SOME ASPECTS REGARDING THE BRAIN DRAIN NOWADAYS

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Abstract

The economical and political changes that occurred in the former communist countries determined a continuous brain drain to the economically developed countries. This brain drain with no positive feedback for the origin country is not healthy for it, on a long term determining a comedown of the economical and social situation of the origin country. In order to prevent this migration flow, the state has to take measures by promoting appropriate economical, social and fiscal policies.

Keywords: brain drain, migration, labor market

JEL Classification : J01, J60

1. Introduction

The human capital has a particularly important role in the economical development of a country. The drainage of cleverness, the brain drain without a feedback that would have positive consequences, is damaging for the origin country, foreshadowing a comedown of the economical and social situation of it. The ideal thing would be for the state to take measures of economic policy to decrease this migration flows of people with higher education, well trained professionally, through appropriate economical, social and fiscal policies.

Talented and trained individuals are tempted to leave their origin country due to the lack of socio-economical conditions and due to wages that cannot cover the costs of a decent life. The investment made for the training of an individual is lost when he decides to leave the country in which he was professionally trained for working in another state. In this case, the loss suffered by the origin country is higher than when individuals that studied abroad to complete, this way, their education don’t come back to the origin country. The most of researches made on this topic show that there are two different negative effects: on the one side, intellectual, scientific, cultural and economical potential is lost and, on the other side, we can also talk about a fiscal loss determined by migration, that is reflected upon the social solidarity. The tax-payers of the origin country of the emigrants paid for their education and will also pay the costs for attention that will be offered to them as old people (Ailenei, D., 2009). Milos and Corduneanu (2011), show in this respect that the mobility of the production factors, such as human capital, affects the retirement-income system and one of the objectives of this system would be to minimize “the distortions of the individuals’ economic behaviour, such as labour supply and savings outside of pension plans”. Miloș (2012) outlines as well that the aims of future policies of the European Union countries and in consequence of Romania “should be creating better job opportunities and working conditions”, including for “the growing number of older people”.

There are numerous definitions in the specialized literature given to the term of “brain drain”. The Royal Society of London used, through its members, the expression “brain drain” to describe the flows of science and technology from Great Britain to Canada and the United States at the beginning of the 1950s (Cervantes and Guellec, 2002).

“Brain drains” or the exodus of brains was defined as “a loss of professional trained staff, that goes to another nation, which offers better opportunities” (Lowell, 2003). “Brain drain” – “makes reference to the selective migration of talented and educated people from poor nations to the rich ones” (Massey and others, 1998).

Generally, the “brain drain happens with significant losses of highly qualified staff and few compensation economical reactions”. We’re talking the correspondence between a significant loss of very educated work force and the economical consequences that follow it. (Lowell, 2003)

Solving both demographic and economic issues at European Union’s level has to do with the free movement phenomenon, with the brain-drain phenomenon (“brains” movement); free migration should not be regarded anymore in contrast with the opening of the labour market and with the social security systems. (Kahanec, Zimmermann, 2009)

2. Causes of the brain drain

Among the motivations of the qualified migrant’s intentions to move to another country we can mention the low wages in the origin country, the socio-economical conditions offered, the lack of opportunities of professional development. Among the reasons that determine workers with university education to come back to their origin country
3. Effects of the brain drain

One of the direct effects of the brain drain is the decrease of human resources, which are the essential of productivity and economic growth. But this brings into play several factors that can promote the economic growth. For example, the large scale emigration of the of the TIC workers from Asia, especially from India, had a series of effects on the origin countries in the guise of the transfer of abilities, externality of arrangements and flows of investments. The promise of higher incomes through migration can even encourage several investments in public and private education than normally scheduled. The expatriates who remain abroad can also positively impact the development of their origin country, to which they will contribute through the funds for remissions and the knowledge, technology and investments transfer, that serve to increase productivity and help the economic development.

Remissions are those money transfers to the origin country, and those associated to the migrant work force as flows sent by migrants to their families, friends, are seen as a compensation for the “brain drain” phenomenon and, generally, for losses of human capital. Those who benefit from the remissions are, at microeconomical lever, the families that remained in the origin country. At macroeconomic lever, the effects of remissions can be outlined through the increase of domestic consuming, the maintenance of the payments’ balance, but there are also effects on inflation, exports and imports. (Predopcean, 2009)

The return migration has always been considered a good strategy to reverse the “brain drain” phenomenon and a significant interest has been showed towards the come back of the qualified workers, as a major positive factor for the development of the origin countries. In regards to this, there is a new concept in the current debates of the migration processes and, more specifically, the brain circulation (Johnson și Reges, 1998). We’re talking about the cycle that mainly the young graduates of universities and young specialists have. They go abroad to continue their postuniversity studies or for a stage or experience exchange, but with the intention of later going back to their origin country, with knowledge, new aptitudes and technologies transfer.

An OECD research regarding the migration of returning to the member states show when and why migrants go back. According to the research 20 – 50% of the migrants (depending the destination countries) leave 5 years later their arrival, either to go back home or to move to a third country (secondary migration). This percentage depends on the destination country: some countries, such as Canada, New Zealand and the United States have more success than European countries for keeping the migrants. Natural persons chose to return to their origin country because they cannot integrate in the host country, have personal preferences for their origin countries, have savings and wish to reach a specific goal in their origin country, due to employment opportunities in the origin country due to the experience gained abroad. (International Organization for Migration, 2008)

Migrants can contribute to the development of their origin country. Their contribution to the development of their origin country depends on the combination of resources that are transferred before and at the moment of their return. Therefore, persons that come back for the last two reasons are more entitled to contribute to the development of the origin country than those who go back home due to the first two reasons.

The real impact of return migration depends on a series of factors, including the reasons of the return, the time after which he had returned. (King, 2000, Wickramasekara, 2003). The return moment is crucial for several reasons.
If migrants get back after enough time, in which they gained in destination countries qualifications and additional abilities, work experience and resources, at the same time with the development of social capital in the guise of networks and connections with people at home, they will be better trained to readapt and to occupy the work force in their countries once they return.

On the contrary, a migrant that comes back after a short time spent abroad is not capable to offer too many benefits to his country once he gets back. The sustainable return is the one with most benefits.

Besides those who come back home for good after a short time in which they worked abroad there are also the migrant workers, who regularly travel between the two countries. This phenomenon is described as a circular migration. In this case there are more leaves and returns during the life cycle of migration. An increased attention is given to the circular migration as an instrument to promote mutual advantages of the migration both in the origin and destination countries.

The concept is broad enough to keep into consideration both systems of temporary migration and diasporas’ moves between the origin and destination countries. For the migration of the highly qualified work force, circularity means that emerging countries don’t permanently lose abilities. For the not qualified workers, the circular migration programs can offer ways of legal and secure migration. Circular migration also helps developed countries to fulfill the needs of the labor market, without ensuring permanent residency or integration.

Despite all this, the current immigration and the visas policies in the developed countries continue to be significant barriers for the free movement.

4. Conclusions

Migration can have benefits for all involved parts, no matter if we’re talking about the countries that issue, about those that receive or about the migrants themselves. We cannot say that there are no winners or losers in this process, but the clear global effect is a positive one.

The origin countries could encourage the return of emigrants by the institution of a much more favorable and convenient business environment for them, that should offer multiple professional opportunities, through elaborating some strategies to promote qualified personnel and plans of measures to manage the migration phenomenon. It is also necessary to promote a modern and performing management, that should secure an efficient use of both human and material resources. Improving work conditions in the public sector, increasing investments in education and research, identifying work places for those with high studies level that worked abroad and come back to origin country are needs of the countries that have a major drain of qualified individuals.

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