

MIGRATION AS A CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH: A PANEL DATA ANALYSIS OF EASTERN EUROPEAN ECONOMIES (2014-2023)

Răzvan Bujor*

Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania.

Abstract

Migration has become one of the defining forces shaping the economic and social landscape of Europe. While much of the literature has concentrated on Western countries as primary destinations, the role of Central and Eastern Europe as both sending and increasingly receiving regions remains underexplored. This study investigates the impact of migration on economic development in four Eastern European countries—Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, and Hungary—over the period 2014–2023. Using panel data analysis, the research examines the relationship between net migration flows, GDP per capita, unemployment, employment rates, and population dynamics. The results indicate that migration plays a significant role in shaping labour market conditions and contributes to economic growth, particularly through its strong correlation with GDP per capita and employment rates. By applying a fixed-effects panel regression model, the study provides robust evidence on the bidirectional link between migration and economic performance. The findings highlight the structural transformations of these economies and underline the importance of migration in addressing demographic decline and labour shortages. This research contributes to the academic debate by offering updated empirical evidence and by filling the gap in the literature regarding the Eastern European migration-growth nexus.

Keywords: Economic Growth, Migration, GDP, Eastern Europe, Net Migration, Labour Market

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* Corresponding author, Bujor Răzvan - razvanbujor94@gmail.com