

Interregional migration in Slovakia

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Abstract

Interregional migrations can significantly influence economic and social position of the regions. As the local government is striving to influence these processes, they should attempt to identify and subsequently influence the crucial migration factors. In the paper, we present a qualitative analysis of the role of unemployment and average regional income. Our analysis demonstrates that these contextual factors do not dominate the traditional urbanisation and suburbanisation movements.

Key words: migration, unemployment, income, region

JEL Code: J61, J62, P25, R10, R23

Introduction

Theoretical approach to the migration does not provide unique consistent theory, but on the contrary, it splits into several distinct schools originating from different theoretical frameworks. The traditional neo-classical migration theory perceives migrants as individually acting rational agents with the full access to an information on the location of the most productive areas. Lewis (1954) and Todaro (1969) are well-known representatives of this theoretical school. Different view on the migration was provided by Castles and Miller (2005), who combined the concepts of the System theory with some traditional views of the Marxist political economy. This theoretical stream is denoted as a historical-structural concept. The ground influencing the focus of our paper is the push-pull theory. This theory claims to identify factors explaining why people move from one to another place [(Massey et al. 1993), (Reniers, 1999)]. Identification of the factors in conditions of the CEE NUTS II. regions was made by Fidrmuc (2004). Our paper is based on the lower level district analysis in Slovakia.

1 Push-Pull factors theory

Push factors relate to the country of origin and consist of adverse conditions (financial and others), which the individual is facing to. In other words, the push factors drive people to leave home. On the other hand, the pull factors attract migrants to a new location. These

factors occur within sending regions, that is, those that send migrants abroad, while pull factors occur within the receiving regions. Most of the scientific research identified the economic factors as the most influential ones among the others (like sociological aspects, conservative attitudes, etc.)

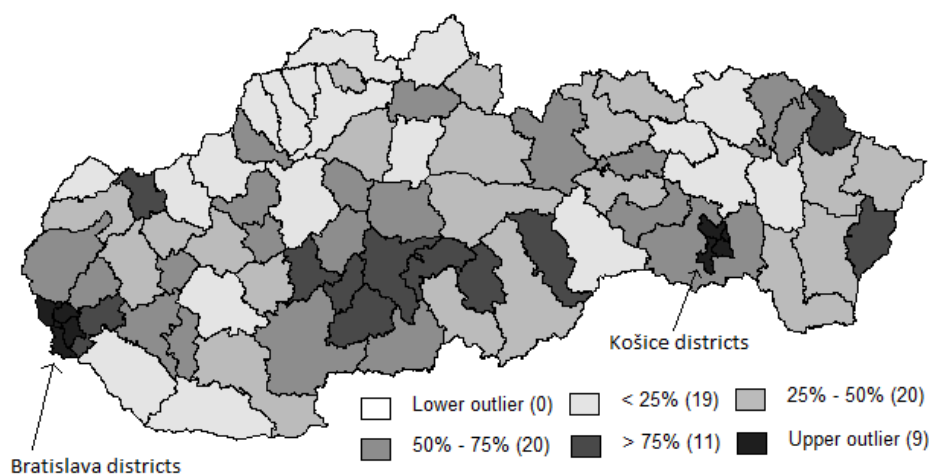
Push factors are negative aspects of the sending country, while pull factors are positive aspects of the receiving country and must be considered parallel. If motivating migrants to move, the expected utility of the move must be greater than the ones connected with the losses of emigrating and vice versa if considering motivating people to stay.

In our paper, we provide an introductory research of two most influential push and pull factors as unemployment rate and average income on both the regional immi- and emigration.

2 Push and Pull factors on Regional Level in Slovakia

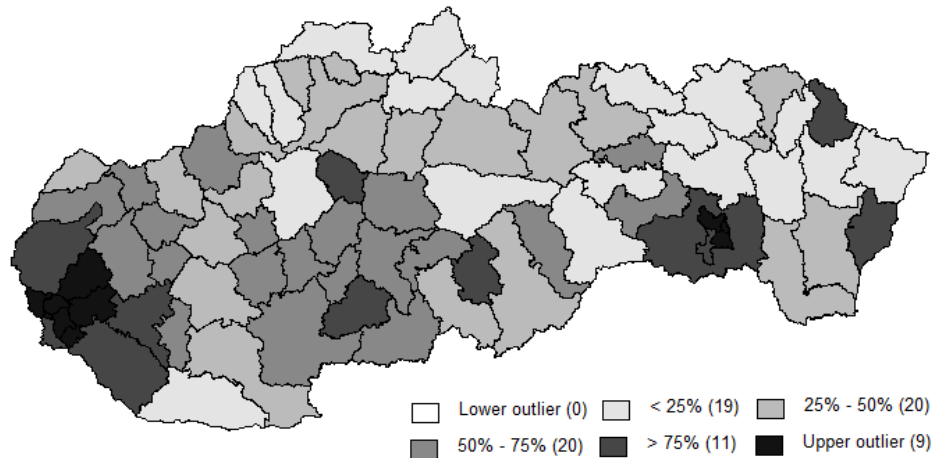
The data for the 2005-2010 period were retrieved from the database of the Slovak Statistical Office. To avoid the crisis period bias, we decided to compute the averages of each of the investigated time series – Inflow, Outflow, Unemployment Rate and Average Regional Income. We consider Inflow and Outflow to be the dependent variables, the unemployment rate to be the push and the income the pull factors.

Fig. 1: Districts outflows quartiles (averages of 2005-2010). [Košice and Bratislava districts are black coloured.]



Source: Database of the Slovak Statistical Office

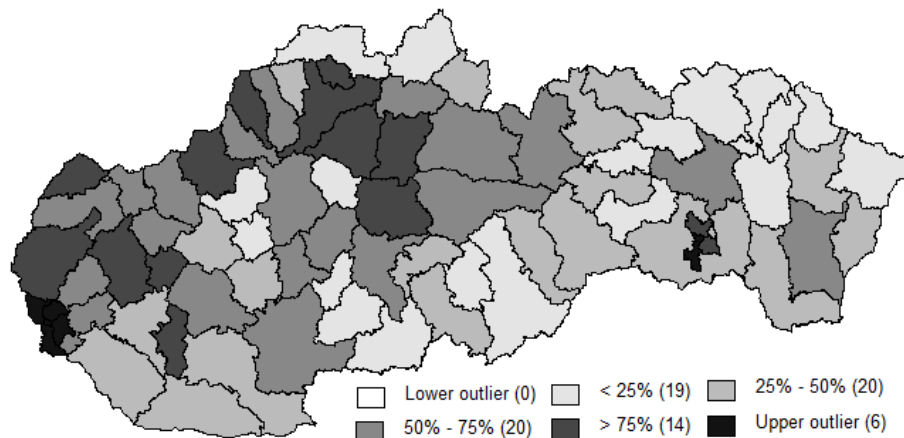
Fig. 2: Districts inflows quartiles (averages of 2005 – 2010).



Source: Database of the Slovak Statistical Office

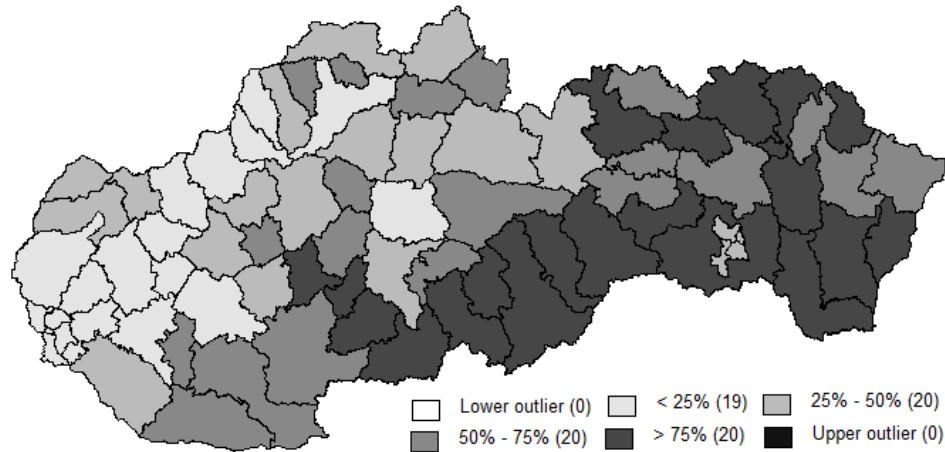
Inspecting Fig. 1., 2., the following is obvious. The Košice and Bratislava districts dispose both with the high rates of immigration and emigration. Immigration seem to be connected with the urbanisation processes (process of moving from the countryside to the industrial zones) and suburbanisation processes (moving from the industrial zones to the near countryside). The suburbanisation process is quite apparent in the districts surrounding Bratislava and Košice. On the other hand, the both processes are quite general and the question is whether they dominate the influence of the both the push and pull factors.

Fig. 3: : Distribution of the real wage rate quartiles in Slovakia (averages of 2005-2010).



Source: Database of the Slovak Statistical Office

Fig. 4: Distribution of the unemployment rate quartiles in Slovakia (averages of 2005-2010).



Source: Database of the Slovak Statistical Office

The regional levels of the average regional incomes and regional unemployment rates are given in Fig. 3. and Fig. 4. The results are not so surprising, if we recognize the complementary character of both figures. Here the districts with low levels of unemployment recorded also high levels of average incomes and vice versa. This fact fully corresponds with the traditional labour market theories and demonstrates quite low regional income level convergence. On the other hand, some clusters and regional patterns are also observable here. The South-East Slovakia (except Košice districts) belongs to the most vulnerable regions in Slovakia. On contrary, the parts of Western Slovakia exhibit the highest level of industrial development, which yields high levels of incomes and low unemployment rates. Does this pattern exist also in the regional migration data? The answer we would get brings the view at Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. Here, the urbanisation and suburbanisation processes strongly dominate in the regional migration and there is no clear correspondence between the unemployment rates and incomes on one side and regional in- and outflows on the other side.

Conclusion

The inter-district immigrations and emigrations can substantially influence the social and economy structure of the regions. We tried to identify some significant factors influencing the regional migration processes acting in the Slovakia. Our research has shown that (on contrary to traditional views) the economic push and pull factors do not seem to

dominate the urbanisation and suburbanisation movements prevailing in Slovakia in the second half of the past decade.

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