Migration Theories, Realities and Myths

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This presentation is also based on the results of the following projects:

1) Grant Agency of the Czech Republic No. P404/10/0581: “Migration and development – economic and social impacts of migration on the Czech Republic and Ukraine (with a focus on the analysis of remittances)

2) Investigative plan MSM 0021620831, financed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic.
Important books relevant to the topic (selection):


Structure of the presentation

- Objectives
- Key terms
- Migration and its myths
- Migration and its unique characteristics
- The role of human needs and information
- Migration theories and their shortcomings
- Micro versus macro approaches
- Selected current migratory trends
- Economic-theoretical perspective
- Historical-structural perspective
Structure of the presentation

- Systems approach
- Theory of societal systems
- Value expectancy model
- Grand theory on immigration
- How to use theories in research – one example
Primary objectives of the presentation

To combat the following myths:

1) There is no need to work with migration theories
2) There is one “general” theory that can explain international migration processes
3) Theories as such are taboos, one should use them only as they were originally designed and proposed
Key terms

Myth

1) a traditional sacred story, typically revolving around the activities of gods and heroes, which purports to explain a natural phenomenon or cultural practice ...

2) ...

3) ...

N) an unproved or false collective belief
Key terms

Theory - general explanations
Key terms

**Theory** – the most developed form of scientific knowledge … bringing a systematic, general picture of regularities and significant interconnections and contexts …

consistency, clear definition of terms, completeness,

exact data, a set of principles, postulates, axioms, logic inferences, causal links, a summary of theoretical results …
A full-fledged theory should have four elements (Portes 1997):

1) a delimitation and description of some patch of reality
2) an identification and definition of a process or characteristic to be explained (the dependent variable)
3) one or more explanatory factors and their types of effects, additive or interactive
4) a logical link to at least one other similar proposition
The biologist passes, the frog remains”.
… Theories pass, the frog remains …
(J. Rostand 1894-1977; in Knowles 2007)

While theories may be discarded, the facts remain unaltered … (Knowles 2007)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Main proponent</th>
<th>Type of migration</th>
<th>Level of analysis</th>
<th>Unit of analysis</th>
<th>Type of constraints</th>
<th>Part of the process explained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neoclassical (1)</td>
<td>Harris-Todaro</td>
<td>Internal or international</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Community or country</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neoclassical (2)</td>
<td>Harris-Todaro</td>
<td>Internal or international</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Costs of migration and probability of employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New economics of migration</td>
<td>Stark-Taylor</td>
<td>Internal or international</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Lack of adequate financial or insurance institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics of family migration</td>
<td>Mincer</td>
<td>Internal or international</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Family/couple</td>
<td>Migration to the same destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segmented labour market</td>
<td>Piore</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Community or country</td>
<td>Structural constraints at destination reduce social mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World systems</td>
<td>Wallerstein</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Constraints imposed by position in the capitalist system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociological</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Push/pull</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>Internal or international</td>
<td>All types</td>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Some constraints may be interpreted as push factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>Various authors</td>
<td>Internal or international</td>
<td>All types</td>
<td>Micro &gt;&gt; macro</td>
<td>Individual/family</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobility transition</td>
<td>Zelinsky</td>
<td>Internal and international</td>
<td>All types excluding forced</td>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Countries</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Political science</td>
<td>Zolberg</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>All types including forced</td>
<td>Macro &gt;&gt; micro</td>
<td>State in relation to individual</td>
<td>Those imposed by States of origin and destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systems</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Systems approach</td>
<td>Kritz et al.</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>All types</td>
<td>Macro &gt;&gt; micro</td>
<td>State, community and individual</td>
<td>Those imposed by States of origin and destination, by the structure of production and by institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Research Question(s)</td>
<td>Levels/Units of Analysis</td>
<td>Dominant Theories</td>
<td>Sample Hypothesis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>How does migration affect cultural change and affect ethnic identity?</td>
<td>More micro/individuals, households, groups</td>
<td>Relational or structuralist and transnational</td>
<td>Social networks help maintain cultural difference.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demography</td>
<td>How does migration affect population change?</td>
<td>More macro/populations</td>
<td>Rationalist (borrows heavily from economics)</td>
<td>Immigration increases the birth rate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>How do we understand the immigrant experience?</td>
<td>More micro/individuals and groups</td>
<td>Eschews theory and hypothesis testing</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>How does the law influence migration?</td>
<td>Macro and micro/the political and legal system</td>
<td>Institutionalist and rationalist (borrows from all the social sciences)</td>
<td>Rights create incentive structures for migrants.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>Why do states have difficulty controlling migration?</td>
<td>More macro/political and international systems</td>
<td>Institutionalist and rationalist</td>
<td>States are often captured by proimmigrant interests.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>What explains immigrant incorporation?</td>
<td>More macro/ethnic groups and social class</td>
<td>Structuralist and/or functionalist</td>
<td>Immigrant incorporation is dependent on social capital.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Selected migration theories offered by various disciplines of science

Theories of migration

Sociological
- Intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940)
- Push-pull factors (Lee, 1966)
- Migrant networks (Taylor, 1986)
- Transnational social spaces (Pries, 1999; Feist, 2000)

Economic
- Macro
  - Classical (Lewis, 1940)
  - Neo-classical (Harris and Todaro, 1970)
  - Keynesian (Hart, 1975)
  - Dual labour market theory (Piore, 1979)

- Micro
  - Neo-classical (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1970; Borjas, 1980)
  - Value-expectancy (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981)
  - New economics of migration (Stark and Bloom, 1984)
  - Including: relative deprivation (Stark and Taylor, 1989), migration without wage differentials (Stark, 2003)

Geographical
- Spatial interactions
  - Gravity theory (Stewart, 1941; Zipf, 1946; Isard, 1960; Lowry, 1966)
  - Entropy (Wilson, 1967)
  - Catastrophe theory and bifurcations (Wilson, 1981)

Unifying
- Migration systems theory (Kritz et al., 1992)
- Multidisciplinary approach plus mobility transition (Massey, 2002)

Cummulative causation (Massey, 1990)
- Institutional theory (Massey et al., 1993)
- World systems theory (Wallerstein, 1974)

Source: own elaboration, corroborating on Zlotnik (1998) and Kupiszewski (2002b)
Myth I

• International migration is a simple topic that anyone can comprehend and study

• Migration is a complex (interdisciplinary) issue that is influenced/conditioned by various - mostly external - factors … This makes any analysis very difficult.
Myth II

- International migration can be easily controlled, in the sense that immigrant flows can be stopped in accordance with our needs.

- Many realities of the current world, as it is now, go against this proclamation: globalization, the integration of the world economy, cheap international travel, the information revolution, “western liberal doctrine” spread throughout third-world countries …
Myth III

• International migration is an “either – or” matter

International migration is not a “black and white story” … there are different patterns involved, both winners and losers, etc. …

The short answer to the question as to whether I am for or against immigration is: “Yes!” (Chiswick 2009)
Myth III cont.

• International migration is not merely settlement migration or circular labour migration …
  
  – the whole picture is very diversified
  – new types of migration …
  – e.g. “fluid migration” (IDEA project, Okolski’s team)
Myth III cont.

- Regarding economic impacts:
  “In broad terms, the economic impact of migration is positive for the destination country; but the size of the impact is not great, and there are distributional consequences to consider” (Kleinman 2003).
Myth IV

- We can successfully combat illegal/irregular international migration

- No, we cannot; because:

  - There is an intense and permanent **DEMAND** for an illegal foreign workforce, particularly from a number of employers in developed countries who are always willing to hire such cheap, flexible, and productive workers, in spite of the various risks involved.

  - The phenomenon is often “quietly” tolerated by political representatives and officials.
    - It is even considered one of the structural components of modern capitalism (e.g. Palliddda 2005).

  - In addition, in the post-communist world, we observe degraded morale that allows many informal activities to become a generally tolerated reality.
Myth V

- Illegal/irregular migration brings no positive effects for the receiving countries

- There are some positive impacts: Filling unappealing and low-paid work positions, a cheap and flexible workforce, the development of certain economic entities and branches. Also, individual households benefit from the presence of illegal/irregular workers (cheaper home services, construction, reconstruction, etc.), the prices for certain goods and services decrease …

- Illegal/irregular economic migration - a dangerous phenomenon. As illegal/irregular migrants do not comply with the law and legislation, they contribute to the undermining of democratic systems, which are based upon adherence to legal principles. In light of such principles, this type of migration is also inequitable/unfair.
Myth VI

• International migration (immigrants) may eliminate anticipated problems of population ageing in developed immigration countries

• A report from the UN Population Division: “Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to a Declining and Ageing Population (2000, 2001)” clearly affirms that no, this is not possible. The migration flows needed to keep the potential support ratio (workers to non-workers) constant are unprecedentedly high, for instance:
  - in the EU: 13.5 million a year,
  - in Korea: more than 5 billion!
Myths

The main goal of this presentation is to combat the following myths:

1) There is no need to work with migration theories

2) There is one “general” theory that can explain international migration processes

3) Theories as such are taboos, one should use them only as they were originally designed and proposed
International migration is a very complex phenomenon. This is true not only for migration, its consequences are also complex …

… external heterogeneous factors behind …
The complexity of various features of migration

- specificity in time and space,
- growing interdependence and international linkages among various migration flows, tied to the increasing political, economic and social interdependence among nation states,
- multi-causality of migration motivation,
- qualitatively and quantitatively different types of migration flows at various hierarchical levels.
Broad range and causality of migration

“Migration analysis is the attempt to explain the decision-making mechanism (individual, household, or village) and human behaviour for persons (with different personality traits and sociocultural backgrounds) interacting with and reacting to (at different levels) the general environment (socioeconomic, ecological, and political stimuli) over time (short- and long-run situations) in order to achieve (maximize, minimize, or satisfy) certain objectives (personal or otherwise, economic and noneconomic) with certain consequences (on the migrant and others in the sending and receiving points)“
- Chang (1981)
Interdisciplinary approach

When researching migration issues, an interdisciplinary approach is necessary

genergy, sociology, economics, demography, ethnology, anthropology, political science, history, psychology, law, planning …

- The interdisciplinary view seeks to develop “a more satisfactory theoretical approach” (Hammar 1992)
Human needs as a key trigger of migration movements -

An individual’s ambitions to permanently increase and differentiate her/his needs – a primary cause of migration (see e.g. “pleonexie” - Korcak 1973);

in line with secondary human needs:
Human needs as a key and natural trigger of migration movements -

**Secondary human needs:**

1) Acquisition – need to gain possessions and property
2) Achievement – need to overcome obstacles, exercise power and try to do difficult tasks well and quickly
3) Dominance – need to influence or control others
4) Autonomy – need to resist influence or coercion
5) Aggression – need to assault or harm another
6) Affiliation – need to form friendships and associations
7) Nurturance – need to nourish, aid or protect helpless people
8) Succourance – need to seek help, protection, or sympathy
9) Cognizance – need to inquire, explore, seek knowledge, and satisfy curiosity

These needs include, in fact, psychological, economic, social and political aspects as well. In particular, needs no. 1,2, 4, and 9, can trigger and propel movements and be quite relevant to international migration.

Migration – inherent law of human existence (not an aberrant or even a “perverse” behaviour)
Information as a very important aspect behind migration movements

The role of information in the migration context is crucial …

… the current era of globalization and information revolution contributes to the intensity of migratory movements

Pred’s matrix makes it possible to infer a probability of moving, according to the quality and quantity of information available to a person as well as to her/his ability to make use of this information …
Concerning migration, it is typical to find ambiguities, contradictions and paradoxes …

1) The heart of the matter lies in the migration process itself and its mutual interrelations with the socioeconomic sphere –

- contradiction between the short-term and long-term effects of economic development upon the propensity to emigrate …
Paradoxes II

2) Problems stemming from scholars’ different attitudes towards the object of study ... (there is also a risk that, perhaps, “firm faith” rather than objective reasoning comes into play.

For example: “In the developmental approach, there are differences in interpretation of benefits and costs, depending on what is thought to constitute development. Those inclined to think of growth and development as a matter of capital accumulation and industrialization, view migration as drawing off surplus labour, causing wage increase and stimulating technological change ... those that have primary concern for distribution, local development and social problems are quick to point out the cost-sectoral and regional imbalances, decline in production (and possibly productivity) in certain sectors, conspicuous consumption and so on ...” (Swamy 1985)

Important philosophical-methodological aspects within interpretations!
3) Policy-related paradoxes

- The right to emigrate (established in the UN Declaration of Human Rights) has no counterpart entailing a right to immigrate.

- Developed countries have proclaimed and demonstrated a willingness to support, both politically and economically, the development of the Third World; while, in reality, their economic policies directly or indirectly restrain these efforts.

- On the one hand, developed immigration countries proclaim the necessity to combat undocumented migration and yet, on the other hand, they often tolerate irregular/undocumented migrants in their labour markets.
‘Push-pull’ concept …

Golledge and Stimson (1987) argue that the push-pull model can, perhaps, be used more at the micro-level. Bogue (1977) points out that “the traditional push-pull framework has limited utility for a micro-level approach”
Very often we tend to speak about “pragmatic” or “ad hoc” attitudes

- Some of the so called “theories” are actually nothing more than concepts, frameworks, perspectives, attitudes, or rather primitively summarized experiences …

- Very limited attempts have been made to establish a theory about the simultaneous interaction of factors, while practically no attempt has been made to formulate general causal models, in which the listed factors appear as aspects of casual mechanisms …
Theories and related shortcomings

There are hardly any precisely ascertained facts followed by principles, laws, axioms and postulates describing the object of study … There is a lack of logical methods of inferring, of proof and there is no summary of theoretical knowledge.

As a corollary, … hardly any systematic, general picture exists regarding regularities and fundamental continuities in the given field …
A close connection between a final theory and empirical facts

“The use of theories is constrained by the availability of data, whereas interpretation of data depends on available theories” (de Beer 1990)

Generally, international migration statistics are also subject to many shortcomings!

Thus, a vicious cycle comes into play …

The true value of international migration research?: A good theory yields the best practical use … ???!!!
There is no one general theory of migration … “It is unlikely that any one general theory could encompass all specific empirical foci” (Richmond 1984), … grand theory of migration is impossible to design (Portes 1997) - The reason is that the different areas that compose the field of migration studies are too disparate to be unified in any meaningful way… such a theory would necessarily be too generic and abstract to the point of being useless for empirical analysis, researchers or policy makers (Portes 1997, Triandafyllidou, Blair 2006)

Too complex – it is beyond our grasp …

It should encompass aspects like: Who are migrants? Why do they move, stay or return? Why and where do they move? When do they move? What are the effects of such action on migrants and on others? etc… (see Chang 1981)
Theories and related shortcomings

- Theories focus mostly on labour migration movements
- Theorizing is concentrated on immigration countries
- Little attention in migration theories focuses on females
- Political considerations/aspects are more or less “ignored” in migration theories
Theories and related shortcomings

- When establishing theories – delay in following the actual features of objective reality

- The role of borders is not adequately taken into account in migration theories
  - Applying “experience” accepted in internal to international migration without any corrections or improvements, sometimes even without references …!!!
Internal versus international migration - common features and differences

Common features:
1) Similar analytical frameworks (methods of analysis)
2) Common social and economic roots
3) Similar determinants and consequences
4) “Structural similarities” – i.e., migrants tend to be young
5) Places boasting a high standard of living (in a complex view) serve as magnets for migration
6) Movements which begin as short term (or circulatory) often change into long-term or permanent stays
7) Close relationship between geographical and social mobility
Internal versus international migration: common features and differences

Differences:

1) International movements are much more susceptible to political and administrative control

2) The reasons for international migration are more complex. In the broadest sense of the word, such migration is much more impacted by political factors and social networks

3) The distance factor carries a different weight with these different types of migration
Micro versus macro approaches

Arise out of philosophical and methodological differences …

Macro tradition – mainly the Marxist/conflict/historical-structural perspective

Micro approaches – functionalist, equilibrium, classical/neo-classical perspective (e.g. push-pull, cost-benefit, human capital models) or the behavioural perspective …
Micro versus macro approaches

The micro-level perspective – emphasis on individuals, families, households, specifically on their behaviour and processes tied to this microsocial milieu …

The macro-level perspective emphasizes economic, social, and political circumstances, the context of which is the actual arena for the behaviour of individual migrants …

It is a must to consider both macro and micro approaches in any meaningful study of international migration …

Both perspectives are significant and complementary to one another …
"Microlevel study must take into account at all steps the influence of macrofactors, the social and institutional, the economic and the geographic context within which the individual exists. On the other hand, macrolevel studies of migration that do not include a consideration of the decision-making process may very easily miss some important factors and aspects of migration“ (Gardner 1981)

Micro versus macro approaches

To overcome the problems???

… close co-operation and mutual acceptance of objective results among supporters of the different perspectives …
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MACRO-LEVEL: STRUCTURAL</th>
<th>MESO-LEVEL: RELATIONAL</th>
<th>MICRO-LEVEL: INDIVIDUAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>opportunity structures</td>
<td>collectives and social networks</td>
<td>values, expectancies and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(political-economic-cultural structure)</td>
<td>(social relations)</td>
<td>(degrees of freedom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>economics:</strong></td>
<td><strong>social ties:</strong></td>
<td><strong>individual values</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– income and unemployment differentials; access to capital</td>
<td>– strong ties: families and households;</td>
<td>(goals, preferences and expectancies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>politics:</strong></td>
<td>– weak ties: networks of potential movers, brokers and stayers;</td>
<td>– improving and securing survival, wealth, status, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, affiliation and morality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– regulation of spatial mobility (nation-states and international regimes);</td>
<td>– symbolic ties: ethnic and religious organisations</td>
<td></td>
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<td>– political repression, ethnic and religious conflicts</td>
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<tr>
<td>– interdependence in international system of states</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>cultural setting:</strong></td>
<td><strong>social capital:</strong></td>
<td><strong>individual resources:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– dominant norms and discourses</td>
<td>resources available to potential movers and stayers by participation in networks and collectives through weak, strong and symbolic social ties</td>
<td>– financial capital</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>demography and ecology:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>– population growth;</td>
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<td>– human capital: educational credentials;</td>
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<tr>
<td>– availability of arable land</td>
<td></td>
<td>– professional skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>– level of technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>– cultural capital: common worldviews, forecasts, memories, symbols</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– political capital: voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1** Three levels of migration analysis.
Migration research – historical patterns


W. Zelinski
(1971)
Current trends – “S curve” versus transnationalism

• Actually, the two concepts need not be in opposition … a transnational system can also be created by migrants who settle abroad but sustain significant ties with their place of origin …
Circular labour migration and its transformation into permanent immigration and settlement (Martin, Taylor 1995)
• Stages in this transformation

"Stage 1: temporary labour migration of young workers, remittance of earnings and continued orientation to the homeland;

Stage 2: prolonging of stay and the development of social networks based on kinship or common area of origin and the need for mutual help in the new environment;

Stage 3: family reunion, growing consciousness of long-term settlement, increasing orientation towards the receiving country, and emergence of ethnic communities with their own institutions (associations, shops, cafes, agencies, professions);

Stage 4: permanent settlement which, depending on the policies of the government and the behaviour of the population of the receiving country, leads either to secure legal status and eventual citizenship, or to political exclusion, socio-economic marginalisation and the formation of permanent ethnic minorities” (Castles-Miller 1993).
Current trends - transnationalism

• “… “The creation of a transnational community linking immigrant groups in the advanced countries with their respective sending nations and hometowns … This field is composed of a growing number of people who live dual lives: speaking two languages, having homes in two countries, and making a living through regular contact across national borders. Activities within the transnational field are comprised of a whole gamut of economic, political and social initiatives ranging from informal import-export business, to the rise of a class of binational professionals, to the campaigns of native politicians among their expatriates” (Portes, Guarnizo, Landolt 1999)
# Transnationalism and its types

(Portes, Guarnizo, Landolt 1999)

## Table 1. Transnationalism and its types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of institutionalization</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Socio-cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Low                          | - Informal cross-country traders  
- Small businesses created by returned immigrants in home country  
- Long-distance circular labour migration | - Home town civic committees created by immigrants  
- Alliances of immigrant committee with home country political associations  
- Fund raisers for home country electoral candidates | - Amateur cross-country sport matches  
- Folk music groups making presentations in immigrant centres  
- Priests from home town visit and organize their parishioners abroad |
| High                         | - Multinational investments in Third World countries  
- Development for tourist market of locations abroad  
- Agencies of home country banks in immigrant centres | - Consular officials and representatives of national political parties abroad  
- Dual nationality granted by home country governments  
- Immigrants elected to home country legislatures | - International expositions of national arts  
- Home country major artists perform abroad  
- Regular cultural events organized by foreign embassies |
New migratory forms/types – “liquid migration”

The concept of liquid migration is inspired by Zygmunt Bauman’s work (1999; 2005) on liquid modernity (Engbersen et al. 2009).

Central to the notion of liquidity is the idea that ‘thick’ and stable social institutions (class, family, labour, community, neighbourhood and nation state) are fading away and being replaced by flexible, ‘thin’ institutions (see also Zijderveld 2000).

Migration has always been strongly embedded in patterns of family, community, local labour markets, and the nation-state (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Portes 1995). The transformation of these institutions, together with ever more advanced communication technologies and the disappearance of internal borders following EU enlargement, has changed migration patterns in post-industrial societies and has made migration trends less predictable.

Liquid migration has six dominant characteristics:
“Liquid migration” (Engbersen forthcoming)

1 Settlement: temporality of migration and stay:
   - Temporary migration
   - Temporary settlement; semi-integration in destination country

2 Type of migration: Labour and student migration:
   - Labour migrants
   - Student migrants
   - ‘Economic’ asylum seekers and refugees

3 Status: legal residential status:
   - Regular migration
   - Temporary work permit holders (Romania and Bulgaria)

4 Destination: No predetermined receiving country:
   - Multiple receiving countries
   - New receiving countries

5 Family: individualised life strategy:
   - Individualised forms of migration
   - First generation pattern

6 Migratory habitus: intentional unpredictability
   - No definite migration aspirations
   - Open options
IDEA conceptual framework
Okolski, Arango, Fassmann … (Okolski ed. forthcoming)

- Concept of the European ‘migration cycle’
- Based on an assumption that all European nation states proceed from net emigration to net immigration countries
- Over the course of this change, countries experience specific migration stages: preliminary, take off, expansion and maturity
- In the preliminary stage - masses of rural population are pushed out and compelled to migration due to rapid growth in productivity coupled with a high rate of natural increase, leading to large emigration
- On the contrary, the mature stage involves a steady and sizable presence of immigrants (or their descendants) and a continuous, but strictly regulated inflow of foreigners in accordance with the needs of economy
- The stage of maturity emerges from two intermediate stages (take-off and expansion) and it develops with declining natural increase, the ageing of the population and growing labour demand
- Hence, the main drivers in a country’s change from an emigration to an immigration country are related to demographic and economic developments along with paradigms of migration and control policies
- A primary objective was to juxtapose the migration situation of CEE countries to the ‘migration cycle’ concept
Economic-theoretical perspective and migration
(neoclassical economic approach)

Most alternative approaches are derived from the push-pull and human capital models (e.g. Sjaastad 1962, Todaro 1969)

The push-pull model generally emerges from the idea that migration is a consequence of the socioeconomic disequilibrium among regions, in which some factors operate primarily by “pushing” a person out of a given place or, on the contrary, by “pulling” him/her to another one … additional variables (intervening opportunities and barriers – Stouffer 1940)

Migration has also been viewed as a flow of manpower from regions with a lack of capital and a surplus of manpower to regions with a lack of manpower and a surplus of capital, where salaries and wages are higher … this translates to a redistribution of human capital, migration is a “development fostering process” … According to this theory, workers do not migrate if there are no differences in earnings or employment rates between countries…
Sjaastad (1962) in his human capital model first realized and “suggested that the individual migrates in the expectation of being better off … and an individual moves if she/he believes that the benefits will exceed the costs”

- time aspect and expected, rather than actual, earnings taken into account

Todaro (1969), in particular, included the possibility of migrants being unemployed … the individual must balance this risk against a positive real income …

Variations of the basic models – simultaneous-equation model, sequential decision-making framework etc. …
Economic-theoretical perspective and migration (neoclassical economic approach)

The common element of the models mentioned (applied at the micro level) is their focus on the individual activity involved …

- **Shortcomings of this perspective:**
- Questionable use in terms of hierarchical levels (regional and “structural”)
- When using microdata – tendency to neglect spatial characteristics
- Danger of generalizing individual-level phenomena from aggregated data analyses
- So many genuine assumptions are inserted into the models, such as: homogeneity, substitutability, rationality, maximizing of profit, minimizing of discomfort, perfect information, flexibility of prices, market equilibrium
- “All is based” on two variables: the effects of income and unemployment
- The models deal only with labour migration – they omit social and political structures, overlook nonmonetary costs generally, say nothing about the assimilation of information, values and preferences …, only the capitalist historical period is taken into account
Economic-theoretical perspective and migration (neoclassical economic approach)

- Economic models – either too simple and static or methodologically sophisticated, but theoretically primitive, bottom line – confusing

- Scarcity of empirical testing

-Labour market theories do not explain the beginning or ending of movements, they are not unable to manage specific conditions within given countries … why movements do not involve all people? why labour migration also exists between countries with a relatively similar high stage of development (including the brain exchange phenomenon, etc.)?
Advantages:

- explanatory models in nature
- Some researchers expand the human capital model to include noneconomic variables as well (.. Da Vanzo)
**Historical-structural (conflict, Marxist, neo-Marxist) perspective and migration**

To a certain extent, this is a response to the individualistic, neoclassical economic approach … many concepts/subconcepts – *world system theory*, “dependency theory”, “internal colonialism”, “centre-periphery” framework or “global accumulation” concept

It is based upon Marx’s ideas and work on historical materialism with a fundamental postulate that classes are defined by social relations concerning production …

The perspective “treats development and underdevelopment as parts of a single integral totality (the world capitalist economy) which simultaneously depends on, and re-creates conditions for worldwide economic inequality” (Papademetriou 1988); “These theories emphasize the peripheral status of poor countries in an international system in which the rich countries are at the centre. The rich central countries serve as a vacuum drawing wealth out of the periphery to such an extent that the periphery is impoverished” (Stahl 1988) … capital, commodities and labour move across national boundaries as part of a developing process that creates complex inescapable ties of interdependence between countries… labour migration is explained by the economies over the peripheral and the specific effects of differences in real and social wage levels in the core and the periphery which leads to recruitment across national boundaries from what is, in effect, an international pool of reserve labour …
**Historical-structural (conflict, Marxist, neo-Marxist) perspective and migration**

- Focus on the exploitation of migrants in rich, destination countries … and their exposure to various constraints, limits and barriers …
  - migrants are mere agents of social change, carrying the necessary attributes of labour to satisfy the abstract requirements of the general law of capitalist accumulation

- Decreasing or freezing wages and prices
- Selectivity in choosing only young and healthy workers
- Inaccessibility to many social achievements
- Vague legal status, limited geographical and social mobility
- Regional and spatial concentration of immigrants (“ghettoization”)

Distinct and quite unambiguous unit of observation – a migration stream as a whole
Historical-structural (conflict, Marxist, neo-Marxist) perspective and migration

• “The world systems theory emphasises structural factors that contribute to the uneven development of sending and receiving countries and the structural disparities and dependence between these economies. However, it also indirectly recognises the role of individuals and families as agents of migration as they point to the function of ideological and cultural links between developing and advanced countries” (Triandafyllidou, Blair)

• Many queries in play:
  – People only as a passive element … behaviour can be explained by an individual’s location within the larger system …
  – The theory deals only with labour migration movements
  – Ideology comes into play
  – No specific economic/social/political climate in various nations/states is taken into account …
  – No possibility of improving social status for immigrants in host societies, immigrants seen as being permanently excluded from the benefits of being incorporated into a host society, having citizenship rights and receiving state welfare benefits, immigrants enter the labour market at the lowest levels of socioeconomic status…
  – “Injuriousness” of labour emigration …

These statements are often in contradiction with reality …
Historical-structural (conflict, Marxist, neo-Marxist) perspective and migration

- Overestimation of macrostructural forces, ignoring individual activity and abilities

- “How would world system advocates explain the famine-induced Irish emigration to the United States in the 1840s, the migration which resulted from political and religious persecution of the past several centuries, or the forced migration of Africans to North America? Alternatively, how can we explain the variations of significant emigration flows from countries that are similarly incorporated into the world capitalist economy?” (Papademetriou 1988)
Based on Mabogunje (1970) who applied General Systems Theory to rural-urban migration in Africa

…“contrary to a linear uni-directional, push-and-pull, cause-effect movement, it enables us consideration of a movement as a circular, independent, progressively complex, and self-modifying system in which the effect of changes in one part can be traced through the whole of the system” (Mabogunje 1970).

He works with four components of a migration environment: economic, social, technological and governmental elements; he considers, inter alia, the relationship between social and spatial mobility; he points out the role of aspirations and the importance of information (and the feedback effect that became the core of later work leading to development of the concept of social networks)
Other scholars highlight the regional approach in defining a migration system where regional proximity is accompanied with close economic and political ties, a comparable level of economic development, similar migration behaviour, cultural background and “political proximity” …

“Migration systems are spaces characterised by the relatively stable association of a group of receiving countries with a number of areas of origin. Such association does not only result from migration flows, but is buttressed by connections and links of a varied nature” (Arango 2000).

In the past – the concept of social networks or global economic, structuralist, macro-level views of reality were considered to be “systems approach”

Elements that define the existence of the migration system: relative structural homogeneity, geographic contiguity or proximity, similarity of policies, and common belonging to supranational organisations (Zlotnik 1992, according to Arango 2000)…

Perhaps there might be key elements, typical of the systems approach, such as: complexity – encompassing both the micro and macro factors, dynamism, interrelations, interactions, interlinkages, openness and flexibility
What are the real principles upon which the systems approach to international migration is based?

The model “is as yet no more than a desideratum which has never been fulfilled, at least as far as international migration is concerned. It has hardly gone beyond the identification of international migration systems, at a purely descriptive level” (Arango 2000).

The full potential of the approach still remains at a stage of promise (Arango 2000)
Other important theories/concepts

- Network theory, Dual labour market theory, Institutional theory, New economics of migration, Gravity models, etc. …
Theory of Societal Systems

Proposed by Hoffmann-Nowotny (1983) – one of the “real”, more general and well-formulated migration theories

- It is based on the foundation of General Systems Theory
- It integrates well-known sociological, socio-psychological and economic concepts from the areas of stratification, mobility, social change, status crystallization, symbolic interaction and marginal utility, or at least elements of these …
- Basic terms: “structure” and “culture” versus “power” and “prestige” – and the status line between them …
Theory of Societal Systems

- Generally, movement and various types of tensions spring from the discordance between power and prestige, and consequently, society; as a result, people are, to some extent and in some way, always on the move …

- Migration can be seen as a process of social interaction that results in a reduction of tension in the emigration system. On the contrary, immigration may contribute to the building of tension in a receiving society.

- In fact, the theory deals with the complicated relationship between social and spatial mobility, when stressing the system level including the hierarchical principle …
Value expectancy model

Based on work of psychologist Crawford (1973) – developed and cultivated, in particular by de Jong and Fawcett (e.g. 1981)

The main proposal – an action in certain ways depends on the expectancy that the act will be followed by a given consequence (or goal) and the value of that consequence (or goal) to the individual …

This model assumes that people will usually behave in a forward looking, positive way, making choices that they believe will maximise their own well-being …
Value expectancy model

It is necessary to get to know personally valued goals that might be met by moving (or staying) and assess perceived linkages, in terms of expectancy, between migration behaviour and its outcomes …

- The model deals with the subjective evaluation and weighing of factors coming to play in achieving goals
- Seven main groups of values or goals, based on psychological and socioeconomic elements, were formulated: wealth, status, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, affiliation and morality –
- these essential attributes of migration motivation are enriched by important factors describing the broader socioeconomic, sociocultural and demographic environment: individual and household characteristics, societal and cultural norms, personal traits, opportunity structure between areas and information
Migration behaviour is thus hypothesized to be the result of 1) the strength of the value expectancy derived intentions to move, 2) the indirect influences of background individual and aggregate factors and 3) the potential modifying effects of often unanticipated constraints and facilitators which may intervene between intentions and behaviour …

**Advantages** of the model: it combines micro and macro elements of reality – individual, household and societal-level migration determinants; it is a simple model, easy to apply

**Shortcomings** – the model is based on assumptions – e.g. physical and mental ability, rationality. It cannot explain forced migration …
Individual and household demographic characteristics: e.g., life-cycle and family cycle, SES, employment, own-rent home, land availability, ethnicity, household density

Societal and cultural norms: e.g., sex roles, political climate and policies, community norms

Personal traits: e.g., risk taking, efficacy, adaptability to change

Opportunity structure differentials between areas: e.g., economic opportunity, marriage opportunity, status advancement, amenities, activities

Values (goals) of migration: categories of values and disvalues, their strength, salience and centrality

Expectancy of attaining values: certainty of outcome to self or others in short term and long term

Migration behavioral intentions

In situ adjustment

Information: extent, relevance, perceived validity

Unanticipated constraints and facilitators

Move-Stay

NOTES

1. Family as unit with separate analyses for members: e.g., single adult siblings, family unit moves

2. Expected strength of explanatory path

   strong
   moderate
   weak

3. \[ MI (\text{behavioral intentions}) = \sum V_i \cdot E_i \]

4. Expectancy measured for present residence and alternative locations
They try to design a comprehensive theory on migration - they seek to integrate the main theoretical perspectives outlined by Massey and his co-authors (1993) into one model that brings them together and potentially allows (if the necessary empirical data exist) for a comprehensive analysis of migration phenomena.

They include network, institutional and cumulative causation perspectives which offer an interesting combination of structural and individual factors that contribute to the continuation, and often to the increase, of migratory flows.

They come to the conclusion that migration results from comparing costs and benefits, from government intervention and from general knowledge and attitudes towards migration.

Grand theory on immigration –

Grand theory on immigration –
Triandafyllidou, Blair 2006

• … the formula has to be exponential (though the gradient is unknown without empirical data).

Nevertheless, so far no empirical testing has been done!!! – … it is now up to empirical analysts to check this attempt against reality and see whether the correlation could be true. It might be difficult to quantify some of the aspects, notably the social costs of moving or the knowledge of the possibilities of moving …
• Such a theory could be useful to policy makers that seek to explain existing flows or predict new migration at a general level.

• …it may be less helpful when policy makers seek to develop migrant integration policies or to examine the impact of migration on a given sector of the economy, or if they wish to know more about the dynamics of a specific type of immigration, e.g. seasonal migration, or understand the specific dynamics of a special feature of immigrants, e.g. the impact of gender on immigration phenomena...

• However, it promise the potential to make general predictions and it helps to uncover the interrelationship between different factors that influence migration phenomena.
D. Massey’s “Ethnic residential segregation model” (1985) and its limits


- West Hollywood, research into Post-Soviet immigrants (N=94, seniors) of Jewish origin, representative plus quota sampling, problems of their integration in West Hollywood (CA) …

- These immigrants cannot overcome their “separatism” – as, indeed, the ethnic residential segregation model dictates them … It is an inevitable consequence of their fate – heritage, age and social position.

- No economic, cultural and spatial assimilation is possible … they stay together in one place …
Thank you for your attention