

Brain Drain in the Context of the Intellectual Labour Market and Human Capital

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Some Definitions.....

Brain Circulation:

“...the mobility of highly talented workers [where the] cycle of study and work abroad may be followed by a return to the home country to take advantage of high-level opportunities”.

JOHNSON, Jean M. and REGETS, Mark C. “International Mobility of Scientists and Engineers to the United States - Brain Drain or Brain Circulation?”, November 1998

Brain Drain:

“The emigration of a significant proportion of a country’s highly skilled, highly educated, professional population, usually to other countries offering better economic opportunity”.

Negative Population Growth - Glossary

Some Trends

- **Increasing migration of people across national borders is part and parcel of the globalization process**
- **Europe continues to be the main supplier of skilled workforce for the Americas and Australia**
- **Increase in emigration of highly qualified towards economies relying heavily on knowledge**
- **Remittances from skilled workers abroad are increasingly important for home country economies**
- **The movement of Human Capital is largely linear rather than circular**
- **More foreign workers from Europe are remaining abroad permanently**

Some Statistics

Bulgaria

- *“For the period 1997-2001, 7% of academic staff and 6% of graduates migrated aboard”*
- *“73% of professors are over 60 years old and 47% are over 65”*

Moldova

- *“37% of people aged between 18-29 yrs would leave the country forever, while 55% would leave for a certain period of time”*
- *“In 2003 (UNFPA) estimated that a fourth of the population of Moldova were working aboard, equal to around 1 million people”*

Romania

- *“The [survey] revealed that 66% of interviewed students from a representative national sample intended to migrate after graduation”*

Serbia

- *“Between 1992 and 2002, the Statistical Bureau estimated that 25,000 university graduates left the country each year, equal to an average annual loss of intellectual elite of around 25%”*

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Typical Profile of Highly Skilled Emigrants

- Aged between 25 and 45
- Holder of at least a first university degree, increasingly higher degree(s)
- Male
- Single
- Remaining abroad for longer or permanently
- Preferred destinations: North American, Australia and Western Europe
- Knowledge of English

Push & Pull Factors

➤ *Reasons for Leaving Home country:*

- Higher salaries and living conditions
- Higher profile of researchers
- Better working conditions
- More career development opportunities
- More lucrative study scholarships
- Greater financial support for research
- Greater demand for R&D and academic research
- More opportunities for networking
- Greater access to information sources
- Less professional corruption and nepotism
- Other domestic factors

➤ *Reasons for Returning to Home Country*

- Family responsibilities
- Non-integration in host country
- Employment outside field of expertise in host country
- End of contract
- Social insecurity

➤ *Reasons for Remaining in Home Country*

- Barriers to mobility due to
 - age restrictions
 - language restrictions;
 - visa restrictions
- Improving prospects for activities in the private sector

Impact of Brain Drain

➤ At the institutional Level

- Lack of innovation in teaching and learning
- Ageing population of academics and teaching Staff
- Less able and under-qualified research and teaching Staff
- Lower quality of research
- Less funding for research
- Less international and bilateral project funding
- Institutional stagnation or regression
- Larger lecture sizes
- Less contact time per student
- More teaching staff involved in double employment
- More high qualified graduates and academics seeking to move aboard

➤ At Societal Level

- Less highly skilled labour force available for economic and social development initiatives
- Weaker economic output
- Shortage of highly skilled labour force in public administration
- Less Direct Foreign Investment

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Creating Incentives for Attracting and Retaining Skilled Labour

- Job profiles which recognise and reward international study and work experience
- Repatriation packages
- Re-integration scholarships for returning academics and students
- Private sector start-up grants
- Support for student and academic exchange
- Increased funding for R&D

- Reform of higher education systems
- Encouragement of foreign investments
- Commensurate career development programs
- Development of an innovation and entrepreneurial infrastructure

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Communicating Incentives to Skilled Labour

- Interactive Websites/Databases communicating job opportunities and packages between skilled labour abroad and their home countries
- Establishing Networks of Diaspora to foster joint research projects, information exchange, public and private sector investments

Thank you

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