LABOUR MIGRATION TO THE EU: PULL FACTORS

ТРУДОВАЯ МИГРАЦИЯ В ЕС: ФАКТОРЫ ПРИТЯЖЕНИЯ

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Аннотация: В статье анализируется теория факторов притяжения трудовых мигрантов на временной основе на примере Европейского союза. Автор рассматривает факторы притяжения в рамках рынка труда на примере Великобритании, анализируя причины миграции в контексте рынка труда. Кроме того, рассматривается классификация факторов притяжения как таковых и осуществляется теоретический анализ данных категорий. Актуальность исследуемой проблемой обусловлена ускоренными темпами развития рынка труда.

Annotation: The article analyses the theory of pull factors for labour migrants on a temporary basis using the example of the European Union. The author examines pull factors within the labour market using the example of the United Kingdom, analysing the causes of migration in the context of the labour market. In addition, a classification of pull factors, as such, is examined and a theoretical analysis of these categories is conducted. The relevance of the problem under study stems from the accelerated pace of labour market development.

Ключевые слова: миграция, факторы притяжения, Европейский союз, трудовая миграция, Великобритания

Key words: migration, pull factors, European Union, labour migration, UK.

Migration is one of the distinctive features of human beings that has been occurring since it started from the very beginning of man's appearance in this universe. Human mobility existed even in primaeval times when people migrated in search of food and safety. Nowadays, migration plays a significant role in the context of globalization and urbanization. Even though in modern times life conditions are different, people still trying to move following a search for better opportunities. Technology development, the interaction of different cultures, etc. led a large number of migrants who are in search of better social conditions, living standards and welfare. Migration is a complex phenomenon affected by many factors and led to both social and demographic changes [1].

According to Everett Lee`s comprehensive theory of migration which he propounded in 1966, there are several factors influencing people`s mobility. These factors are: associated with the place of origin; associated with the place of destination; intervening obstacles; personal factors. Each place contains both negative characteristics (factors that force people to leave this area) and positive characteristics (factors that attract people from other areas). Also, there are some neutral factors that people consider as indifferent ones. Migration in any area is the net result of the interplay between these factors. Chart 1 below illustrates that approach.

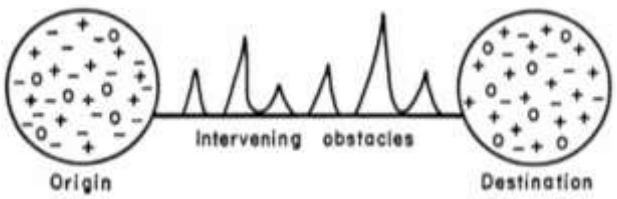


Chart 1 – Origin and destination factors and intervening obstacles in migration [2].

"Push-pull" model represents the general known theoretical concept in the migration studies implicitly related to economic models of migration which explains the

main causes of migration. It illustrates a combination of negative factors (reasons for leaving one place) and positive factors (reasons for coming to another place). Economic, social and political difficulties represent push factors while pull factors contain comparative benefits in richer countries. And the resulted combinations of these factors would define the size and direction of migration flows [3]. The theoretical hypothesis is that migration rather occurs in more deprived places [4]. Push-pull models were dominative in migration studies during the mid-twentieth century and represented neoclassical economic direction based on rational principles and maximisation of utility [5].

Despite the fact that this approach allows us to consider the causes of migration in a structured way, push and pull models are significantly limited in their ability to explain migration decisions in accordance with the opinion of several scholars [6]. While the classification of various factors is a strong point of the push-pull approach, it cannot fully explain people's choice of pros and cons based on the availability of complete information about the markets. For example, this approach fails to explain why people's responses to the same factors differ, the simultaneous flows of immigration and emigration in the same places [7].

Speaking of the weaknesses of neoclassical theory, according to Arango [8], it could not explain the reasons for such a low level of migration given the incentives to do so. Besides, it did not answer the question of why, given the same economic conditions, some countries have high migration rates, while others do not. Taking into account personal, socio-cultural factors, the history of colonialism, political barriers, etc. eventually led to theoretical fragmentation.

In terms of pull factors, the following categories can be distinguished:

– Socio-economic factors. It includes a generally higher standard of living, better employment opportunities, level of social protection, etc.;

– Political factors. A stable political environment or seeking political asylum may be considered;

– Demographic factors. According to various statistical data, demographic indicators such as the birth rate, population size and density, share of young adults have an impact on migration;

– Historical, cultural and geographic factors. Migration flows can be influenced by factors such as past colonial ties, linguistic similarities, and physical distances;

– Environmental factors. It can be presented as a search for the best climatic conditions and good environmental conditions [9].

As estimated by Berger et al. [10], the choice of destination by immigrants is quite complex, where the influence of factors other than those that may be related exclusively to the economy. Determinants such as personal motives or aspirations, social environment, nature, lifestyle, and so on can weaken the influence of economic factors on the decision to appoint.

In the context of labor migration to Europe the following pull factors can be identified:

– High level of accumulation of the capital. Differences in rates of accumulation of the capital cause the differences between an attractive and the repulsive forces of labor in various regions of the world economy.

– Level and scales of accumulation of the capital have direct influence on an occupation level of able-bodied population. As pull factor could be considered high level of employment.

– Higher standard of living.

– Better career opportunities.

– Social protection in connection with labour contracts.

– Availabilities of medical coverage provided by employers.

– Higher quality of services in the context of better living standards and economy development.

– Scientific and technological progress (wide variety of vacancies in specified spheres).

– Higher level of incomes etc.

As an illustration of pull factors will be considered labour market conditions of United Kingdon because of its belonging to the European Union until 01.02.2020.

In chart 2 below presented data from the Eurostat about the immigration to the United Kingdom from the EU member states.

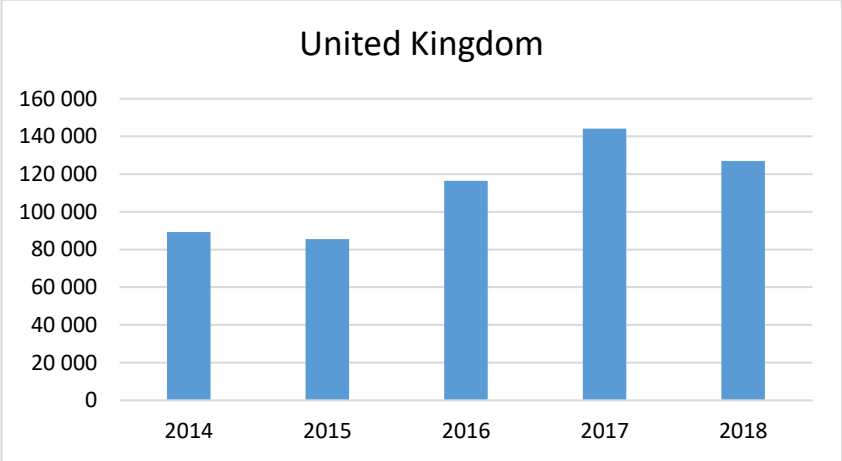


Chart 2 - Immigration flow from the EU-countries to the United Kingdom

According to the statistical data, we can see the tendency of increasing the level of immigration. We can consider the following pull factors in terms of labour migration as reasons for that increase.

Pull factors in the context of labour migration to United Kingdom:

1. High rate of employment

The UK performs relatively well on a number of indicators on the Social Scoreboard that supports the European Pillar of Social Rights, but some challenges remain. The labour market shows strong performance in terms of employment creation while unemployment rate remains comparatively low around 3,9%.

2. Implementation of equal gender opportunities

The UK has recently introduced pay transparency to help reduce the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap remained stable in 2017, with women earning on average 20.8% less than men. The pay transparency reform introduced in 2017 has led to mandatory pay transparency reporting for companies with 250 or more employees in the private and voluntary sectors in England, Scotland and Wales. In 2018 and 2019, this highlighted that almost 80% of companies pay their male staff more per hour than their

female colleagues. The data also reveal that the highest gender pay gaps among the firms covered by the gender pay gap reporting are in the sectors of construction, finance, mining and communications. As a result of the findings, as of June 2019, 52% of in-scope employers had published an action plan to tackle the gender pay gap in their company.

3. Implementation of apprenticeship system

An apprenticeship is a system for training a new generation of practitioners of a trade or profession with on-the-job training and often some accompanying study (classroom work and reading). Apprenticeships can also enable practitioners to gain a license to practice in a regulated profession. In January 2020, the online Apprenticeship Service was opened up to employers who are not currently subject to the apprenticeship levy. This covers employers with a pay bill of less than GBP 3 million per annum, which share the cost of apprenticeships with the government.

4. Low tax burden on labour

The tax burden on labour is among the lowest in the EU across the income scale. Personal income tax and national insurance contributions make the biggest contribution to tax revenues. At 28.93% of the average wage for a two-earner couple with two children, the UK's tax wedge is one of the lowest in the EU (the EU average was 36.34% in 2018).

5. Active venture-capital investment market

Venture capital investment in the UK is above the EU average. However, the availability of equity is lower for scale-ups than start-ups. Private equity and risk capital is particularly available for entrepreneurship and high-tech sectors such as fintech, artificial intelligence, and information and communication technologies.

6. High level of digitalization of economy

The UK economy is already a relatively highly digitised economy. It has the ambition to be a digital leader, and is investing significantly in digitising its economy further.

7. Social protection in case of risks to become homeless (due to loss of job, for example)

UK agencies provide various services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The right to housing provided through the UK's homelessness legislation and right to prevention of homelessness in England and Wales rely on the availability of private rented or social housing and housing benefits. The Homeless Reduction Act, which came into force in April 2018, provides a new legislative framework for local authorities to refocus their work on preventing homelessness.

Thus, due to high economic indicators, the development of the technological component, opportunities to improve work-based skills and low taxes, the migration flow to the UK within the labor market is increasing. This example shows what specific pull factors can be in labor migration.

In conclusion, the author would like to say that the push-pull approach allows us to consider various categories of factors that influence the migration process, structure them according to the scope and draw certain conclusions. Negative factors that affect leaving a place can be identified, as well as positive factors that attract migrants to come to another place. In the context of voluntary labour migration, the main pull factors can be identified: economic, social and political. That is, all those that can affect the level of wages, working conditions, various employment indicators, etc. However, some issues remain on the agenda, as it is impossible to interpret all migration decision-making within the push-pull approach and determine why, despite sometimes obvious incentives, people never migrate.

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