Source: UN Population Division, 2000-2010

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the share of women in the whole migration rate has been higher than males. There are many reasons for that trend. Generally it can be explained by growing self-confidence of women. They feel independent and due to such attitude, women increasingly rare accompany their husbands while migrating, but choose to migrate alone. It can be predicted that such trend is going to grow continuously in the future.

Taking under consideration Krawczynska-Butrym’s opinion, the most distinctive features of feminization in labor migration process are:

1. countries’ features with growing women migration
2. the types of work performed in immigration countries
3. the specificity of threats connected with females’ migration
4. causes and fundamental purposes of migrating women
5. changes in family status of female migrants

Common feature among countries where the most migrants are coming from and host countries is level of economic development with occurring labor market issues affecting on financial status of

families. Though, women are tend to choose highly developed and european countries to migrate, moreover those countries where political and economic situation is stabilized are more often chosen even if it costs of less material satisfaction (Szczygielska, 2013, pp. 89-90).

Nevertheless, labor migration is profitable when earnings and costs of living are vary in both countries: host and native land. It is remarkable that work performed by female migrants is underpaid and low-skilled (Ibidem, p. 95). Such situation is the consequence of dual labor market. First one, the primary sector creates demand for highly qualified workers and which is supplied by autochthons. Secondary sector requires no special skills and qualifications, and as a result it became unpopular within native employees. Consequently migrants are suitable candidates for such kinds of jobs (Malek, 2011, pp. 10-11). Krystyna Slany points out the growing number of health and care, catering, agriculture, tourism, textile industry, erotic entertainment job offers (Slany, 2008, p. 12).

Market analyzers underline the modern phenomena of the occurrence "care shortage" connected with female migrants' domination in family-provided domestic services. It refers to those countries where social assistance and support is not efficient enough to cover population needs such as child and elder care (Ibidem, p. 13).

Niche employment, often informal, entails certain threads like: day and night availability, depersonalization<sup>1</sup>, physical or psychological violence, sexual harassment (Rosinska – Kordasiewicz, 2004, pp. 79-109). All these issues create syndrome of gender discrimination against women-migrants while social security such health care, pension insurance, leave of absence or sick, are not provided. Saskia Sassen's theory is determined by returning "servant class", says: "female migrants image showing a woman serving white middle-class lady replaced traditional vision of black servant and her white boss" (Sassen, 2007, p. 95).

Vitally important issue in feminization of migration feature is its motive. Studies on the subject proved three primary groups of determinants:

1. difficult financial situation,
2. specific job offers in host countries,
3. educational, matrimonial, family reunion purposes
4. due to those groups, A. Malek divided female migrants into five types (Malek, 2011, p. 128):
5. family-oriented (improving financial status of their family affects on decision making)
6. individuals (self-orientated and encouraged to improve their own material situation)
7. cognitive-seekers (curiosity, adventure, gain new experiences, psychosocial moratorium (Czerka, 2008, p. 30)
8. escapists (absence justified by financial status, but it is only an escape from difficult life experiences)
9. romantics (material aspect is important but not as much as their partner)

The consequence of family model change contributes to dominance of women in general migration rate (Sycz, 2007, pp. 146-147). Most of all it depends on woman's role redefinition in family. Now, she becomes the breadwinner. Notwithstanding every her absence involves costs like: periodic orphanhood, long-distance and superficial family care, emotional emptiness (Szczygielska, 2013, p. 250). Those issues affect the most children and may have bad impact on their future life, for example in relationships, sense of security and so on.

To conclude, it can be said that 21st century began the new era of migration, in particular labor migration as a very dynamic occurrence influenced by constant quality and quantity changes. The feminization of labor migration is a great example of quantity change, due to the fact that the phenomenon has occurred very intensified lately then it was in the past. For obvious reasons, the analyzed thoughts should be treated only as a signal to the topic and thus call for further scientific discourse. The specificity as well as the complexity of the issue of women migration which was tried to show in the article, imply in-depth interdisciplinary analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> Treating employees like they were not at the working place at the moment

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