

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION
PAPERS**

73

**Migration prospects after the 2004
enlargement of the European Union**

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SOCIAL PROTECTION SECTOR
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Foreword

The ILO's International Migration Programme publishes two working paper series (*International Migration Papers* and *Perspectives on Labour Migration*) with the goal of making quickly available to ILO tripartite social partners, and the general public, current research on global migration trends, conditions of employment of migrants, and the impact of State policies on migration and the treatment of migrants. Their main objective is to contribute to an informed debate on how best to manage labour migration, taking into account the shared concerns of countries of origin and employment for generating full and productive employment of their nationals, while at the same time respecting the basic rights of individual migrant workers and members of their families.

The recent enlargement of the European Union undoubtedly became one of the most significant events in the economic and political life of the European continent. Starting on May 1st 2004, the 15 "old" members welcomed ten "new" countries to its structure and changed their label to *EU-25*. The entrant economies used to belong to the ex-communist block in Central and Eastern Europe (the CEE-8: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia), plus two small Mediterranean nations (Cyprus and Malta).

This report attempts to present the extent and nature of the potential East-West migration after the enlargement of the European Union. It compiles and analyses the findings of several studies concerning this important topic. It reviews the situation in the acceding countries and the current attitudes towards migration in Western Europe. Then, it reviews the past experience of the EU with enlargements (specifically, Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1986), when similar immigration fears arose among the public. Next, it presents the migration prospects from the New-10 and the actual migration potential.

The report concludes that the latest EU enlargement's economic, commercial, political, cultural and social advantages can hardly be disputed. The accession of the new members will improve their situation enormously and give a new stimulus to stagnant markets in Western Europe. Some migration will undeniably appear, particularly in the neighbouring countries in the EU-15 in the short-term. However in the long run, anticipated intra-EU migration will probably continue at limited levels, even after the restrictions are lifted. The challenge, it states, is to make the best use out of it.

Geneva, December 2004

Manolo I. Abella
Chief
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1. Introduction

The recent enlargement of the European Union undoubtedly became one of the most significant events in the economic and political life of the continent. Starting on May 1st 2004, the 15 “old” members welcomed ten “new” countries to its structure and changed their label to *EU-25*. The entrant economies belong to the ex-communist block in Central and Eastern Europe (the CEE-8: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia), plus two small Mediterranean nations (Cyprus and Malta).

The much-heralded expansion adds almost 75 millions persons to a community already comprising 380 millions (an increase of 19.5%). It thus becomes the most ambitious enlargement in its history and consolidates it as one of the axes of the world economy. It also sets a landmark in European dynamics, since it represents the conclusion of a transition phase for most of the new members; their conversion from communist republics into capitalist nations successfully integrated into global markets is now “officially” completed. The enlargement extends the idea of a unified Europe beyond the Western countries, traversing the ancient “iron curtain” and reaching into the Central and Eastern parts of the continent.

An enormous amount of benefits for both the old and the new members is expected. The enlargement assumes the introduction of the ten additional economies into a single market of goods, services, capital and people. This would create synergies and scale economies, both at national and intra-industrial levels, enhancing the growth of the new economies and simultaneously giving new impetus to the old EU-15.

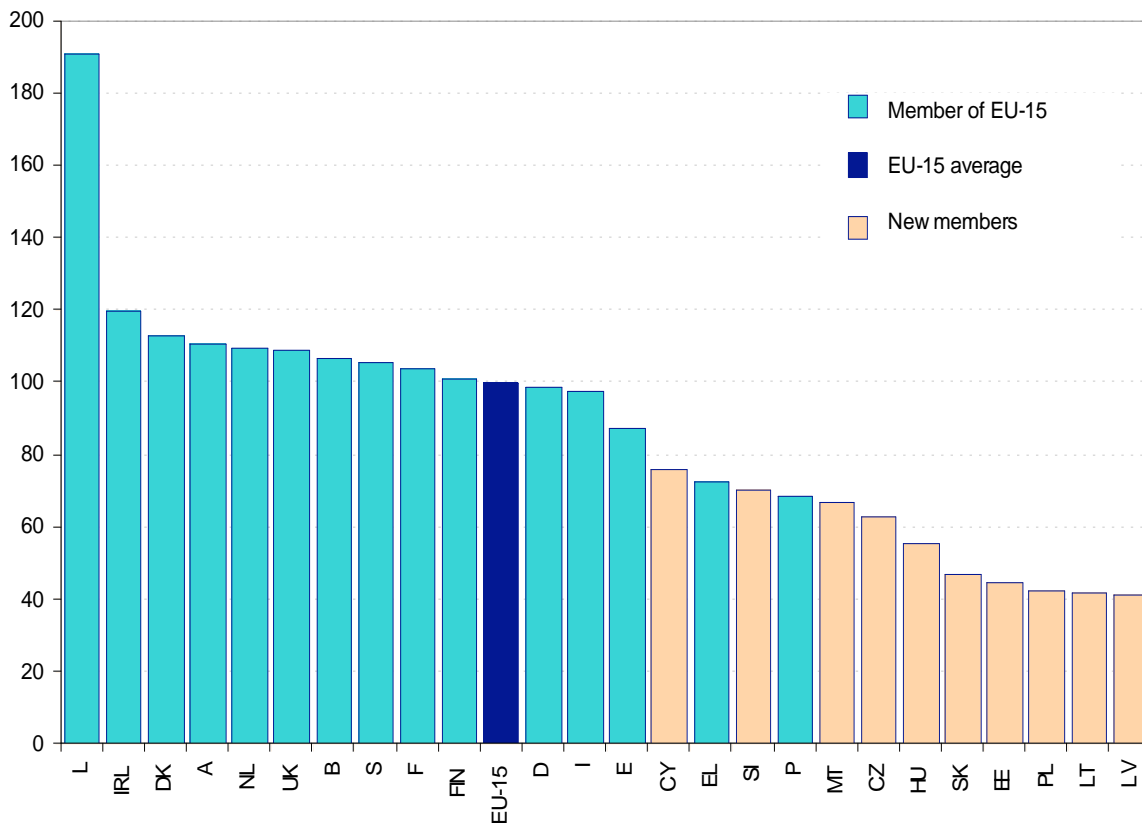
However, some parties have pointed at a negative prospective. They have raised their voices against the common labour market presupposed by the union, fearing that if the citizens of the new member states were given freedom to work throughout the EU, they would migrate *en masse*. This would create pressure in the already dysfunctional markets and would potentially cause further unemployment and lower wages, among other harmful results. Other factions rule out this scenario as a very improbable one and stress the advantages of an integrated labour market.

As an informative support in this argument, this report attempts to present the extent and nature of the potential East-West migration. It will compile and analyse the findings of several studies concerning this important topic. This document will, first of all, provide a background of the situation in the new members and the current attitudes toward migration in the West. Then, a subsection will review the past experience of the EU with enlargements (specifically, Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1986), when similar immigration fears arose in the population. After that, a couple of chapters will present the migration prospects from the New-10 and the actual migration potential. Finally, the last part of the study will present the main conclusions.

2. Context of the enlargement

Less than two decades before enlargement, the CEE-8 formed part of another club: the communist states. The collapse of their political and economic structures at the beginning of the 1990s suddenly forced them to adapt themselves as democratic nations governed by market principles. The painful reforms revealed the inefficiencies of the previous system and brought about a significant fall in their economic indicators and the standards of living of the population. But their recovery accelerated rapidly and, in only a few years, their internal situation had stabilised in economic and political grounds. What's more, they successfully found a place in the world economy, with investment inflows and external trade increasing importantly. Malta and Cyprus, the remaining two new members, have strong links with the old members of the EU and a high level of economic development.

Figure 1. GDP per capita at Purchasing Power Standards (EU-15 = 100), 2003



Source: Own calculations based on data from Eurostat.

Despite their exceptional economic performance since the second half of the 1990s, their income level is still considerably below the EU-15 average, in general terms. **Figure 1** depicts the GDP per capita at purchasing power standards for the EU-25. As the chart shows, most of the New-10 still have a long way to go before they can reach the other member of the union. The highest ranking new member is Cyprus, with an income level equivalent to 76.3% of the EU-15 average, while the lowest is Latvia with 41.5%. The biggest of the entrant economies, Poland, has a GDP per capita of only 42.3% of the average of the old members.

Table 1. Real GDP growth rate, 1995-2003

Country	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Average 1995-2003*
EU-15	2.4	1.6	2.5	2.9	2.9	3.6	1.7	1.0	0.8	2.2
CZ	na	na	na	na	0.5	3.3	3.1	2.0	2.9	2.4
EE	4.5	4.5	10.5	5.2	-0.1	7.8	6.4	7.2	5.1	5.7
CY	6.5	1.9	2.3	4.8	4.7	5.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	3.7
LV	1.6	3.8	8.3	4.7	3.3	6.9	8.0	6.4	7.5	5.6
LT	3.3	4.7	7.0	7.3	-1.7	3.9	6.4	6.8	9.0	5.2
HU	1.5	1.3	4.6	4.9	4.2	5.2	3.8	3.5	2.9	3.5
MT	na	na	na	na	4.1	6.4	-1.2	1.7	0.4	2.3
PL	2.7	6.0	6.8	4.8	4.1	4.0	1.0	1.4	3.8	3.8
SI	11.2	3.6	4.8	3.6	5.6	3.9	2.7	3.4	2.3	4.6
SK	5.8	6.1	4.6	4.2	1.5	2.0	3.8	4.4	4.2	4.1

* Average 1999-2003 for CZ and MT

Source: Own calculations based on data from Eurostat.

However, these countries are growing rapidly, much faster than the average of the other members. **Table 1** includes the information about their economic performance for the period 1995-2003; the shaded cells signal the cases in which the GDP of a New-10 member attained a higher growth rate than the EU-15 average. As this data manifests, the new integrants outperformed the old European Union in most of the occasions. In fact, as the table shows, the average rate of growth of the old EU during this period was 2.2%; every single one of the New-10 surpassed this rate. The countries with the best performance were the Baltic states, which impressively outgrew the EU-15 by more than 3%.

Table 2. Total trade as a percentage of GDP, 1995-2002

Country	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
CZ	44.8	42.7	47.3	48.5	49.5	55.1	57.2	53.6
EE	56.8	53.4	62.0	62.1	55.7	72.0	67.0	62.2
CY	25.6	27.8	26.8	25.1	23.2	25.4	24.6	22.4
LV	37.6	37.0	40.2	42.3	36.2	36.1	37.7	39.1
LT	49.3	49.0	49.5	43.4	36.1	41.2	45.8	47.8
HU	31.7	34.5	45.2	46.6	55.7	65.0	62.1	55.0
MT	71.2	64.7	59.7	60.4	58.3	75.1	58.6	58.7
PL	20.3	21.7	24.7	24.5	23.3	25.6	24.8	26.6
SI	44.6	44.0	45.8	45.9	43.8	49.5	49.5	48.1
SK	44.8	47.9	50.4	53.7	52.7	61.0	65.6	63.8

Source: Eurostat.

The accession economies are also integrating rapidly with the world economy. First of all, international trade now represents an essential portion of their GDP. Furthermore, with the exception of Cyprus, Lithuania and Malta, the importance of exports and imports in their national product has grown in the last years. This is exhibited in **Table 2**, which covers the

trade volume as percentage of GDP from 1995 until 2002. Worth mentioning are the situation in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, where this ratio augmented by 23.3, 19.0 and 8.8 percentage points, respectively.

Secondly, the new-10 have also incorporated into the world capital flows. As an indicator of this, **Table 3** shows the FDI that enters the country as a percentage of GDP. Particularly in the first years after economic reforms, inflows of foreign investment exploded. In some cases (Czech Republic, Slovenia and the Baltic republics), this positive trend continues even today. Now that they have acquired full membership in the EU, the amount of FDI is only expected to augment in the years to come.

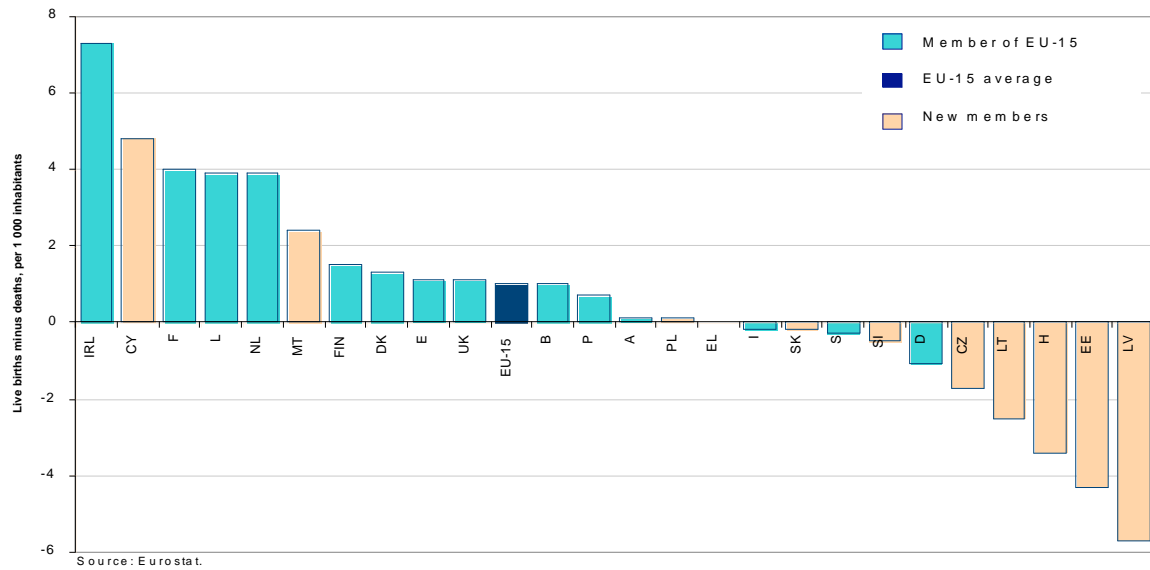
Table 3 . Foreign Direct Investment as a percentage of GDP, 1992-2002

Country	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
CZ	na	2.2	2.4	5.0	2.8	2.5	7.1	11.7	9.9	10.2	13.8
EE	2.0	4.6	5.7	4.5	5.1	9.1	12.8	8.3	9.9	15.2	8.1
CY	1.8	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.5	2.9	4.1	4.2	na
LV	0.5	1.2	5.4	5.1	7.8	9.5	7.2	5.6	5.9	7.5	5.0
LT	na	0.5	0.5	1.1	1.9	4.1	8.5	6.2	3.4	3.8	5.3
HU	4.0	6.1	2.9	11.0	5.2	5.9	5.5	4.9	4.9	6.1	3.9
MT	4.7	2.3	5.8	20.3	10.7	6.4	11.4	23.6	25.6	17.6	29.7
PL	0.8	2.0	1.9	3.3	3.5	3.3	4.6	5.5	6.3	4.3	3.7
SI	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.0	2.0	1.3	0.8	1.1	3.7	10.2
SK	na	2.0	1.9	1.3	2.0	1.3	4.0	3.8	11.8	na	na

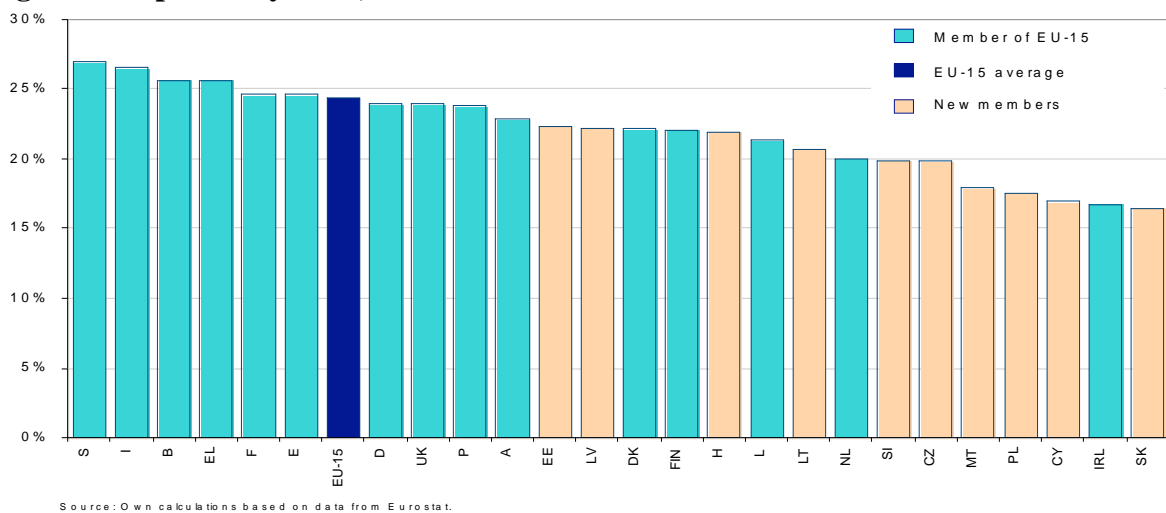
Source: World bank, "World Development Indicators" at <http://devdata.worldbank.org/dataonline>

As this three indicators show, the New-10 have generally displayed an exceptional performance with respect to the EU-15 average. Although their income level is still below the rest of the members, their high rates of growth and their integration in the world markets promise to close this gap promptly. Nonetheless, these nations have not achieved positive results in all aspects. Their demographic and labour situations remain topics of concern.

Figure 2 portrays the worrying demographic condition of the New-10. With the exception of the Mediterranean nations, all of the new members exhibit natural population balances close to zero or negative. The situation is specially stressing in the Baltic countries and Hungary. Although not particularly positive, the EU-15 (with the exception of Germany) fare better.

Figure 2. Natural population change, 2001

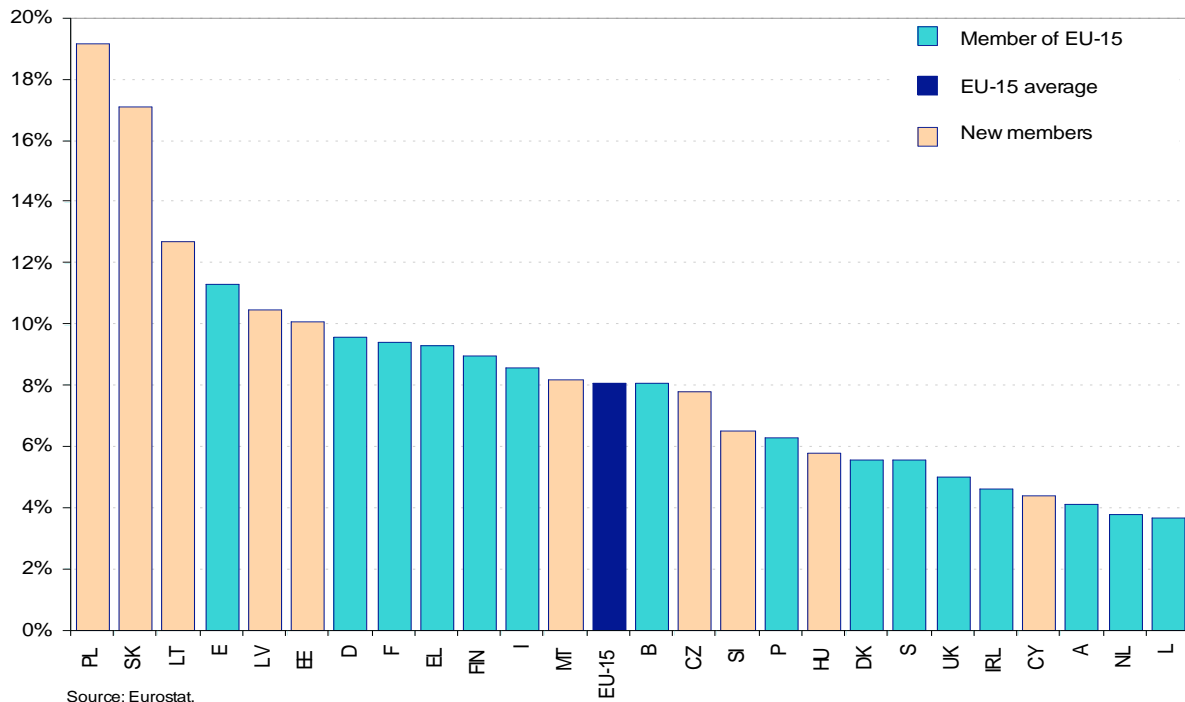
As another indicator of the demographic setting, **Figure 3** illustrates the dependency ratio for the EU-25. This ratio is calculated as the proportion of the retirement-age population (65 years old or over) over the working-age population (15-64 years old). For example, a value of 25% for this variable denotes that there is one person older than 64 years old per four persons of working age. Even though all the New-10 are below the EU-15 average, the situation is expected to deteriorate rapidly, as the population ages and a big proportion of the labour force reaches the retirement age limit.

Figure 3. Dependency ratio, 2000

As an illustration of the state of affairs in the labour market of the EU-25, **Figure 4** shows the average unemployment rate for 2003. Apart from Cyprus, Hungary, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, the new members have a higher rate of unemployment than the average of the other 15 countries in the EU. The problem is remarkably worrying in Poland, Slovakia and Lithuania. After their change of system, the ex-communist states were faced with inefficient production and low productivity; the economic reforms that followed severely contracted the demand of labour which, in turn, produced high unemployment and labour-market inactivity (through informal activities, production for self-consumption or emigration). Although some

countries have already recovered through the proliferation of new enterprises, the problem still affects other economies.

Figure 4. Unemployment rate, 2003



As a final indicator of the socioeconomic situation of the ten accession countries, the tendency for immigration has finally reverted. After the disintegration of communism, an important exodus of the national population could be observed in some countries. This, in addition to the negative rate of natural population growth that was mentioned before, led to depopulation in some of the countries. As Table 4 confirms, the situation was particularly problematic in the Baltic states, where part of the population of Russian origin left. Other nations where a similar, though less severe, phenomenon occurred were Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. After the collapse of communism, many persons from CEE migrated to Western Europe, as part of family reunions or in search of better economic and political prospects than those of their devastated homelands. In fact, it is estimated that by 1998 there were more than 550,000 citizens from the CEE-8 living legally in Western Europe and many more residing irregularly¹. Most of this immigration, as Table 4 shows, originated in the early years of the 1990s. But at present, most of the New-10 have turned into net migration countries. The only exceptions are Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. The first two still exhibit a very modest emigration, although at a much slower pace than a decade before; the third one, on the other hand, has maintained relatively small outflows of its citizens during the entire period.

¹ Hönekopp, E. and Werner, H. 2000. "Is the EU's labour market threatened by a wave of immigration?" in *Intereconomics*, January/February, p. 6.

Table 4. Net migration rate, 1991-2002

Country	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
CZ	-5.5	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.6	-0.8	1.2
EE	-8.1	-27.1	-18.9	-14.2	-10.9	-9.5	-4.9	-4.8	-0.8	0.2	0.1	0.1
CY	19.2	17.7	13.9	11.0	10.3	9.1	8.2	6.2	6.1	5.7	6.6	9.7
LV	-5.7	-20.5	-12.6	-9.0	-5.5	-4.1	-3.9	-2.4	-1.7	-2.3	-2.2	-0.8
LT	-2.9	-6.6	-6.5	-6.6	-6.5	-6.5	-6.3	-6.2	-5.9	-5.8	-0.7	-0.6
HU	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.0	0.3
MT	3.4	2.5	2.7	2.4	-0.5	1.6	1.6	1.1	23.7	3.4	5.9	4.7
PL	-0.4	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3
SI	-1.7	-2.8	-2.3	0.0	0.4	-1.7	-0.7	-2.7	5.4	1.4	2.5	1.1
SK	0.0	-0.5	0.3	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2

Source: Eurostat.

Based on the significant income gap between the original members and the New-10, in addition to the unemployment problem in most CEE-8 countries and their reputation as emigration countries, many politicians, trade unions and the broad public opinion of the EU-15 feared a massive immigration to their territories. They argued that, if the new EU countries were given the freedom of labour mobility, they would take advantage of that right to look for a job in the countries with higher remunerations. The labour markets of the EU-15 are, in general, suffering from high structural unemployment and this would further exacerbate the problem. The main apprehension was an invasion of highly-skilled workers from the new members, ready to accept lower remunerations. They argue that this could put a downward pressure to wages and would increase the number of unemployed. Additionally, they pointed out to other unfounded fears, like a possible abuse of the existing welfare system in the EU-15, and higher crime rates, as well as issues such as escalating competition for cheap housing in the cities.

On their side, the New-10 showed an ambivalent position over this topic. On one hand, most of the potential emigration would originate from the unemployed population; this would diminish the pressure on their labour markets. Additionally, there is the positive effect of the remittances that their nationals could send to their families back to their countries. On the other hand, they feared an exodus of their young, skilled and educated population; that is, the so-called youth- and brain-drain.

In spite of the advice from economic and demographic studies, which predicted only a limited amount of immigration in their territories, most countries in the EU-15 decided to implement some transitory restrictions on access to their labour markets.

Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain were the countries that opted to set labour limitations to the citizens of the new members; contrarily, Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom decided against these measures for the initial period.

The restrictions regime operates in the following way. All citizens of the New-10 already employed inside the territory of the EU-15 at the date of accession will immediately be recognized as legal workers with the same rights as those of a national. All other citizens from

the new members will have the right to immigrate only for purpose of family reunion, educational purposes and for establishing a business. Access to the labour market to everyone else will not be allowed during an initial period of two years. Specialized reviews will be conducted afterwards, with the possibility to extend the restriction for three additional years. After these five years, another assessment of the situation will be undertaken. Only in cases when a serious labour-market disturbance or threat is proven, a further restraint of two years will be accepted. This means that, at the longest, restrictions can last for seven years; i.e. until 2011. It must be mentioned that these restrictions only apply to CEE-8 countries; namely, all New-10 except Malta and Cyprus.

The rationale behind the restriction to labour mobility is that free access to employment throughout the enlarged EU should be brought about gradually in order to prevent social tensions. The supporters of this measure argue that the new members should be given a period of time to benefit from EU membership before the borders are open completely; this would deter impetuous migration during the initial years when the income gap is wider.

Table 5. Growth scenario: Year when the income gap will reach

Country	Income gap				
	40%	30%	20%	10%	0%
CY	-	-	2006	2012	2017
SI	-	-	2010	2016	2021
MT	-	2006	2012	2019	2024
CZ	-	2009	2016	2022	2027
HU	2007	2015	2022	2028	2034
SK	2016	2024	2031	2037	2042
EE	2019	2027	2033	2040	2045
PL	2021	2029	2036	2042	2048
LT	2022	2030	2037	2043	2048
LV	2022	2030	2037	2043	2049

Source: Own calculations based on data from Eurostat.

However, it is dubious that the economic situation will change dramatically in seven years. To expose this idea, a scenario can be developed. The starting point is the values for the GDP per capita at PPS for 2003, which were mentioned in [Figure 1](#). It is assumed that the EU-15 average will grow 2% per year, while the New-10 will develop two percentage points faster; that is, their rate of growth will be 4%. [Table 5](#) reveals the date when the income gap between the old members and the accession countries will reach a certain threshold. It can be seen that the time lapse before convergence can be quiet long. For example, Hungary would reach a gap of 40% in 2007, but it would have to wait until 2022 to close this difference to 20%. For the case of Poland, the biggest of the new members, an income gap of 40% would be attained in 2021, a difference of 20% in 2036 and a complete convergence until 2048! Under these circumstances, a restriction period of seven years seems rather futile.

For the reason exemplified above, it has been argued that the transitory restriction scheme is not a realistic solution. It is even possible that it would lead to an increase in the informal sector because migrant workers from the New-10 would probably look for a source of income in countries of destination in unregulated activities outside the formal economy.

In addition, these measures are a response designed to an expected migration in great proportions. However, several studies have argued that this would just not happen. Before the main conclusions from these analyses are summarized, a short review of the past enlargements of the EU and their effect on migration will be presented.

3. Previous experiences with enlargement in the EU

The EU had passed through four enlargements before the recent expansion of May 2004. They occurred in 1973 (Denmark, Ireland and United Kingdom), 1981 (Greece though full labour mobility until 1986), 1986 (Portugal and Spain though full labour mobility until 1992) and 1995 (Austria, Finland and Sweden). From these four, the so-called “Southern enlargements” that involved the three Mediterranean countries caused anxiety in the population of the existing members. As it happens today, it was hypothesized that the lower income and their status as emigration countries would motivate a large flow of its citizens into the “Northern” countries.

At the moment of their accession, Greece, Portugal and Spain had a GDP per capita (at purchasing power parity) equivalent to 71.6%, 54.4% and 67.6% of the existing configuration of the EU, respectively². In spite of the income gap, the feared migration flow from these countries never materialized. In fact, the EU experience has confirmed that countries with below-average GDP and a negative migration balance actually diminish and even invert their level of migration after their integration in the economic community. This happens because the new members benefit from big flows of investment from the richer members and from higher international trade, which generate growth and employment. The positive economic performance and the ensuing improvement in living standards attract migrants back to their home countries. In fact, the higher the level of integration of the economies, the lower the level of migration pressures. For this reason, it has been argued that the close level of integration of their members has actually deterred intra-EU migration flows.

Indeed, labour-mobility has ranked as the least used freedom in the Union. The first column of **Table 6** shows the proportion in 1998 of the citizens from the European Union in the total foreign population of the 15 members. With the exception of Luxembourg and Belgium (understandably, two of the seats of the EU government), the level of intra-EU mobility has remained modest, never surpassing 50% of the total foreign population. In fact, for six of the members, this proportion only reached 25% or less. As another indicator of the low tendency for migration inside the alliance, the second column of Table 6 includes the proportion of EU nationals in the total population of each member. This ratio exceeds a mere 2% only in Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg.

As the experience with previous expansions shows, the EU-15 should not anticipate a large inflow of immigrants from the new members. The situation of the New-10 is very similar to that of Greece, Portugal and Spain at the time of their accession: negative migration balance for years and GDP per capita significantly lower than the rest of the members. Although the income gap is wider this time (in half of the cases, including Poland, wider than that of Portugal at the time of its accession), it is not exceptionally so. Consequently, although not at negligible levels like in the past, only a limited amount of immigration should be

² Own calculations based on data from World Bank, “World Development Indicators”, at <http://devdata.worldbank.org/dataonline>

expected. Indeed, even some return migration may appear, as the nationals of the New-10 that are already working abroad are lured back to their countries as a consequence of the benefits of EU membership.

Table 6. Intra-EU mobility, 1998

Country	EU foreigners as percentage of total foreign population	EU foreigners as percentage of total population
L	89.0	31.0
B	62.2	5.5
E	42.7	0.7
F	36.6	2.0
S	33.9	2.0
NL	28.0	1.2
P	26.3	0.5
D	25.1	2.3
DK	20.5	1.0
FIN	18.7	0.3
UK	18.5	0.7
I	13.7	0.3
A	13.0	1.2
EL	na	na

Source: OECD, "Trends in international migration", 2001.

4. Prospects of migration

Regarding the labour mobility in an integrated market, there are two basic economic theories. In the first one, known as the integration theory, workers are allowed to move freely across the union. They choose to settle where their productivity is greatest (depending on their specific skills and know-how), and their wages are also highest as a consequence. This movement of workers continues until marginal productivity and wages reach equilibrium all through the common market. Important migration flows are predicted by this theory.

A second theory, the classical ideas of international trade economics, assumes that labour as a production factor is immobile. It is also presupposed that the trading countries have different resources and factor productivity. A country concentrates on the production of goods in which it has a comparative advantage vis-à-vis the rest of the economies. The country then exports these goods to the other members of the trade union and imports the products in which it is comparatively disadvantaged (which, in turn, are produced by other countries with a comparative advantage in those goods). As a result, foreign trade develops between the countries in the union. Labour migration is not necessary because international commerce serves as a substitute.

Past experience in the EU has corroborated the classical theory and refuted the integration hypothesis. Even though the workforce is indeed mobile in the structure of the agreement, little intra-EU migration has appeared, as it was exposed before. Instead, trade and foreign investment had grown enormously between members. In fact, international commerce has reacted quickly and very elastically to the economic integration that has taken place in the European Union and it has replaced the economic demand for migration. Since the present

expansion is following similar trends as previous enlargements, it is very probable that international trade and investment will develop at the expense of migration movements of workers.

In addition to economic theories, some facts and characteristics of the New-10 may support or undermine the idea of a population prone to migration. These would be described in the following two subsections.

4.1. Arguments supporting migration fears

There are some push- and pull-factors present that could propitiate emigration from the New-10 into the old members. Although economic and political stability belong to the past of the CEE-8, a remaining push-factor is the situation of the labour market in those countries. The high level of unemployment and relatively low wages may turn into incentives for some sectors of the population to migrate to look for better employment opportunities abroad.

As part of the pull-factors, the most important one is the income gap. As it was shown in section two, there still exists a big difference between the EU-15 and the New-10 average GDP per capita. This may become an incentive for the population to emigrate. However, if this occurs, it would most likely be a temporary migration, with migrant workers having the intention to save enough money to set a business back in the country of origin.

Other important pull-factors are the networks of migrants in the EU-15. A number of persons from the new members have migrated to Western Europe, either regularly or irregularly. For the case of the CEE-8, this especially occurred in the first few years after the disintegration of the communist structures. Although some of this migration has already returned, a significant proportion is still abroad. These social networks may become a pull-factor if their positive experience motivates and helps other co-nationals to migrate.

Finally, the well-developed social provision systems in Western Europe constitute an important pull-factor. This is particularly true of students, who may seek to start or continue their education in the EU-15. Since no country raised any restrictions to this kind of mobility, some immigration of this type is definitely anticipated.

4.2. Arguments refuting migration fears

In addition to the mobility restrictions imposed by most of the countries in the EU-15, there are other characteristics and situations that may counteract the pull- and push-factors described above.

First of all, the same trends observed during the Southern enlargements of the European Union are starting to develop, including a massive inflow of FDI and an increasing international trade. These, in addition to the structural and cohesions funds assigned by the EU, will generate significant economic growth, with a consequent improvement of the employment situation, and will slowly push to convergence with the other members. Since one of the main motivations for migration is work and financial reasons, the improvement of the economic scene in the New-10 will relieve the migration pressure.

Second, emigration actually occurred during the first half of the 1990s. For this reason, most of the persons motivated to migrate have already done so and the pressure remaining is very low. Contrary to what may be expected, enlargement and its resulting economic progress of the New-10 may actually motivate a return migration from those persons that left around a decade ago.

Another consideration is that most of the countries of the New-10 do not have the demographic capacity to support emigration without suffering important imbalances. Their population is rapidly ageing and, in addition, their natural population balances are among the lowest in the continent. For this reason, from a demographical point of view, a massive emigration is not viable at all.

As a consequence of communist planning, the CEE-8 exhibit large internal inequalities between the countries' capitals, the small cities and the countryside in terms of wages, employment opportunities, social provision and cultural offer. The population who are discontented with their current situation may not feel the need to migrate abroad; an internal rural-to-urban or urban-to urban transfer may suffice. This trend appeared in Spain, Portugal and Greece after the economic impetus of their membership to the EU, and it is very probable that it will repeat in the New-10 as they accelerate their development.

Also, there are strong social and cultural ties between the population and their home country. This may be an important factor to deter migration. Language can be an issue to decide against migrations, since all the CEE-8 members have their own particular language. Furthermore, some knowledge and skills are country-specific, so the experience gained through education and work may be useless abroad.

In addition, most of the population normally exhibit some degree of risk aversion. They are not willing to migrate if this represents any kind of threat. For this reason, the common attitude is one of "wait and see": if others' migration is successful, their perception of the inherent risk diminishes and they may show a motivation to migrate at that point. However, in the case of the New-10, the internal situation will probably improve during the waiting period, so the actual pressure for migration will very likely disappear.

Finally, some significant studies are stressing the economic and fiscal tensions arising out of an EU ageing population. A recent ILO study aims at alerting the policy debate on the economic consequences of ageing and the size of the dimension of possible necessary replacement migration on domestic productivity and labour market developments and standard of living targets. The study concluded that European Union countries' policies need to "find a compromise between accepting lower economic growth (and hence lower growth rates in the standards of living), accommodating replacement migration and investing in the increase of productivity of older workers".³

³ Cichon, Michael; Leger, Florian; Knop, Rüdiger : *White or Prosperous : How much migration does the ageing European Union need to maintain its standard of living in its twenty-first century?*, ILO, The International Financial and Actuarial Service, Geneva, March 2003, unpublished report.

5. Migration potential

Since the announcement of the enlargement intentions of the EU, a multitude of studies appeared, fuelled by the political, social and economic effects of this process. Many of them focused on the migratory aspect of the expansion, trying to predict its size and its consequences both in the source and receiving country. Detailed econometric models, extensive surveys and opinion of experts were used as support for their conclusions. Most of them included the New-10, plus the other candidate economies (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey). A general review of their main conclusion will be presented in the following subsections. It must be mentioned that most of this studies concentrate on labour-motivated migration. A large proportion would originate from single persons of young age, the most mobile sector of the population. However, some of it would also come from other social groups; the potential migration of dependants should then be considered.

5.1. Quantitative potential

The majority of these analyses concluded that the emigration potential from the new members would account to 3-4% of their population over the next one to two decades after the freedom of mobility is granted. From a total population of 74.2 millions in 2003, the New-10 are expected to send between 2.2 and 3 millions of persons to the EU-15. Taking into account the anticipated return migration, the net migration would be around 1 and 2% (740 thousands to 1.5 millions)⁴. In other terms, the studies estimated that the size of gross immigration would be equivalent to 0.59-0.78% of the aggregate population of the EU-15, while net migration would only amount to 0.20-0.39%.

One of the most trusted sources of information on the subject is the study published by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2004). This article analyses the data extracted from the 2002 European Commission's Eurobarometer survey applied to the whole population of the accession and candidate countries from 15 years of age onwards. The attitudes towards migration are separated in three degrees: general inclination to migrate, basic intention to migrate and firm intention to migrate. Since it is based on direct interview with the persons, its conclusions can be considered as reasonably realistic.

Taking into account the population between 15 and 65 years of age for the New-10, this study discovers that 3.7% of them have a general inclination to migrate in the next five years; if only a firm intention is considered, this proportion is reduced to 1.0%. In other words, 1.9 millions of the working-age population from the accession countries reveal their willingness to migrate to the EU-15 in the following five years; of these, only 516 000 exhibit a firm purpose. The results disaggregated by country do not present great variation; it is only worth mentioning that the member with the highest inclination towards migration is Poland (4.3%, 1.8% and 1.1%, respectively for the three degrees).

In summary, the analysts do not anticipate an exodus from Eastern and Central Europeans into the European Union. Quite in the contrary, their calculation point out to a very modest level of migration. The Eurobarometer survey estimates that around half a million of working-age persons have the firm intention to move from the New-10 into the EU-15 during the next

⁴ Straubhaar, T. 2001. "Migration policies and EU enlargement" in *Intereconomics*, July/August, p. 168-

few years. If the total population is considered, this figure equals around 750 000 persons. The gross potential for the next two decades should not exceed 3 million. If these studies are to be believed, fears of mass migration are greatly overstated.

In fact, the most likely scenario is one in which migration would remain moderate. The progression would probably go along the next trend. Immigration into the EU-15 would exhibit an initial upsurge immediately after labour mobility is permitted; this would originate in the transfer of those nationals of the New-10 with the firm purpose to migrate and in the regularisation of the informal workers already employed in the old members. Afterwards, migration would rapidly decelerate and would fall below 100 000 after a decade. In total, the number of persons moving from the New-10 to the EU-15 in the two decades after labour freedom is granted would be of around three millions. Of course, this does not include the return migration, which could generate as the new members' economies gain momentum and their nationals decide to return; this factor could reduce net migration to even lower levels.

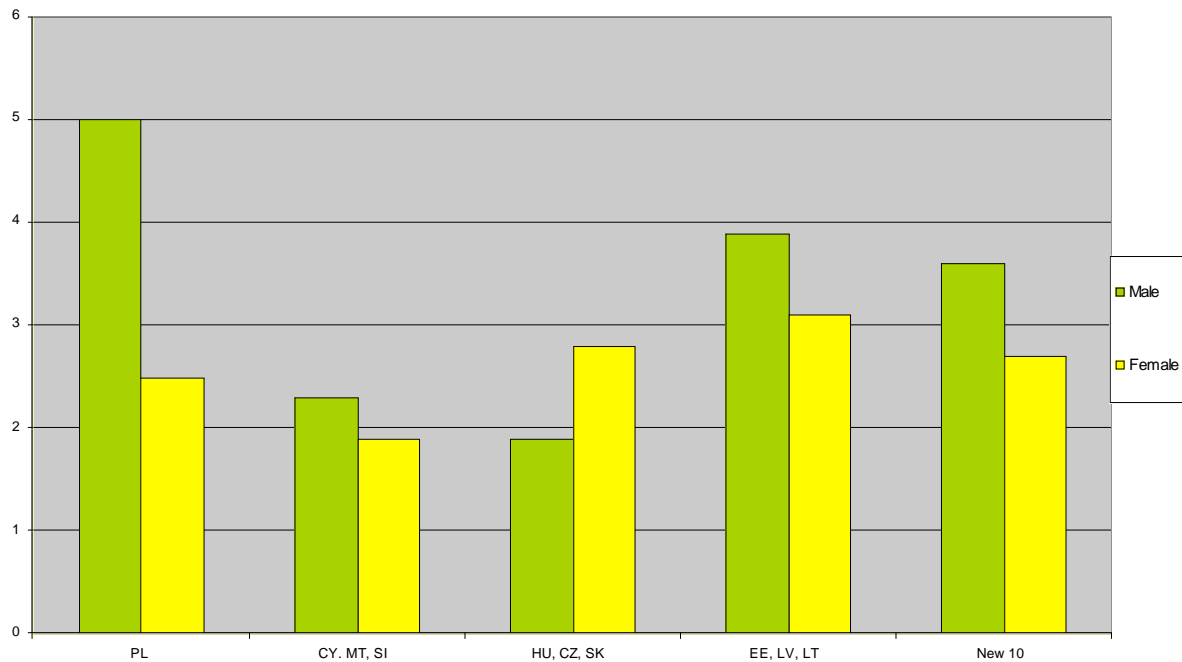
The main target countries will very probably be Germany (2/3 of expected migration), Austria (10%), Italy (5%) and the United Kingdom (5%). The choice of the destination depends on the geographical proximity, the communities of migrants already there and the general socioeconomic situation of the country. This is the rationale behind Germany and Austria as the foremost targets of emigrants.

Another important point to consider is that, although the migration potential seems rather low, it would not be directed to the entire territory of the target countries. Instead, it would probably centre on specific areas or regions with favourable conditions and where manpower is required. For this reason, although the aggregate EU effects will probably be very limited, the regional labour market of some specific areas or sectors, particularly along the border with the new members, may resent the inflow of migrant workers.

5.2. Qualitative potential

The information of the Eurobarometer survey can give a profile of the characteristics of the anticipated migration. First of all, the vast majority of those identified as firmly inclined to migrate are young. The survey concludes that 94.9% of the migration-prone respondents had between 15 and 39 years of age. This confirms the demographical idea that young people constitute the most mobile sector of society. Once the restrictions to labour mobility conclude, or already for those economies that chose not to impose them, the EU-15 can expect a small quantity of young immigrants ready to incorporate themselves in their labour markets. This can represent good news for the enterprises that require flexible workers ready to adapt themselves to the required skills. On the other side, this becomes a worrisome fact for the New-10, who fear a youth-drain from their rapidly ageing population.

According to this study, in general, 54.7% of those disposed to emigrate are men and 45.3% are women. This roughly equilibrated gender distribution calls attention to the recent feminisation trend that has appeared in migration flows not only in Europe, but worldwide. Indeed, as shown in [Figure 5](#) while the total percentage of females from the New 10 EU countries showing an inclination to migrate was lower than that of men, in some of them like in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, a greater proportion of women than men migrants is expected.

Figure 5. General Inclination to Migrate by Gender in EU-10, 2002

Source: Candidate Country Eurobarometer Survey (2002.1), EU Directorate General of Employment and Social Affairs. Information published in "Migration Trends in an Enlarged Europe" by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

From the potential migrants from the New-10, 0.1% have primary education or less, 30.2% secondary education, 31.0% tertiary education and 38.7% are still studying. This means that the highly educated are more prone to migrate. While this tendency represents bad news for the sending countries (brain-drain), it is positively received by the receiving nations. A well-educated, highly-skilled immigration becomes an important asset for economies of countries of destination, especially in those countries where skills deficits in some sectors are felt.

Another characteristic drawn from the questionnaire is the labour force status of the population with migration prospective: 27.3% are employed, 31.5% are unemployed and 41.1% are enrolled in education. This confirms the hypothesis that unemployment is one of the main motivations for emigration, although not in the intensity that it was believed. What outstands as a determinant of migration is the civil status. Of the interviewed with firm intentions to move to another member of the EU, 70.4% are single, 26.0% are married or cohabiting and 3.6% are widowed/divorced/separated. It can be confirmed that single persons are significantly more mobile.

In relation to the purpose behind the intended migration, the four more quoted factors were "work reasons", "financial reasons", "family/private reasons" and "not satisfied with current home". This confirms that the labour situation of their countries and the income gap with the EU-15 are some of the main motivations behind migration. Following this reasoning, the anticipated improvement of the economic situation that would ensue from growing investment and structural aid will probably relieve the pressure to emigrate.

Finally, the survey concluded that most of the projected emigration was only of a temporary, rather than definite, nature. This is, nationals of the New-10 have the intention to stay abroad months or years, and not decades or the rest of their lives. This can be considered a positive feature for the sending countries, since it represents an opportunity to benefit from the “brain-gain” or skills acquired by the return migrants. For the receiving economies, this is also a constructive factor, since it supplies the required manpower and stimulates the labour markets without imposing a long-term pressure to them.

In summary, a moderate level of immigration is expected in the EU-15 after the labour mobility is inaugurated. But this inflow of people features the most beneficial characteristics: young, well-educated and transitory rather than permanent.

5.3. Transit migration into the EU through the new members

The countries of the EU-15 are not only worried about the migration from the New-10 but also through them. As it was exposed before, the new members have developed a positive net migration balance in the last years. This is explained by both the effect of the return migration and the growing number of foreigners that enter their territories regularly or irregularly. Nationals of CIS (especially Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Russia) and Asian countries use the CEE-8 as their migration goal or as a buffer zone before they attempt to enter Western Europe. Although there is no estimate on the dimension of this undocumented migration, it is believed to reach an enormous magnitude and it keeps growing.

In order to comply with EU membership and Schengen rules, the new members have tightened border controls and imposed stricter visa regimes. Now, all regular citizens from other Eastern European and Central Asian nations (with the exception of candidate countries Romania and Bulgaria) are required visas to enter their territories.

However, the effectiveness of these measures is doubtful. First, an intensive border trade has developed over the last decade with the neighbouring countries, many times taking the form of contraband. Also, there is a strong and historic relation with the co-ethnic minorities living in adjacent countries; this is particularly strong with Hungarians. In addition, the anticipated income growth and increasing labour demand in the CEE-8 will surely attract those persons living east of the new EU border.

To counteract this problem, the new members are going to enforce operational measures to combat irregular migration and develop effectively-designed migratory strategies that could guide a regulated number of temporary foreign workers into the industries and sectors where they are needed. This would become especially necessary when Bulgaria and Romania become members themselves. However, the inexistence of simple solutions to complex migration phenomena opens the debate on achieving not only a proper border management, but also a proper management of migration flows. Western European countries are recognising that an ageing population together with a declining work force and their impact on social security financial sustainability could be strongly linked to an improvement of migration management within the region.

6. Conclusions

The recent enlargement of the European Union is one of the most important events in its history. The migratory response of the New-10 after their accession into the European Union remains to be seen. Most of the old members imposed restrictions for up to seven years to the labour mobility of the citizens of the new integrants.

However, a mass exodus from the new members into the EU-15 will very probably never take place. Experts estimate that about 750 000 persons will migrate in the next year after full mobility is allowed. This flow will rapidly diminish and the accumulated migration after two decades will remain at around three million. Taking into account the potential return of this migration, these figures are reduced substantially. Most of the migrants will consist of young, well-educated persons with the intention to stay abroad only temporarily, so the qualitative outlook of the migration to the old members is very positive. Their main destination will be Germany, followed by Austria, United Kingdom and Italy. Rather than representing a substantial source of migration, it is more probable that migration will originate in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and only pass through the new members in order to reach Western Europe.

There are several reasons that explain the low propensity to migrate. First of all, people have been migrating into the EU-15 since the beginning of the 1990s, so the migration pressures will not mount considerably. In addition, although the income gap is still significant, an important economic improvement is expected with the inflow of the EU's regional funds, the entrance of larger amounts of FDI and the growth of foreign trade; this will push the GDP per capita upwards and will create employment. Other factors, like the demographic situation, the social and cultural ties, the risk aversion of the population and the large internal differences also play important roles.

Labour migration will likely be very moderate and their effect on the labour markets and the housing situation of the old members will remain limited. However, some specific border regions in Austria and Germany may receive an amount of migrants large enough to destabilize the local markets. The national and EU authorities must provide a safeguard in such situations.

Independent of their quantity and extent, migration has a positive side in both sending and receiving countries. The countries of origin experience a relief in their pressured labour markets and benefit from their emigrants' remittances back to their families. Additionally, if these persons return after a period abroad, they will represent a brain-gain in terms of the skills, knowledge and education that they could have acquired. For the receiving countries, immigration can provide their enterprises with the manpower they lack at relatively low wages; this would result in an increased productivity.

The progression of the migratory flows between the old and the new members should be systematically and should serve as a learning experience that will prove essential in the future enlargements of the EU (as of today, Romania and Bulgaria are programmed to become members in 2007, Turkey is still in negotiations and Croatia is expected to apply formally soon).

The latest EU enlargement's economic, commercial, political, cultural and social advantages can hardly be disputed. The accession of the new members will improve their situation enormously and give a new stimulus to the stagnant markets in the West. Some

migration will undeniable appear, particularly in the neighbouring countries in the EU-15 in the short-term. However in the long run, anticipated intra-EU migration will probably continue at limited levels, even after the restrictions are lifted. The challenge will be to make the best use out of it.

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B) Abbreviations and acronyms

CEE-8	Accession countries from Central and Eastern Europe: New-10 minus Cyprus and Malta
EU	European Union
EU-15	Austria (A), Belgium (B), Denmark (DK), Germany (D), Greece (EL), France (F), Finland (FIN), Ireland (IRL), Italy (I), Luxembourg (L), Netherlands (NL), Portugal (P), Spain (E), Sweden (S) and United Kingdom (UK)
EU-25	EU-15 plus New-10
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
New-10	Cyprus (CY), Czech Republic (CZ), Estonia (EE), Hungary (HU), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Malta (MT), Poland (PL), Slovak Republic (SK) and Slovenia (SI)

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