

Migration in EU: Implication to the Regional Integration

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Abstract: This paper aims to address the migrations issues in European Union (EU) and its relation to the continuation of a closer union. Migrations become essential, yet delicate issues on the integration of Europe based on the socio-economic impacts they create. Two important relations will be focused on, first is the relations between migration and the problems of aging population and second is the relations between migration and social tension. This paper concludes that the negative excess of economic achievement on socio-culture will potentially hamper the regional integration.

Keywords: European Union, Migration, Social Tension, Aging Population

Abstrak: Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan isu migrasi di Uni Eropa (UE) dan korelasinya terhadap keberlangsungan hubungan di dalam Uni Eropa. Migrasi menjadi penting, namun tidak demikian dengan dampak atas integrasi Eropa berdasarkan isu sosial ekonomi. Dua hubungan penting yang menjadi fokus di dalam tulisan ini, pertama adalah hubungan antara migrasi dan masalah-masalah dari populasi orang tua dan kedua adalah hubungan antara migrasi dan tekanan sosial. Tulisan ini menyimpulkan bahwa dampak negatif dari pencapaian ekonomi yang berlebihan terhadap sosial-kultural dapat berpotensi menghambat integrasi regional.

Kata Kunci : Uni Eropa, Migrasi, Tekanan Sosial, *Aging Population*.

Background

It is widely understood that the EU creation has been heralded as a breakthrough movement offering new models of regional integration. It too has triggered attentions from international relations scholars on strengths and weaknesses such body inherently harbors. Eu's rigid mechanism has generated a sound institutional performance in its capacity as a supranational entity, but at the same time discourses on its economic integration amongst unequal economic power houses has attracted doubt on its Eurozone model. As consequences, criticism and praises are coming and go with the intentions of copying EU's path of success to challenge its way of business.

Integration is inclusive, an economic

integration will be followed by political and socio-culture integration. It is impossible to halt the influences of one filed to the other as they are highly dependent and interlinked. The spillover effect once pioneered by Ernst B. Haas in explaining the EU journey for an ever closer integration can be adopted to explain the contagion effects of integration on European society.

Migration epitomizes the spillover effects by underscoring the correlation of economic and socio-cultural relations. EU defines migration as "the action by which a person from a non-EU country establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of an EU country for a period that is, or is expected to be, at least twelve months" (EU, 2014). On the other hand, migrant is defined as "a person who leaves from one

country or region to settle in another” (EU, 2014). European integration has increased the mobility of EU Citizens in the EU territory for the purpose of work, travel, and study within the Schengen area.

This paper employs an understanding of the people movement from EU member states to Western EU²¹⁰ member states as its main definition of migration. Furthermore, in seeing the migration outlook, the paper considers two origins of migrants’ home countries. The first one is from Eastern EU²¹¹ and the second one from PIIGS²¹² countries. Few hypotheses are employed; First, migration policies become crucial issues the EU has to deal with. Its economic integration has brought opportunities for movements of goods and labor and in the same way it exposes the idea of multicultural Europe. However, migrations might drag the integration progress down as the movement of labor affects the dynamic of existing socio-cultural norms of host countries. Second, significant alteration on migration policy in the EU will not take place during

the new administration resulted from the 2014 elections. Amidst the Euro crisis, the current pattern suggested that it is unlikely for EU to introduce policies to restrict migrants from less developed countries (such as from Eastern Europe) to more developed countries (Western Europe). This is exacerbated by the fact the EU’s economy still recovers from sovereign debt crisis. Furthermore, migrants play crucial role in generating economic growth, contributing to the employment rate and fulfilling the gap of aging population, therefore such pervasive alteration is highly unlikely to be executed. Third, migrants especially the lower skilled ones from Eastern Europe may alter the demographic in the host countries they reside. Influx of migrants’ populations which are not associated with traditional minorities in their host country may cause social tension and stigmatization instead of promoting multiculturalism of European identity. Therefore, we can argue one of the crucial challenges the EU face on migration relies on the subsequent tension economic places on social relations. It is especially apparent considering the inequality of growth between the Western European and Eastern European member countries.

The paper will be divided into parts; the first part discusses a theoretical background explaining the correlation between migration and its relations with regional integration by looking at the

²¹⁰ In the context of this paper, we define western europe member states (EU-15) as Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. Furthermore we will use only use sample data from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands and Norway provided by Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz) as the rest of the countries's data are either incomplete or unavailable.

²¹¹ In the context of this paper, we define Eastern Europe member states as Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Croatia Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

²¹² Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain.

interweaving of economic achievements and the perception of social identity. The second part explains the economic state of migration by linking the relations amongst the aging population and the needs of economic growth. The third parts discuss the correlation between social implications of migration and their effects to the regional integration process by emphasizing on the existence of socio-cultural tensions and symbolism threat.

Theoretical Framework

Due to its multifacets nature, migrations can be explained using several problem dependents theories. For example, development theory can explain why migration from Eastern European to Western European takes place. Development theory views migration as one important key to development, migration itself is seen as an outcome of underdevelopment, remittances act as a source of income for low-income households and a source of growth and usually increases during time of crisis or when foreign investment drop (Raghuram, 2009). De Haas (2010) argued that remittances can be a more effective instrument to tackle poverty and boosted economic growth than development aids although migration and remittances may not contribute to significant development or economic growth. Migration can be beneficial for both recipient and donor

countries economically, although migration can put pressure on the labour market, this is because migrants adding competition and driving down wages (Lipsmayer and Zhu, 2011). In the economic terms, Europe needs more migrants because the fastest growing sector is the jobs that the residents do not want to take, and immigrants tend to accept lower skilled and lower paid jobs than the local residents (Hix and Noury, 2007). Local unskilled workers are most likely to compete with immigrants than local higher-skilled workers, however there is a likely impact of greater unemployment among lower-skilled workers than lower wages (Hix and Noury, 2007). Beets and Willekens (2007) argued that it is unclear whether an economic crisis will always trigger migration. However there is a tendency for people to migrate if there are not enough jobs in the market. In the context of EU, there is a trend of migration from countries that were affected by 2008 global financial crisis and 2010 European sovereign debt crisis.

The economic dynamic affects the social environment. The migrations phenomenon harbors potential social conflict when put *vis a vis* in relations with society of host countries. Conflicts stem from various sources, mostly are caused by competition over resources and incompatible social norms. It is important to note that the social conflict emerged from migration can be traced back using a

social approach on individual identity. Individual identifies itself into a group and creates certain attachments and build their “owned-feeling” toward that group. Identity is essential for individuals and they are usually very protective towards their identity (McLaren, 2006). However in its development, an individual does not limit itself to be identified with only one identity. Individuals can have several identities and it is possible for individuals to feel as a part of several groupings in which they choose to associate themselves with. Identity can be formed by cultural and linguistic process (McLaren, 2006), and it can later develop in the smallest grouping of family, on sub-national or national level, creating what we call as ethnical and national identity. The existence of groups’ identity could trigger conflicts. This phenomenon is captured in the concept of in-out groups in which hostilities are produced amongst groups because of competition over resources.

With regard to the suitable migrations policies to address the interactions of these each individual identities, Will Kymlicka offers theoretical understanding on ethnocultural minorities and the attitude they perform in their host society. According to Kymlicka (2007), the older approach of ethnocultural minorities have been challenged. Instead of assimilationist laws and homogenizing nation-states, citizenship is replaced by a multicultural model. This is reflected in

state policies where there is a widespread adoption of religious and cultural accommodations for ethnic minorities, or even recognition of language rights for national minorities. This approach also has an international dimension that it is being constantly internationalized, first there is a global politic discourse in multiculturalism promoted by international organizations, NGOs, policy makers, and the second is codification of multiculturalism in certain international *norms*. Kymlicka (2007) stated that in order to mitigate the negative side of migration, policy should be directed to embrace the dissent cultural nature of migrations. To him, a state not only “should not uphold the familiar set of common civil, political, and social rights of citizenship that are protected in all constitutional liberal democracies, but also adopt various group-specific rights or policies that are intended to recognize and accommodate the distinctive identities and aspirations of ethnocultural groups” (pp. 61). The rise of this multicultural model citizenship is apparent on the recognition of different identity: it is now common for an immigrant to express their ethnic identity in public and not as source of shame although it can vary case by case (Kymlicka, 2007).

The social tension created by migration and its implication toward the regional integration project are captured by public opinionist. McLaren (2006) brings a new hypothesis into the study of public

opinion by arguing that the existence of an identity is important in a regional integration. She goes further by proposing what she calls as a “symbolism threat”. The approach stated that people of a certain national identity see the new regional identity as a threat to their groups’ identity. If a society feels the new identity (regional identity) threatening their persisting identity, they will respond negatively, however if society thinks the new identity is harmless to their national identity they are more likely to be open to the integration process (McLaren, 2002). This approach lies in its understanding of national identity and the possible threat to its core by other “forces” that originated from “the other” identity. She concludes by highlighting that conflict of identity is counterproductive to regional integration. Migration in this sense cultivates the possibilities of conflicting identity, in which will hamper the regional integration effort.

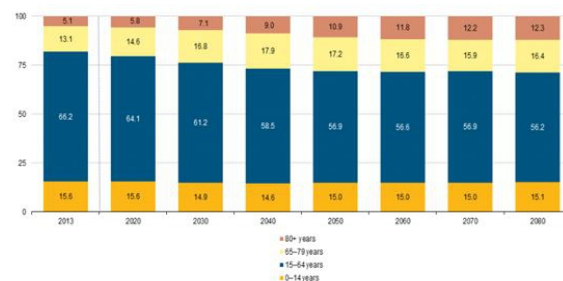
Migration in the EU : Employment and aging population in host countries.

One of the potential problems the European Union has to face in the future is the declining demographic of working age while increasing percentage of age population. Working age is defined as the population aged 15 – 65 years, while old age is defined as the population of 65 years old above (Eurostat, 2014).

The figure 1 shows an inflate of

aging population in 2080 compares to the 2013. As a consequence, the allocation of old age population in 2080 is exceeding both the young age and working age population. A 2% decrease can of working age population is expected to occur between 2013 and 2020. This downturn is expected to accelerate and will reach 10 percent by 2080. The ratio of working age population and old age population in the EU have shifted from 4 : 1 to 2 : 1. As consequence, “the EU would move from having four people of working-age to each person aged over 65 years to about two people of working-age” (European Commission, 2014) as illustrated in figure1.

Figure 1. 2020-2080 Projections



Source: Eurostat, cited in European Commission, 2012.

The projection above shows that a constant shrinkage will take place on the population of working age, this pattern is followed by steady but incremental increases for old age population. This pattern poses a threat for the economic growth. The dynamic outlook of working and old age population does not affect the outlook of young age population. In other

words, a relatively stable number of young population through the 2080 means no support is readily available for “fattening” the composition of working age population. As it cannot fulfill the loss of working age population to the old age population, an alternative way to substitute the gap is by inviting migrants.

The economic consequences of such demographic changes will affect the growth per capita and the expenditure of public policies. The loss of working age population will causes the loss of workforce and in return will decrease per capita income. Furthermore, the increasing of old-age population will put pressure on the public pension expenditure state has. Generally, public pension expenditure is projected to rise “by 1.5 percentage points to nearly 13% of GDP by 2060” (European Commission, 2012). The double burden will hinge upon EU; a waning economic growth that is coupled by the increases of public expenditure.

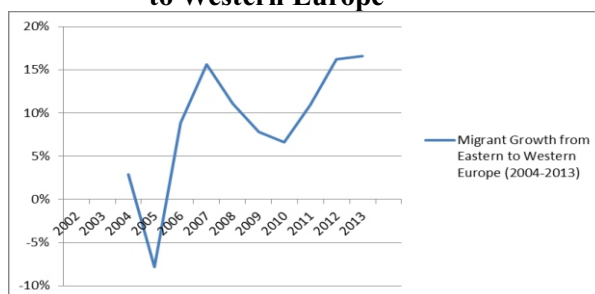
Migration and Social Tension: Complicated Relations

The economic integration of European Union member states has relaxed border control in the region (Lipsmayer and Zhu 2011). This has boosted movement of people who are looking for employment outside their country of origin. Although migration can be beneficial for the migrants, it can also hurt the recipient

states, this is because migrants put more competition on the labor market, adding pressure to the welfare budget.

In 2008, EU was hit by the Global Financial Crisis and only had 0.4% percent economic growth, in 2009, the economy was contracted by 4.5% before bouncing back to 2% in 2010. The economy slowed down to 1,6% in 2011. However from the period of 2012-2013, economic growth has been sluggish, economy was contracted - 0,4% in 2012 and only grew 0.1% in 2013 (World bank, 2014). Meanwhile, migrations from Eastern to Western Europe received its first peak on the year of 2007. The following incremental hike was gained in 2012 after a period of decrease and has stayed relatively stable through last year. During the period of 2002-2013, average growth of migrations from Eastern Europe countries (aggregate) to Western Europe was 8.87%.

Figure 2. Migrant growth from Eastern to Western Europe

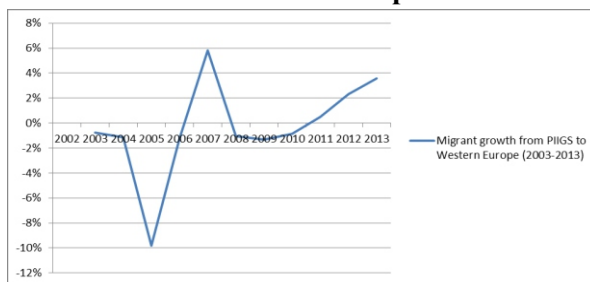


Source: Eurostat, 2014

A similar finding (see figure 3) can be extracted from the migration outlook from the PIIGS countries. The 2010

European sovereign debt crisis has also affected the regional growth and migration flow. The PIIGS posted the largest economic contraction during 2010-2014. Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain received bail out with various conditionalities that forced the countries to privatize many of its private sectors without preparing the social impact. The PIIGS countries, as 2012 still had high double-digit unemployment rate with unemployment was the highest in Spain (25,2%) and Greece (24,2%) (World Bank, 2014).

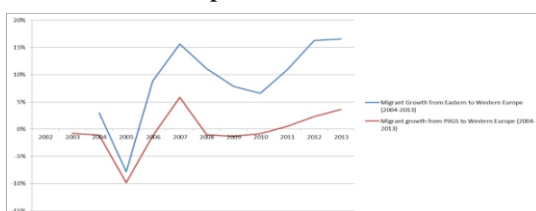
Figure 3. Migrant growth from PIIGS to Western Europe



Source: Eurostat, 2014

However, it is important to note that economic crisis alone was not always responsible for the migration flow in 2009 as migration has been always been high and fluctuated since 2006 for both outlooks.

Figure 4. Comparison of migrations Outlook from Eastern to Western European countries and from PIIGS countries to Western European countries



Source: Eurostat, 2014

The high number of expected migration to Western European countries prove to be a generating factor of social tensions. A research on personal perception amongst European Union member states can add into the discourse of cultural tension or national "supremacy" identity. At the very least the survey can be used as consideration in knowing the fragmented thought the European have about itself. The survey by Pew (2013) revealed that the Germans are seen as the most trustworthy companion. They are perceived as the most arrogant and least compassionate toward the rest. The British does not score well in compassionate attitude, the same as French who is disliked for its arrogant attitude. The underlying problem of the stereotyping can influences perception of European people on a multicultural model of society.

**Tabel 1
Stereotyping in Europe**

View in	Most trust worthy	Least trust worthy	Most Arrogant	Least Arrogant	Most Compassionate	Least Compassionate
Britain	Germany	France	France	Britain	Britain	Germany
France	Germany	Greece	France	France	France	Britain
Germany	Germany	Greece/Italy	France	Germany	Germany	Britain
Italy	Germany	Italy	Germany	Spain	Italy	Germany
Spain	Germany	Italy	Germany	Spain	Spain	Germany
Greece	Greece	Italy	Germany	Greece	Greece	Germany
Poland	Germany	Germany	Germany	Poland	Poland	Germany
Czech. Rep	Germany	Germany	Germany	Slovakia	Czech. Rep	Germany

Lutz, Kritzing, and Skirbekk

Source: Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, 2013

(2006) suggested that younger generation has a generally positive view about the possibility of multicultural society. Older

people, according to the research are more oriented to national identities, while younger people with constant exposure and socialization of European identity will most likely to have multiple "European" identity. We believe that building European identity is a long process. This is because the Europe itself has a long history of war within their neighbors. The first two world wars were caused by the European powers. It is only in the past half century, the region achieved a relative stability.

Meanwhile, contrary arguments can be built under the premises that people from troubled economic zones most likely to seek better opportunities in more developed countries of Western Europeans. A sudden increase of migration of non-historic minorities may not be easily accepted by the local citizens (Kymlicka, 2007). Migrations, thus may create social tension which will deepen the gap between national identity and regional identity. This situation created dilemmas for the western European as migrants can help to fill the gaps in labor market, however it has also created situation where the migrants abuse the welfare system.

There have been discussions in Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Austria to prosecute people who abuse the welfare system (Deutsch Welle, 2014). Furthermore, social tension is reflected on the rise of Eurosceptic parties in European Parliament, most notably is the Europe of

Freedom and Direct Democracy party (EFDD) who won 48 of 751 European Parliaments. EFDD's charter stated that there are no such thing such as single European people and the group opposes further European integration (EFD group, 2014).

Conclusion: National Identity and Threat to Further Integration

Migration from less developed European countries to more developed countries is economically beneficial for both sides. Migrants in host countries could help to fulfill the aging gap of employment, and could take lower-skilled jobs that are reluctant to be taken by the local residents. The home countries benefited as migrants sending remittances to their family household and increasing economic growth indirectly. However, the influx of migrants has created social problems such as abuse of welfare system, complaints from local low-skilled workers and competition over resources.

The dynamic relations between migrants and the possible clashes of identities give birth to the emergence of symbolism threat that could punish the European integration movements. This accentuated by the increasing influences the Eurosceptic proponents that have acquired seats in the European Parliament. Sound policies to migrations will have to focus on ensuring smoother exchanges between

migrants and host society. Failure to facilitate the exchanges will result in greater risk of polarizing identities. This in return will undermine the building of regional identity and hamper the regional integration processes.

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