

**REMITTANCES AS A CONSEQUENCES
OF LABOUR MIGRATION OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN
EUROPE (CEE) CITIZENS IN 2004–2013**

Anna Organiściak-Krzykowska, Joanna Machnis-Walasek

Department of Social Policy and Insurance
Faculty of Economics

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

e-mail: anna.krzykowska@uwm.edu.pl; e-mail: joanna.machnis@uwm.edu.pl

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A b s t r a c t

Migration is a very important socio-economic issue in the contemporary world. One of the interesting research problems worth considering concerns the scale and consequences of migration from the countries which joined the European Union in 2004 and in the later years. As a result of integration with European communities, citizens of the new member states acquired citizenship of the European Union. The right of free movement caused a significant increase in the number of temporary migrants. According to statistical data, the number of emigrants from the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEE) to the more prosperous European countries increased from 1.7 million in 2004 to 5.6 million in 2012. In the context of the scale of economic migration from the CEE, important questions should be asked about the economic consequences of the mobility.

The main objective of this article is a diagnosis and evaluation of the size of migration and remittances in the CEE countries. An analysis of the statistical data from Eurostat concerning the transfer of financial means due to working abroad made it possible to assess the economic consequences of labour migrations of the CEE-10 inhabitants. It turned out that, as regards the amount of those transfers, the biggest beneficiaries are Poland, Romania and Hungary. Throughout the period under analysis (2004–2013) Poland saw a joint inflow of EUR 44.8 bn, Romania – EUR 31.9 bn, and Hungary – EUR 15 bn due to their citizens working abroad.

**TRANSFERY ŚRODKÓW FINANSOWYCH Z TYTUŁU PRACY ZA GRANICĄ
JAKO KONSEKWENCJE EMIGRACJI ZAROBKOWEJ MIESZKAŃCÓW
EUROPY ŚRODKOWO-WSCHODNIEJ W LATACH 2004–2013**

Anna Organiściak-Krzykowska, Joanna Machnis-Walasek

Katedra Polityki Społecznej i Ubezpieczeń

Wydział Nauk Ekonomicznych

Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie

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Abstrakt

Migracje są ważnym społeczno-ekonomicznym problemem współczesnego świata. Kwestiami wartymi uwagi są skala i konsekwencje emigracji z krajów, które przystąpiły do Unii Europejskiej w 2004 roku i następnym. W rezultacie integracji państw europejskich obywatele nowych krajów członkowskich uzyskali obywatelstwo UE, a tym samym nabyli prawo do swobodnego przemieszczania się, co skutkowało znaczącym zwiększeniem się skali migracji czasowych. Według danych statystycznych liczba emigrantów pochodzących z krajów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej przebywających w krajach UE-15 zwiększyła się z 1,7 mln w 2004 roku do 5,6 mln osób w 2012 roku. W kontekście skali emigracji zarobkowej z krajów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej istotne wydaje się pytanie o ekonomiczne skutki tej mobilności.

Głównym celem artykułu jest diagnoza i ocena rozmiarów migracji oraz wysokości zarobków z emigracji transferowanych przez obywateli krajów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej. Analiza danych statystycznych Eurostatu w tym zakresie pozwoliła na ocenę ekonomicznych konsekwencji migracji. Największymi beneficjentami wśród krajów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w zakresie wysokości środków z tytułu pracy za granicą, transferowanych do kraju pochodzenia, są Polska, Rumunia i Węgry. W latach 2004–2013 do Polski napłynęło łącznie 44,8 mld EUR, do Rumunii – 31,9 mld EUR, a do Węgier – 15 mld EUR.

Introduction

Migrations are an important economic and social issue in the contemporary world. The integration of European countries contributed to the radical growth of international migrations of people within the area of the Community. This mobility is caused mainly by economic factors and its goal is to satisfy the financial needs of the migrants and members of their households as well as to improve the quality of their lives (RAVENSTEIN 1889, p. 167–235). This type of migration is referred to as labour migration.

The enlargement of the European Union with new member states in the 21st century was of key significance as regards the share in labour migration of the inhabitants of the Central and Eastern European countries. The newly implemented EU legislation guaranteed freedom of movement and residing freely within the territory of EU Member States (art. 21, Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Journal of Laws. EU, C 83, 30 March 2010), including the right to take up employment there (art. 45, Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). Although as a result of pre-enlargement negotiations the „old” EU-15 countries were allowed to apply transition periods to regulate access to the labour markets for the citizens of the new member states, since 2004 the number of citizens of the Central and Eastern European countries emigrating temporarily has increased steadily. Taking into account the economic aspect of mobility, it seems very important to assess the amount of remittances which are transferred to the migrants’ countries of origin. From the macroeconomic perspective these remittances are an important part of the domestic finances. As regards the household level, the transfers of emigrants’

compensations and remittances play an important role in the income structure, which contributes to the improvement of living standards of the members of these households (RAJKIEWICZ 2005).

The present article is devoted to the problem of remittances transferred by inhabitants of the 10 countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE-10) which joined the European Union in 2004 (i.e. Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary) and in 2007 (i.e. Bulgaria and Romania)¹. The aim of the article is to diagnose and evaluate the size of emigration from the CEE-10 countries from the point of view of the value of remittances transferred to these countries. In the first section of the article stages of opening the labour markets of the „old EU-15” to the new member states will be identified as well as the size of foreign migrations of CEE-10 inhabitants in the years 2004–2013. In the subsequent part attention will be focused on the differentiation of the inflow of financial funds to the CEE-10 countries from long-term and short-term emigrants.

The impact of the EU enlargement on the migration flows in Central and Eastern Europe

The flows and scale of migrations within the territory of Europe are conditioned by the integration processes of the countries on this continent. In the 21st century the first enlargement of the European Union took place on the 1st of May 2004. 10 new countries joined the EU-15 then, namely Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia (European Union... 2003). Three years later, in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania were accepted, and in 2013 Croatia joined the community of European countries. In the newly accepted member states single market rules came into force, among other things, free movement of persons, services, goods and capital.

The free movement of persons was of key importance for the migration flows of populations within the territory of the countries belonging to the Community. Its fundamental operating principle is balancing surpluses and shortages on the labour markets of individual countries, and, in the longer run, equalizing the wage level. The principle of the freedom of movement, residence and taking up employment within the EU territory offered an opportunity to

¹ Croatia, which joined the EU in 2013, tends to be treated as one of the Central and Eastern European countries, too (GABRIELCZAK i in. 2015). However, the country has not been taken into account in the present analysis due to lack of full data as regards the size of migrations and transferred funds.

choose optimal employment conditions, aimed at improving migrants' financial situation (ORGANIŚCIAK-KRZYKOWSKA 2013, p. 11).

The mobility of labour force within the EU is supported and promoted by the community institutions. The European Commission perceives labour migration as a strategy for reducing the disparities between demand and supply on the European labour markets, which has been laid down, among other documents, in the *Agenda for the New Skills and Jobs* of the Europe 2020 strategy (Communication from the commission... 2010) and *Employment Package* (Communication from the Commission... 2012).

The implementation of the principle of free movement of persons (Directive 2004/38/EC) was, however, combined with the necessity of respecting transition periods as regards opening national labour markets and systems of social protection to workers from the new member states². The transition periods were established for 7 years, taking into account the so-called „2+3+2 formula”, which meant the possibility of applying a 2-year transition period (from 1 May 2004 to 30 April 2006), a 3-year transition period (from 1 May 2006 to 30 April 2009), and a 2-year transition period (from 1 May 2009 to 30 April 2011). The decision to apply these temporary restrictions was left to each of the EU-15 countries (ŻUKROWSKA 2004, p. 43). 1 May 2011 was the cut-off date for lifting the restrictions concerning access to the labour markets of these countries. Only Great Britain, Ireland and Sweden fully applied the principle of free movement of persons towards the citizens of the new states which joined the EU in 2004. The stages of opening individual labour markets of the EU-15 countries to the inhabitants of those countries which joined the EU in 2004 (with the exception of Cyprus and Malta), i.e. EU-8, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Stages of acquiring the right of free access to employment in the EU-15 countries by the citizens of the EU-8 countries

Year	Member state
2004	Ireland (1 May), Sweden (1 May), Great Britain (1 May)
2006	Finland (1 May), Greece (1 May), Italy (1 May), Portugal (1 May), Spain (1 May)
2007	Luxembourg (1 November), The Netherlands (1 May)
2008	France (1 July)
2009	Belgium (1 May), Denmark (1 May)
2011	Austria (1 May), Germany (1 May)

Source: SPRENGER (2013).

² The transition periods did not apply to the citizens of Cyprus and Malta, who gained full freedom of movement within the EU simultaneously with joining the Community.

The enlargement of the EU with the Central and Eastern European countries led to the increased volume of international migrations of the inhabitants of these countries. In 2003 it was predicted that the influx of immigrants from the CEE-10 countries to Great Britain until 2010 would be relatively small and would amount to 5–13 thousand persons. As regards the total number of immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe who would stay in the „old EU” countries until 2015, the estimates oscillated between 700 thousand to 2.6 mln persons (DUSTMANN 2003, p. 6).

Table 2
The number of Central and Eastern Europe citizens residing in EU-15 in the years 2004–2012
(in thou.)

Country	Year				
	2004	2005	2008	2010	2012
Bulgaria	171	229	333	437	482
Czech Republic	74	71	113	105	108
Estonia	28	34	45	59	68
Latvia	23	32	57	80	128
Lithuania	50	99	167	193	254
Hungary	92	92	131	152	184
Poland	580	776	1,328	1,497	1,798
Romania	541	882	1,640	2,218	2,400
Slovakia	66	99	150	166	158
Slovenia	34	36	38	41	43

Source: DUSZCZYK, MATUSZCZYK (2014).

The data aggregated in Table 2 show that the actual size of migrations from the CEE-10 countries far exceeded British researchers' predictions. As a matter of fact, in 2012 5.6 mln citizens from the CEE-10 countries resided within the territory of the old 15¹. The largest group of the CEE-10 countries immigrants are the citizens of Romania (in 2012 over 2.4 mln persons), and it should be remembered that this country joined the EU later, in 2007. Poland ranked 2nd as regards the number of inhabitants residing within the territory of the EU-15 countries. In 2012 the number of emigrants living temporarily outside their country of origin amounted to 2.13 mln persons, out of which over 1.7 mln resided within the territory of other EU countries. The currently available data show that in 2015 the immigration influx from Poland was the highest since the country joined the EU and it amounted to 2.4 mln persons (including 2 mln residing in the EU-27 countries) (*Informacja o rozmiarach...* 2016, p. 3).

The size of emigration from the CEE-10 individual countries looks a bit differently in reference to the populations of the emigrants' countries of origin. The analysis of the number of emigrants per 1000 inhabitants shows that the largest population outflow in 2012 took place in Romania (119 persons/1000 inhabitants), Lithuania (85 persons/1000 inhabitants), Bulgaria (66 persons/1000 inhabitants) and Latvia (63 persons/1000 inhabitants). Poland ranked 6th among the CEE-10 countries in this respect (47 persons/1000 inhabitants).

The transfer of remittances to the Central and Eastern Europe countries

An important reason for international migrations of populations is the wish to improve the financial situation on the part of the persons who decide to emigrate. Among the economic determinants which encourage labour migration, there are push factors (e.g., high rate of unemployment, low wages) and pull factors (e.g., low rate of unemployment, the prospect of higher earnings than in the country of origin). The above mentioned determinants were the core of E. Lee's theory of *push-pull factors* (LEE 1966, pp. 47–57).

From the economic point of view, the measurable effects of international migrations are the financial means obtained due to working abroad. In relevant sources and international statistics the term *remittances* is used to define the incomes of households earned as a result of temporary or permanent residence abroad. Remittances comprise financial means and goods transferred officially (e.g. electronic banking transfers) and unofficially (for instance, goods, financial means in cash) (*International Transactions in Remittances...* 2009, p. 291).

In accordance with the recommendation of the International Monetary Fund (included in the Balance of Payments Manual), the standard components of emigrants' earnings transfers (remittances) include:

- compensation of employees, i.e. remunerations or other benefits (in cash or in kind) of seasonal workers or other short-term migrants (residing abroad for less than 12 months) and frontier workers, whose economic interests are tied to the countries of their origin;
- workers' remittances – i.e. current transfers from migrants who are employed and reside abroad for more than one year (the long-term migrants);
- migrant transfers – i.e. goods and financial resources (savings), brought by emigrants while crossing international borders (*Balance of Payments Manual* 1993, pp. 70, 75).

The information about the value of transfers made by migrants is systematically aggregated by Eurostat. In table no 3 data are presented concerning the total amount of transfers of money to the Central and Eastern Europe countries earned by their citizens due to working abroad in the years 2004–2013 (i.e. transfers understood as the total inflow of compensation of employees and workers' remittances) and also the share of remittances in GDP. On the basis of data available it can be concluded that in the whole period under analysis Poland, Romania³ and Hungary were the biggest beneficiaries among the CEE-10 countries. In the years 2004–2013 Poland registered an inflow of EUR 44,8 bn, Romania – EUR 31.9 bn, and Hungary – 15 bn EUR. In the first ten years after the biggest enlargement of the EU, the 10 Central and Eastern European countries saw a total inflow of EUR 131 bn from their citizens' work abroad. The year 2007 was a record-setting one in terms of the highest level of transferred means in the period under discussion. EUR 6.43 bn was then transferred to Poland, EUR 5.76 bn – to Romania, EUR 1.59 bn to Hungary.

In the following years the level of financial transfers decreased considerably. In 2013 transfers to Romania constituted merely 35% of their value from 2007, while Polish citizens' transfers in 2013 constituted 70% of the transfers made in 2007. As regards the amount of transfers by Hungarians in the years 2007–2013, it remained at a relatively stable level.

To evaluate the economic significance of emigration in the context of the inflow of remittances from migrants, one can use the indicator remittances in relation to GDP (KWIATKOWSKI 2010, p. 209, 210, KWIATKOWSKI 2013, p. 47). In 2013 the highest ratio of the value of remittances to the value of GDP was observed in Lithuania (2.49%), in Bulgaria (2.22%) and in Slovakia (2.08%). On the other hand, for Poland and Romania (i.e. countries which benefit the most from the remittances as regards their real value) it amounted to merely 1.17% and 1.40% of their GDP, respectively. It turns out, then, that the remittances constituted a relatively low percentage of the total supply in the economies of the CEE-10 countries.

The analysis of the structure of financial means transferred by emigrants according to the length of stay abroad (Tab. 4, 5) makes it possible to observe the following tendencies. Firstly, as regards the type of transfers to Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria in 2013, long-term migrants' earnings constituted the largest share: as much as 87.14% of the remittances transferred by the citizens of Lithuania, 84.25% by the citizens of Romania and 62.58% by the citizens of Bulgaria. The transfer of funds by Polish emigrants residing abroad for longer than 1 year amounted to slightly more than a half of the value of all the

³ It should also be noted that Romania joined the EU only in 2007.

Table 3
Inflow of workers' remittances and compensation of employees in the Central and Eastern European countries 2004–2013 (in EUR mln)

Country		Year										
		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Bulgaria	remittances in mln EUR	1,190.30	1,071.20	1,183.70	872.3	985.2	843.4	707.6	741.9	793	888.1	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	5.84	4.61	4.47	2.83	2.78	2.41	1.96	1.93	1.99	2.22	
Czech Republic	remittances in mln EUR	514.3	982	1,147.10	1,172.50	1,172.00	1,208.80	1,296.70	1,262.80	1,371.90	1,484.20	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	0.56	0.94	0.97	0.89	0.76	0.85	0.86	0.81	0.90	0.99	
Estonia	remittances in mln EUR	115.5	177.5	287.5	275.5	c	c	c	c	c	272.3	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	1.19	1.59	2.15	1.71	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	1.46	
Latvia	remittances in mln EUR	na	na	na	c	c	na	na	na	na	na	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	
Lithuania	remittances in mln EUR	5.2	7.8	15.4	17.6	18.6	651.6	889	673.3	501.7	860.9	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.06	2.44	3.21	2.17	1.52	2.49	
Hungary	remittances in mln EUR	1,290.30	1,427.10	1,556.10	1,589.80	1,571.60	1,434.30	1,499.10	1,512.30	1,554.20	1,592.00	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	1.57	1.61	1.74	1.60	1.49	1.57	1.56	1.53	1.60	1.63	
Poland	remittances in mln EUR	3,056.60	4,412.70	5,543.40	6,431.30	5,975.60	5,031.30	4,979.30	4,798.10	na	4,550.00	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	1.50	1.81	2.04	2.07	1.65	1.62	1.40	1.29	bd	1.17	
Romania	remittances in mln EUR	1,175.30	3,131.60	4,201.90	5,758.20	5,874.50	3,044.40	2,393.00	2,174.00	2,188.50	1,995.20	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	1.92	3.92	4.30	4.62	4.20	2.58	1.92	1.65	1.66	1.40	
Slovenia	remittances in mln EUR	202.9	205.6	216.3	225.1	249	223.7	249.4	331.1	485.7	501.6	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	0.75	0.72	0.70	0.65	0.67	0.63	0.70	0.92	1.38	1.42	
Slovakia	remittances in mln EUR	457.6	797.4	910.2	1,132.70	1,400.10	1,263.10	1,269.60	1,253.50	1,478.20	1,501.40	
	share of remittances in GDP (in %)	1.35	2.07	2.05	2.07	2.17	2.01	1.93	1.82	2.08	2.08	

na – not available

c – confidential data

nd – no data

Source: Eurostat data (<http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>, access: 20.04.2016).

transfers from working abroad in 2013. At the same time it should be noted that since Poland joined the EU, the share of remittances from long-term emigrants has steadily increased (in 2004 it constituted only 24.5% of the joint value of transfers, but in 2008 the share grew to 48.83%). This trend is caused by the growing scale of emigration from Poland and the simultaneous lengthening of the stay abroad, which is confirmed by the analyses conducted by the National Bank of Poland (CHMIELEWSKA 2015, p. 17).

Table 4
Inflow of emigrant workers' remittances in European Union countries in the years 2004–2013
(in EUR mln)

Country	Year									
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bulgaria	225.2	236.7	211.2	407.0	455.4	476.3	463.2	497.0	519.0	555.8
Czech Republic	0.0	314.5	354.5	375.1	380.9	377.5	395.3	402.4	415.0	450.9
Estonia	8.8	6.4	6.4	20.2	–	–	–	–	–	42.8
Latvia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lithuania	2.6	4.6	11.8	15.5	16.2	525.2	684.8	492.6	399.8	750.2
Hungary	34.8	46.3	40.6	39.1	30.1	31.7	36.0	38.3	38.8	39.8
Poland	749.2	1,317.8	2,134.7	2,859.6	2,917.9	2,406.7	2,494.6	2,409.6	–	2,336.8
Romania	1,105.2	2,534.2	3,490.8	4,637.2	4,792.0	2,661.4	2,003.2	1,844.0	1,801.4	1,681.0
Slovenia	5.4	2.9	2.8	2.0	16.5	16.8	17.0	17.0	16.4	16.4
Slovakia	38.3	49.7	55.8	74.2	99.8	81.1	76.2	179.2	351.7	0.0

Source: Eurostat data.

Table 5
Inflow of compensation of employees in the EU countries in the years 2004–2013 (in EUR mln)

Country	Year									
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bulgaria	965.1	834.4	972.5	465.3	529.8	367.1	244.4	244.9	274.1	332.3
Czech Republic	514.3	667.5	792.7	797.4	791.1	831.2	901.3	860.4	956.8	1,033.3
Estonia	106.7	171.1	281.1	255.3	185.4	159.3	181.4	224.8	226.2	229.5
Latvia	134.9	255.7	324.6	340.0	335.8	342.9	376.7	410.7	476.1	471.9
Lithuania	2.5	3.3	3.6	2.1	2.4	126.4	204.2	180.7	102.0	110.7
Hungary	1,255.5	1,380.8	1,515.5	1,550.7	1,541.5	1,402.6	1,463.1	1,473.9	1,515.3	1,552.2
Poland	2,307.4	3,094.9	3,408.7	3,571.6	3,057.7	2,624.6	2,484.8	2,388.5	–	2,213.3
Romania	70.1	597.4	711.0	1,121.0	1,082.5	383.0	389.8	330.0	387.1	314.2
Slovenia	197.4	202.6	213.4	223.1	232.5	206.9	232.4	314.0	469.3	485.2
Slovakia	419.3	747.7	854.4	1,058.5	1,300.3	1,182.0	1,193.4	1,074.3	1,126.5	1,501.4

Source: Eurostat data.

However, it should be remembered that in the long run the longer stay abroad may lead to a decrease in the amount of remittances transferred by emigrants to their countries of origin. When migration processes enter the maturity stage (which entails reduction and stabilisation of the number of emigrants), the amount of transfers decreases. Those emigrants whose residence abroad is transformed into settling emigration tend to be less willing to transfer remittances to the country of origin (CASTLES, MILLER 2009, p. 84, AVCI, KIRISCI 2008, DASGUPTA 1981, p. 47).

On the other hand, the second group, in which the inflow of compensation from short-term emigrants was dominant, comprised Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia. The share of this sort of transfers from employees residing abroad for less than 12 months in the total inflow of compensation from working abroad in 2013 reached the level of 84–97% in the above mentioned countries.

Conclusions

The spatial mobility of the citizens of Central and Eastern Europe is conditioned first and foremost by the processes of European integration. The implementation of the EU principle of free movement of persons created the opportunity to move freely and take up employment in EU countries. As a result of opening labour markets of the EU-15 countries, the size of foreign labour migrations of the inhabitants of the Central and Eastern European countries (i.e. Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania) grew considerably, far exceeding researchers' prognoses. On the basis of data analysis it can be established that in 2012 5.6 mln CEE-10 inhabitants moved to the EU-15 countries, and the most numerous group of emigrants were citizens of Romania and Poland.

The analysis of Eurostat statistical data concerning the transfer of financial means from taking up employment abroad made it possible to assess the economic consequences of labour migrations of the CEE-10 inhabitants. It turned out that, as regards the amount of those transfers, the biggest beneficiaries are Poland, Romania and Hungary. As far as remittances to Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria are concerned, they are dominated by long-term emigrants' earnings. Conversely, transfers to Slovenia, Estonia and Hungary came almost entirely from the emigrants residing abroad for less than 1 year.

However, the comparison of the remittances with the GDP made it obvious that in 2013 the highest ratio index was registered in Lithuania, Bulgaria and Slovakia, rather than in the countries which benefit most from the transfers as regards their real value (i.e. Poland and Romania). The share of the remittan-

ces in the GDP of the CEE-10 countries ranged from 0.99 to 2.49%. It can, therefore, be concluded that the economic importance of remittances is not too high.

To sum up, as a result of the EU enlargement, citizens of the Central and Eastern European countries gained the opportunity to choose optimal employment conditions within the territory of the Community, as a result of which in the years 2004–2013 a total amount of EUR 131 bn in remittances was transferred to those countries. The distribution of those financial funds at the individual level will have an impact on the improvement of living conditions for members of migrant households, and, indirectly, also on the socio-economic situation of individual Central and Eastern European countries.

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