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SEGMENTATION OF RETURNING MIGRANTS

The article deals with the segmentation of returning migrants in Bulgaria. It conceptualizes the complexity of remigration and its trajectories, causes, forms and consequences. Emphasis is placed on the variability, heterogeneity and fluidity of migration processes. Return is analyzed in the overall context of mobility as its moment or final stage. Priority is given to the subjective meaning and individual interpretations of migrants about the causes and results of their mobility. Structural factors are analyzed through the prism of their individual perception transforming them into prerequisites and motives of migratory behavior. Comparisons were made between the motives for departure and return as components of the overall migration movement. Diverse economic and non-economic motives for return are identified. Migration spatial and temporal trajectories of returning migrants, as well as their professional and educational segmentation, have been traced.

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Contemporary migration patterns are becoming more complex and diverse. The traditional migration trajectory between "sending" and "receiving" countries is being differentiated and transformed into various forms of multi-directional and permanent mobility. Conceptualizing migration as one-way and final tends to underestimate the phenomenon of "return" (Gmelch, 1980). Compared to earlier periods, today, many migrants prefer short-term or circular mobility, making "return" an important element of their migratory behavior (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2008). According to Krasteva, migration and mobility are not antipodes, but different modalities of the same phenomenon that exemplify increased diversification and intensification in the interferences between them (Krasteva, 2014). As such, this theoretical perspective allows for the extrapolation of more nuanced and adequate explanations over the traditional migratory movements. Moreover, it grants a perspective on the heterogeneous and fluid trajectories of contemporary international mobilities (the "leaving-returning-new departure" model).

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The heterogeneity of migratory movements, profiles and types of migrants impose their imprint on the segmentation of returning migrants. Fundamental and applied research focused on remigration is relatively rare. The scientific project under which this article is prepared³ attempts to partially fill in this deficit regarding permanent or temporary returning migrants to Bulgaria.

Return Migrants: Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

Basic Definitions

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines migration as “the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State ... it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification”.⁴ IOM applies a working definition of return migration⁵ as „the relocation of a person to his/her country of origin or permanent residence, usually after having spent at least one year in another country. This return may be voluntary or involuntary. Return also includes voluntary repatriation” (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2004). As in Bulgarian language the term “return” is associated with finality, we should mention that for the purposes of this article we use it as a component of the migration cycle that is not necessarily a final stage. Return is a process of remigration to the country of origin, but for some migrants this is just another intermediate or temporary destination in the migratory movement. For others, it can also be a final stage in their return migration. A widespread definition of the category of the "returning migrant" and also used for the purposes of this project, is any “person who returns to his/her country of origin, in the course of the last ten years, after having been an international migrant (whether short-term or long-term)...the stay in the country of return must be longer than three months. The return could be permanent or temporary”.⁶ It could also be an expression of individual decision or structured by unexpected circumstances.

Methodological Approach

As the methodological approaches applied to the explanation and the understanding of migratory processes vary greatly across disciplines and theoretical lenses, we will not conduct thorough analysis here. Instead, we will consider some main principal alternatives and differentiations in the multi-layered and heterogeneous theoretical continuum, outlining the characteristics and limitations of the approach, accepted by the authors of the present

³ “Return Migrants: Segmentation and Stratification of Economic Mobility”, sponsored by National Science Fund, Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Bulgaria, Competition for financial support of fundamental research – 2016.

⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM) <<https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>>, visited on 11.5.2018.

⁵ The concepts „return migration“, “remigration“, “reverse migration“ will be used as synonyms.

⁶ Return Migration and Development Platform. <<http://rsc.eui.eu/RDP/glossary-2/>>, visited on 11.5.2018.

article. Several key dilemmas in the theoretical conceptualization of migratory movements can be highlighted:

First, the explanatory models vary from the pole of structuralist theories focusing on the objective economic, political and socio-cultural factors that determine the migrants' behavior to the pole of theorizing migrants as active and rational actors who themselves construct and implement their migration projects.

Second, contemporary theorizing of migration takes place at different scales and units of analysis (micro, meso and macro) and in the context of many scientific disciplines - economics, sociology, politics, law, anthropology, demography, statistics among others.⁷ For example, the macro perspective is taken by both some influential economic conceptualizations, such as the neoclassical economic theory (Borjas), the "world-system" model (Wallerstein) or the "dual labour market" (Piore), but also by theories in the field of political science that analyze migration through the prism of the role of the state and interstate relations in the emergence, regulation and control of migratory movements.

The meso-level is "inhabited" for example by the theories of the new migration economy (Stark, Bloom), social networks (Castells, Haasp Massey), global and open cities (Sassen, Clark) that explore the influence of the family, community, settlement, ethnic and religious background of migration processes. The micro-level is a territory primarily occupied by economic conceptualizations that analyse the migratory behavior of the rational individual, his or her human capital, and the maximization of possible benefits calculated on the basis of outward migration (Chiswick). The subjective understanding of migratory experiences is a subject of some sociological and anthropological interpretations as well.

Third, not only theoretical but also political and ideological tensions are identified between two main methodological paradigms. Firstly, that would be the thematization of migration in the context of the "nation-state" as a fundamental locus for economic, political, social and cultural processes, and its institutions, organizational structures and policies as key factors that create, reproduce, regulate and prevent external threats (methodological nationalism). Secondly, that would be transnationalism as a field of study that conceptualizes various economic, political, social and cultural practices, institutions, organizations, social movements and networks that cannot be explained and regulated within the "nation-state" (e.g. international and interstate institutions and political parties, transnational corporations and non-governmental organizations, supranational social, religious and cultural movements and practices, social networks and financial transfers between sending and receiving countries, global climate change, and many others).

Fourth, an important theoretical distinction is drawn between voluntary and forced migrations, the causes of which are qualitatively different and cannot be analyzed and explained in the same way. Forced migration is mainly conceived through the figure of the refugee, seeking asylum in other countries due to natural disasters, wars and hostilities,

⁷ For a detailed overview of the theoretical conceptualization of migration and its causes, see, for example: Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaui, Pellegrino, Taylor, 1993, p. 431-466; Cassarino, 2004, p. 253-279; Krasteva, 2014; Mintchev, Markova, Misheva, Zareva, Balkanska, Boshnakov, Kalchev, 2012.

political persecution, ethnic and religious persecution in the country of origin. Refugees are distinguished from economic migrants and are being treated differently by national migration policies but also framed differentially according to different ideological discourses.

Fifth, stressing the variability, fluidity, heterogeneity and intertwining of migration processes contrasts with traditional theoretical models that are for the most part focused on their one-sidedness, finality, and political control.

The variety of theoretical explanations of migratory movements, and in particular of return, corresponds to their complexity, heterogeneity and dynamic nature.

This necessitates that each attempt to interpret the phenomenon of migration is preceded by the careful outline of the author's specific approach. Thus, we can delineate the following characteristics and limitations for the present article:

1. The subject of our research lies mostly within the boundaries of the economic mobility of Bulgarian citizens (labour, entrepreneurial, educational, seasonal). At the same time, attention is paid to non-economic reasons for return, even when the outward movement was economically determined.
2. Priority is given to the migrant's individual perspective. In particular, the investigation is focused upon the returnees' own interpretations of the reasons behind migrating and the subjective meaning of their migratory movements. Structural factors are analyzed through the prism of individual reflection, which in turn transforms it into prerequisites and motives behind the migratory behavior.
3. The theoretical framework of the project follows mainly perspectives drawn from the fields of sociology and economics. The emphasis is placed mainly on the micro and meso levels of analysis.
4. An attempt was made to capture the diversity, fluidity, overlapping and volatility of the causes of migratory movements and the motives for return.
5. The return is looked upon in the overall context of mobility either as a split moment within it, or as a final point.

In the framework of the abovementioned limitations and perspectives, the article discusses the following main themes:

First, the subjective meanings and temporal perspectives of return – either permanent or temporary, its voluntary nature or conditioned by objective circumstances character in the context of the initial plans and intentions of the migrants.

Second, continuity, dynamics and comparison between departure and return motives as components of the overall migration movement.

Third, the content of the diverse economic and non-economic motives behind the return decision.

Fourth, spatial and temporal trajectories of returning migrants.

Fifth, professional, educational and qualification segmentation of returning migrants.

Segmentation Criteria and Typologies of Return Migrants

The heterogeneity and multilayeredness of migration and its trajectories, causes, forms and consequences are conceptualized through the category of "segmentation of returning migrants". Segmentation is based on multiple criteria and results in different typologies of returning migrants. Among them, we can highlight the following:

First, spatial and temporal migration trajectories. Returning migrants differ depending on the specificities of the territorial movements (initial destinations, subsequent migratory movements, country of final destination, circular mobility trajectories) and time parameters (period of initial migration, migration duration, stay in the last destination country, time of return, periodicity of circular movements).

Second, migrants are distinguished according to the reasons for migratory movements and motivational structures for the initial migration, subsequent movements, sustained return, or circular mobility.

Third, according to the period before initiating the outward movement, the period of stay abroad and upon return the migrants are being segmented on the basis of several features that describe their economic and social profile:

- (a) economic activity;
- (b) sector/branch of employment;
- (c) education and professional qualification;
- (d) occupation;
- (e) economic status/income.

A distinction is also made on the basis of certain migrant labour categories such as a contract or non-contract based employment, self-employed, performing jobs requiring a lower qualification than previously obtained and others.

Fourth, the return could have a different time horizon – permanent or temporary, where some specific forms of continuous mobility (seasonal migration, temporary cross-border employment, work in several countries, etc.) are taken into account.

Fifth, specific groups are identified according to the continuum between voluntary and forced return. The emergence of specific circumstances leading to return deserves mentioning here.

Research Design and Methods

The segmentation of returning migrants is clustered around data that was obtained primarily from a nationally representative survey among returning migrants within the framework of the research project "Returning Migrants: Segmentation and Stratification of

Economic Mobility". The target group of the survey covers individuals who meet two conditions simultaneously:

Firstly, adult Bulgarian citizens (18+) who have worked at least once abroad for a minimum period of three months during the last 10 years (2008-2017). This category includes:

- Individuals who have worked abroad for a period of more than 3 months (legally or illegally, permanently or seasonally, employed or self-employed, developing their own business). As "migrants" are considered also those who perform internal mobility in the countries of the European Union.
- Persons residing outside Bulgaria for the purpose of caring for their relatives abroad, attending children of relatives or acquaintances, escorting family members and other similar activities are perceived as work, albeit without payment.

Those staying abroad for more than three months for leisure, tourism, vacation, casual meeting with relatives do not belong to the target group.

Secondly, persons whose return in Bulgaria is final or persons who periodically return to the country for reasons related to their work or education (e.g. seasonal work, secondment in Bulgaria by the company in which they work abroad, enhancing their education or qualifications and other similar reasons). The target group does not include individuals returning for a short time period to Bulgaria such as holidays, family meetings, medical treatment and alike if these are the sole reasons for their return and are not somehow connected to their work, education and/or training.

The nationally representative survey among returning migrants was conducted in nine regions of the country: Sofia-city, Plovdiv, Varna, Pleven, Stara Zagora, Dobrich, Kardzhali, Yambol and Montana located in all administrative regions (NUTS2) and in different types of settlements (capital, town, small town, village). The number of people surveyed in each of the nine areas is proportional to the number of their adult population.

The sample of the study is constructed in two steps: first, random route selection of respondents starting from initial random address; second, a variant of the "snowball" sampling, in which the respondents provide the interviewer with contacts to persons from the target group. The selection of potential respondents from the target population was carried out according to predetermined quotas of gender, age, education and ethnic self-determination. Each respondent must comply with the following requirements: to meet the criteria of the target group and the quota; be an adult Bulgarian citizen; be the only one surveyed in the household.

The planned sample size was 600 individuals and the completed sample includes 604 respondents distributed in 60 units with 10 persons interviewed in each. In order to achieve the planned interviews, 1218 contacts have been implemented by applying both respondents selection methods. The average number of people interviewed by an interviewer was 13.42. The data collection method was a face-to-face interview at the respondent's home. The fieldwork was completed in the period October 28 – November 20, 2017. The survey was carried out by 45 experienced interviewers.

Annexe 1 presents the main parameters of the field work and the completed sample. Thematic areas and content of the indicators used in the survey to analyze the segmentation of returning migrants are summarized in Appendix 2.

1. Sustainability and Subjective Meaning of Return

It is appropriate to interpret remigration in the context of the overall life and migration history of returnees. Accordingly, several typical categories of migrants are distinguished, for which return has different meanings and is ambiguously assessed – such as success, failure or temporary condition. This subjective interpretation also affects the desire to remain within the country of origin or to remigrate temporarily or permanently.

Depending on the sustainability of return, several categories of migrants are usually identified:

- (a) migrants permanently returned to the country of origin with the idea of remaining there for the rest of their lives;
- (b) temporarily "returning" migrants who are planning to leave again;
- c) "circular migrants", who alternate between periods of stay abroad and remaining home.

Data has also been collected for the category of short-term mobile Bulgarian citizens whose stay abroad is between 3 and 12 months. It should be noted that there are specific cases of seasonal returns related to the nature of work in the agricultural, tourism, construction and other sectors (Mintchev, Boshnakov, Richter, Ruspini, 2017, pp. 25-60).

According to the migrants' initial intentions, several categories are distinguished: (King, 2000)

- "Migrants with a purpose" who are leaving their home country with the intention to return and who actually return. They have specific plans and return after achieving the goal placed behind their mobility (education, earning a certain amount of money, buying property, performing specific activities/tasks, etc.).
- Migrants with the intention of permanent emigration who nevertheless return. Reasons for remigration could be external and coercive, personal or family, favorable changes in the country of origin or deterioration of the situation in the destination country.
- Migrants who intend to stay abroad temporarily and who do not return (for example, students who remain in the host country or labour migrants who have not planned but have decided to stay permanently in the host country).
- Migrants who are leaving with the intention of not returning.

Empirical evidence confirms the existence of a relation between migrants' initial projects and the time horizon of return, but this relation shall not be read in absolute terms as some considerable discrepancies are registered between departure intentions and actual migratory behavior (Table 1).

Table 1

Initial migration projects and return sustainability (%)

| | Initial intention – permanently | Initial intention – temporarily | No specific intention | Total |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| I would like to stay in Bulgaria | 42.4 | 63.6 | 51.8 | 59.7 |
| I would like to leave again permanently | 36.4 | 7.1 | 20.5 | 12.1 |
| I would like to leave again temporarily | 21.2 | 29.4 | 27.7 | 28.2 |

Based upon the empirical data, several conclusions concerning the returning migrants' dilemma of "staying or going back" can be drawn:

First, returning migrants, who intend to remain permanently in Bulgaria prevail – their share is 59.7%. The share of returning migrants with the intention of remaining permanently in Bulgaria is the highest among those who were initially oriented to temporary emigration – 63.6%. Among those intending to leave forever, this share is by 21.2 percentage points lower (42.4%), and among those who did not have clear migration plans – by 11.8 percentage points lower (51.8%). However, it is noticeable that the original migration projects are subject to reconsideration and do not explicitly define subsequent migratory behavior.

Second, the stay in Bulgaria is only a phase of mobility for 28.2% of returning migrants who intend to leave again, but temporarily and without seeking to settle permanently abroad. The share of returnees who have seasonal employment is 22.7%. Attitudes to new temporary migration remain relatively stable among returning migrants, irrespective of their original projects. Their share ranges between 21.2% for people oriented towards permanent leave and 29.4% – towards temporary migration.

Third, the category of returnees who intend to emigrate permanently is 12.1%. The strongest desire for new and final emigration is registered among returning migrants who, still at the first migration, intend to leave the country permanently (36.4%). The most likely explanatory hypothesis for their return is the failure so far in the implementation of their migration plans or the emergence of specific circumstances that have imposed temporary residence in Bulgaria. For almost a third of the returnees (31.5%), remigration is caused by some objective economic, family or personal circumstances (migrant or relatives' disease, care for elderly parents, children or grandchildren, loss of work, termination or expiration of employment contract, expiry of a visa or a legal stay permit, etc.).

Initial intentions for a temporary stay abroad have had more women (79.2%) than men (71.8%). The largest share of respondents (18.8%), who initially left without specific plans was among the age group 18-29, followed by 30-39 years old – 16.8%. The intentions of the respondents in the age bracket of 50-59 were most straightforward – 80.4% of them left the country temporarily, and 13.1% thought of staying abroad forever. Nearly every fifth (18%) of the people with primary education intended to remain permanently abroad. This share is twice lower among the better-educated ones – 10% for people with secondary education and 7.5% for those with a higher one.

Future intentions for emigration are not gender specific. Among the higher age groups the willingness to remain in Bulgaria increases. Over 70% of people over 50 have no plans to leave the country again. Those who wish to migrate or to stay in Bulgaria among the 30- and 40-year-olds have equal shares of 50%. The two age groups differ along their intentions to emigrate – 30-year-olds are more likely to leave permanently (16%) than 40-year-olds (10.4%). The highest share of those who are willing to stay in Bulgaria is registered among returnees with primary education – 67.5%. To leave abroad temporarily would prefer 27% of the respondents with higher education and 30% – with secondary education. To migrate permanently would choose 14% of the latter group.

The category of "successful migrants" who have had specific plans (education, earning a specific amount of money, buying property, performing a specific activity/task, etc.) and return after their goals completion is markedly visible. The motivation for return "I accomplished this, which is why I left" states 40.7% of the remigrants (as the first reason – 21.2%, second – 12.9% and third – 6.6%). Almost three-quarters of the surveyed returnees (74.5%) respond positively to the question: "Did you manage to achieve the goals behind your decision to migrate?".

Success in achieving the goals of migration is reported by more women (77.7%). Men are more dissatisfied with the achievements abroad – 28.2% say they have not achieved what they have left for. The most dissatisfied with their residence abroad are 30-year-olds – 31.3% claim they have failed to meet the goals that motivated their departure. Most satisfied are those over 60 years of age – 83.7% declare accomplishment of their plans, followed by 40-year-olds, with the share of 75.6%. The highest the level of education, the more satisfaction with the achieved goals is reported. Returnees with primary education are the most unsatisfied – 32.5% of them have failed to achieve their initial goals. Of those with higher education, 79.4% declare success in achieving their goals.

The data reaffirms the existence of a significant group of migrants who are not oriented towards an irrevocable exit from the country, but instrumentalize migration as a means of achieving certain goals ("migrants with a purpose", according to the King's above-mentioned typology). They largely represent the contingent of migrants who are likely to return to Bulgaria after accomplishing upward social and economic mobility.

2. Causes of Migration and Motivational Structures of Returning Migrants

The understanding of objective and subjective factors in migratory movements is central to the theoretical interpretations and empirical studies of migration. The causes and motives for going abroad and return vary and range from individual and family reasons to macroeconomic and political ones that are related to the situation in the host and home countries. Often, we can observe that the abovementioned are even intertwined. King distinguishes four main types of reasons for return:

1. Economic reasons. They relate to the possibility of receiving higher incomes, finding a better job, opportunities for professional realization, worsening of the economic

situation in the host country, starting a business and/or investing in the country of origin and others.

2. Political reasons that also examine a wide range of possibilities: discriminatory attitude towards migrants and violations of their rights, implementation of active national return policies, voluntary return for participation in the political life, forced expulsions, etc.
3. Social reasons are no less diverse: difficulties in adapting and integrating into the host country, homeland nostalgia, involvement in public initiatives and projects, desire to contribute to the country, etc.
4. Family reasons related to the cycle of individual and family life and relationships such as: care for elderly or sick parents; search for partner and/or marriage; desire to raise the children at home and/or receiving education in their native language, with the help of the parents; return after retirement and others. (King, 2000)

The obtained empirical data support the conclusion that economic reasons are leading to the initial departure, but social and family motives dominate the remigration process.

A summary of the three most important reasons for the initial departure is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Reasons for initial migration (% of all respondents)

| | First place | Second place | Third place | Total |
|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------|
| To join parents and/or relatives | 14.7 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 19.0 |
| To accompany spouse, partner, parents, children | 4.3 | 2.2 | 0.5 | 7.0 |
| Marriage/partnership | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.8 |
| To acquire foreign citizenship for me and my family | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 1.3 |
| To receive the desired education for me | 3.1 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 4.0 |
| To provide better education/future for my children | 2.6 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 6.3 |
| Living in higher standards conditions | 8.8 | 9.4 | 9.6 | 27.8 |
| To get higher payment | 33.1 | 25.5 | 10.4 | 69.0 |
| To find a better job | 10.4 | 16.1 | 11.9 | 38.4 |
| For better professional realization | 2.8 | 6.3 | 5.0 | 14.1 |
| To develop my own business | 0.5 | 0.7 | 1.5 | 2.6 |
| To support my family or other relatives in Bulgaria | 4.1 | 13.7 | 14.1 | 32.0 |
| Business trip | 2.5 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 4.0 |
| Felt discriminated in Bulgaria | 0.2 | 0.7 | 2.0 | 2.8 |
| I just do not want to live in Bulgaria anymore (lack of perspectives, unclear regulations, bad public environment, crime, corruption practices, etc.) | 1.8 | 2.6 | 5.3 | 9.8 |
| I was unemployed in Bulgaria | 10.8 | 4.0 | 4.8 | 19.5 |
| No response | 0.0 | 12.3 | 29.3 | 41.6 |

Almost three-quarters of those returning to Bulgaria (73%) point to motives of an economic nature as the main reason behind their initial departure. They are mainly related to the triad

"job-income-living standard": "to get higher payment" (33.1%); "I was unemployed in Bulgaria" (10.8%); "to find a better job" (10.1%); "living in higher standards conditions" (8.8%).

The reasons for emigration are rather complex with 86.7% of the returning migrants pointing to the second motive and 69.7% to the third. Components of the motivational triad "job-income-living standard" dominate categorically among the three main reasons for initial departure – seeking for higher payment (69.0), finding a better job (38.4%) or any kind of job (19.5%), higher living standard (27.8%). Family reasons for migration are second in importance: "to support my family or other relatives in Bulgaria" (32.0%), "to join parents and/or relatives" (19.0%), "to accompany spouse, partner, parents, children" (7.0%), "marriage/partnership" (0.8%). Every tenth has pointed to an education-related motive – "to provide a better education/future to my children" (6.3%) and "to receive the desired education" (4.0%).

There are significant discrepancies between the reasons for return and those for departure (Table 3).

Table 3

Non-economic reasons for return (% of all respondents)

| | First place | Second place | Third place | Total |
|--|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------|
| Affection for the family and my relatives in Bulgaria | 34.9 | 14.4 | 6.5 | 55.8 |
| To care for an elderly or sick relative | 8.3 | 4.3 | 1.3 | 13.9 |
| To continue my education in Bulgaria | 2.0 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 3.1 |
| To raise and/or educate the children | 5.5 | 6.6 | 3.6 | 15.7 |
| To marry in Bulgaria and live here | 2.3 | 2.6 | 0.5 | 5.5 |
| Retirement | 2.5 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 3.8 |
| Inability to legalize the stay in the country of my previous residence | 1.7 | 2.6 | 1.2 | 5.5 |
| Intolerance/discrimination in the country of residence | 1.2 | 2.2 | 1.7 | 5.0 |
| Uncertainty for immigrants in the country of residence | 2.2 | 4.8 | 3.3 | 10.3 |
| Forced expulsion from the country of residence | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.5 |
| Home nostalgia | 4.8 | 10.8 | 9.9 | 25.5 |
| Involvement in political, social life in Bulgaria | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.8 |
| I did not adapt to the foreign country | 3.6 | 6.5 | 6.1 | 16.2 |
| I achieved the goal that I left for | 21.2 | 12.9 | 6.6 | 40.7 |
| I just do not want to live abroad anymore | 3.1 | 5.0 | 7.8 | 15.9 |
| Other | 6.6 | 2.8 | 1.3 | 10.8 |
| No response | 0.0 | 22.2 | 48.8 | 71.0 |

Family motives are among the three most important reasons for remigration: "affection for the family and my relatives in Bulgaria" (55.9%), "to raise and/or educate the children" (15.7%), "to care for an elderly or sick relative" (13.9%), "to marry in Bulgaria and live here" (5.5%), "retirement" (3.8%).

The role of social motives is also important both in terms of the growing attractiveness of the home country (pull factors) but also the role of push factors in the host country. Among the pull factors to Bulgaria, the most significant is the "home nostalgia" (25.5%) and among the push factors – the difficult adaptation in the host country (16.2%) and the reluctance to live abroad (15.9%). They are supplemented by reasons such as uncertainty for immigrants in the country of residence (10.3%), inability to legalize stay in the host country (5.5%), intolerance/ discrimination in the country of residence (5.5%).

Economic reasons for return play a less significant role as compared to their importance for the initial departure (Table 4). About 40% of respondents do not mention an economic motive for remigration. Among the economically motivated returnees, the share of the seasonal worker's group is almost one third (32.0%). Almost equal is the share (about 40% of the respondents) of returnees facing problems in the host country, and those who see better economic opportunities in Bulgaria.

The "negative" economic motivation associated with push factors in the host country is due to reasons such as: "it is difficult to find legal employment (with official contract and insurance) in the country of residence" (13.4%), "I lost my job/I was not able to find a job in the host country" (12.7%), "not worth it – higher incomes but higher spending in the country of residence" (10.8%), "I paid high taxes and social security contributions in the country of residence" (2.8%).

Table 4

Economic reasons for return (% of all respondents)

| | First place | Second place | Third place | Total |
|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| I expect living conditions in Bulgaria to improve | 8.3 | 5.6 | 5.0 | 18.9 |
| It was not worth it (higher incomes but higher spending in the country of residence) | 4.5 | 4.3 | 2.0 | 10.8 |
| I paid high taxes and social security contributions in the country of residence | 0.7 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 2.8 |
| I lost my job/I was not able to find a job in the host country | 6.5 | 4.5 | 1.8 | 12.7 |
| It is difficult to find legal employment (with official contract and insurance) in the country of residence | 4.5 | 7.0 | 2.0 | 13.4 |
| Opportunities for better job/business in Bulgaria | 2.5 | 2.8 | 1.8 | 7.1 |
| Professional realization in Bulgaria | 2.8 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 8.6 |
| To develop my own business here/to invest here | 2.5 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 5.3 |
| I am send on business trip here | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| Restoration/acquisition of property in Bulgaria | 1.7 | 1.7 | 0.3 | 3.6 |
| Deterioration of economic situation in the country of residence | 2.3 | 3.8 | 2.0 | 8.1 |
| My job was seasonal/temporary | 22.7 | 5.3 | 4.0 | 32.0 |
| Another economic reason | 0.7 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 2.3 |
| I did not come back for economic reason | 40.1 | 1.8 | 3.5 | 45.4 |
| No response | 0.0 | 56.6 | 71.7 | 128.3 |

The economic attractiveness of Bulgaria is manifested in optimistic attitudes and several groups of positive motives for return: "I expect living conditions in Bulgaria to improve"

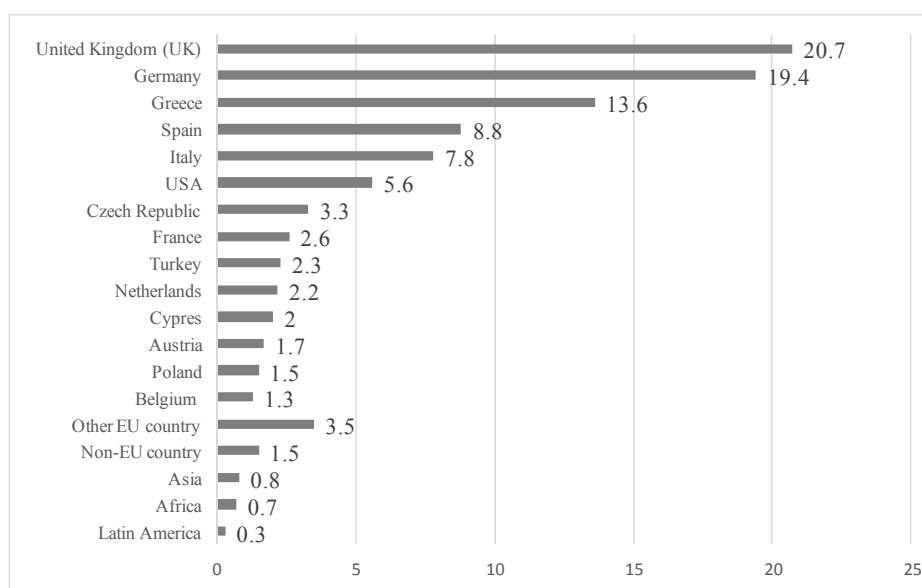
(18.9%), professional realization in Bulgaria" (8.6%), "opportunities for better job/business in Bulgaria" (7.1%), "to develop my own business here/to invest here" (5.3%).

3. Migration trajectories of returning migrants

The results of the survey show that for the period of interest (2008-2017, inclusive), 90% of the respondents have stayed in one country outside Bulgaria before returning. The remaining 10% have resided in two or more countries.

The destination countries, those in which the respondents have migrated to work, are in most part EU member states (Figure 1). This is mainly due to the fact that Bulgaria has been part of the EU since 1 January 2007 and as a consequence has been integrated into the single European labour market. In the last 10 years, 20.7% of all respondents have been stayed in the UK whereas 19.4% have resided in Germany, all of them for work purposes. The Mediterranean or South European countries (Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal and Cyprus) are a destination for 32.3% of all those taking part in the survey. The United States and Canada are the "beyond the continent" destinations for only 5.6% of respondents.⁸

Figure 1
Countries in which migrants resided for more than 3 months for work purposes in the last 10 years (%)



⁸ The preferred destination countries that are registered in previous migration studies are proven as factual destination countries, from which migrants return after a certain period of time. See for example Minchev, 2016, pp. 91-115.

Mediterranean countries (24.8%), Germany (23.8%), Great Britain (20.3%) emerge as an attractive destinations for men, whereas 41.2% of all women have stayed in one of the Mediterranean countries. About one-third of those in the 18-39 age range have chosen the United Kingdom. Nearly two-thirds (62.2%) of the returnees from the United States and Canada have a tertiary education. This share is twice as low for those who have returned from the UK (29.6%).

The returning migrants from the US and Canada differ from those from Western Europe when it comes to initial emigration plans – 21.6% of them held intentions for permanent migration, 18.9% made no concrete plans, and 59.5% went abroad temporarily. When it comes to those returning from Western Europe, 77.1% envisioned a temporary stay and only 9.6% made no plans for return.

Those who have returned from the United States and Canada are the most satisfied with their migration experience – 89.2% claim to have successfully achieved their pre-conceived plans. In comparison, approximately three-quarters (73.5%) of the return migrants from Western Europe declare the same degree of satisfaction. The most dissatisfied are the ones who have returned from the UK – 34.4%. The largest share of the UK returnees have a desire to go abroad again – 32% have temporary plans and 17.6% desire more permanent settlement.

More than half of all respondents have stayed abroad for up to a year, out of which 27.2% for a period of four to six months. 13.1% of respondents have stayed outside of the country for up to two years and only 6.5% – for up to three years. Those Bulgarians who have lived and worked abroad for over five years are 16.4% of all respondents; they have all left the country before 2008.

The average duration of stay abroad of all returnees is about 2.5 years. The longest average duration of stay is observed in Russia and Turkey (about 10 years). The average duration of stay for work purposes in the last 10 years in the Mediterranean countries and beyond the continent (USA and Canada) is around four years.

In Great Britain and Germany – the most desirable destinations for Bulgarian emigrants in the last 10 years – the average duration of stay and work there is about two years (Table 5).

Table 5

Average duration of stay abroad in the last 10 years (in months)

| Country | Months |
|---|-------------|
| Great Britain | 20.9 |
| Germany | 23.8 |
| Mediterranean countries | 43.6 |
| Other countries in EU | 17.8 |
| Russia, Turkey | 112.8 |
| USA, Canada | 48.2 |
| Other continents (Asia, Africa, Latin America) | 65.0 |
| <i>Average duration of stay abroad of all returnees</i> | <i>33.4</i> |

The last return to Bulgaria for a large number of respondents has occurred over the last three years – 11.8% have returned in 2015, 19% – in 2016, 25.5% – in 2017. For the period 2008-2014 on average around 6% of the respondents returned to Bulgaria every year. About 65% of those who returned in the period 2014-2016 are eager to stay in Bulgaria. Those who have returned in 2017 have the greatest desire to leave again – 48.7% temporarily and 14.3% permanently.

The preference for certain destinations over others, as well as the planned length of stay, can be better explained in relation to return migrants' employment distribution according to economic sectors.

4. Professional and educational qualification segmentation of return migrants

The segmentation of return migrants in terms of employment, occupation and education is also very diversified (Table 6). When it comes to the economic sectors of employment in the destination country, almost 14% of all respondents were employed in agriculture, 15% in construction and 11% in tourism. One-third of the women were employed in various jobs in housekeeping and social care. Another one-third of them were employed in agriculture and tourism. Almost one in ten women (8.8%) provided unpaid care for children or grandchildren. Men were employed mostly in construction (27.9%), agriculture (13.9%), manufacturing (10.9%), transport and warehouse (10.9%) sectors.

Table 6
Employment sectors of returning migrants in the destination countries by sex (%)

| Sector | Men | Women | Total |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| Agriculture | 13.9 | 15.0 | 14.4 |
| Construction | 27.9 | 0.4 | 15.4 |
| Tourism, hotels, bars, restaurants | 8.5 | 15.0 | 11.4 |
| Manufacturing | 10.9 | 3.3 | 7.5 |
| Transport, warehousing | 10.9 | 1.1 | 6.5 |
| Trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles | 6.4 | 4.0 | 5.3 |
| Childcare, healthcare, housekeeping | 0.3 | 30.7 | 14.1 |
| Care for family members | 0.6 | 8.8 | 4.3 |
| Other | 17.9 | 15.1 | 16.8 |
| Unemployed | 1.8 | 6.6 | 4.0 |
| No response | 0.9 | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

One-third of those who returned from the UK worked in agriculture, 13.6% in tourism and 12% in construction. In Germany, most of the respondents were employed in construction – 32.5%. In the Mediterranean countries most provided paid care work for children, elderly and sick (28.7%), or worked in the agriculture (18.5%) and tourism sectors (13.3%). In the rest of Western Europe, returning migrants worked mainly in construction (23%) and manufacturing (13.5%).

One fifth (21.6%) of the returnees from the United States and Canada worked in the tourism sector and about 5% in the field of information, telecommunication, financial and insurance services, professional and scientific research. The share of return migrants from USA and Canada who have cared for their own children or grandchildren (13.5%) is higher than the one of European returnees (3.6%) (Table 7).

Table 7
Employment sectors of returning migrants by country of residence (%)

| Sector | Great Britain | Germany | The Mediterranean | Western Europe | USA, Canada | Total |
|---|---------------|---------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Agriculture | 29.6 | 5.1 | 18.5 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 14.4 |
| Construction | 12.0 | 32.5 | 7.2 | 22.9 | 0.0 | 15.4 |
| Tourism, hotels, bars, restaurants | 13.6 | 9.4 | 13.3 | 6.3 | 21.6 | 11.4 |
| Manufacturing | 6.4 | 6.8 | 6.2 | 13.5 | 0.0 | 7.5 |
| Transport, warehousing | 4.8 | 6.8 | 6.7 | 7.3 | 8.1 | 6.5 |
| Trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles | 8.0 | 6.0 | 3.6 | 3.1 | 5.4 | 5.3 |
| Childcare, healthcare, housekeeping | 8.0 | 6.8 | 28.7 | 4.2 | 8.1 | 14.1 |
| Care for family members | 3.2 | 4.3 | 3.1 | 6.3 | 13.5 | 4.3 |
| Other | 10.4 | 16.3 | 11.2 | 23.9 | 35.1 | 16.8 |
| Unemployed | 2.4 | 6.0 | 1.5 | 3.1 | 8.1 | 4.0 |
| No response | 1.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

The educational profile of the returning migrants is generally as follows: 2.1% have no education; 17.2% have primary education; 18.5% have secondary general and 35.4% - secondary vocational education; college graduates are 3.3%; with Bachelor's and Master's degrees are respectively 10.9% and 11.1%, and 1.2% hold a PhD. In the period between their initial departure and final return, 4.5% of the respondents have obtained a higher degree.

More than half of the respondents believe that their qualifications and skills correspond to the work they have done abroad. As insufficiently qualified have felt 12.7% whereas 25.8% consider themselves more qualified for the work they have been doing. Almost half of those who have provided care for children, sick or elderly people assess themselves as overqualified for the work they have been doing (49.4%). Over one third (34.8%) of those working in tourism and agriculture believe to possess higher qualification than the one required in those sectors.

At the same time over half of all respondents (56.1%) declare that the wage they received was lower than that of local people in the same position.⁹ Only 11.6% believe to have been better paid than the locals (Table 8).

⁹ The persistence of feeling lower pay compared to that of the locals for the same position is impressive. Such share is pointed out also in Zareva, 2016, p. 38.

Table 8
Comparison between wages of returning migrants and local people at the same employment sector and position in the country of residence (%)

| | Agriculture | Manufacturing | Construction | Trade and repairs | Tourism | Transport | Childcare and social care | Total |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|---------|-----------|---------------------------|-------|
| Lower | 73.6 | 51.1 | 69.9 | 59.4 | 49.3 | 59.0 | 65.9 | 56.1 |
| Same | 13.8 | 28.9 | 15.1 | 18.8 | 29.0 | 25.6 | 14.1 | 19.2 |
| Higher | 4.6 | 11.1 | 9.7 | 18.8 | 18.8 | 12.8 | 10.6 | 11.6 |
| Did not work | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.4 | 8.1 |
| DK/NR | 8.0 | 8.9 | 5.4 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 7.1 | 5.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

The feeling of lower pay compared to that of the locals for the same position is shared by 73.6% of those who have worked in agriculture and 70% of those in construction. Around one-third of those who have worked in manufacturing and tourism claim that there has been no differentiation in the payment received by locals and foreigners. One in five of those working in trade of tourism sectors believes to have received a payment higher than that of the locals. Most of the surveyed (72.8%) were in full-time employment with only 14.6% in part-time. Two thirds (62.9%) of the returning migrants declare that they had a labour contract with their employer.

Conclusion

On the basis of the data obtained, several general conclusions can be drawn regarding the segmentation of returning migrants:

Firstly, the complexity, multi-dimensionality, and dynamics of the processes of re-migration in Bulgaria are clearly visible. Their heterogeneity and fluctuations are reflected in the various trajectories, causes, shapes, consequences and subjective perception of international mobility.

Secondly, return increasingly becomes only a moment or phase of the migratory movements that can not be interpreted as one-way or final. At the same time, although many migrants prefer short-term, circular or temporary mobility, the majority of surveyed returnees express a desire for remaining permanently in Bulgaria.

Thirdly, almost three-quarters of the returning migrants perceive themselves as having succeeded in achieving the goals that motivated their departure. This fact, not only supports the argument for the instrumental and non-final nature of emigration for a significant number of returning migrants, but also reveals the positive personal meaning of the undertaken mobility.

Fourthly, there are significant differences in motivation when it comes to initial migration and return. The main reasons for the initial departure are mostly of an economic character

and are closely related to the motivational set "jobs – income – living standard". Among the reasons for return, the family motivations are the most important – affection for the family in Bulgaria, desire to be with children and participate in their raising and education, care duties towards older or sick relatives and others. The social and emotional motives are also relevant, both in terms of pull factors (mainly defined as "nostalgia") and of push factors in the host country (such as difficulties in adaptation and the reluctance to live abroad).

The intensity of re-migration has increased in recent years, presenting new opportunities, but also problems. The development and implementation of adequate and effective policies for return and reintegration into the public, economic and political life of returnees is an important and topical challenge for the Bulgarian state and society. The benefits of the economic, professional, educational, political and social potential of the returnees stand out as a significant resource for the accelerated development of Bulgaria.

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Appendix 1

Basic parameters of the fieldwork and execution of the sampling outcomes

Contacts made, accomplished and unrealized interviews

| | Number | % of the contacts made |
|--|--------|------------------------|
| CONTACTS MADE | 1218 | |
| ACCOMPLISHED INTERVIEWS | 607 | 49,84 |
| Of them: | | |
| • effective | 604 | 49,59 |
| • cancelled | 3 | 0,25 |
| UNREALIZED INTERVIEWS – IN GENERAL | 611 | 50,16 |
| Of them: | | |
| • do not meet the criteria of the target group | 482 | 39,57 |
| • refusal to participate in the survey | 125 | 10,27 |
| • office, not a home | 4 | 0,32 |

Implementation of the national quota (%)

| Quota attribute | Planned | Realized |
|------------------------------------|---------|----------|
| Sex: | | |
| men | 60.0 | 54.6 |
| women | 40.0 | 45.4 |
| Age: | | |
| 18 - 30 years old | 15.0 | 18.9 |
| 31 - 60 years old | 60.0 | 60.4 |
| over 60 years old | 25.0 | 20.7 |
| Education: | | |
| Primary and lower | 25.0 | 19.3 |
| Secondary (general and vocational) | 50.0 | 53.9 |
| Tertiary (college and higher) | 25.0 | 26.5 |
| Ethnicity: | | |
| Bulgarians | 83,3 | 82,3 |
| Turkish | 8,3 | 8,1 |
| Roma | 8,3 | 8,6 |
| Other | - | 1,0 |

Appendix 2

Segmentation of return migrants; key areas, research topics and indicators

| Key areas | Research topics | Indicators |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Migration trajectories | 1. Temporal parameters of the migration movement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time of first migration • Number of migration movements • Duration of migration • Frequency and periods of return to Bulgaria • Time of the last return to Bulgaria |
| | 2. Spatial parameters of migration movement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial destination country • Migration experience in other host countries • Countries of circular migration and mobility |
| Reasons for migration movements | 1. Reasons for migration movements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic motives for migration • Initial intentions of (non) return • Migration decision-making process • Motives for subsequent migration |
| | 2. Reasons and motivation for return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic reasons • Political reasons • Social reasons • Personal and family reasons |
| Employment and economic status | 1. Employment before, during migration and after return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic activity • Economic sector/branch of employment • Nature of migrants' activity in the destination country (employed with a contract, self-employed, employed without a contract) • Type of employment (legal and illegal employment) |
| | 2. Level and dynamics of economic status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income • Property • Investments made • Savings • Level of consumption • Self-assessment of economic status • Change in income and economic status • Change in economic activity |
| Education, profession, qualification | 1. Education and qualification before, during and after migration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of completed education • Type of education (economic, law, engineering, medical, etc.) • Degree of qualification • Change in education and qualification |
| | 2. Profession | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquired and exercised profession (s) before emigration • Acquired and exercised profession (s) during migration • Occupation after return • Self-assessment of the professional career |
| Characteristics of return | 1. Sustainability of return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final return • Lasting return, but with the possibility of subsequent migration |

| Key areas | Research topics | Indicators |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Socio-demographic profile of return migrants | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return within circular migration • Temporary/seasonal return • Short-term return |
| | 2. Degree of voluntary return | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary return • Forced return |
| | 1. Demographic profile | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex • Age • Ethnicity • Religion • Location/type of settlement |
| | 2. Social profile | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marital status • Number of children up to the age of 16 in household • Unemployed members in the household • Self-assessment of social status |

Appendix 3

Segmentation of returning migrants by country of stay

Destination country for work purposes by age and sex (%)

| | 18-29 years | 30-39 years | 40-49 years | 50-59 years | Over 60 years | Men | Women | Total |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Great Britain | 30.2 | 32.1 | 19.3 | 11.2 | 11.9 | 20.3 | 21.2 | 20.7 |
| Germany | 13.5 | 19.8 | 22.2 | 20.6 | 19.3 | 23.6 | 14.2 | 19.4 |
| Mediterranean countries | 24.0 | 23.7 | 33.3 | 38.3 | 40.7 | 24.8 | 41.2 | 32.3 |
| Other countries in EU | 19.8 | 13.7 | 17.8 | 15.9 | 10.4 | 20.6 | 10.2 | 15.9 |
| Turkey | 0.0 | 2.3 | 0.7 | 2.8 | 5.2 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 2.3 |
| Russia | 0.0 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 0.0 | 1.2 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| USA, Canada | 8.3 | 6.1 | 4.4 | 5.6 | 6.7 | 5.2 | 7.3 | 6.1 |
| Other non-EU countries | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 0.8 |
| Other continents (Asia, Africa, Latin America) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 2.8 | 4.4 | 1.5 | 2.3 | 1.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Destination country for work purposes by intention of stay – temporarily or permanently (%)

| | Temporarily | Permanently | Do not have specific intentions | Total |
|--|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| Великобритания | 20.3 | 16.7 | 26.2 | 20.7 |
| Great Britain | 18.9 | 19.7 | 21.4 | 19.4 |
| Germany | 34.8 | 25.8 | 23.8 | 32.3 |
| Mediterranean countries | 16.5 | 15.2 | 13.1 | 15.9 |
| Other countries in EU | 1.5 | 9.1 | 1.2 | 2.3 |
| Turkey | 0.7 | 0.0 | 1.2 | 0.7 |
| Russia | 4.8 | 12.1 | 8.3 | 6.1 |
| USA, Canada | 1.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Other non-EU countries | 1.3 | 1.5 | 4.8 | 1.8 |
| Other continents (Asia, Africa, Latin America) | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Destination country for work purposes by duration of stay (%)

| | 1-3 months | 4-6 months | 6-12 months | 1-2 years | 2-3 years | 3-5 years | Over 5 years | Total |
|--|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-------|
| Great Britain | 26.7 | 20.7 | 25.0 | 30.4 | 17.9 | 10.3 | 12.1 | 20.7 |
| Germany | 24.4 | 17.7 | 21.7 | 21.5 | 23.1 | 25.9 | 10.1 | 19.4 |
| Mediterranean countries | 26.7 | 30.5 | 25.0 | 22.8 | 30.8 | 37.9 | 51.5 | 32.3 |
| Other countries in EU | 15.6 | 17.7 | 20.8 | 20.3 | 20.5 | 12.1 | 4.0 | 15.9 |
| Turkey | 2.2 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 0.0 | 2.6 | 1.7 | 7.1 | 2.3 |
| Russia | 2.2 | 1.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| USA, Canada | 2.2 | 8.5 | 4.2 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 6.9 | 10.1 | 6.1 |
| Other non-EU countries | 0.0 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Other continents (Asia, Africa, Latin America) | 0.0 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 2.6 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 1.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |