Migration intentions – between dreams and definite plans

The impact of life-course events on different types of migration potential

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Trend of migration potential in population aged 18–40 in Hungary, 2001–2013

Cumulative migration potential

Short-term labour migration intentions

Long-term labour migration intentions

Emigration intentions

%
Theoretical considerations, and previous research findings


  → previous migration intention is a primary determinant of migration behaviour (De Jong 2000)

Therefore: studies on migration intentions can provide information on the characteristics and motivation of prospective migrants – if real migration intentions are grasped.
Migration as a three-stage process

- Not considering migration
- Considering migration
- Planning migration
- Realizing migration

- ‘Weak’ plans (dreams)
- Definite plans
Research questions

- What are the major individual determinants of migration intentions, and what role life-course events play in planning migration?
- What are the characteristics of people with different types of migration intentions (‘dreamers’ and ‘serious planners’)?
- How different types of migration intentions are affected by life-course events?
Data and method

DATA:
'Migration plans in Hungary among the 18–40 aged population' survey
– carried out by the HDRI in 2013*
– 1,464 respondents
– representative with respect to sex, age-group, educational level and type of settlement

METHOD
1) Logistic regression: having migration plans vs. not having; the impact of life-course events
2) Selecting serious planners and ‘dreamers’, comparing these two groups – descriptive analysis
3) Testing the influence of life-course events separately for these two groups

* Research project founded by HSRF (OTKA 101458 PD)
The selection of serious planners

According to responses on the filtering questions ‘serious planners’ are those who…

… claim to have serious thoughts on migration or have already made the decision &

… plan to move in the next 1-2 years &

… presume very likely or certain to realize the move &

… have already taken the first steps towards preparing for migration

The rest → ‘dreamers’
Hypotheses, control variables

Assumptions:

1) Migration decision-making is influenced by life-course events – especially during life-course transitions.

2) The influence of life-course events is higher in case of ‘serious planners’ than in case of ‘dreamers’.

Control variables:

- **socio-demographic characteristics**: gender, age, marital status, number of children, labour market status, type of settlement
- **human capital**: educational level, command of a foreign language, previous migration experience, health status
- **financial resources**: perception of livelihood situation
- **network capital**: family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances living abroad
## Former and anticipated life-course events

### Life-course events over the past three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>In the whole sample (aged 18–40)</th>
<th>In early adulthood (aged 18–29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting higher education</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing school/higher education</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting to live with a partner</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce/separation</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving the parental home</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of a child</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting employment</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming unemployed</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing employment</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Anticipated life-course events in the next three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>In the whole sample (aged 18–40)</th>
<th>In early adulthood (aged 18–29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting (higher) education</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing (higher) education</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting to live with a partner</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce/separation</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving the parental home</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of a child</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting employment</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving the job</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing employment</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Volume of migration intentions in population aged 18–40 in Hungary, 2013

**Total sample**
- Not having migration plans, 67.3%
- Having migration plans 32.7%

**Planners**
- Having serious plans 35.5%
- Having 'weak' plans 64.5%

= 11.6% of total sample, (370,000 people aged 18–40)
The determinants of having migration plans in population aged 18–40 in Hungary (odds ratios)

**Basic model (Model 0):**
gender, age-group, educational level and type of settlement

**Model 1:** Model 0 + marital status, having a child, labour market status, perception of own livelihood situation

**Model 2:** Model 1 + command of foreign language, previous migration experience, network capital
The impact of life-course events on the probability of having migration plans (odds ratios)

Model 3: Model 0 + former life-course events (in the past three years)

Model 4: Model 0 + anticipated life-course events (in the next three years)
‘Dreamers’ vs. ‘serious planners’ – descriptive analysis

‘Dreamers’: 
- younger 
- less educated 
- are married (or live with a partner) and have a child 
- students and unskilled workers

‘Serious planners’: 
- live in the capital 
- are unmarried or divorced 
- skilled workers or unemployed 
- have financial problems 
- have better health condition 
- have more experience abroad, more network capital abroad 
- less satisfied
The impact of life-course events separately on being a ‘dreamer’ and being a ‘serious planner’ (odds ratios)

Model 5: Model 0 + former and anticipated life-course events – for being a ‘dreamer’ vs. having not plans

Model 6: Model 0 + former and anticipated life-course events – for being a ‘serious planner’ vs. having not plans
Conclusions

• Many life-course events – both former and anticipated – have significant impact on the migration decision process.

• The influence of life-course events is higher in the case of ‘serious planners’ than in the case of ‘dreamers’.

• The strongest predictors of serious planning of migration are: former divorce or separation and events linked to the employment, as well as the anticipation of divorce or separation, leaving the parental home and starting employment.
Thank you for your attention!

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