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The migration flow of teachers at tertiary level with a focus in economic factors

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Abstract

This article discusses how economics factors affect the migration of teachers at the tertiary level. The study focuses on the analysis of earnings, a harmonised index of consumer prices, personal income taxes, the gross domestic product, unemployment and expenditure on education at the tertiary level of 32 European countries during three different moments, i.e. 2002 (the last world economic slump of the 20th century), 2006 (an economic expansion), and 2010 (the financial collapse of the 21st century). Results showed that: 1) economic factors affect the migration flow of teachers significantly; 2) the level of earnings is the key determinant of variations in the number of migrant teachers at the tertiary level in Europe, and 3) earnings and the effect of personal income tax determine the number of migrant teachers at the tertiary level in a country and 4) the unemployment also affects migrant teachers migration in the opposite way, i.e. the higher the unemployment, the lower the number of migrant teachers is.

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1. Introduction

The migration flow in Europe is a growing phenomenon from the second half of XX century (Kaczmarczyk & Okólski, 2008). Literature has analysed migration of highly skilled workers due to the fact that it involves different benefits for any country, such as a higher added valued, a superior labour force and economic development

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(Hawthorne, 2009; Kriščiūnas & Greblkaitė, 2007). Teachers at the tertiary level are considered to be the top skilled workers who are very important for any country and institution; therefore, variations in the number of this staff have to be examined very carefully, especially in the case of migration. The migration decision would depend on non-economic factors such as the presence of others famous researchers in the final destination, notoriety and prestige of institutions, etc. (Eurydice, 2012). Yet, economic factors constitute the main reason of migration (Čiarnienė & Kumpikaitė, 2011; Papademetriou & Sumption, 2011; Schierup, Hansen & Castles, 2006).

Economic factors are changing over the time and affect the migration flow in different ways (Aceleanu, 2011; Čiarnienė & Kumpikaitė, 2011). This leads to a significant impact on the economic development (Stulgienė & Daunorienė, 2009).

The economics factors affect international migration of teachers at the tertiary level and they must be analysed attentively (Papademetriou & Sumption, 2011), especially during the changing period with different economic situations affecting the traditional migration (Fix et al., 2009). Moreover, teachers at tertiary level are the top skilled workers who carry out activities of high added valued and have a very important impact on the economic growth (Kriščiūnas & Greblkaitė, 2007). In addition to this, the situation of economics factor are different in each country.

Furthermore, the European Commission has elaborated through the EACEA's (2012) several reports about the situation of the Education sector and teachers at the primary and second level, however there is an important lack of literature regarding the migration of teachers and researches at the tertiary level.

Therefore, the research problem is formulated by the following question, i.e. how economic factors affected the migration flow of teachers at tertiary level? Thus, considering the research problem, the aim of the paper is to analyse the influence of economics factor on the variations of migrant teachers at the tertiary level.

The object of the article is the analysis of the influence of economics factor on the migration in the Education sector at the tertiary level.

Regarding the theoretical framework, Kilijonienė, Simanavičienė & Simanavičius (2010) stated that scientific migration is a natural role in this kind of occupations and it is part of a strategy to achieve better knowledge and positions. This mobility is promoted by universities and governments in order to attract the top skilled workers and to improve their own workers level.

Migration flows are primarily triggered by economic factors that affect the development of any country (Čiarnienė & Kumpikaitė, 2011). Therefore, this research is focused on the analysis of such economic factors.

Literature addressed as the main economic factors of migration earnings, consumer prices, personal income tax, gross domestic product, unemployment and public investment (Kumpikaitė & Žickutė, 2012; Stulgienė & Daunorienė, 2009).

Workers who need to increase their income would move to countries where earnings are higher (Jennissen, 2003). Mihi-Ramírez and Kumpikaitė (2013) demonstrated the use of the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) in order to internationally compare prices and the cost of living for migrants. A superior personal income tax has a negative effect on the purchasing power, but it could also contribute to a higher welfare system (Kumpikaitė & Žickutė, 2012). Economic cycles, measured by the evolution of GDP, also influence migration flows, but it would depend on the strength of economic crises as well as different stakeholders involved (OECD, 2012). The neo-classical approach shown a decreasing unemployment in the destination country and an increasing level of earnings encourage emigration (Martinoia, 2011). According to Eurostat (2013), the expenditure on education favour the economic growth.

2. Method

The research examines the case of Europe (EU), a relatively well developed market where countries have a traditional intensive interaction between each other. The European migration flow has been growing since 1990. Therefore, the analysis of the evolution of the economic factors provides possibilities to reach a better understanding of the migration flow of teachers at the tertiary level, taking in account the main consequences in a European framework. The statistical data about the migration has been obtained from the OECD, the Eurydice, and the Eurostat.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the link between the number of migrant teachers at the tertiary level and economics factors such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP),

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