



GLOBALIZATION PROCESSES AND MIGRATION MECHANISMS

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyse and assess the impact of globalisation processes in the context of migration mechanisms. The analysis is based on statistical data from International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Eurostat. Essentially, globalization consists of ongoing processes involving the flow of goods, information, capital, human resources and the development of transport and communication on an international scale. With advancing globalization processes, procedures applicable to the movement of human capital are simplified, and, at the same time, international migration intensifies. With respect to migration mechanisms, international agreements play an important role, as they establish rules for the movement of migrants across the borders of the state parties to particular agreements. The continually unfolding globalization processes in the 21st century indicate an increasingly evident trend whereby people from poor countries migrate to more affluent countries. Due to the high correlation between migration and socio-economic development, the issue of human capital transfer has become a matter of interest for international economic institutions, particularly where developing countries are concerned. Consequently, greater attention is focused on migration processes and their impact on the social and economic circumstances in particular countries.

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Słowa kluczowe: globalizacja, procesy globalizacji, mechanizmy migracyjne, migracja, zasoby ludzkie.

A b s t r a k t

Celem artykułu jest analiza i ocena wpływu procesów globalizacji w kontekście mechanizmów migracyjnych. Analizę przeprowadzono na podstawie danych statystycznych z IOM, UNDESA, UNHCR oraz Eurostatu. Istotą globalizacji jest rozwój procesów związanych z przepływem dóbr, informacji, kapitałów, zasobów ludzkich, rozwoju transportu oraz komunikacji w skali międzynarodowej. Postępujące procesy globalizacji przyczyniają się do uproszczenia procedur związanych z przepływem kapitału ludzkiego oraz nasilenia się międzynarodowej migracji. W kontekście mechanizmów migracyjnych ważną rolę odgrywają porozumienia międzynarodowe, na których mocy są ustalane zasady przemieszczania się migrantów przez granice państw uczestniczących w porozumieniu. Efektem rozwijających się procesów globalizacji w XXI wieku jest nasilająca się tendencja, według której osoby z ubogich krajów migrują do państw bardziej zamożnych. Ze względu na wysoką zależność między migracjami a rozwojem społeczno-gospodarczym w przypadku państw rozwijających się problem związany z transferem kapitału ludzkiego zaczęły rozważać międzynarodowe instytucje gospodarcze. Doprowadziło to do skupienia większej uwagi na procesach migracyjnych i ich roli w kształtowaniu sytuacji społeczno-ekonomicznej w danym państwie.

Introduction and methodology

The emergence of innovative solutions which enhance the flow of information, human capital and technology, as well as the international agreements signed by numerous states to regulate the movement of citizens between countries, have contributed to migration waves of unprecedented magnitude. The directions of major migration flows are changing as a result of global structural change. The mass migrations of the 19th century were markedly different from the contemporary flow of human capital. Today, the largest waves of emigration are observed in the Middle East and Central Africa, while the lower number of migrants in relation to the global population constitutes the main difference between contemporary migrations and the 19th century movement. In contrast to the latter, one sees a growing trend whereby the proportion of women migrants has increased substantially (Freeman, 2006, p. 152-154).

Technological developments have resulted in accelerated communication, information and transport flows which, in turn, yielded more extensive prospects and opportunities for businesses and populations. Contemporary means facilitating the movement of people have led to significant changes in how countries approach migration. Today, migration policy is one of the main pillars of the internal policies of the European countries. Still, despite the advantages offered by technological development, globalization processes precipitate the negative effects of migration mechanisms, including urban overpopulation, environmental pollution and the disappearance of national and cultural values.

This current paper analyses globalization processes while considering their impact on migration mechanisms, focusing on the persons who choose to relocate to another country. The principal research problem is to determine how globalization processes contribute to shaping migration mechanisms. The paper attempts to identify the relationship between globalization and the global migration of persons and, given the problem thus formulated, the following hypothesis is advanced: “globalization processes contribute to an increase in the scale of migrations”. In order to verify the adopted hypothesis, desk research was carried out to obtain a thorough review of pertinent literature, followed by an analysis of secondary statistical data from IOM, UNDESA, UNHCR and Eurostat.

The essence of globalization in the context of migration mechanisms

In order to define globalization, it is necessary to highlight several key factors. This phenomenon is said to encompass such elements as population migration, international expansion of enterprises, the development of technology and the propagation of cultures. Globalization is a very complex phenomenon, the scale of which is influenced by various determining factors; it is multidimensional and affects many spheres of life. To a substantial extent, the current scale of globalization owes to the interdependencies and interactions of the states that constitute the world system. The relevant literature distinguishes three basic types of globalization (Micał, 2008, p. 150, 151):

- universalization, which involves the standardization of needs, goods and services across different regions of the world, which consequently leads to the standardization of norms and regulations;
- internationalization, which describes the increase in trade between countries and the increase in dependency among the participants in that trade;
- liberalization, which notes the formation of the so-called world economy, i.e. a system in which there would be no restrictions applied to the exchange of goods or the migration of people.

Globalization can be considered in its economic aspect, with particular attention drawn to the processes taking place in the micro- and macroeconomic domains.

Currently, globalisation processes are leading to the creation of a single world economy and are gaining momentum as more barriers between local, regional, national and continental markets are removed (Kryńska, 2017, p. 139, 140). One of the crucial corollaries of globalization is the increasing mobility of capital, which enables the appropriate allocation of resources in countries where the cost of their use is lower. Considered in terms of social issues, globalization processes result in a shift within the population which gravitates toward the so-called “global society” (Okólski & Koryś, 2004, p. 7, 8). The increasing mobility of the human capital, supported by state-of-the-art technologies of information flow, means of transport and communication, has led to the compression of many cultures in places which offer higher living standards. Moreover, as a result of globalization processes, racial and religious conflicts have subsided. The homogenization of cultural values and the disappearance of national identities of individual social groups have fostered the emergence of a worldwide value system (Paleczny, 2007, p. 168, 169).

In recent decades, numerous ground-breaking technological solutions have precipitated globalization. One of the most significant of those was the invention and spread of microprocessors, which today are used primarily in telecommunications equipment, transport and manufacturing processes. The creation of a worldwide system of connections (the internet) has amplified the flow of information from a global perspective. Technological innovations in the communications industry have reduced transport costs and increased its accessibility (Okólski & Koryś, 2004, p. 9-11).

In the wake of modernization, extensive human capital flows across borders took place as early as during the industrial revolution, but contemporary migrations trends are distinct from the mass movements of people in the 19th century. The main difference is that the migrants are fewer in relation to the global population. Furthermore, the migration structure shows an increasing proportion of women. The directions of migrations around the world are fluctuating, which is due to the economic situation in individual countries. Currently, the regions from which the largest number of people are seen emigrating include Central Africa and the Middle East. A global increase in the number of international migrants can be observed in each successive year. According to statistics, in 2020, the estimated number of people who migrated abroad was 280.6 million (Fig. 1).

Between 1990 and 2020, the number of international migrants worldwide increased by approximately 83.4 per cent. The steep rise in the number of migrants in highly developed countries has prompted a reaction from international organizations, whose previous activities focused mainly on the economic aspects. Institutions such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) began to study the phenomenon of international migration and simultaneously established dedicated departments within their

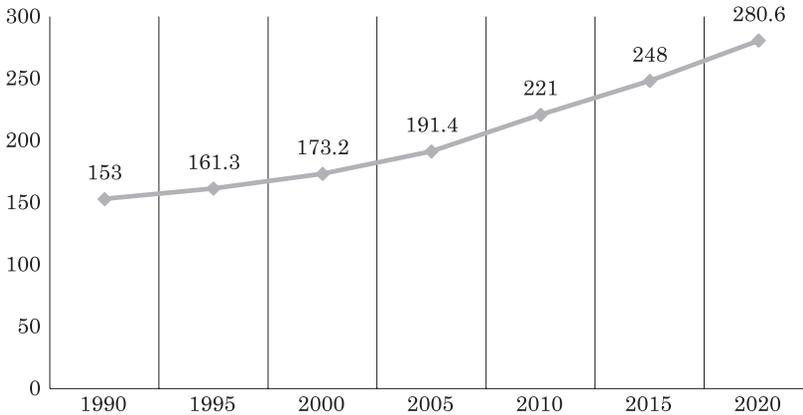


Fig. 1. Number of international migrants globally in 1990-2020 (in millions of people)
Source: based on: *Total number of international migrants...* (2021).

structures to deal with issues relating to migration mechanisms. The task of these designated agencies is to publish and analyse reports concerned with the phenomenon of human capital flows. Other tasks of those designated departments in international institutions include cooperation with government representatives and independent experts in the field (Lesińska, 2014, p. 11-13).

Restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic have had a major impact on migrant mobility. From 10 March 2020 (the day before the World Health Organisation announced the COVID-19 pandemic) until 28 February 2022, 122,823 movement restrictions were imposed worldwide (*Migration data relevant for the COVID-19 pandemic*, 2022). In 2020, the scale of permanent immigration to OECD countries is estimated to have decreased by more than 30%, and 2020 alone saw the lowest migration flows to OECD countries since 2003 (OECD, 2021, p. 168-170). The decline in migrant inflows, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions imposed, has had a major impact on the demographics of some European countries. Data from 2020, collected by the German Federal Statistics Office, suggests that Germany's population did not increase for the first time in the last decade due to a reduction in immigration (German Federal Statistics Office, 2021a). According to data from the Italian National Statistics Institute, in 2020 the largest population decline was in Italy (0.6%), followed by Romania (0.7%) and Poland (0.3%) (Italian National Statistics Institute, 2021, p. 5). At the end of 2020, the total number of foreigners in Germany increased by 1.8%, the lowest growth rate in the last decade in Germany (German Federal Statistics Office, 2021b). In the same year, the number of immigrants in Germany decreased by 24% and emigrants by 22% compared to 2019 (German Federal Statistics Office, 2022). In Sweden, the number of residence permits issued in 2020 decreased by approximately 25% compared to the previous year and is the lowest value since 2007.

International agreements on human capital flows

For many years, the European continent has witnessed large flows of human capital, which are conditioned by the differing economic situations in the various European countries. Increased migration within the European Union is the result of a number of important agreements that have been made to standardise standards and regulations for international migration (Tab. 1).

Table 1

Selected international agreements governing international migration

Year	Event	Description
1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	the document passed at the Third Session of the UN General Assembly includes the human right to freedom of movement, to seek asylum and to choose one's place of residence within the borders of each state
1951	The Refugee Convention	UN Refugee Convention, during which international standards for refugee rights were established
1985	The Schengen Agreement	agreement under which controls at the internal borders of the Member States were abolished
1993	The Maastricht Treaty	the treaty defines and clarifies the right to asylum applicable within the EU
2009	The Treaty of Lisbon	the treaty introduced a qualified majority voting procedure for legal migration, as well as a new legal basis for integration measures
2011	Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)	the draft adopted by the European Commission establishes a general framework for EU relations with third countries in the field of migration
2014	Open and secure Europe	the programme proposed by the European Commission in the area of freedom, security justice, which emphasises the need for a global approach to migration
2015	The European Migration Programme	the programme proposed by the European Commission, whose guidelines concern immediate action to deal with the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean region. This draft also includes actions to be taken to manage migration more effectively in all its aspects in the future
2018	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration	a pact initiated by the UN and signed in Marrakech, whose main objective was to establish standards and rules governing the behaviour of states in the movement of people across international borders
2020	New Pact on Migration and Asylum	it represents a continuation of migration policy reforms. The main objectives of the Pact are to define the methods of managing the external borders, to be prepared in case of a crisis through a response in combination with a solidarity mechanism, defining relations with key third countries with main third countries, and integrating the asylum procedure into the overall management of migration

Source: own elaboration based on: *Polityka migracyjna*. (2022).

One of the main documents defining the rules and regulations for international migration was the Lisbon Treaty, concluded in 2007, with the creation of the so-called Single Market. The goal of establishing such a single market within the EU and participating third countries was to ensure the so-called four freedoms, namely (Czermińska, 2016, p. 63):

- the free movement of goods;
- the free movement of capital;
- the free movement of persons;
- free movement of services.

The free movement of people is very important for the migratory flows of people within EU countries. Its basic principle is to balance surpluses and shortages in the labour markets of individual countries, and in the long term to equalise wage levels (Organiściak-Krzykowska & Machnis-Walasek, 2016, p. 93, 94). The earlier Schengen Agreement, concluded in 1985, was an important steppingstone which served as a model for all subsequent agreements related to the movement of human capital. Its chief premises included the abolition of control at the borders of countries within the community and free migration between countries. Being economic in nature, it was intended to optimize the supply chains of economic entities and reduce the price of transport services. Another important from the point of view of migration policy is the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, which is the EU's response to the challenges posed by migratory pressures and the labour needs of individual Member States' labour markets. Presented by the European Commission, the draft aims to build confidence by introducing more efficient procedures for crossing the external borders of the Union and balancing responsibility and solidarity among EU members (Nowy Pakt Migracji i Azyłu. 2020).

The scale of migration in Europe

After both the Lisbon Treaty and the Schengen Agreement entered into force, the scale of international migration within the community increased. These developments resulted in massive flows of human capital for labour. Most often, highly developed countries were the preferred destinations of migration because they offered good living standards and higher wages. According to statistics collected by the European Commission, there were 23.7 million third-country nationals residing in the European Union in 2021 (Migration and migrant population statistics. 2022). The predominant reasons behind the arrival of non-EU nationals in the community included the presence of their family and the search for employment (Fig. 2). According to the statistical data gathered, 9% of third-country immigrants applied for asylum, and only 3% immigrated to EU Member States for educational purposes.

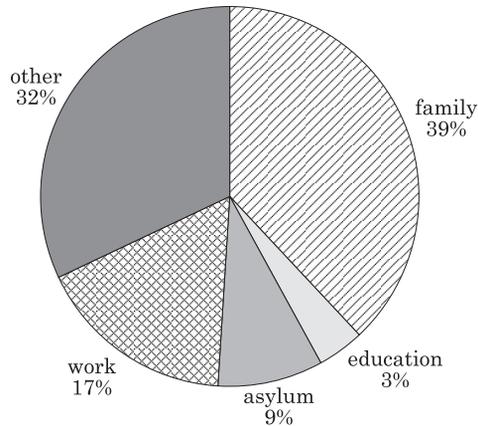


Fig. 2. Reasons for third-country migrations to Europe

Source: based on: *Imigranci w społeczeństwie europejskim – ogólne dane liczbowe* (2021).

Since 2014, Europe saw very large flows of migrants from Africa and the Middle East. The phenomenon intensified in the following months, with the largest waves of migration recorded in 2015. Many of these people migrated to Europe for fear of persecution and armed conflict. The challenge of receiving such large numbers of people in a brief period of time exposed the weaknesses of the European asylum system. As a result, the European Parliament decided to allocate adequate financial resources from the EU budget to enable more effective migration management (*Kryzys migracyjny w Europie*. 2020). The international agreements concluded by EU countries regarding the movement of human capital also resulted in increased migration of people across the internal borders of the EU. In Poland, a negative migration balance was observed for several consecutive years. However, due to the substantial immigration of people from the countries of the former Soviet Union, the Polish migration balance in 2018 shifted to positive values (Tab. 2). In 2012-2020, countries which recorded a negative migration balance were Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Spain and Poland.

The phenomenon of negative migration balance most often affects countries with high unemployment, low wages, widespread issues resulting from the social policies of the government and exacerbating inflation. Conversely, the highest positive migration balances are observed in highly developed countries such as France, Germany and Italy, where the main reasons for high immigration rates are better pay, a greater number of employment opportunities and an extensive social benefits system. In the case of Spain, the significant increase in migration balance in 2018 was due to securing the Eastern and Central Mediterranean routes through which migrants from Africa and the Middle East headed to Europe. As the Italian government blocked access to the country's ports in 2017, NGO ships with rescued migrants would sail to the ports in Spain (Pawłowski & Szymańska, 2018).

Table 2

Migration balance in selected European countries in 2012-2020

Country	Year				
	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020
Bulgaria	-2,512	-2,112	-9,329	-3,666	30,715
Czechia	-11,769	1,429	25,219	39,168	27,241
Denmark	10,746	23,962	21,729	4,288	3,408
Germany	352,174	560,672	496,090	353,471	240,468
Greece	-66,494	-47,791	10,332	16,440	6,384
Spain	-142,553	-94,976	87,421	334,158	219,357
France	71,509	32,280	64,087	86,490	138,440
Italy	244,556	141,303	143,758	175,364	87,642
Hungary	10,822	12,368	13,729	34,759	8,106
Austria	39,745	62,771	65,081	38,421	40,984
Poland	-58,057	-46,024	-28,139	24,289	48,949
Sweden	51,312	75,729	117 127	85,621	33,581
Norway	47,215	37,595	26,766	20,706	14,840

Source: own elaboration based on statistical data from Eurostat.

The scale of international migration is steadily increasing. In 2000, the number of migrants in a global perspective was 173 million, while by 2020, this figure has risen to 281 million people. A very interesting phenomenon is the increase in the share of women in the structure of international migration. In 2020, women accounted for 48% of the total number of migrants worldwide (UNDESA, 2022). Women's migration became an independent research issue in the research community when an increasing number of women started to be active in foreign labour markets (Marks-Bielska, 2019, p. 147). The latest data from the International Organisation for Migration in 2019 shows that women accounted for 41.5% of the 169 million working migrants. Of the 70.1 million working women, 47.9% were of working age. This represents a slight change from 2013 data, when the share of women in the total number of migrants was 44.3% (*World Migration Report...*, 2022, p. 36, 37). Disparities in female and male shares over time and in other regions of the world can vary, e.g. female participation rates are higher in countries with a tradition of immigration such as Canada and Australia. Some countries are characterised by a fairly constant migration trend, which is considered on a gender basis. Such countries may include Mexico, where emigrants are mainly men, and the Philippines, where the share of women in overall migration statistics is higher (Jakimowicz-Pisarska, 2017, p. 82, 83).

One of the most important aspects of population movement is political migration, which, as defined, refers to displacement, refugees and other causes

triggered by political action (*Migracja*, 1997-2022). Under international law, there is a fundamental difference between a refugee and a migrant. A refugee, as defined by the Geneva Convention, is a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the borders of the State of which he or she is a national (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951). According to UNHCR data, there were 26.6 million refugees worldwide in mid-2021. Following the aggression of the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 against Ukraine, Europe was faced with a scale of refugees unprecedented since the Second World War. UNHCR figures from 13 September 2022 indicate that there are more than 7.2 million Ukrainian refugees across Europe. In Poland, there are more than 1.3 million registered Ukrainian citizens who have been forced to leave their country for fear of armed conflict. As of 24 February 2022, more than 10 million people have left Ukraine, while some 5.7 million people have immigrated into the country.

Conclusions

Technological progress has significantly enhanced the flow of information and capital as well as promoted the development of transport, all of which has, consequently, led to massive population migrations around the world. Figures for 2019 indicate that there were approximately 20.9 million third-country nationals within the European Union. The considerable scale of human capital flows has prompted both the European Union and many other international organisations to take extensive measures to contain and study the migration phenomenon. Very often, migrants choose highly developed countries as their destination. Western European states offer a telling example of the relationship between migration and socio-economic development, whereby nations such as Germany, France and Italy have seen a high, positive migration balance for many years.

The advancing globalization processes make it considerably easier for people to cross borders between countries, primarily in practical terms but also in the legal sense. The Schengen Agreement concluded in 1985 between the current EU members and selected third countries became the foundation of subsequent treaties concerned with the movement of human capital. In 2007, the Lisbon Treaty established the so-called Single Market, which consequently contributed to the free movement of persons, capital, goods and services between the countries participating in the agreement. Data from UNDESA shows a trend whereby the number of women who choose to migrate internationally is increasing every year. The proportion of women in the overall structure of migrants is also increasing. An important element of international migration policy is the establishment of norms and regulations that set rules for the reception and assistance of refugees.

According to data from the UNHCR, there were 26.6 million refugees worldwide in mid-2021. Secondary data shows that 7.2 million Ukrainian citizens have migrated to Europe since the beginning of the armed conflict in Ukraine.

The globalisation processes observed around the world have a strong impact on international migration. The flow of human capital is determined by economic, political, socio-cultural and environmental factors. On the basis of international agreements, migration procedures are being standardised and simplified in many countries around the world, making the population more willing to emigrate to seek better living conditions.

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