

# MASS MIGRATION - THE FASTEST GROWING CHALLENGE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CROATIA

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**Abstract:** *Migration has become one of the key components of population change in the European Union. Greater mobility has contributed to the increase in the number of migrants in recent decades (migration between regions, and within the EU and migration from non-EU countries). Migration flows over the past decades between and in EU member states have had a significant impact on the current population size in most member states. There are a number of reasons why people want to move to the European Union. Some come to look for a better life, better living standards, some for employment, some to go back to their home country, some to study, etc. Since the first day of July 2013, the Republic of Croatia became the 28th member of the European Union according to the experience of some European Union member states it can be assumed that in the future there will be an increased immigration inflow to the Republic of Croatia as well. Still, the Republic of Croatia is just a land of passage. Currently growing problem of immigration inflows, which so far has not taken on larger proportions is the leaving of the Croatian population from the Croatia.*

*The aim of this paper is to show the migration as the fastest growing problem of the European Union. Most of the developed European countries, despite the bad and extremely unfavourable demographic indicators, still have no clear population and immigration policy. Consequences may be crucial to their future economic development. In this study is included the analysis of the collected statistical data and survey which was conducted among a representative sample of respondents, adults who have left the Republic of Croatia from 1996 to today. The survey will show the main reasons for leaving home country.*

**Key words:** *migration, emigration, European Union, Croatia*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Migration is a major problem, which was paid little attention. Migration of different communities is not a novelty or a special feature of these areas and of this time. The impact of mass migration on society, especially on the local community in the areas of acceptance is mostly negative, which is particularly visible in the EU countries.

European Union countries can see a greater number of migrants as a threat to their lifestyle, culture or national security and stability, or as a rival in the struggle for limited local resources. Then there may be an increase in racism, discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance.

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## 2. HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Demographic changes are one of the main drivers that shaped the lives of Europeans. Europeans were most moving by all other nations. By the 19th century, Europe had a slow increase in the number of inhabitants. The reason for this was discomfort and wars in the area. Migrations took place in several waves.

The emigration started already after major geographic discoveries in the 16th century. However, only in the 19th century, due to the large natural increase in the number of inhabitants of Europe and the economic crises that affected primarily the poorer layers, mass emigration from Europe took place. According to the Institute for Migration and Ethnicity in Zagreb, “the migration of Europeans across the Atlantic is the largest and most fully documented migration in human history.” [1]

In the 19th and 20th centuries, most people went to North and South America, mainly in Argentina, and in Oceania. After the first wave, which is primarily related to the Germans and Scandinavians, began the second wave that applies to immigrants from Italy, Russia (Jews) and Central Europe (Austria-Hungary). At the end of the Second World War, most of the population was forced to emigrate. Just then occurred largest migration movement in the history of humankind “when in the area of Western Europe entered about 15 million people.” [2]

“In the late 40s and 50s and comes to overseas migration. Then, about 3 million people went from all over Europe.”[2] And residents of former European colonies migrated to Europe. After the wars, Europe needed labor, and it was brought primarily from former colonies, then from less industrialized countries such as Ireland and Finland, from Mediterranean countries such as Spain, Portugal, Greece and later from the former Yugoslavia, Tunisia, Turkey. Most of it was about temporary stay, which in time became constant.

“According to Castles in the 1970s there were about 12 million immigrants in Western Europe.” [2] Just then begins to change migration policy and the introduction of restrictive immigration measures - unskilled labor is no longer desirable. At the same time, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece become immigrant countries, and most of the population comes illegally.

“In 1989. year is a milestone in the history of international migration.” [2] Political changes - Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Connection of East and West “culminated in so-called mass

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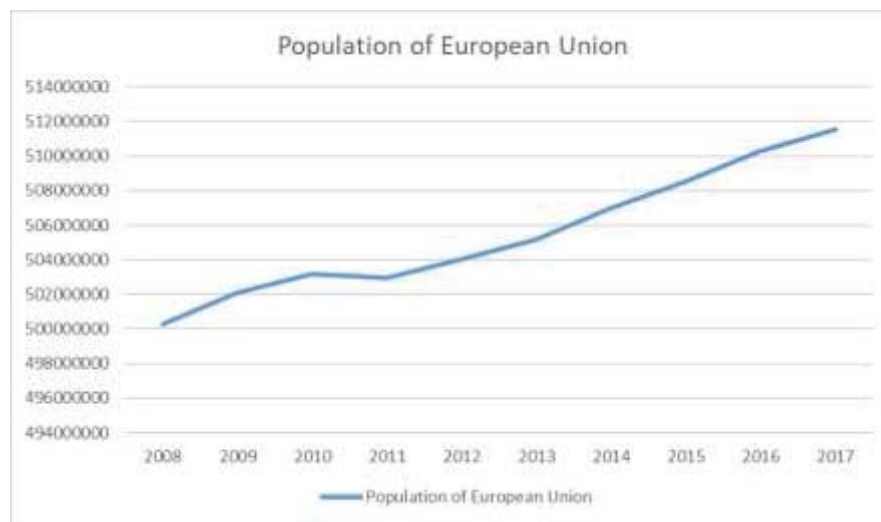
*In 2009 she has been employed at the College of Slavonski Brod as an assistant professor at the "Management" study program. In 2013 she earned its teaching degree and position as a lecturer at the College of Slavonski Brod. In 2017, she gained a teaching degree as a senior lecturer where she is still working today.*

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movements from 1989 to 1990. years. Only in 1989 more than 1.3 million people have emigrated. “[2] In mass migrations in 1989 there were two types of migration - ethnically motivated migration and forced migration, which shows the following picture. Ethnic-motivated migrations were made up of national minorities - Germans, Jews and Greeks. Forced migration has largely caused the war between the former Yugoslavia, when “more than a million people went from 1991 to 1998 in Western Europe.” [2]

In addition, Eastern European countries are facing labor migrations. Since 1997, there has been a growing trend of illegal migration. The inflow of migrants to the European Union has escalated in recent years. The wave of migration to the EU is largely due to war, poverty, and dangers due to and after Western intervention. The EU is a rescue for thousands of people fleeing from countries where there is no future. It is most common in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and parts of Africa. Accordingly, annual figures are radically larger than those of last years are. The main characteristic of the demographic picture is continuously increasing population at the level of the entire EU as shown in the graph below.



Graph 1: Population of European Union [3]

The graph shows that current demographic situation in the EU is characterized by continuing population growth.

### 3. DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION - MIGRATION AS A GLOBAL PROBLEM

The EU is not currently responding to an increasing number of immigrants, and this humanitarian problem is becoming an increasingly political, economic and security issue. This applies primarily to countries at the entrance, or to countries that are connected to the sea, such as Greece, Italy and Spain, but more and more to Hungary as it enters the Schengen zone. The decision to lift a tall wall between Hungary and Serbia for the new wave of migration - recalls the time of "Iron Curtain, ie the Berlin Wall." The Hungarian raising the wall was aimed that a number of migrants redirected towards Croatia or through the Croatian in the Schengen area. The number of refugees coming from Serbia and just the wall at the border with Hungary is rapidly increasing the number of refugees in Croatia. In this way, Croatia has become a transit country for migrants.

In addition to trying to reach a political plan for migration, the EU is still helpless to address this problem. Migration problem should have a common European solution, as refugees will again find alternative entry into Hungary, for example through Croatia. For this reason, national solutions will fail. Although the EU believes that each EU member state must provide border control itself, one of the proposals is that the whole EU should accept part of the registered asylum seekers, according to the system of imposed national quotas.

The European Union is currently in the most difficult position since its inception. Everyday life has become a crisis of unemployment and economic stagnation. According to the European Commission, "the number of employees is growing steadily in most EU countries, and the biggest problems remain long-term unemployment and youth unemployment." [4] In addition, the Republic of Croatia found itself in the same issue.

No one could ever even suspect that unemployment would rise so much that Greece's economy and economic problems would lead to bankruptcy. However, the economic problems are not only related to Greece but the future of the entire European Union can also be brought into question. In 2008, the financial crisis began and until today, it still lasts. The Greek crisis - the country's inability to pay its debts for itself since 2010, and its culmination, was achieved when the referendum Greek voters rejected the creditors' demands for reforms and now the key question is how to solve this problem.

Possible exit from the Eurozone or from the EU represents an unknown space for all EU policies. Exit would create a completely new situation for the European Union. The migration question has become one of the most important issues for the survival of the European Union.

#### 4. THE PROBLEM OF MASS MIGRATION IN THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIAN

Croatian joining the European Union announced the greater immigration wave. However, mass migrations are not expected in Croatia. The Republic of Croatia currently represents only the land of passage. Much greater problem is the emigration of the population from the Republic of Croatia in the countries of Western Europe.

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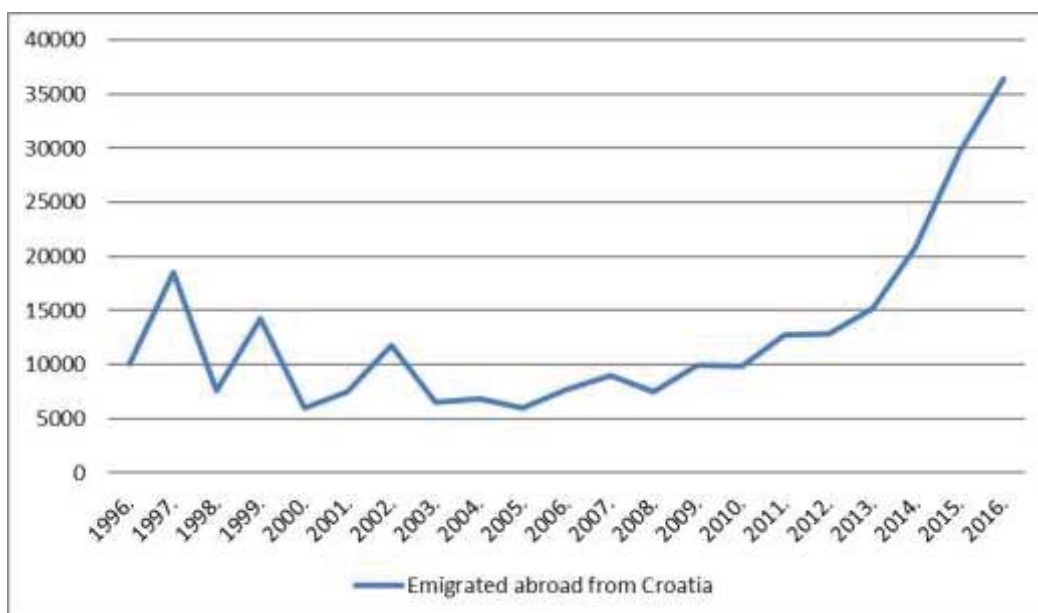
*Brod, direction: "Administrative Officer" in 2003. The same year she enrolled at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, where she graduated in 2007 at the direction of Financial Management. In 2009, she enrolled in the postgraduate doctoral study at Management at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, where she got a doctorate on 15 June 2015.*

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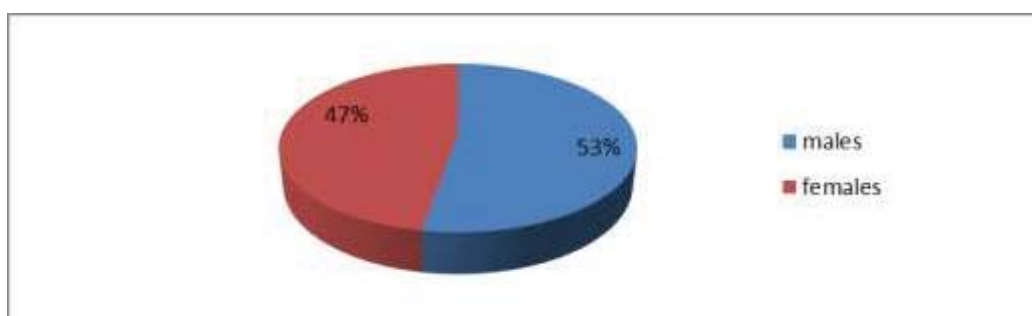
As one of the most important 'positive' factors of Croatia's accession to the European Union, there was a greater possibility of employment in Western European countries. Unfortunately, in this way, Croatia is still losing its population because it enables young people to move freely throughout Europe and have the opportunity to study and work in any country in the EU. It is a danger for every country, not just for Croatia, because it can lose skilled and educated staff for whom it has been attracting large amounts of money. The chart below shows the situation with the emigration.



Graph 2: Emigrated abroad from Croatia [5]

The graph shows that the Republic of Croatia has lost a great number of demographic potential in the observed period. The economic crisis, unemployment probably contributed to such bad indicators. In order to find out the reason for leaving was made a survey.

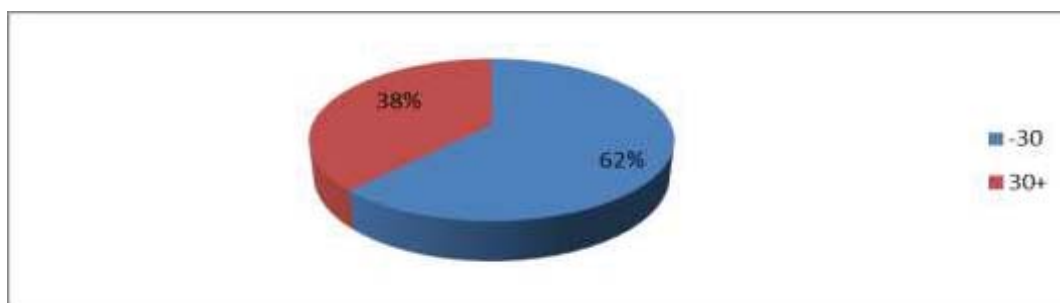
The survey was conducted through an emigrant survey to collect data on respondents' views on migration. The sample of entities is made up of 353 Croatian emigrants who have emigrated from any country in the world since 1996. The sample consists of respondents who were older than 18 at the time of emigration, except for the age limit and the time of emigration, there were no other constraints on the entity selection. The sample is suitably chosen, by selecting the emigrants the author came to know by personal acquaintance or the acquaintance of her acquaintances. However, the sample size ensures satisfactory representability. Below, it is shown the proportion of male and female respondents with the following graph.



Graph 3: Respondents by gender [author]

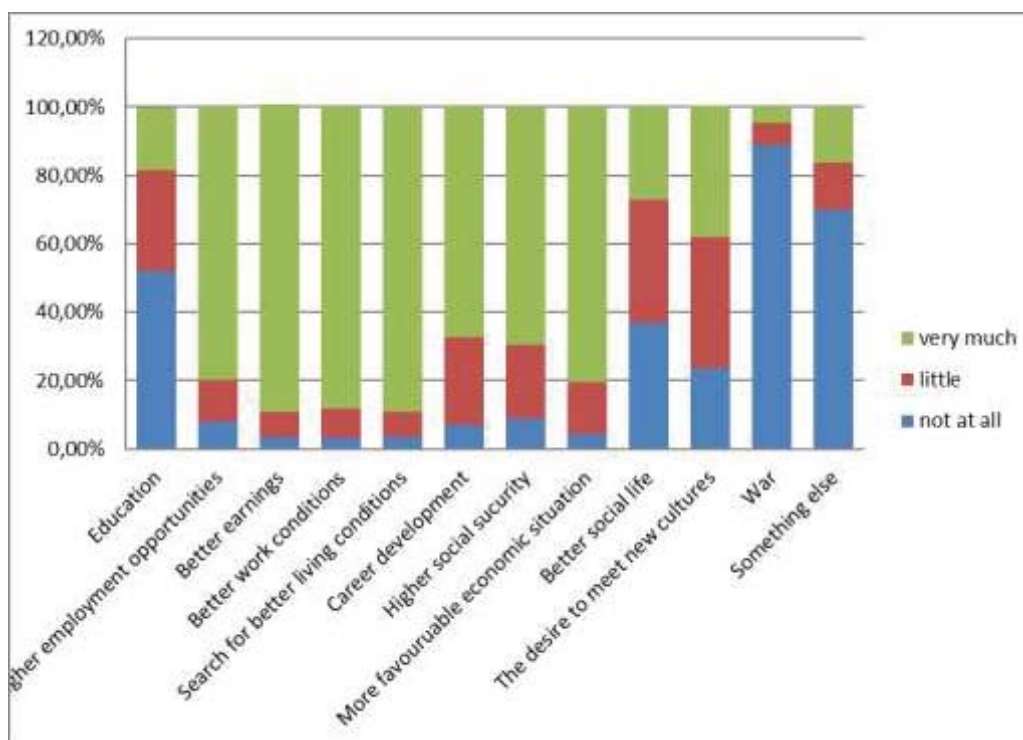


The obtained results show that random selection resulted in a slightly higher number of males (52.7%) than women (47.3%). The age of the respondent is shown in the following graph.



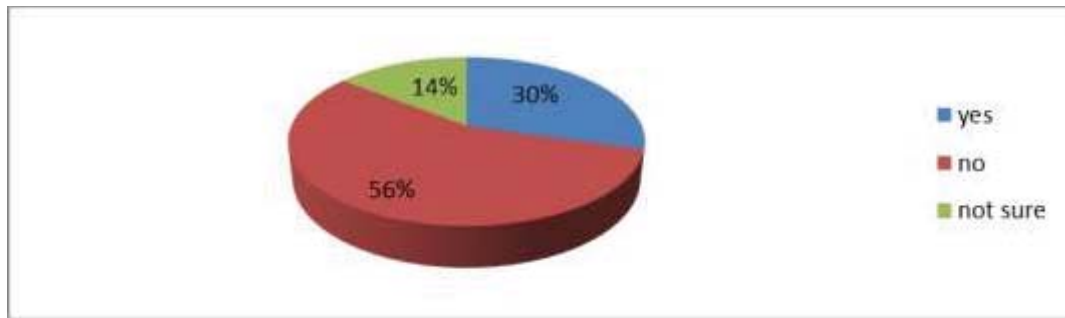
Graph 4: Respondents by age [author]

The results show that the majority of respondents (62%) almost two-thirds are between the ages of 18 and 30, which is expected while the respondents aged 30 and over have 38%. First and foremost, young people who are leaving because of existential problems are emigrating and this is a major problem for the state. The chart below shows the motives of leaving the respondents from the Republic of Croatia.



Graph 5: Motivation of leaving Croatia [author]

The obtained results show that the main reasons for leaving the Republic of Croatia are economic reasons. The most influential motive for the respondents was better earnings (89.9%), search for better living conditions (89.2%), better working conditions (88.1%), more favourable economic situation (70.5%), higher employment opportunities (79.9%), higher social security (69.7%), and career development (67.4%). On the other hand, only 4.8% of respondents have been persecuted (the war) is the motive for leaving; something else is a motive for leaving for 16.4% of respondents and education for 18.4% of respondents. What is particularly a major problem is that residents are encouraged to leave Croatia. The chart below shows the respondents' opinion should it be prevented departure from Croatia.



Graph 6: Respondents' opinion should it be prevented departure from Croatia [author]

The results show that 56% of respondents state that they should not be prevented from leaving, 30% of respondents say they should be prevented, and 14% is not sure. How much the emigration from the Republic of Croatia will continue will depend primarily on the socio-economic situation in the country and on new investments and the situation on the market of Western Europe.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Mass migrations are the present and the future of the European Union. The problem with immigrants in Europe is growing daily and its gravity is stronger than ever. Difficulties in accepting migrants to European Union are not only due to cultural or religious differences, but also because European countries do not have the history of immigration.

Furthermore, due to the lack of economic growth and high unemployment rates in some countries of the EU in the case of the Croatia can be seen that the population leaves country more and more. This trend has been increasing especially for the last couple of years and the prospect for the future is not good at all. The outcome of migration will depend on whether the EU is ready to assume the responsibility for the integration of the new population and how emigrants are ready to accept the foundations of the EU - democracy, human rights and so on.

*Lena Duspara* was born on November 9, 1984, in Slavonski Brod. She graduated at Zagreb School of Economics and Management in Zagreb 2007. In 2008, she enrolled in postgraduate specialist study "Strategic Entrepreneurship" at the Faculty of Economics and Business in Zagreb, University of Zagreb, which ends in 2011. In 2016, finished postgraduate doctoral study Management at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek.

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Lena Duspara has participated in international conferences and symposia in the fields of economics and management and has published 48 scientific and professional papers as well as 3 book, 1 chapter in the book, 1 guide, 1 abstract in the abstract and one paper



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