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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Czibere, I., & Schranz, E. (2020). The Migration of Career-Starter Hungarian Graduate Women to the Countries of the European Union. *Social Sciences*, *9*(5), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci9050062

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social sciences

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Article

The Migration of Career-Starter Hungarian Graduate Women to the Countries of the European Union

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Received: 7 March 2020; Accepted: 23 April 2020; Published: 27 April 2020

Abstract: In our paper, we present the reasons for and characteristics of the increasing migration of graduate women, mostly undertaken alone. In Hungary, in the context of the acceleration of migration experienced after 2010, two phenomena can be observed: (1) Due to positive selection a high proportion of well-trained young graduates have moved to live abroad; (2) over the past few years, a higher proportion of those migrating for work have been female graduates in their maternity age. Thus, not only is the process of weakening of the male dominance among the emigrants clearly perceptible, but a Hungary-related version of the feminization of the brain drain phenomenon due to the labor market demand of the host countries is also evolving. In this study, we examine the motivations of graduate women to work abroad and the success of their integration. Our qualitative study examines motivations for migration among college graduate females, who are just starting their career. We have explored social forces that influence emigration among the highest educated. We have also studied integration and assimilation strategies among Hungarian women working in the European Union. Our findings contribute to and extend research that focuses on push and pull factors in migration, as well as the interpretation of gender differences in migration, especially among the highest educated.

Keywords: work abroad; migration of women; feminization of brain drain; causes of migration

1. Introduction

In addition to migration policies, international migration is also influenced by a number of co-operative phenomena such as differences in labor market structures between countries, salary differentials and inequalities generally associated with this, as well as labor demand and labor supply, social security or insecurity and related confidence and other (e.g., economic) crises, potential conflicts and public policy factors (De Haas 2011). In the years after 2010, emigration from Hungary also accelerated (Blaskó and Gödri 2014), which was not only due to wage differences, wage dissatisfaction or unfavorable developments in unemployment. The increase in the rate of emigration can be influenced by "the labor market, the institutional, welfare and social care system of the given country, the way the former (post-socialist) institutional structure is transformed, the network of migration relations rooted in the previous period, the culture supporting migration and the processes can be influenced by the change in general well-being as well. The change of the Hungarian migration trend is explained by the above-mentioned factors, and besides the significant change in the institutional factors" (Hárs 2016, p. 245).

In 2011 several member states of the European Union opened their labor markets for Hungarian workers, which attracted a growing number of youths who decided to work abroad (Policy Brief 2019). New, emerging patterns of mobility in Central Europe have some similarities, but the migration trends of many member states show a lot of heterogeneity; that is, in terms of migration and its characteristics

Central Europe is not a homogenous area. As a result, the last 20 years have seen distinct emigration trends in intensity and direction. Emigration from Central and Eastern Europe is a severe problem. According to Eurostat data, in 2008 only 4.2 million Central and Eastern European residents moved to another European country, but by 2017 this number increased to 7.6 million. Statistics combining data from Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria indicate that emigration percentages rose from 4.6 to 8.5 percent. In Hungary emigration and working abroad started out very slowly, lagging behind in numbers compared to other countries in the area, and despite a rise in emigration, Hungary's numbers are higher than that of the Czech Republic only. Between 2011 and 2016, on average, 1% of Hungarian workers left the labor force. Currently about 10% of them work abroad. Emigration from Eastern Europe started in 2004 when Great Britain, Ireland and Sweden opened their labor market to welcome workers from Eastern Europe. Emigration from Hungary has been gradually on the rise since, especially to the United Kingdom and traditional destinations, such as Austria and Germany. The year 2011 saw a boost moving toward Austria and Germany when these countries opened their labor markets in May 2011. After a change in governance in Hungary in 2010, people waited for a while, but when they sensed restrictions and an unfavorable situation, some left to work abroad.

International literature has dealt since the 1960s with the issue of female migration significant to both the issuing and the target countries, in particular with the phenomenon of unmarried female emigration (Blaskó and Gödri 2014). The reasons brought up are the increasing independence of women and the possibility of independent decision-making on migration, which is the result of complex socio-cultural and historical effects (Oishi 2002). Analysts explain the reasons for the higher migration rate of women (also leaving the family behind) with a variety of factors, such as with increasing labor market participation as a result of changes in gender roles, the increase in the level of education, the feminization phenomenon of poverty (Czibere 2012; Blaskó and Gödri 2014) and the growth in women's family supporting role. Parallel to these, the importance of certain activities and services have become revaluated in the target countries (domestic, nursing jobs), which are carried out by a cheap female work-force (Gábriel 2016). The latter is the phenomenon of care-chain and care-drain, which is currently one of the main drivers of the female migration process in Europe (Blaskó and Gödri 2014).

In Hungary, according to TÁRKI's 2015 rapid migration survey of the population, the intention to emigrate was the highest in 2015 since the change of regime. According to the results of the survey, while in the peak period of 2011 to 2012 this rate was 7%, in 2015 already 10% would have chosen to emigrate. While short-term labor migration willingness declined, long-term employment willingness began to increase. The idea of emigration was mostly dealt with by men, the unemployed, young people, people living in rented homes and people of Roma/Gypsy origin (TÁRKI 2015). In terms of the social composition of migrants, the literature writes about a higher proportion of men, as authors Blasko, Ligeti and Sik also mention in their comparative study of 2014, in which they compared the results of five researches carried out among Hungarians having already emigrated and who are working abroad. In the analysis, with regard to the gender ratio in the above, they added that the extent of the male surplus differs among the migrants, which is explained by the different attributes of data collection, and secondly, by the fact that, in Hungary, due to the accelerated emigration of recent years, the male surplus characteristic of the first period of migration along with the widening of the emigration process lost part of its strength (Blaskó et al. 2014), with particular regard to long-term migration and groups including whole emigrated households. Thus, with the acceleration of migration, there is a weakening of male dominance among emigrants, while the proportion of men in short-term employment is significantly higher, and the proportion of long-term or permanently emigrated males is apparently lower. Endre Sik et al., comparing the results of several researches (SEEMIG, SEEMIG Omnibus (KSH 2014), Census, NKI Omnibusz, TÁRKI Monitor) conclude that, among the age group of 25 to 50 year-olds, most have travelled abroad and work abroad, and as to the level of education the proportion of graduates is the highest, higher than the proportion of those with high school level of education or that of unskilled migrant workers. The authors note that, in terms of the population aged

18 to 65 years: (1) The chances for migration decrease with age considerably; (2) graduates and skilled workers are four times more likely to go abroad than those with the lowest level of education, but high school graduates also have a double chance compared to the previous group. According to the social composition, the proportion of women, young people and people with higher education is the lowest in Germany between 18 and 65 years of age; in Austria the rates are similar; in the UK the ratio of women and men is relatively balanced but the ratio of the younger generation (18 to 31 year-olds) is significantly higher (63%), and the proportion of people with tertiary education is also significantly different, more than double the ratio of those in Germany.

The greatest difficulty in migration research in Hungary lies in uncertainties and validity issues in migration statistics. As a result, official and authentic data are hard to access. At the same time, the existing data are not suitable for exploring real reasons behind emigration or the length of emigration and other personal factors. Usually it is beneficial to check statistics in the host countries because their migration and labor force data tend to be more reliable than those of the home countries. Besides issues in statistical data, explorative qualitative studies are limited as well; thus, there are no available in-depth studies concerning social, individual and other causes of migration (Czibere and Rácz 2019).

Our qualitative research involved conducting semi-structured interviews with college-graduate women in the beginning of their career who have been living abroad for a while. The main dimensions of our study aim to explore motivations behind working abroad, as well as strategies for successful integration and assimilation. This research fills a gap in more than one way. First off, there had not been a migration study among women in Hungary; secondly, there had not been any information on highly educated women making a career abroad.

Our study focuses on the migration motivation of young, mostly single, female graduates working abroad. Over the past 5 to 7 years, an increasing proportion of young graduate women have chosen to emigrate for employment mostly alone, with no connection network in the host countries (Gödri 2010; Gödri and Feleky 2017). Research on this phenomenon is still a peripheral area for analysts. In this study, we examine the causes, motivations and female specifics of the employment and migration of graduate women abroad, touching upon their integration characteristics. In the first section of this manuscript we discuss the relationship between social capital and migration, introduce the phenomenon of the brain drain and we also cover some aspects of the feminization of migration. In the second half of the section we focus on key points in migration theories, especially those that provide a relevant framework for the interpretation of our results. Our "Methods" section outlines our interviewees in detail, as well as our sampling methods, research dimensions and the aims of our study. The second half of our article is devoted to discussing our results. First, we introduce typologies for motivations, then satisfaction levels among the young women and we interpret the factors and strategies that aid their successful integration. The last section of our manuscript sums up our findings.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Capital—The Feminization of Brain Drain?

The involvement and role of social capital in the distribution processes is deduced by the authors (Flap 1998) from the Weber stratification model. According to Weber, people's actions towards improving living conditions are motivated by gaining economic, symbolic and political power (Weber 1996a, 1996b). In Flap's interpretation, beside the three types of power mentioned above, social power can be distinguished as a fourth. "People's personal networks and the resources that can be mobilized through them can be considered as social capital" (Flap 1998, p. 130). As a result of social capital in relationship systems, the assumption of a better quality of life and the possibility of getting a better job are at the heart of the theory's hypothesis. The two authors distinguish three aspects of the impact of social capital: (1) Greater social capital provides better job opportunities; (2) all this as soon as possible and for a longer period of time; (3) equates social capital and the expected value of future assistance. At the same time, in their study entitled 'Social capital and occupational status' they note

that, according to research results, although personal relationships in good jobs help the individual to progress in the labor market, these relationships cannot replace good education— as measured through occupational prestige (Flap 1998). Subjective life situations may show similarities in their relation to the process of retaining social status. In the interpretation of the Hradil milieu theory, this may imply the development of a "common lifestyle" (Hradil 2010, p. 420) among migrant youth in other countries as well. Based on the identities of the "common lifestyle", people-made groups are created so that they have external living conditions or internal attitudes that provide the basis for the collective lifestyle characteristics (Hradil 2010). Similarly to the new concepts born in the 1970s and 1980s, the Hradil milieu concept is focused on the individual to examine the mediator function of milieus (according to sectors) between the individual and the outside world. Thus, the path leading to the best knowledge of the social world surrounding the individual is, according to Hradil, is the knowledge of subjectively meaningful actions according to the actors, while taking into account the preconditions, action processes and consequences related to them.

In the advantageous countries, the economic environment gives a greater incentive to the migration of the gifted, emphatically of the spiritual elite (De Haas 2010), which strengthens potential migration so that migrants often do not look for adequate opportunities at home (De Haas 2010), thus accomplishing the phenomenon of brain drain (Csanády et al. 2008; Blaskó and Gödri 2014). However, through the focus of the feminization of migration (Castles et al. 2014), Hungarian data show that, while research on migration intent and realization showed a significant male surplus at the beginning of the 2010s (Ruff 2013), by the mid-2010s young Hungarian graduate women began to become more mobile in undertaking employment abroad than men, so the trend seems to be turning around. The Network and Boston Consulting Group Survey (2014), one of Europe's leading organizations of market-leading job portals, having conducted an international comparative research (the Network and the Boston Consulting Group conducted a survey in 189 countries about the possible reasons for migration in 2014 (a sample of 200,000 people), in Hungary 5000 people were in the sample. https://www.bcg.com/publications/2014/people-organization-human-resources-decoding-global-talent.aspx) also measuring Hungary, says that 57 percent of women and 43 percent of men in Hungary would be looking for a job in another country. With the acceleration of migration, the process of the weakening of the clearly male domination among the emigrants is perceptible. Positive selection (Horváth 2015; Czibere and Rácz 2016) has led to the migration of a high proportion of young people with a higher education from Hungary; this group has a higher proportion of female graduates in the last few years (Czibere and Rácz 2016), employees in an age when they would be able to have babies. Considering the statistically well-founded concept in migration research (KSH 2015; TÁRKI 2015; The Network and Boston Consulting Group Survey 2014) that migration is chosen by the unmarried due to the cost factors of human capital theories (Blaskó and Gödri 2014; Sik and Szeitl 2016), as well as the fact that more young women in Hungary are graduates of higher education institutions than men, the female migration potential in Hungary and the feminization of the brain drain phenomenon (the migration of human capital and the brain drain phenomenon of the migration of people with higher education have been investigated for almost half a century by researchers from sociology, cultural and economic aspects (Csanády et al. 2008)) in the labor market demand of the host countries (Csanády et al. 2008; Rohr 2012) is clearly emerging in our opinion (KSH 2016; Csanády et al. 2008; Rohr 2012). In addition, we cannot ignore the fact that the proportion of women planning to study abroad is significantly higher (women: 12%; compared to 8.5% for men) (Czibere and Rácz 2016).

2.2. Migration Theories and Graduate Female Emigration

Migration studies differentiate between various types of migration and explore distinct social, economic and cultural contexts for migration. Migration is a cultural phenomenon that has always been present in human civilization as a salient force (Cohen and Sirkeci 2011). According to the (Cseresnyés 2005) interpretation, we consider a change of their living environment from temporary to permanent of

young graduate women in the frame of our research not as mobility but as migration. This is confirmed from the transnational theories by the typing of Tilly's migration aspect (Tilly 2007), which analyzes the types of migration. In the Tilly interpretation of the shades of transition and final migration, it is their role in the network of the sending country that determines the type of migration of individuals. This approach is also accepted in our analysis. We use chain migration (as a result of the chains of related individuals and households, the migrant arriving at the new location is assisted by the population living at the place of arrival, after proper preparation (information, housing, encouragement, etc.)) and career migration (feature of individuals and households who change their position to seize the best opportunities within corporate structures) as a decisive correlation from the Tilly typing. In our interpretative framework, the transnational form of life is a fundamental element, in which the migrant develops a "social field" over geographical, political and cultural boundaries (Pitó 2015, p. 19) with the development of travel techniques and telecommunications.

In our analysis, we consider the system of factors for individual interests, the Ravenstein push–pull system of factors and the labor attractiveness provided by the host country connected to the pull effect, and the opportunities (work environment, personal relationships, senior-subordinate relationship, appreciation) interrelating with the start of life chances that ideally appear. We rely on the interpretation of the international migration model of the microeconomic model, which leads to unbalanced relations between earnings–employment rates, which correlates with the characteristics of human capital (education, foreign language skills). According to this, migration is more likely if the individual has a high level of education and knowledge of a foreign language because they are more likely to be employed with the hoped-for higher salary in the country of destination than in the country of origin.

In the Gödri interpretation of the theory of cumulative causality, migration itself creates a transformation in the relationships that make the bond a resource. Thus, the emigrated person becomes a central player in his network in terms of migration—in the form of information and help. According to the theory of social capital, emigrants or those who have previously been in contact with people who chose to be migrants, are able to use such social capital as a resource that increases the chances of themselves becoming migrants. In Gödri's view, this does not only mean that this resource chain has an explanatory power in terms of the size of migration waves, but also explains why certain target countries are popular. De Haas's "bipolar pattern" (De Haas 2010, p. 59) assumes that in areas and countries with an advantage, the economic environment draws the investment from those on the periphery and gives more impetus to the migration of the more gifted, which also strengthens potential migration, as migrants often do not look for adequate opportunities at home. In our case, this momentum in our research is mostly related to issues of the first job of young people.

3. Data and Methodology

Our qualitative study examines reasons behind the emigration of young, college-educated women. Our research was carried out among Hungarian women aged 22–36 (BSc, MSc, Ph.D.) living abroad. The young people in the sample came from the capital city, from the cities of Bács-Kiskun, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar, Borsod, Baranya, Fejér, Vas, Győr-Moson-Sopron counties, and rarely from smaller villages, to the European labor market. In terms of destinations, Germany (Munich, Frankfurt, Berlin and smaller settlements), the Netherlands (The Hague, Amsterdam, Rotterdam), Switzerland (Zurich, Basel) and the UK (London, Oxford and smaller settlements) and smaller cities in France are now home to the emigrated Hungarian youth we interviewed.

Almost all of the young people with higher education we interviewed spoke both English and German, so they were able to apply for jobs in both languages, in line with the multinational environment. The young people's professional qualifications are diverse. Many of them are economists or financial graduates, but there are also land surveyors, mechanical engineers, biomedical engineers, horticultural engineers, chemical engineers, transport engineers, auditors, sociologists, psychologists, geographers, graduate social workers, social policy graduates, financial analysts and HR and international relations experts. Those who had a job at the time of the interviews, with the exception of five young people,

are all employed in their profession; that is, they are doing a job according to their qualifications. Almost all of them are employed as intellectuals, some of them already working at the middle management level. Four respondents were looking for a job or studying at the time of the interview. Several people would like to continue their studies, but all of them are planning to do this abroad, none of them would move home to do that. A significant proportion of the respondents grew up in satisfactory and even very good financial circumstances, and those also considered their living conditions in Hungary well-off who came from a significantly lower-income family.

The research was conducted from October to December 2015 and April 2016, with the recording of 50 individual interviews. The selection was done by expert sampling; that is, we selected participants from the target population for our sample based on some relevant information. All of our interviewees have been living, studying and/or working abroad for years, there were those who were in a job change, but also those who were not working because of child care. We reached the interviewees with snowball technology. We needed snowball sampling because we did not have a chance to identify in advance who falls into our target population, and where they live, so a palpable solution was to rely on our informants to give us references. We asked interviewees to suggest other subjects, and we contacted the next potential participant based on that. At the start of our research, we tried to search for our prospective subjects from several directions, first by trying to make contacts through Facebook, for example, with young Hungarians living in London and around London, but this technique did not prove to be successful. There was strong mistrust, several people said that they were happy to fill in a questionnaire, but they did not want to talk. The search for interviewees was finally launched with the help of acquaintances, mostly from our university. So, with the help of referees, we were able to prepare the interviews gradually.

As we have discussed before, due to uncertainties and validity issues in migration statistics, official and authentic data are only scarcely available. The last comprehensive survey in Hungary that studied emigrants was a micro census by the Central Statistical Agency in 2016. At the same time, these data are not suitable to explore real reasons behind emigration, or how long it lasts, or any other personal factors. We conducted our own research to fill this gap among young women. As ours was an exploratory study with qualitative methods, we did not have a chance to form hypotheses in advance. We did have research questions, as follows:

1. What motivates migration among the highly educated women we interviewed?
2. What kind of factors impact successful integration and assimilation among women who work abroad?

We had an interview outline for our semi-structured interviews. We broke the questions down to five main dimensions: (1) Family and relationship background before leaving to work abroad; (2) motivations for moving abroad; (3) personal and labor market factors influencing integration and assimilation abroad after migration; (4) current standard of living and circumstances living abroad; (5) satisfaction level, the extent to which expectation have been met, future plans (career plans, relationships, starting a family, potential plans to return home).

We recorded (skype) and transcribed each interview word by word. Interviews were 60–90 min. During our interviews we aimed to explore profound, complex cause and effect relationships, comprehensive, ingrained opinions and previously unknown mechanisms. We analyzed interviews by coding. We coded labels that through their names succinctly indicated repeated themes, content or characteristics. Codes were paired with pieces of text for content reduction and focusing on what is really important. During our analysis we performed secondary coding for patterns to underline the connections and patterns between codes.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. The Motivation of Employment Abroad for Young Graduate Women and the Characteristics of Their Integration

The Motivation for Migration and the Level of Satisfaction

We asked our interviewees to evaluate how they lived in Hungary before moving abroad. We received different answers for each type of settlement. The majority of respondents from the capital and larger cities considered their living conditions in Hungary to be satisfactory, many of them reported an above-average standard of living. Even this subjectively good situation did not prevent the female respondents from moving abroad alone and living there as co-renters, not even those who had a self-contained apartment in the capital or a separate apartment in the parental house. For the most part, this did not affect the hope for a better life, as the women interviewed considered their own opportunities for action to be better, despite all the changes they might consider negative.

In the sub-sample of graduated women from small towns and small settlements, there were respondents satisfied and also those dissatisfied with their juvenile circumstances. However, those belonging to the group of graduate women from villages were almost all dissatisfied with their circumstances at home. The reasons mentioned for this were low parental incomes, modest pocket money, their housing milieu, modest housing conditions (for example, a shared room with several siblings) or the absence of a parent due to divorce or death, family tensions mostly due to material deprivation or difficulties due to lack of financial support during the period of their higher education studies.

Young people living in a relationship rent a flat or a small apartment in the country of their choice (sometimes the rental property is paid by their employer). However, for women living alone, in the majority of cases, co-renting is only affordable. Mostly, they rent a room in a multi-room apartment, most of them live with students from other countries or with Hungarian-speaking workers; sometimes they are tenants with local families. In general, there is a strong desire in these young women to move to independent apartments, especially in situations where co-renting is actually bed renting; that is, a shared room with another migrant. The responses reflect the apparent contradiction that even those are satisfied with their current circumstances who now live in worse conditions compared to their past circumstances at home (previously they had their own room in their parents' home or lived in excellent financial conditions in their own homes).

Tertiary education qualifications, especially Ph.D. degrees, have a very strong impact on the intention for long-term foreign employment. The women with a doctoral degree we interviewed plan their entire future abroad, without exception, as also do young female respondents who study for their basic diploma abroad.

In the case of single women, future planning is strongly influenced by the uncertain or unpredictable changes in their life at the time of the response, so some of them left the question open or decided to settle down. Uncertainty about female respondents living in a relationship increases with childbirth or child education. These two cases allow young women, i.e., those who have children and a family or want to have children in the near future, to reflect on family. One reason for this is that in their country of choice, childcare allowance is often less advantageous than that of the domestic system.

Of the two groups of female graduates, those who were single and those who were living in a relationship, it was markedly single women who felt that they were satisfied with their circumstances based on their monthly earnings. Among those living in relationships, living conditions and relationship difficulties played a greater role in determining their judgments of their overall satisfaction.

As far as the issue of regular financial support for the home is concerned, it was clear that this is not typical of the young people in the sample. It is more common among single female respondents to decide whether or not to support those left at home on the basis of their family circumstances and family relationships. Regularly and in a larger proportion, it is those who are to provide support who

have left the needy at home, a divorced mother, an unemployed mother, a younger sibling or a parent living in a disadvantageous settlement.

Those who are unable or unwilling to reintegrate into domestic conditions, i.e., those who are planning their lives abroad in the long run, were more critical in their responses to the public affairs in Hungary. Primarily, it was the labor market, their employment difficulties or their failures, or the related situations (Hajdu 2012; Ságvári 2012; Kapitány and Kapitány 2016) that they considered to be against their norms, which were mentioned as conditions exceeding their tolerance level. Disintegration (Hajdu 2012) coming from the loss of public trust felt in Hungarian present-day society and the opinions formulated about norms and values by the young generation, i.e., the social group considered by Furlong as "the most vulnerable" (Furlong 2004), are reflected in the responses of the young women, as well.

Based on the above, we have identified five categories of responses as to the motivations of migration among fresh graduate women: Migration due to hopes for a better life start, self-realization, fugitives of failure, those moving abroad for their studies and those who follow their partners.

1. Hopes for a better life start

This category involves migration due to lack of money, as well as placements in the hope of promotion prospects in the company.

> "I saw that if I wanted to move out of those 30 square meters, I wouldn't be able to save up for it. That was one reason. The other was that there was a limit, there was a learning curve, from that point there was no way forward at home. The field I was in was getting very boring because things were just repetitive, and I already knew there were much more interesting deals in London or elsewhere, one could learn more, there was more work to do. But if you are up to the task, it may be better" (33, credit analyst, London).

While the dilemmas of life-start chances are apparent in all five categories, the migration of young graduate women in the category of "better life-start chances" in Sik's relationship capital (Sik 2012) interpretation may also be given special emphasis, as according to their accounts, almost without exception, they started to look for foreign jobs without a foundation of network capital, only relying on their hope in the labor market value of their own studies, abilities and diplomas.

> "There are things I can't change, like my (student) loan . . . in order to be able to make a living and send money to my mother as well, it seemed like the logical option, that I had to go abroad. I don't know how well this would work at home" (27, financial analyst in London with an MA degree from Spain).

> "It was basically that I started my Ph.D. and I wasn's doing very well with the research, I only did work that the company needed me to . . . so I thought I was never going to complete it, and then I applied for a Swiss scholarship. I worked here for a year, it was clear to me that if I could, I would like to stay here because of the Ph.D. scholarship; the doctorate is in practice work so I got a salary from the local institution, from which they deduct social insurance, then if later the person becomes unemployed, they will get unemployment benefits because this will have been withdrawn from the scholarship, so I could apply for unemployment benefits, I started looking for a job, I was interviewed about ten times, I started working here in April, I was looking for work for practicallyh half a year. I wanted to go to Sweden or I don't know. Actually, somewhere in Western Europe, where research has a future and there's money for it". (30, living in Zurich, bioengineer)

> "My grandmother was retired. The orphan's allowance for 3 children plus her pension, max. HUF 200,000 [monthly income for the family]. They lived quite modestly [at home]. When I studied at university, I had been supporting myself for quite a long time. By the time I

> was 14, when I moved into the student college, I was leading an independent life. I was careful with [the orphan's allowance], paid for the hostel, textbooks, bought clothes, paid for lunch, stuff like that. [My siblings] are grown up now, they also live abroad. My brother is 4 years younger than me, he lives here in the UK, my sister is 5 years younger, she is in Poland. I think [foreign employment] is a matter of living standards. After university I had a job [in Hungary]. The trouble was that the financial crisis came right then, but the person who employed me was from a foreign country. I started as an intern. He thought that I was able to do more, and I wanted to show that I could reach a certain level, and that may sound self-absorbed, but I felt that one could do everything and anything. Of course, within the ethical framework that is often missing in a particular environment. But today I think it over again, who should I want to prove anything to? You always move forward compared to yourself, not to others" (33, economist, financial analyst in London).

The meritocratic approach of these young graduate women is associated with the possibility of exploiting the opportunities. In their decisions based on migration motivations, the recognition of the investment-return result-parallels analyzed by Rosen and known from human capital theories appears: The total of the incomes is the compensation of previous investments (Rosen 1998). That is another reason we can label the better life start category as a category that strongly supports the rational decision motive.

2. Self-realization (and seeking adventure)

> "Hungary was never enough for me, and the opportunities were not such that would allow you to have a normal standard of living, especially as it relates to social life. Obviously, I didn't want to live with my parents forever, with their support, and in order to live on the same standard of living as the way I had grown up, Hungarian salaries are not high enough. My mom worked in child protection, and I grew up into the social care profession, so I felt that this was my calling, my talent is in this, people trust me, theya are open towards me, I have empathy, I don't care if I don't become a millionaire, but I felt that I had to do this" (28, working in his profession as a social politician in Brighton).

The common origin of the migrant motivation of young graduates in the category of self-realizers is that they take their profession that they have acquired at university level more seriously than any other category. This is particularly true of graduates in the social sciences. According to their answers, in the domestic economic–social conditions they did not see the achievement of individual ambitions, professionalism and the realization of the goals and possibilities of starting a life approachable. Their migration is not merely one-dimensional or two-dimensional; that is, we cannot declare that there are only economic reasons (job opportunity, salary) for their emigration. The individual interests include cultural factors that show subjective needs, and factors of well-being also appear in some of the answers.

3. Escapists (employment abroad specifically due to failures in the domestic employment market)

> "Well, I have been to a lot of places, I went to interviews in many places, but as I see it, it's not as easy as it sounds. Especially if you sign up from the Internet. Everywhere in Hungary who you know . . . so there was also a place where they were expressly hostile to me because I had lived abroad and they did not like that" (26, mechanical engineer, Burghausen).

The third category of motivations is used to label those fleeing labor market failures (to clarify, this category is not associated with that of refugees (e.g., political) used in migration research. The category is simply based on labor market motivations). In these cases, the subjectively different, yet objectively equally present failure experienced by young graduates—often looking for their first jobs—does not only leave a negative impression, but is also linked to an unsuccessful start to their adult lives,

manifesting also as an inefficiency in their career development. Thus, this initial failure presents itself as a strong motivation for emigration. The sub-sample of single women in this category undertook migration and employment abroad with an inferior status compared to the one they had at home. Characteristically, they started looking for jobs alone, without any support. According to Piore's thoughts, low wages in the countries of origin or a high unemployment rate would not necessarily be strong push factors in themselves, without the labor-related pull factors of the host countries (Piore 1979). In the case of people in this category, escaping was, on the one hand, a reaction to the realities of the domestic labor market, on the other, seemed their only way of realizing their potential.

> "I had several jobs, indeed with a multinational company and with smaller companies as well. Yet somehow nothing ever really worked, and in the end, I had had enough, because after all, I didn't want to stay in Hungary for long, anyway, it was my parents who insisted. But, I really wasn't leaving behind any kind of career, so there was nothing to keep me. Basically, I have found one or two of these waitress jobs where I think they would employ me, only, I'm still waiting on a place that should have answered already, that would be an HR job, so it would be more appropriate for my qualifications, I don't want to start another job before I know this [application] was successful or not. I think they are 100% supportive, my mom definitely, my dad also supports me so I really can't say a word, because they supported me coming out here financially as well, to try and start over, only, they wanted me to stay there, but then I think they realized byt now that I'm an adult and sooner or later I'll come if I want to" (25, economist, Paris).

> "There were no job interviews according to my qualifications. There were two big reasons [for coming abroad], that I was at home with my family in the village, so, the village as an environment, compared to Debrecen, so compared to a city where I had lived [when I was studying at university], and I could go where I wanted. My friends were there. Well, most of my friends stayed there or they were tied to that place, and when I went home it was different. I kept in touch with them on Skype and exchanged messages, but for me, this was a step backward, a narrower space than what I had got used to. One that I didn't know how to get out of when I had no money even to travel to Debrecen anymore. That is, to leave the place where I was at the time. And that hit me pretty hard" (27, geographer, lives in Stuttgart).

4. University studies

> "I wanted to graduate from a top university, to improve my chances on the job market, and the Netherlands was the country where EU students get the cheapest education. For me, this was the least likely option in my mind that I go home. I wanted to try to stay abroad. If I had stayed at home, I wouldn't be doing the same. So I don't think I would be starving because I'd be doing something different, I just like to do this" (26, economist, with a doctorate from Rotterdam).

Respondents who had originally chosen to go abroad for their studies present a less uniform picture in the economic background of their families and in the labor market position they had attained by the time of the interview. While their career planning, accompanied by their search for educational and employment opportunities, had been based on conscious strategies aligned with aspects of a transnational lifestyle (Tilly 2007; Pitó 2015), many were in a phase of active job-seeking at the time of the interview. They were determined to find a job that fit their qualifications, because they considered the potential opportunities and experiences they could gain as a foundation forfuture progress. At the same time, with regards to the economic resources of the families of female respondents in this category, we found examples from both ends of the spectrum. In the case of those who had chosen to do their undergraduate degree in London or other major cities in Europe, or who had completed their paid masters courses in, for example, Germany, and were supported by their parents for the whole time,

attention to conscious career-building stemmed from a different source than in the case of those who had moved from the countiyside to Budapest for their studies and had to work all throughout their university education. Members of the second group made decisions based on push–pull motivations guiding individual interests, under which such interests are not always economically oriented, because the socio-political characteristics of the target country also play a role in migration decisions (Hárs 1992; De Haas 2011; Pitó 2015). This group justified their decision to emigrate with the state of public affairs in Hungary.

> " . . . then I came here thinking that if I do not hate this country from the bottom of my heart, I will not move back home" (31, sociologist lives in Sheffield, with a doctorate from the UK).

5. Followed her partner

"I fell in love 9 years ago with a Dutch guy with whom we were in a distant relationship for four years, and then there were opportunities to get closer step by step. I studied economics, I became an HR officer. As a young talent with a company, I had the opportunity to go work in Germany, it was closer to the Netherlands, so I did it. Not to mention this was a real challenge professionally. Then the next step was that the Dutch subsidiary had a vacancy that was perfect for my profile. It was 5 years ago in June that I started to live and work here. Meanwhile, we got married, we have two children" (36, lives in The Hague, did her MSc in HR in the Netherlands).

> "I went through the interview processes properly and completely. I got all of [my jobs] this way, starting with NATO, my first professional training, and all the rest that followed; that I took the necessary steps" (27, has lived abroad for 5 years living abroad, financial analyst in London).

In this category, there were three groups: (1) Followed a partner with the same mother tongue they had met in their home country; (2) followed a partner from a foreign country they had met in their home country; (3) moved to live with a partner they had previously met abroad. Childrearing is not characteristic of people in this sample, even among couples who are married or have lived in a stable relationship for a longer period; only a few have children. The most major commonalities among them were striving for a better life both in general and in terms of social capital, and being motivated by the advantages of mutual support measured in the expected value of mutually helping each other (Flap 1998) and the hope of mutually supportive career-building. Such moves were occasionally helped by the possibility of intra-company career migration (Tilly 2007) within a multinational company present in Hungary. Couples going abroad from Hungary could only rely on each other from the beginning. In the case of foreign partners, an intermediary third language often plays an impeding role in daily life. This emotionally charged situation, even with the sacrifices made in the hope of future returns (family foundation, children, financial security) (Sik 2012) calls attention to the risky nature of such an investment of relationship capital.

> "We had relied on each other with Balázs, which was good, and at the same time it was not so good, and really, you can also rely on your family even at a distance, they can honestly provide a lot of mental help" (32, has lived in the Netherlands for 10 years, did her MSc in finance–accounting, high prestige position at a multinational company).

5. Factors Influencing Successful Foreign Integration

In their respective chosen environments (workplace, living environment, partner), the adaptability of young people in each group is tested differently by the environmental changes associated with working abroad. According to the logic of Hradil's theory on milieus, life goals assigned to ideas regarding quality of life make it possible for people to define their needs—as they relate to the elimination of inequalities—themselves (according to this theory, in terms of the quality of life and

everyday lifestyle, the needs of an individual seeking social security throughout their whole life cannot be compared to the needs of a person longing for the economic benefits and recognition attained through their profession. With the strengthening of this subjective factor in modern societies, the emergence of autonomous attitudes is increasingly observable (Hradil 2010)). Our assumption is that the motivation for obtaining a post befitting one's educational qualifications is essentially the first step towards integration into one's social environment, since, as can be clearly deduced from the interviews, there are no special requirements and conditions for the integration into environmental (residential, workplace) relations. This assumes a high degree of adaptability from emigrants. From this point forward, in order to examine the various forms of integration, we put our interviewees into different categories created based on the thesis of Hradil's theory on milieus (Hradil 2010), whereby lifestyle is formed according to the needs of: (1) Those who already completed bachelor's or master's degrees abroad; (2) those who went to different countries in Europe after having completed their training at home and/or after having acquired work experience.

5.1. Relationship-Building and Integration among Women Who Obtained a Degree at a Foreign University

Approaching the relationship between exclusion and inclusion through the complexities of social and cultural integration, Eriksen asks: "To what extent are minority members able to satisfy some or even a larger part of their needs within their own community—without "the need for complete integration"—on the other hand, to what extent is the boundry between the majority and minorities solid, or else similar to a semi-permeable membrane?" (Eriksen 2008). Eriksen modeled the extensive networks of a Somali family leading a transnational, migrant lifestyle in Oslo, and examining them through the lense of Tönnies' two ideal types of social organization, Gemeinschaft (community) and Gesellschaft (society), found that a person can be a full member of either without belonging to the other—in the general, real sense of the word. In other words, they can be a member of a narrower community—with an extensive network of their own—without even speaking the language of the host society (Gesellschaft). Conversely, they can be a tax-paying, law-abiding, voting, functional member of the society they live in without knowing anyone in it.

Young female university graduates' experiences of integration are related to the mostly international community they cultivated themselves, in which they studied and now work, and which, in Eriksen's interpretation, is Gemeinschaft. Therefore, their experience of belonging to Gesellschaft is increasingly limited in its importance.

The young women in the sample, who have completed a bachelor's or master's degree in the European Union outisde of Hungary, or taken part in master's and/or Ph.D. programme and are now employed in their chosen country, have typically studied in an international environment and for the most part work in an international team. Moreover, although they have close relationships with their friends back home, with whom they communicate via the internet, keeping what they consider also created local ties important to them. Collegial relationships formed during university or at the workplace have developed into friendships with bonds of varying strength (Granovetter 2010; Gödri 2010), in which these young people, according to their own assessment, feel good. Thus, in a complex sense, their integration can be called successful if we accept the view that social systems regular contact (monthly, weekly or even once every 3 to 4 days) with them, all of them have that exist in multiple dimensions assume continuous interaction between individuals and the process of institutional integration (Eriksen 2008; Kováts 2013).

> "Integration has never been a problem for the most part, and I think people have different levels of demand, because there are those for whom it is more important, those for whom it is less so; people who were my colleagues at Moody's, they are very good friends of mine to this day. So I don't feel like I wasn't able to integrate or find friends" (27, financial-accounting degree, lives in London).

However, in the normative interpretation of integration, used by researchers for interpreting the personal social integration of immigrants, integration also appears as a goal and tool, and the degree of integration is formulated according to the subjective and objective well-being of the individuals and groups that make up society (Kováts 2013). Since adapting to the characteristics of their chosen lifestyle is not a constraint, but a means to an end, homesickness does not seem to enter the minds of those in this sub-sample analyzing of the texts of all the interviews; this concept only comes up once, and even then only in the negative: "I often went back home because of my long-distance relationship, so . . . I went often but not because of homesickness" (27, international studies MA, lives in Munich).

At the same time, young university graduates belonging to this group move relatively frequently due to their studies, internships and jobs, so they often do not even really have a chance to integrate, in the social, societal and everyday sense of the word (Kovách and Csaba 2012, p. 8).

> "Because of university, there was already an environment that made it easy at the beginning, and I made lots and lots of friends. At first, I didn't want to move away from there. Then, the city is very good, relatively small, but not too small. It's in a gorgeous area, the people here are incredibly nice. I think that when my contract expires next year, if I apply for jobs then I will try to make sure they're around here, so that I do not have to move. I've really gcome to like the place, and I have a favorite coffee shop. My friends here . . . while in Birmingham, I have friends from the university there on the one hand, and on the other, I have, basically, met a group of people who lived in the same part of town as I did, and then we went out with them everywhere. Here the relationship netork is a bit wider and a little more extensive and varied, but essentially one of the most important elements is the workplace" (31, sociologist, with a doctorate from the UK, lives in Sheffield, teaches at a university).

According to (Eriksen 2008), it is necessary to clarify what the aspects of social exclusion and inclusion are in a given social environment. To do this, however, it is necessary to understand the aspects of culture in a given (inclusive) society (common framework of reference, mutual understanding/symbolic language), as well as its social dimensions (such as social activities, institutions, statuses, roles) (Eriksen 2008). In cases where young people met their foreign spouse while studying abroad, and already live in the family they established, integration is deeper and more extensive, but it is also this very situation that reveals the limits of what we call complex integration above (Eriksen 2008; Kováts 2013).

> "I'm the type everybody knows, the fishmonger knows me, the greengrocer knows me, the baker knows me, everyone knows everything, the fishmonger knew first that I was pregnant because he noticed it. Everyone on the street greets everyone else, it is just that kind of neighborhood. There are 12 flats in a house, we stick together, we have barbecues together in the summer, we can call on each other at any time we want, we bring a bottle of wine and talk, so all this is absolutely there. What is not there is my 5 friends, and I will never have them either, because the Dutch are not the kind to make friends; that is, they make friends at school and at university but not after that . . . Yes, so I have good acquaintances—it was usually me who initiated these relationships—with whom [contact] is frequent, we talk, meet, but the relationship is not the same as with my college friends, with whom I can discuss everything, anything" (36, lives in The Hague, graduated as MA in the Netherlands, works in HR).

Based on the responses, it can be stated that the variability of relationship networks, community relationships and individual friendships determines the extent and depth of integration into the chosen environment, but does not eliminate the need for deep friendships developed at home, considered the most intimate among (Granovetter 2010) attachments.

5.2. Networking and Integration Abroad with a Degree from Hungary

With the spread of globalization, integration theories are based on transnational and global approaches (Gödri 2015). According to the theory called transnational model based on the examination

of the relationship network of immigrants living in the host and recipient countries, (network approach) being attached to both societies—both economically and culturally at the same time—creates transnational communities, in which case the preservation of ethnic identity and the presence of social capital as a source is also characteristic (Schmitter 2000; Gödri 2015). However, in the process of integration, the integration of immigrants into a particular social environment goes through several processes, more precisely, spreading from segregation to assimilation (Gödri 2015). The process of integration depends on the extent to which immigrant groups and individuals acquire the language of the host country, to what extent they are aligned with the rules, norms, culture, etc. (Gödri 2015).

We divided the cases of the young graduate women who obtained their basic or master's degree in Hungary into two subgroups, the ones living alone and those living with their partners. We have identified two fundamental differences compared to those who have graduated from abroad and were presented earlier.

(1) The majority of those living alone and having emigrated for work after their graduation in Hungary, regardless of their workplace or the international environment, are more likely to socialize with Hungarian native speakers in their free time. Mostly, they also prefer to live with Hungarian native speakers, or in a shared flat where there is at least another Hungarian. Moreover, while they often go out with their colleagues after work, for the vast majority it is people they share their flat with who make the new host community for them. They also get acquainted with others' broader workplace relationships and friends, so, through spending their free time and through the workplace relationships, being part of the transnational community (Schmitter 2000; Gödri 2015) according to the network approach is really given for these young people. However, missing friends and spiritual companions (Gőgh 2013) found in their youth is also strong in their case.

> "We four found a place to live in, so it's good for us because we moved out here so that we knew each other. But we go pubbing or go away to have fun with friends who have a car. We get into the car in the morning, and then we'll go to such nice places in England. Well, yes, many times I miss my friends from Hungary because they were my real friends with whom I went to university and high school" (28, social policy expert, lives in Hertfordshire).

All in all, it can be stated that the young women interviewed created the conditions for getting into the new environment (acquaintance, their own friends, leisure partners, looser individual friendships) relatively soon after the time of their resettlement.

(2) According to our results, the strength of the integration of people working abroad but having graduated from institutions at home and living with their partners was also significantly influenced by which institutions and segments of the labor market of the host country (Gödri 2015) they were able to settle in and, also, by what social relations were formulated for them in the host country (Gödri 2015). According to this, different patterns of integration are formed (Gödri 2015).

> "Well, integration, you must say, in Switzerland, is terribly difficult, terribly closed people, so I have been here for more than two years now and I can count on one hand how many Swiss people I speak to, on the other hand, I usually say that Zurich is not part of Switzerland, but an international island in Switzerland, practically you can go without talking to Swiss people, and my friends are all foreigners of course" (28, graduated in international business, works for a cosmetic company in Zürich).

The UK, Switzerland and Holland belong to that group of countries in our sample where making contacts with the locals is more difficult, according to personal experiences.

> "There is no such thing as a neighbor relationship because the English people, so to say, are not so friendly, at work, it was me to carry the openness and warmth, so there is no neighbor relationship, people don't talk so much to one another, I was able to fit in, but it's culturally dependent" (28 years old, social policy expert, lives in Brighton).

In the case of the UK, Switzerland and Holland knowledge of the local language is practically not necessary, not even for a longer period of stay, due to the suction effect of international companies and, even more, to their readiness to receive immigrants in these countries, and also, owing to the education culture of these non-English speaking countries (all children learn to speak English on a good level). Therefore, for those young Hungarians who are based in international companies in these countries, integration is also a Gemeinschaft experience of belonging to a specific local-international community.

> "I think it is possible to live in the Netherlands smoothly so that a person does not speak Dutch. And this is so, I think, in very few countries. For example, in Spain or Italy, I could not imagine that one cannot speak the local language, the Netherlands is one such country. Because they speak English very well. Yes" (32, financial-accounting degree, lives in The Hague).

Within the group with grades from Hungarian institutions, we have categorized the subgroups of those living in partnerships with children and those with partners but no children. We did so because those who, after graduating at home, had a child already abroad, have been living abroad for a longer time than the majority of the whole sample. On the other hand, they have quite different possibilities for contacts due to their children (kindergarten, playground). Thus, family friendships that turn into stronger ties from weak bonds based on child-friendly relationships (Granovetter 2010) open up another perspective in the dimensions of integration. This does not mean that friendships from workplace acquaintances are "who I can turn to if there is a problem" relationships would not be present in their lives, but the "family programs" of companies, as strong ties, are more decisive.

> "We often follow the great fashion for brunch, on Saturday or Sunday, we get together with friends, have coffee, have breakfast, now, for example, we are going away with friends for a long weekend" (28, horticulturist, lives in London, works in a winery).

If a young female employee has lived for a long time in the country of choice at the time of the interview—that is, she had had strong bond (Granovetter 2010) friendships before she had her child—the child's arrival into their family usually strengthens the network of relationships needed for narrower social and community integration (Gödri 2010).

> "I came out a long time ago, and I did not have my child then, no boyfriend, no one, and then I was forced to socialize, and then I came to have new relationships with people who have had children since then" (29, international studies expert, now on child care leave, lives in Nice).

Hradil (2010) social-milieu-perception approach presupposes a lifestyle created by people according to their needs through their actions. Thus, in terms of everyday lifestyle, the general need of an individual that presupposes life-long social security, which can be considered as a general human aspiration, cannot be equated with the needs of a person who is highly striving for economic benefits and recognition measured with the prestige of the profession (Hradil 2010)). However, in modern societies, with the strengthening of this latter subjective factor, the emergence of autonomous attitudes can increasingly be discovered. Thus, in everyday life, a group of individuals living in the same lifestyle forms the given milieu in the structure of society showing differences (Hradil 2010). In the chosen country, the focus of direct integration into the environment is different if the young woman has completed her higher education in Hungary, or if she has graduated from a foreign university. While in the case of the diplomas obtained in Hungary, young people could have opportunities to gain experience of adapting to the environment of another country through scholarships, it means something different to go abroad for a definite period—mostly to study or to spend time in an apprenticeship—and again something different to start a new life abroad influenced by external–internal factors and motivated by the feeling of well-being (Sik and Szeitl 2016), urged by the life-cycle and striving to become independent. For

women, to this appropriate (Hradil 2010) life-start mostly undeveloped networks of relationships and the lack of a migratory envelope (Sik 2012) is characteristic. Considering all this, we have noticed that better living conditions that can be acquired in the European labour market, as well as the possibility of a job—based on a person's studies, especially for graduates (Sik and Szeitl 2016; Kováts and Papp 2016)—are also a source of confidence for young people to experience migration even without a network of connections (Gödri 2010). Most of them are trying to adapt to the unknown environment despite the lack of potential relationship capital (Gödri 2010), which is important for post-migration integration and in spite of the situation without friends and family. The job/job opportunity they can obtain, the image of a promising career and the wages associated with it will put the lack of friends and family in the background and make it acceptable to adapt to the new environment.

> "Here I feel that my work has some meaning in the sense that they, make use of what I do, so I see that it has some relevance for the institution I work for, which I never felt at home. And, obviously, all of us want a job that makes you feel that it makes sense what you do. And I feel that it is obvious here, which was not like that there, but otherwise, if I look at its material side, I am in a much safer position and can maintain a much higher standard of living. I always measure it with the orange juice, so in Hungary I couldn't afford the orange juice, but I can buy it here. I always say that making your drinks with syrup is a poverty indicator for me. I hated the syrup so much in my childhood because it always meant to me that we could not afford Coca-Cola" (31, sociologist, did her Ph.D. in England, lives in Sheffield, teaches at a university).

The migrant young women in the sample do not break away; they are even strongly tied to their family relationships in Hungary. The family background left at home is still an alternative for many in case they want to stop working or staying abroad for some reason. For them, this strong bond in the background means a safety net. The "two-legged opportunity" means for young graduate women working abroad that they can return to the environment of solidarity of family and friends (Utasi 2009), providing emotional security (Bodonyi et al. 2006) if deemed necessary.

6. Conclusions

Our article covered migration motivations of young, college-educated Hungarian women. The first section summed up relevant aspects of social capital, brain drain and migration theories. We introduced migration purposes among Hungarian youths and the characteristics of working abroad.

In our study, we have shown that increasingly widespread emigration among young Hungaian women with university degrees, mostly undertaken alone, has become a special form of contemporary international migration. While research on intent to migrate and realization thereof showed a significant male surplus at the beginning of the 2010s, by mid-2010s young Hungarian women with university degrees started becoming more prone to seeking employment abroad than men, so the trend seems to be reversing. Concurrent with the acceleration of migration, a process of weakening male preeminence among emigrants can be perceived, especially if we take into consideration that positive selection has led to the emigration of a high number of young people with higher-education degrees from Hungary. All comparative statistics confirm (SEEMIG, SEEMIG Omnibusz (KSH 2014), Népszámlálás, NKI Omnibusz, TÁRKI Monitor) that among those who left Hungary, university graduates are more numerous than those with only secondary education, or those who are unskilled. There is an emerging, Hungary-specific version of the feminization of the brain drain phenomenon in the labor market demand of the host countries. In countries where pull factors associated with the economic milieu have a stimulating effect on the immigration of highly educated people from poorer countries, potential migration is further increased as a significant number of immigrant youth do not even attempt to seize domestic labor market opportunities.

We have pointed it out that there is a real scarcity in official and authentic data due to uncertainties and validity issues of migration statistics. What is more, the data that exist are not suitable to explore

reasons behind emigration, the length of it, or any other personal aspects. This study was conducted to fill this gap among young women. Our research used a sample of 50 females. We conducted semi-structured interviews among college-educated women in the beginning of their career who moved abroad. As the target population is difficult to reach, we did not use random sampling; instead, we relied on personal contacts and recommendations. One prerequisite of becoming part of the sample was related to age: The interviewee had to be 22–36 with a college degree. We endeavored to select participants from all major destination countries for migration. We posed two key research questions: (1) What motivates migration decisions among the highly educated women in the sample? (2) What factors influence successful integration and assimilation among the young women working abroad? Our analysis identified five types of motivation for migration among young, college-educated women at the dawn of their career: (1) Those who had hopes for better opportunities to start a career abroad; (2) those who left the country for "self-realization" and a desire for adventure; (3) those who escaped from previous failures at the labor market; (4) those who moved abroad after their graduation to continue their studies abroad; (5) those in a relationship who left because their significant other got a job abroad.

In our study of the motivations behind migration, we assumed that the direct causes of young women with a bachelor's or master's degree seeking foreign (European) employment are not to be found in the fact that certain jobs are hard to come by on the Hungarian labor market, and also that better financial compensation, which otherwise is a strong motivating factor, were not a central component of the decision of young people to migrate, either. Rather, the material and mental obstacles to their efforts to become independent, which they expected to do, have played a pivotal role in their decisions to emigrate. For young people, within the framework of job- and income-stability and safety under present-day economic and social conditions, there are no perceivable subjectively suitable life chances according to Hradil's theory on milieus. This is especially true for young women from smaller municipalities and lower strata of society. In fact, a university degree does not only mean upward mobility for them—compared to their parents—but also serves as a "passport" for realizing individual ambitions. Looking at the issue through the lense of age-based expectations about life tasks, there are multiple interruptions in the life-cycles of these young people, including in the acquisition of a suitable first job, in the appearance of opportunities for advancement and in achieving relative external and internal stability before starting a family. The country's low confidence index, reflecting the general condition of Hungarian society, also has a role in this, namely, that young people experience the lack of primary values brought from home (rules of behavior, morality, respect, appreciation for one's work) as a deterioration of values in general.

Author Contributions: Data curation: E.S.; formal analysis: E.S.; investigation: E.S.; Methodology: E.S.; supervision: I.C.; writing-original draft: E.S.; writing-review & editing: I.C. Both authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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