POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF MIGRATION ON THE SENDING COUNTRIES: LESSONS FROM KOSOVO

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Abstract

This research analyzes the effects of migration in sending countries, with special focus on the case of Kosovo. The latter has a relatively long and intense migration history and represents a case where migration has had an important impact. The research reviews the main existing views on migration effects on the sending countries, and sheds light on the characteristics of Kosovo through the analysis mechanisms of the structuralist and neo-classical theories on migration. By confronting the main arguments of the optimistic and pessimistic approaches on the effects of emigration, this research utilizes the context-specific data and arguments to show that migration has more complexity and nuances beyond one-dimensional approaches and theories. Therefore, it aims to demonstrate that measuring the emigration effects needs a pluralistic approach.

Key words: migration, emigration, political, economic, diaspora, effects, sending country

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1. Introduction

Migration as a global phenomenon is everyday more and more the subject of academic discussions that analyze the effects and impact it has on sending and receiving countries. The data shows that the number of international migrants has increased to a large extent during the past half-century. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the number of people living in a country other than their country of birth in 2020 is considered to be 281 million (over 3,7% of the world's population), about twice as in 1990 and over three times the estimated number in 1970 (International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2019, 3).

The growing number of resources as data and statistics are being very helpful to better understand the trends, as well as the causes and effects in both sending and receiving countries of migrants. It is similar in the case of Kosovo and other Western Balkans countries from where, according to European data, 228,000 people have emigrated legally to the EU only in 2018 (Lavric 2020, 19). During the past decade, the region has experienced a large extent of net emigration especially of the young population 15-39, with Kosovo among the leaders of the list (M. Leitner 2020, 10). Meanwhile, the working age of this region has declined by more than 400,000 individuals in the past five years (Bregu 2020).

The Western Balkans has a relatively long history of emigration, a phenomenon that is perceived to have mainly drawbacks for the developmental paths of the countries of origin in this region. It is estimated that over 4.5 million people from the region living abroad still maintain ties with their countries of origin (Jusufi and Ukaj 2020, 142). A number of reasons have made people from this region, particularly from Kosovo, flee. Push factors (predominantly economic) such as increasing employment opportunities, improving living standards, and

earning a higher income, have been a constant in the emigration dynamics of the country. While in the past, because of the political circumstances, most of those who left for better economic opportunities, did not really seek 'qualitative' jobs, as their goal was to secure the bottom minimum for their families back home. Quality employment is something that recently has been a topic of discussion, especially for young and skilled people, whose unemployment rates are the highest, and working conditions are the worst. Meanwhile, the education system is not responding to the labor market's needs, with a lot of skills and knowledge mismatching. Some data shows that new jobs created are too insufficient to respond to the labor supply available (The World Bank and Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies 2018).

While on one side, push factors show that the home countries of the Western Balkans have failed to create a promising and enabling environment for the future of their citizens, on the other side, pull factors from the migrant-receiving countries are motivating emigration from this region even more. In addition to higher employment and income opportunities and general well-being, Western European developed countries led by Germany are easing the immigration procedure and access to their labor markets for non-EU citizens. Furthermore, Carragher (2021, par. 4) points out that the majority of the southeastern European migrants are moving to the west as its economic powers are trying to balance their declining population trends. This is made by the introduction of special legal mechanism for immigrants such as the German immigration act in 2020 or the special regulation for the Western Balkans countries specifically in 2015 (Carragher 2021, par. 4). According to Federico Fubini's (2019, par. 9) estimation, more than over two hundred billion euros have entered the German economy from the education and training of worker migrants who moved there between 2009 and 2017 (Fubini 2019, par. 7) from South Eastern Europe.

Easing the access to the labor market has been seen as a national economic interest for many Western European countries, therefore the EU's attempts to harmonize the immigration policies of its member states have failed so far (GAP Institute 2020, 5). High wage differentials at the Western European Countries have become a major pull force for skilled migrants from the Western Balkans. The number of skilled work force moving from the region (including all Southeast European countries) is so high that it takes on the dimensions of an exodus, with the potential to cause irreparable effects on the sending countries. Clotilde Armand (2020, par. 5), a former Euro-parliamentarian named this exodus a "de facto transfer of wealth from East to West".

In many cases, continuous trends of emigration are a predictor of slow economic convergence, despite its positive role in reducing labor market tensions, and alleviating social vulnerability and poverty (Atoyan et al. 2016, 22). Brain drain is the major issue here that hinders the development efforts of the countries of origin. The departure of the most qualified tends to also have political consequences. In the case of the Western Balkans, ss Carragher (2021) points out, emigrants are on average younger and more educated than their non-migrant compatriots, comprising a segment of a relatively open-minded electorate. Their leave therefore may alter a population's political behavior, as it may empower poor and incompetent political leadership (Carragher 2021, par. 11).

However, under certain circumstances, migration can generate positive effects in the countries of origin. Emigration to the more developed countries can equip migrants with skills and knowledge that they did not possess before, thus creating human capital that could be leveraged by the countries of origin to foster their developmental goals. Moreover, migrants tend to accumulate financial capital which is usually a problem in their countries of origin. The latter's governments can tap into this capital to solve the financial insufficiency issues to fund capital

and developmental projects. In addition to that, there is a large amount of money that goes from the migrant's countries of settlement to the countries of origin in the form of remittances. According to the data of Migration Policy Institute (Accessed August 2022), 548 out of 719 billion dollars of world remittances were transferred to low and middle-income countries (Migration Policy Institute n.d.).

Given different approaches on migration effect on the sending countries, this paper analyzes the political and economic effects of emigration through the lenses of political economy from a pluralistic approach. There is a tendency in many sending countries to view emigration effects from either one or the other perspective, stating only the positive or negative effects from it. However, in a liberal world, we have enough analytical mechanisms to accurately assess the effects that come as a result of people leaving their country. A pluralistic approach to migration's effects on the sending countries may help us come to more accurate conclusions that would make policymakers and the general opinion see migration as a more colorful phenomenon rather than black and white.

The main **research question** that this study aims to answer is:

RQ: What are the economic, political, and demographic characteristics that determine the nature of the effects of emigration on the sending countries, with a particular outlook in the Kosovo case?

Methodologically, the answer to this question further adds to De Haas's (2010) arguments toward a pluralistic approach to the theoretical framework that aims to explain the emigration effects in the sending countries. The past century's developments in regard to migration and development show that there is much more interaction between developmentalism and structuralist approaches than they present themselves. Hence, the nuances of both approaches

combined can help us understand better the causes and consequences of migration in the sending countries. Therefore, this research contributes to understanding the linkages and interrelation between different views on migration, which are presented below.

I hypothesize that *(1) the effects of migration in sending countries are not completely explained unilaterally by deterministic or neo-classical approaches; (2) "migrant syndrome" or increasing emigration trends do not necessarily present negative effects of migration on sending countries, and (3) the increase of remittances affect positively the development of the countries of origin.*

1.1. Methodology

This research starts with a review of existing literature and analysis of relevant studies on migration in general, and migration in relation to the case study Kosovo. Through the review of main theoretical approaches, I initially bring an overview of the main views about migration's effects in sending countries. The research continues with a review of the key political, economic and demographic data regarding Kosovo.

Kosovo represents a distinct case study in regard to emigration because its emigration experience is quite complex and nuanced. Kosovo characteristics need a thorough analysis in order to measure and evaluate the effects that migration has had in its effects in its developmental path. Kosovo in this regard represents a typical case according to Gerring's case selection analyses (Gerring 2009). It is a study of a unit that helps understand a broader range of units (Gerring 2004, 342). Moreover, this research aims to add to the existing knowledge on migration's effects in the case of Kosovo but also similar cases like it.

Regarding the data sources, this research uses as primary sources all relevant studies done in the field of migration and its effects on the sending countries, with a stronger reference to the developmentalist views presented by De Haas. In regard to the case study, the research presents in parts the interpretations of the Kosovo socio-economic characteristics such as Living Standards Measurement Survey 2000 (Haxhikadrija 2009; Hoti, 2009; 2015), Kosovo Agency of Statistics Remittance Report (2013), and a general report on migration conducted by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2014).

This research is structured in three chapters:

- the first chapter reviews the main theoretical perspectives and views on the topic of migration effects on the sending countries;
- the second chapter sheds light on the political-economic indicators in regard to migration, and its characteristics in the case of Kosovo; and
- the third chapter discusses and analyzes the theoretical framework in relevance to the case study, ending up with conclusions on the topic.

2. Theoretical Background

Migration is a very complex issue that has been discussed over the years from different perspectives and different contexts, with multiple theoretical approaches analyzing the causes and effects of this phenomenon. Since Ravenstein (1889), a long debate was devoted to finding out the factors that make people decide to move from one place to another. These movements have had an impact on both sending and receiving countries of migrants. Migration has been shaped in typology based on the causes that have influenced it. Various authors have identified and analyzed different types of migration such as labor migration, forced migration or chain migration (Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana 2016, 17), or even environmental migration – people who move from one place to another due to environmental conditions (Laczko et al. 2013). Migration types are shaped depending by the circumstances and pull and push factors that emerge. Therefore, as Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana (2016, 17-18) observe, migration is a subject to changes along with the changes of other factors whether they are social, economic, or geopolitical.

Changes in the factors subject to migrants have influenced the shape of theories of migration as well. The neo-classical theory sees emigration from an economic perspective, pointing out geographical differences of the labor supply and demand, as well as seeing migrants as rational individuals whose actions are based on cost-benefit calculations (De Haas 2005, 4-5). Meanwhile, the historical-structural theory criticizes the neo-classical point of view, claiming that people are not always rational since they are restricted by other structural forces, and their movements are forced by bounded economic structures (De Haas 2005, 7). Most of the theories and perspectives on migration has been put in one of these two sides (optimistic and pessimistic

views) and analyzed with a special focus on the effects of migration on both the sending and hosting countries.

2.1. Emigration Pessimistic Views

Of the dominant paradigms behind emigration is the historical structuralist, which sees migration as an output of capitalism expansion in the world that cannot sort out the very structural circumstances that caused it (De Haas 2010, 233). The problem of brain drain here occupies considerable space, as it is perceived that the loss of skilled labor causes the reduction of productivity in the countries of origin, making them to stagnate even more in development processes. That is considered to be a deprivation of poor (sending) countries from their skilled labor in which they have invested a lot through education (Baldwin 1970, De Haas 2010, 233). Meanwhile, those elements considered as positive from emigration such as remittances, from the pessimistic viewers are seen as a means of increasing consumption and inflation at the sending countries, as well as facilitating the one-way dependency of the sending countries towards the migrant's receiving countries.

Emigration pessimistic views see migration as a phenomenon that increases the effects of inequality between underdeveloped and developed countries. The latter, through immigration, exploits the already limited human resources of the most backward countries. The cumulative causation theory detailed by Gunnar Myrdal (as cited at De Haas 2010, 27), which stands at the core of the pessimistic views on emigration, points out the differentiated and unequal spatial capitalist developments as causes of migration. As pointed out by De Haas (2010, 26-30), in his elaboration of pessimistic views on migration, migration makes developed countries drain investments in peripheral or disadvantaged countries, something that also increases the demand for out-migration from the poor or developing to the developed countries. Following the

historical-structuralist views, the cumulative causation theory states that even those considered as positive effects of emigration, such as the increase of demand for certain products from the sending countries and remittances, do not exceed the negative effects of migration. As for the theory of cumulative causality, the causal relationship between migration and its negative effects on the sending country lies in the fact that the increase of the emigrant community from the sending country does not increase the quality of life of those left behind, nor their willingness to live there. In the contrary, it aggravates underdevelopment and increases the likelihood of non-migrants emigrating as well, thus making migration self-supported (Massey 1990, 4-5). An important element in this regard is the creation of migration networks. These networks and their growth push for even more emigration by facilitating the whole process for those who have insufficient access to them but the will to emigrate (Fussell 2010, 175).

Migration from a macro-historical perspective further widens the gap between developed countries and migrant-sending countries. This is because the increase in labor demand in developing countries consequently increases wages, an element that becomes attractive enough for people with the necessary skills to emigrate for higher incomes. This adds to the negative effects related to brain drain and the lack of transfers (Dustmann, Fadlon and Weiss 2011, 66), as well as with a reduction of market activities, competitiveness and an increase of social costs in relation to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Atoyan et al. 2016, 7-8). Since in the sending countries it is believed that those who emigrate are usually the people with proper know-how, their departure causes a “brain drain” that creates a gap in the labor market thus decreasing the economic activity. Moreover, assuming that emigrants are usually the most skilled workers of the population - those with the highest incomes, sending country loses from their departure in terms of the decrease of the taxes they used to pay, therefore affecting the distribution resources of the state (Bhagwati and Hamada 1982).

The loss is even higher for the sending country considering the amount of investment in educating in the migrants, who go as ready-made skilled laborers to receiving countries. The latter leverages it even more by adopting immigration policies that makes migration easier for selective occupations that contributes to their economies (Cinar and Docquer 2004, 104).

Another element, known as a positive indicator coming from emigration – remittances, is seen to be a "curse" for sending countries from a pessimistic perspective. This is due to the assumption that remittances in sending countries are mainly used for the consumption of the products which in most cases come from imports, leading to further growth disparities (De Haas 2010, 236-7) between developed and underdeveloped countries. De Haas (2010) further points out that migration tends to create a remittance dependency which is dangerous, especially if we assume that remittances will decrease by the time migrants settle or return from the receiving countries. Remittances also affect the quality of the governance. This is because bad governance and / or corruption has a lower cost for remittance-recipient families, making the demand for government accountability to decrease, hence giving the governments more space to go into corruption (Abdih et al. 2012, 664).

By being 'self-supported', migration develops underdevelopment by becoming a kind of a culture in the sending countries. This is because a large part of people tend to see emigration as the only method to fulfill their lives (incomes, mobility, welfare), so that by time expectations towards migration become a part of the "repertoire of people's behavior" (Heering, van der Erf, and van Wissen 2004, 325). Meanwhile, the local opportunities are not even considered to be sustainable for a life that emigration is assumed to provide.

2.2. Emigration Optimistic Views

Contrary to the pessimistic view, the neo-classical theory of migration sees migration as a development-related phenomenon for both sending and receiving countries. It is based on a simple logic according to which the free movement of labor to developed countries by less developed ones causes to the latter an increase in the scarcity of labor consequently increasing the wage levels at the sending countries (De Haas 2010, 231). In regard to the distribution of labor from especially rural areas to urban and industrial ones, migration is perceived as an imperative to economic growth (Todaro 1969, 139). The neo-classical theory sees migrants as rational individuals who tend to utilize the opportunities from emigration, and other factors such as their nationality or group belongings are irrelevant in regard to their push factors to migrate.

To the emigration optimistic views, migrants are very important developmental agents who bring back to the sending countries positive changes and innovation, and entrepreneurial attitudes. Although their departure may leave gaps in the short term, through the accumulation of capital and remittances they influence the increase of purchasing power and living standards in the country of origin. Contrary to pessimistic emigration views, the causality mechanism here works positively - an increase in incomes to the sending country through different forms of transfers, increases the demand for local products, thus creating business opportunities for both migrant and non-migrant communities (Massey and Parrado 1998, 18).

As it has been argued by many authors, human capital is one the most important dimensions when analyzing the effects of emigration. That is so because of a broad consensus that human capital is a prerequisite for the necessary technological and institutional changes that causes growth (Trebilcock and Sudak 2006, 249). In this regard, it is obvious that education is the

biggest investment in human capital creation, and an indicator that also shows the probability of development of a country. However, human capital's externalities are not necessarily related to the of usage of skills and knowledge for different sectors of industry and economy. As Glaeser et al. (2004) argue, the main externalities of human capital are more political than technical, courts and legislators replace guns which translates into higher property security and thus economic growth. Taking that into account, the loss of human capital from migration would discourage states to invest in education.

Brain drain is evidenced to negatively impact the growth of the sending countries in the long run. Nevertheless, the departure of the most-skilled labor and educated people cannot be seen from a one-dimensional aspect. The benefits from the migration of these people has the potential to surpass losses from their absence in the sending countries. As Trebilcock and Sudak (2006, 254) point out, emigrants are able to assist in the formation of such networks that enables the exchange of ideas and foreign capital, as well as market linkages, in addition to remittances as a one-way payment process.

Furthermore, Dos Santos and Postel-Vinay (2003) argue that emigration positively affects the sending economies through knowledge diffusion. As rational individuals who choose freely a destination country, some migrants can return to the home country (sometimes for the same rational decisions they emigrated), but, this time, armed with the knowledge they gained while abroad. The diffusion of the knowledge in the home country directly influences the increase of the human capital or its formation, thus reducing the gap between developed and developing countries. This process is also known as 'brain gain', and there are already plenty of examples when countries through various policies incentivize their migrants to return and leverage their know-how and skills accumulated in developed host societies. Meanwhile, this form of

migration mobility can decrease the willingness to emigrate and increase the will to return (Dos Santos and Postel-Vinay, 2003, 163).

Regarding the human capital formation, there is also a possibility that emigration can have a positive influence as it leads to an increase in investments in education in developing countries (Beine, Docquier and Rapoport, 2001). Given that developing countries have fewer qualified people, and consequently less investment in education because of the low expected return, the departure of qualified people creates an even bigger gap in the economy. However, since return from emigration is one of the key factors that attract the most qualified, their departure is, in a way, an incentive for those who stay behind to invest in education - albeit expecting a higher return through emigration. However, as Beine, Docquier, and Rapoport (2001, 276-278) argue, emigration represent an uncertain action, and not all those who invest in education for that purpose can emigrate. Their investment in education though will certainly affect the creation and growth of human capital needed for growth of the sending country.

3. The Political Economy of Migration from a Sending Country Perspective

Developments since the late 20th century show that interaction between agent and structure has far more nuances than structuralist or neo-classical approaches. The results from this interaction in different contexts represent different outcomes. De Haas (2010) names this a pluralistic approach to the relationship between migration and development, which takes into account different circumstances to explain different outcomes of migration in sending countries. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to look at key areas of migration effects in sending countries in general, in order to analyze and categorize them in a particular case, in ours - Kosovo. Out of many areas, for the purposes of this paper, the following ones are chosen to be discussed. This selection of factors is made based on the frequency of their use in the reviewed literature as key elements of the migration effects on the sending countries.

3.1. Socio-Economic Factors

3.1.1. Wage differentials and employability

Referring to the cost-benefit model, people are rational beings who make rational calculations before taking the decision to migrate. In this direction, as Massey (1990, 5-7) explains, people 'invest' in migration based on their expectations for the return of this investment. To migrate or not, according to this logic, is decided by the result of the calculation. According to this model, people decide to migrate if their net income in the destination country is expected to be greater within a certain period compared to the net income they would have received if they stayed in their country of origin (Massey 1990, 6-8). This is related to the so-called wage differentials as push-pull factors for migration. For instance, as Konica and Filler (2009, 79) point out, in 1996

in Albania, even though unemployment rates were similar, the wages between workers in Albania and those in Greece and Italy were from eight to twelve times lower. This, and factors like knowledge of the language and cultural context, made Albanians move massively to these two countries.

Nevertheless, it is not only the wage differentials that push people to migrate. There's evidence that employability rates sometimes present bigger incentives to move from one country to another than expected incomes (Greenwood and Hunt 1984). This also means that individuals may be more likely to migrate to a country where the chances of finding a job are higher than a country whose labor market demands do not correspond with the individual's labor supply. Both wage differential and employment rates correspond mostly with a certain category of migrants - labor migrants or people that decide to move out for predominantly economic reasons. Usually, this category is the one that makes up the largest share of the labor market supply of the sending country, thus affecting it quite a lot with their departure. The latter is connected also with the migration networks presented below.

3.1.2. Migration Networks

Migration networks comprises the connections and relationships that migrants have with the original communities in the receiving countries, be it people close to the communities or former migrants (Martinez-Brawley and Zorita 2014, 125). Migration Network theory constitutes one of the most compelling explanations of migration as a self-sustaining phenomenon, and what is later perceived as the culture of migration. This happens for two main reasons: the networks reduce the costs and the risks of migration (Massey et al. 1993, 448-449). Migrant costs include (but are not limited to) the physical movement costs, information and research, opportunity costs, as well as the mental/psychological toll (Massey 1993, 8). Meanwhile, as Massey et al. (1993, 449) point out, migrant networks make it much easier to access a job. As soon as the

first generations of migrants integrate into the receiving countries, they create networks that make migration less costly and risky for others left in the countries of origin willing to move. These two elements then encourage migration even more and have a multiplier effect, since the networks expand with the increase in the number of new migrants. As Massey et al. (1993) show, migration networks constitute a form of social capital which serves migrants to access foreign labor markets, thus raising the likelihood to emigrate. Furthermore, once the networks reach a certain threshold, migration becomes self-perpetuating, as the structure is already strong enough to continuously attract new members (Massey et al. 1993).

Migration networks are a phenomenon that also reveals the interrelationship between neo-classical and structuralist theories. While migration individually is based on cost-benefit calculations, it is also influenced by social structures and network culture that make it grow.
Migration networks are also closely related to the maintenance of culture and identity of origin. What Brubaker (2005) calls 'boundary maintenance', consists of the cultural and ethnic identities' preservation that migrant or diaspora communities maintain towards the receiving society. This is also seen as a resistance to assimilation, especially in the 'melting pot' cultures.

3.1.3. Labor market and "Brain drain"

One of the most discussed points about the effects of migration is the "brain drain" phenomenon. The departure of the most educated and high-skilled persons from the country of origin, also known as the 'human capital flight' is usually seen as the cost of emigration sending countries pay. Even though the data about the skilled migrants are sparse, it is estimated that by the beginning of the 2000s, over 20% of all migrants were highly skilled, a number that had an increase of 70% in ten years, with a vast majority coming from the developing countries (Beine, Docquier, and Rapoport 2008). The data picture of "brain drain" in global level is not clear, yet the likelihood of migration of the most educated ones is growing. According to

Biavaschi et al. (2016) high-skilled workers are as high as four times more likely to emigrate than the non or less skilled ones. This can be explained by the fact that globalization and technological development and communication have made the movement of human capital much easier than before. However, the effects from the movements of these people to the countries of origin continue to be discussed from different perspectives. The dominant and classical developmental economists such as Todaro and Smith ironically point out that the highly educated and skilled who migrate from poor to rich countries are the only ones that the former cannot afford to lose (as cited at Beine, Docquier, and Rapoport 2008).

As mentioned above by the pessimistic view, brain drain negatively affects the development efforts of sending countries. This is due to the simple fact that human capital, a prerogative for development, is reduced. However, there are particular circumstances when the effects of brain drain become even more unfavorable for the sending countries. As Docquier and Rapoport (2012) argue, the emigration of the highly skilled affects the behaviors and expectations of people in the sending country from migration. In cases where the departure of the qualified does not affect the expectations of people from emigration, meaning they do not see (or cannot afford) investing in education and training as an opportunity to migrate - thus improve their well-being, then the effects of the brain drain tend to be negative. Hence, the human capital loss is not substituted. Usually, poor countries do not change their approach to education due to liquidity barriers and the opportunity to invest (Docquier and Rapoport 2012). This pushes them further into underdevelopment.

Yet, brain drain is recorded to have positive effects under some other circumstances. It is again related to the expectations created in the sending countries by the emigration of the highly skilled and educated people. Docquier and Rapoport (2012) point out that when the move of

the most educated and skilled ones incentivizes investment in education, then brain drain can be translated into human capital formation. Human capital formation takes place when investment in education increases. In this case, the reason behind this lies in the fact that the investment in education increases the chances of emigration, consequently opportunities for higher incomes - higher returns. Even though this can further push migration, it makes possible brain circulation and brain gain, since a portion of the educated ones stays in the country. This is mainly recorded in what are considered middle-income countries (Docquier and Rapoport 2012), where there are no high liquidity constraints as in the low-income countries to invest in education.

There is also the phenomenon of 'brain waste', which according to Docquier and Rapoport (2012, 700) may happen due to imperfect information regarding the labor market or intentionally erroneous signaling of labor market demands to increase the chances of emigration. Even though it is less studied, brain waste may be recorded in lots of cases of migrants from developing countries. Brain waste is described as the underutilization of skills and education. In regard to migration, it consists of people that move with the hopes of finding a job in their field of expertise but end up working in other sectors - usually service-related because their skills and know-how are either not demanded in the receiving market or they are considered overqualified. One example related to this was in 2013-2014 migration wave in Kosovo. There was a piece of numerous false information spread in-country that Germany was receiving migrants and providing working opportunities and granting asylum (Möllers et al. 2015, 179). Therefore, this became a pull factor for people to migrate. However, some ended up in refugee camps, and some worked in tertiary industries, while others were sent back because of a lack of entry documents. Many of those who migrated during this wave were previously working in Kosovo, even in skill-specific industries such as carpentry or

construction-related sectors but they ended up working in other fields like driving or cleaning services.

3.1.4. Remittances and other financial transaction

Remittances undoubtedly represent one of the most direct effects and gains from emigration. A gain from migration is because a share of that gain is spent at the sending countries through remittance - financial transactions, usually less developed than the receiving ones. Remittance effects in the sending countries differ, though, depending on the local contexts. As Kapur and McHale (2012) argue by referring to recent literature, remittances serve the households' risk management. The money coming from remittances influences a lot the poverty reduction, substituting the insurance and credit markets' absence, as well as providing a financial resource for investment in various areas such as education, health or entrepreneurship (Kapur and McHale 2012, 7-8).

Even though it is hard to record the exact amount of remittances worldwide, International Monetary Fund's 2017 projection shows that remittances reached almost $600 billion in 2017, with three-quarters of them poured into developing countries (Ratha n.d.). Yet, it is estimated that a considerable amount of remittances go unrecorded (Page and Plaza 2006, 265-266).
Remittances have already for years exceeded the international development assistance of developed countries for developing ones. Page and Plaza (2006), referring to a growing number of references, show that there are generally three types of motives for remittances: (1) altruist, (2) insurance, and (3) investment. Migrants or remitters tend to also respond to crises or emergencies in the country of origin by sending more money to match the needs of the family members in extraordinary circumstances (Page and Plaza 2006, 278).

However, whatever the motives, remittances have contributed tremendously to the improvement of many households in sending countries and have been a large source of foreign exchange for many countries. De Haas (2005) points out a 'euphoria' regarding the impact that remittances to developing countries, called "a new development mantra".

However, he further argues that remittances and migration do not necessarily lead to development, as the effect of remittances to the sending countries is often limited by the not-so-favorable investment climate, political instability as well as legal order (De Haas 2005, 1278). In some cases, remittance receivers become less active in the labor market, using them mainly for leisure, which affects their development (Ratha 2006, 179). The use or the way remittances are spent by the households influences their effect on the sending countries' economies as well. Households with no other sources tend to spend the money from remittances on daily consumption - thus keeping the above poverty level. Meanwhile, households that, in addition to remittances, have other sources of income have the opportunity to use them for investment - thus increasing their impact.

Remittances and their effects in the sending countries also differ by the profiles of the remitters. For instance, highly skilled migrants behave differently when it comes to remitting to the sending countries or their family members. As Docquier and Rapoport (2012) point out, on one side, those who are better educated are in a better position to send money back because they gain higher incomes and have access to lower transaction routes (banks and/or money transfer agencies). On the other side, some of the highly skilled migrants already come from families with higher incomes in their home country, thus they feel less of the need to send money back Docquier and Rapoport (2012, 703-704).

Another element that shapes the way and effects of remittances in the sending countries is the transaction mechanism. In addition to the trust, according to Page and Plaza (2006), the main factor to choosing a transaction mechanism (intermediary) is the transaction cost, which includes the remitting fees and the currency exchange fees when the currencies differ from host to sending country.

3.2. Political Engagement

Many scholars and researchers in the field of migration have lately widely used the term 'homeland orientation' as the defining criterion for the migrant/diaspora communities to explain the relationship with the sending/home country. Safran (1991), one of the most influential authors in ethnic studies on the diaspora communities, identifies some key elements that make up transnational migrant communities, nowadays referred to as diaspora communities, relationship with the sending country: (1) the element of dispersal from a country of origin to foreign countries, (2) the collective memory of these communities about the home country and its cultural, political and historical features, (3) lack of belonging to the host country society and the inability of being accepted from them, (4) the belief of returning to the country of origin at an appropriate time and moment, (5) a sense of having a responsibility to be committed to the country of origin, by contributing to its development and safety, and (6) a sense of community and belonging to the homeland.

This perspective is important to analyze the motives behind the relation - especially the political engagement of migrants with their country of origin. It is broadly said that the relationship of migrants with the country of origin is subjective. Yet, their engagement in political developments of the countries of origin has different characteristics. Beyond the subjective characteristics of the migrant communities that make up their relationship with their country of

origin, there are various indicators that incentivize their political engagement and influence on the home country.

Katrina Burgess (2014) categorizes these indicators into socio-economic and political incentives. The former includes emigration rates of the home country, weights of remittances, physical distance, and telecommunication connection with the home country (Burgess 2014, 17). Meanwhile, for the latter Burgess (2014) argues for two ways of incentivizing migrant communities to act politically at the sending country. First, it is the politicization of the diaspora, which refers to people that are or have been exposed to either political events and campaigning or identity-related connections (Burgess 2014, 20). The second way goes through formal access to political developments in the home country, meaning any way of connecting with institutions, political parties, or entities from the home country working with diaspora communities (Burgess 2014, 23).

Migration is a process through which migrants move from one system to another, not only physically but also in terms of values, social norms, political order, etc. This process naturally exposes migrants to new values which undoubtedly have an impact on their behavior towards their country of origin. Migrants who returned from western Europe to central and eastern Europe played an important role in many areas to facilitate the post-communist transition (Fidrmuc and Doyle 2004, 2). Migrants engage in various political processes in the country of origin, from participation in the elections (Diaspora voting) to political campaigning and diplomacy in the receiving countries.

3.2.1. Diaspora politics

Diaspora politics is a relatively new term, but it explains phenomena that started at the beginning of the 20th century. It is important to explain that the use of the term diaspora instead

of migrant or transnational communities has to do with the new dynamics of migration, which have also affected the terminology in this field. As mentioned above, Diaspora is not a term that has an unchanging definition. However, it describes individuals or groups that maintain a sense of ethnic and national belonging to a country of origin - called homeland (Adamson 2016, 292). Some call diaspora as a political project which does not consist of all migrants from the same ethnic group (Baser and Swain 2010, 40).

Diaspora political engagement does not necessarily mean that there should be e country state of origin. There have been numerous examples of what are known as *stateless* diasporas who have been quite engaged in the politics of nation or state-building in an imaginary homeland. Jewish diaspora until 1948 is a classic example of such diaspora political activism. Similarly, Czechoslovak communities in the US were very active in lobbying for the creation of their state in 1918. Kurdish diaspora is another example of a *stateless* diaspora.

Meanwhile, there is diaspora political activism from diaspora communities that have a state that calls the homeland. The latter comprises examples of oppositional activism against a certain regime in the home country or activism that promotes the development of the country of origin, which in various cases takes the form of diplomacy and lobbying. Ho and McConnell (2017, 238-240) argue how diaspora diplomacy can be situated as a separate field of study within the public diplomacy domain. According to Ho and McConnell (2017) diasporas have been active in diplomacy in two main ways: (1) serving the diplomacy of the home states, and (2) conducting diplomacy independently through advocacy, mediation, and representation. Regarding the former, diasporas, for instance, have acted as an extended lever of lobbying for national interests to the US government for states such as Armenia, Israel and Ireland (Ho and McConnell 2017, 240).

While political activism in the diaspora has suffered from the *long-distance nationalism* which has often taken on destructive connotations, in recent times there are many examples of political activism in the diaspora that advocates or mediates for the well-being of different groups be they in the sending or receiving country. For example, the Haitian diaspora in the US was very active and vocal in gaining political and financial support for the recovery of Haiti after the earthquake (Newland 2010, 17).

3.2.2. Diaspora (out-of-country) Voting

Out-of-country voting is an important element of the political engagement of migrants to the sending country. Out-of-country or voting from abroad is a process that enables some or all citizens of a country to vote in national or local elections while being temporarily or permanently resident in another country (Aman and Bakken 2021, 8). There are many ways through which states allow out-of-country voting. However, according to Aman and Bakken 2021 (2021, 15), there are roughly 216 states and territories that provide legal provisions for their citizens to exercise voting rights from abroad, with only 27% of the states/territories not allowing any form of out-of-country voting.

Aman and Bakken 2021 (2021, 12-130 point out four general methods of out-of-country voting: *in-person voting*, the most used method, which means votes are cast at a polling station in-person; *postal voting*, through which voters send their votes from their country of residence to the country of origin via mail; *proxy voting*, it is a form of delegation of the right to vote to another person in the country where elections are being held; *e-voting*, or voting via technology and internet. All these methods have their specific country contextualized regulations that specify the form and ways to exercise voting rights from abroad.

The voting methods from abroad has to do also with the importance and the ways states want to have their migrant communities politically engaged. In-person voting, or voting organized

in polling stations set abroad at diplomatic missions or specific locations, for instance, is provided when sending country institutions want to have control over the out-of-country elections, while other methods like postal or proxy voting are when institutions want to provide more access to the communities abroad (Aman and Bakken 2021, 13). In a comparison between Poland and the Czech Republic, for instance, the Polish result is more persuasive to their citizens abroad to vote due to the Polish liberal approach towards nationality and dual citizenship (Fidrmuc and Doyle 2004, 6). Furthermore, there are issues like whether voting from abroad should be limited to a certain number of electors to be selected or have a separate electoral zone for voters from abroad. In countries with large emigrant communities, there is a discussion about whether the enfranchisement would influence internal political processes to the extent that would make resident citizens less relevant. That is why for instance countries like Israel do not allow out-of-country voting for their citizens living abroad (except for the diplomatic officials).

Beyond technicalities, out-of-country voting has been and continues to be a topic of debate in many countries. Many believe that non-resident citizens should not have the right to decide on political issues in their country of origin, since they do not bear the consequences of these decisions. Others add that migrants make up a poorly informed community of voters, therefore their votes can have irreparable and harmful consequences for their compatriots at home. However, in today's times of globalization, both of these arguments against voting from abroad are fading. As Spiro (2006, 218-219) points out, the argument that voters from abroad are irresponsible is challenged more and more by the new dynamics among migrant communities, who, although physically absent, own property, pay taxes, and are interested in the politics of their home country in many fields. Although non-resident, many migrants continue to cultivate institutional but also economic ties through investments in the country of origin. Consequently,

they are willing to be active in the politics of the home country to express their democratic will on topics that relate to their personal interest in particular, and to the origin society in general. A similar argument applies for the of concern of migrants as uninformed voters. Nowadays, information knows no borders, and the means of information are so numerous that regardless of residence, the potential voter can access all the information he or she needs through the websites of institutions, political parties, or diaspora organizations (Spiro 2006, 220).

Granting the right to vote to migrant communities from the sending country's perspective is justified by many different arguments. General theoretical argument focuses on the right to vote as something that goes along with citizenship. As long as both sending and receiving states of migrants allow dual citizenship, they cannot withdraw their voting rights. From the sending country's perspective, however, there are further arguments that consider the right to vote from abroad as a means of maintaining the cultural, political, and economic ties with people that have left the country for whatever reason. An 'in favor' argument for the right to vote from abroad comes from a report of the Venice Commission (European Commission for Democracy Through Law), which emphasizes that out-of-country voting boosts the feelings of national belonging of the citizens living abroad (Venice Commission 2011, 11).

In a country-specific context, the advocates of the right to vote from abroad find reasons such as the contributions of migrants to the home country's development to justify their right to vote. In this regard in Croatia, for instance, advocates for out-of-country voting based their arguments on the contribution of Croatian emigrants to the war for the liberation and independence of Croatia, as well as their financial and economic support for its development after independence (Kasapović 2012, 781-782).

Another important but less analyzed element of out-of-country voting is the voting behavior of migrants. Fidrmuc and Doyle (2004, 32-33) point out that the voting behavior of migrants in the elections in sending countries is shaped by the environment and values to which they are exposed and adapted in the receiving country. The analysis of Polish and Czech migrants' voting behavior shows that right-wing parties tend to get more votes from migrants who live in countries with consolidated democracies and economic freedom, and on the contrary, left-wing parties get much fewer votes from this category of voters (Fidrmuc and Doyle 2004, 34). Diaspora voters, in general, comprise a very low percentage of the total voters, however, there is a growing impact even in terms of numbers. In cases like Moldova, Turkey, and Croatia, diaspora votes have had a significant impact on election results. In the case of Kosovo, presented below, diaspora votes have been very impactful and change-making for both national and local elections.

3.3. Kosovo Emigration

Kosovo has a relatively long history of migration. Its people have left the country for many and various reasons. Being one of the poorest and most unstable countries in the Western Balkans and Europe, Kosovo's population has been always struggling to find peace at home. Therefore, emigration has been an exit way for many, throughout the years. From individual choices to structural determinants, but not only one or the other push or pull factors that describe the movements of people from this country, explained below.

3.3.1. Dynamics of Emigration from Kosovo

Emigration from Kosovo may have started very early, but most of the records of the departure of people are kept only after the Second World War. Since then, Kosovar migration has gone chronologically through five different waves. There are four waves usually mentioned in

previous studies. However, a fifth last one that is taking form in the past years has been added for analysis purposes in this research.

The first wave begins immediately after the second world war when Kosovar-Albanians find themselves under the Yugoslav Federation. This period, which starts from 1945 to the middle of the 60s, is characterized by massive departures of the population towards Turkey due to political repression of Kosovar-Albanians by Serbs at that time (King, Piracha and Vullnetari 2010, 4-5). This wave of migration is preceded by a pre-war international agreement between Yugoslavia and Turkey in 1938, which aimed to encourage the migration of Muslim Albanians from the territories of nowadays Kosovo and North Macedonia (İçduygu and Sert 2015, 94-5).

The second wave of Kosovar migration begins in the mid-60s, when Yugoslavia opened its borders, and continues until the end of the 80s. This wave is characterized by the emigration of workers to Western European countries, mainly to West Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, but also to some other more developed parts of Yugoslavia (King, Piracha and Vullnetari 2010, 4-5). This is the period of the so-called 'guest workers' when these countries open the labor market for workers from less developed countries. Kosovar-Albanians see this as an opportunity to generate more income to help their families at home. Hence, their migration is characterized by many struggles in the receiving countries, namely West Germany, Switzerland and Austria - who saw them as temporary workers unable to be integrated (Haxhikadrija 2009, 29)

The third wave of Kosovar migration began in the late 80s until the beginning of the war in 1998 in Kosovo. This wave is mainly characterized by departures for political reasons, with the Yugoslav state abolishing Kosovo autonomy, and enforcing numerous repressive policies, after

Milosevic rose to power. According to Human Rights Watch, it is estimated that around 350,000 people were forced to emigrate during this wave, with many finding destinations in Switzerland and other European countries, supported by the then-established diaspora networks (as cited at Haxhikadrija 2009, 30). Another portion of migrants, mainly educated and from Kosovo urban areas, found their destination in Great Britain. A considerable number of Kosovar-Albanian political activists moved to Europe during this time, and continued their activism in exile, to later return during the Kosovo war in '98 -'99.

The 4th wave of Kosovar migration was short in time, during the 1998-99 war, but large in the number of people who left their homes and fled as refugees. Between 850,000 to 1 million people left their homes and moved to the neighboring countries of the region, Albania, Macedonia (today's North Macedonia), and to some extent in Montenegro. A small portion found destinations in 25 other countries (Haxhikadrija 2009, 31) from Australia to Canada, but mainly in western and northern Europe. Most of them were granted asylum and temporary residence in foreign countries. However, a great number of them returned to Kosovo after the war. Yet, from the beginning of the 90s until after the war, it is estimated that between 350,000 - 500,000 or around 20% of the then Kosovo population, permanently migrated (Hoti 2009, 444).

The fifth wave of migration begins in the mid-2000s and continues to this day. After the war there was a decline in emigration as people returned and were full of hopes to build their new lives after the war and up to the declaration of Kosovo Independence. In the meantime, legal migration routes were blocked by European states, and among the rarest ways to move was by obtaining family reunification visas for those who have relatives living and working abroad. However, emigration began to increase again to almost the levels before independence and the

war, culminating in 2014 when about 100,000 people illegally crossed the borders of the European Union, and only in Germany over 30,000 were registered as asylum-seekers (Möllers et al. 2015, 174). Most of the people part of this wave up until 2015 decided to emigrate driven by economic push factors such as lack of employment and low income. Nevertheless, recently there are signs of pull factors that influence the motivation to move such as low migration transaction costs made possible by newly adopted migrant-attractive mechanisms from the western economic powers such as Germany.

3.3.1.1. Socio-economic characteristics of Kosovo emigrants

Emigration to Kosovo for many reasons, as can be seen from the different waves of migration, has been a structural part of the society. For many years, especially during the 20th century, migration was seen as an element of survival and functioning of households within a predominantly patriarchal mentality. As Haxhikadrija (2009) points it out, there was a wish to Kosovo families to have six sons “two to go abroad and work, two to stay home and care for the family, and two to die for the country, fighting for freedom," (29). This proves that emigration from Kosovo for a long period has been a household strategy to overcome economic difficulties and underdevelopment in the country. Most of the migrants from the 60s to the 90s come from poor families of mainly rural areas of Kosovo.

The profile of a typical migrant of this specific period is that of a male with no or basic education and without any specific skills. However, their decision to migrate was not based on individual calculations. Households were the central structures of decision-making, which used a cost-benefit calculation when planning migration. Within household planning, larger families were more likely to plan migration due to labor surplus (Kotorri 2010, 26). In analyzing the likelihood of migration, the profile of the head of a household is an important indicator. As Kotorri (2010, 25) argues, in cases where the household’s head had higher education, the

probability of emigration of a family member from that household was lower. Up until the 90s, emigration in Kosovo happened due to economic reasons, with some exceptions of political activists who were politically persecuted. By the end of 80s and 90s, the number of the latter started to rise due to political repression from the Serbs during the late Yugoslavia. Politically motivated migrants, differently from migrants for economic purposes, were better educated and knew international languages. Nevertheless, they leveraged migration networks established by the former labor migrants - that is why most of them had for destination Switzerland and Germany. A different profile of migrants represent those who migrated to the United Kingdom. They represented an urban profile, well-educated and skilled (Haxhikadrija 2009, 30), whose decisions to move to the UK were mostly individual. The profile of migrants of the fourth wave is that of refugees, fleeing from the war, so no further analyses of their socio-economic characteristics is conducted.

The last wave of migration represents yet another profile of a Kosovo migrant. This wave starts after the war and independence of Kosovo, with two different groups of people. The first is that of those with previous experience of migration and the second of those with no experience in migration. The first category is made up of people who emigrated mainly during the 90s and returned to Kosovo after the war with the hope of building a new life in freedom. Their typical profile is that of people from the upper class who were not able to reintegrate in Kosovo and started looking for new opportunities to return to the receiving countries. Part of the second category were young people who, in the absence of perspective, looked for opportunities to emigrate. Most of them came from poor families in Kosovo, with mostly primary or secondary education.

The common denominator of both these categories is that, beyond purely economic reasons, they are demotivated to see a perspective in Kosovo and have decided for an exit strategy. As

Möllers et al. (2017, 176) point out referring to Hirschman's "Exit, voice and loyalty", dissatisfaction with a certain political or economic situation can result in exit, as one of the most direct forms of reaction. In this case, a large part, especially the young people of Kosovo, have chosen this form of reaction, hopeless about changes as a result of their voiced disagreement with the political and economic developments.

3.3.2. Political-Economic effects of emigration in Kosovo

Undoubtedly, emigration has had indelible effects on Kosovar society and state in many spheres. Starting from the population, migration has had a huge impact on the number of people that have left compared to those who stayed. Data on the number of Kosovo people abroad remain unclear to this date. Different sources show different numbers, starting from 380,000 to 700,000 (UNDP Kosovo 2014) to 800,000 to 1 million (Haxhikadrija 2009, 31). The official data of the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2014) records 380,826, which counts only for the period between 1969 to 2011, and only the people that were born in Kosovo and at some point, moved out of the country. However, Kosovo Agency of Statistics 2013, 22) in a population forecasting report acknowledges that the real number can go up to 550,00. Nevertheless, the most consensual number is 800,000, which means that almost one-third of Kosovars lives abroad, and every third household has a migrant (Haxhikadrija 2009, 31).

Taking these numbers into account, we can surely conclude that Kosovo has a large migrant community in comparison to its resident population. Kosovo migrants, therefore, have had a significant impact on the sending country as a whole and their families in particular. As for the latter, based on Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) conducted in 2000, families, especially in rural areas, which had a family member abroad, were better equipped with household appliances and goods than families without an emigrant member of the family

(Haxhikadrija 2009, 47.) In economic terms, the Kosovar economy is significantly affected by income from the diaspora. In this regard, most cashflow comes in the form of remittances.

Remittances in Kosovo, only from formal channels, make up from 10% to 16% of the country's GDP over the years after the independence (2008). They have had an increasing trend, almost tripled in the past fifteen years, and have grown in a counter-cyclical way compared to global trends during the pandemic. According to Hoti (2009, 445), remittances comprise the second largest income category, and with this ratio to the country's GDP, Kosovo is among the top transition countries regarding the impact of remittances. In the last two decades, remittances have reached and exceeded the level of foreign direct investments (FDI) in Kosovo. To date, remittances in Kosovo represent one of the main sources of financing the consumption of family economies. Kosovo has the highest share of households that receive remittances among all other Western Balkans countries (OECD 2022, 93).

Given the high unemployment rate in the country, remittances play an important role in keeping social cohesion as well. As a source that ensures stable social conditions, remittances reduce the burden on the state budget of many Kosovar families and increase their purchasing power (KAS 2013, 29-32). There was a perception in the country that remittances are having negative effects on the recipients, by making them less motivated, and thus less active in the labor market and economic activity in general. However, the KAS (2013) research report shows that there is no correlation between these indicators and the fact that some remittance recipients are less active because they are either part of older demographic groups or are less educated - therefore have fewer opportunities in the labor market. What hinders the impact of remittances, however, is the negative trade balance of Kosovo in goods and daily consumer products, with the latter

coming mainly from imports. Considering that most of the remittances are spent in this category, then the effect of remittances is faded.

Regarding investments and further economic engagement of migrant communities, Kosovo has stagnated to leverage the financial potential of its diaspora. Investment in real estate is the only area where concrete results are visible. But, in this direction, as Hoti (2015, 91-92) estimates, the money that comes as an investment in this sector can be classified more as remittances than as investments because they are not productive and do not generate a surplus for migrants who send them. The biggest impact from the migrants in regard to economic development is the facilitation of exports of Kosovo products in specific sectors such as wood processing or technology. Diaspora business associations are providing an important channel for Kosovo producers to access European markets. In this regard, there are some international organizations supporting the trade and export of Kosovo products, by leveraging diaspora links and networks ("USAID Kosovo Compete Activity" 2021).

The labor market is undoubtedly one of the areas most affected by emigration in Kosovo. Bearing in mind that most emigrants from Kosovo are very young, it has an immediate effect on the labor supply. Kosovo has the largest share of migrants under the age of 25 in comparison with other countries in the region (OECD 2022, 171). The phenomenon of brain drain in Kosovo, although it is not identified much since most of the emigrants are unqualified and low-educated young people (OECD 2022, 171, in certain sectors such as healthcare labor and skill shortages are quite evident and alarming in recent years. According to Hajdari and Krasniqi (2021, 273), nowadays "one doctor emigrates every two days while two nurses emigrate every day". This becomes even more shocking given that Kosovo has 2.5 doctors per 100,000 citizens, among the lowest in Europe. Signs of brain drain are recorded in other professions

such as engineers. In addition to the labor skill shortages, there is a social cost, which consists of public spending on the education and training of these people who emigrate (Hoti 2009, 456), which in the case a doctor is estimated to be 100,000 euros (Hajdari and Krasniqi 2021, 6). Consequences of the labor shortages are expressed by employers in the Balkans Busines Barometer, where 44% of them say that they are unable to fill their vacancies due to lack of skills of applicants (OECD 2022, 85). Another element identified in Kosovo is that of brain waste. As OECD report (2022, 171) shows, over 50% of the Kosovar high-skilled migrants in the OECD countries are overqualified, so they end up unemployed or underemployed. This a result of the mismatch of their education and labor market needs, which in Kosovo is a serious issue.

Beyond economic-related effects from migration, Kosovo has witnessed politically *pure* activities from its diaspora. Even though diaspora political engagement is a relatively new phenomenon, it has been quite intensive and influential to Kosovo's internal political and economic developments. Kosovar diaspora political activism started beginning of 90s to continue to our days. Despite the fact that diaspora activism is quite intense, it is the developments at the country of origin that drove all the political activity abroad (Koinova 2012, 434). Hence, diaspora political engagement developed in parallel depending on the nature of the developments back home. As Koinova (2012) points out, four types of Kosovar diaspora political activism characterised its initial phase of activity, radical strong, radical weak, moderate strong and moderate weak. Each of these types showed up in a period of more or less ten years. Beginning of 90s were characterized with a moderate strong activity, which was mainly focused on diplomacy and transnationalization of the Kosovo issue, and serbian political repression and violation of human rights in Kosovo. Main activities during this time were organized in the US, by lobbying to important senators and congressmens. Radical activity

among Kosovar diaspora, as per Koinova's definition (2012), starts with the intensification of violence and later the war in Kosovo. Now, the political disidents that emigrated by late 80s activated to fight for the liberation of Kosovo under the Kosovo Liberation Army. There was even a military brigade made of diaspora members called "Atlantic", which was comprised of young men from the Kosovar-Albanian American migrant communities who travelled all the way to join the KLA forces in the battlefield.

Even after the war, diaspora was quite engaged for the independence of Kosovo. Kosovar politicians who once were part of the migrant communities, continued to use the migration networks to further continue political campaigning in the receiving countries. In this regard, most of the activity was done in Switzerland, Germany and the US, where actually the larger part of Kosovo migrants are concentrated. Political activity among the diaspora and migrant communities continued after the independence. Now, looking at how to strengthen the statehood and enhance Kosovo's image abroad (Xharra and Waehlisch 2012). Another dimension during this time is the diaspora's engagement in electoral processes in Kosovo. The data shows that the votes coming from abroad have had a steady increasing trend, influencing considerably the final results, with the latest parliamentary elections reaching over 6% of the total electorate (GERMIN 2021).

4. Discussion and Analysis

The arguments and facts presented above create a very large room for discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of migration in the sending. Some of the key elements described in the theoretical framework are also found in our case study, Kosovo. The case study proves that some of the theoretical hypothesis are true and some others are false. What we see as well is that the perceptions and understanding of the effects of migration has evolved from the time when the departure of people was seen *a priori* as a loss of the population and consequently of the goods that people can generate (Ravenstein 1889), to the time when migration has new dynamics and the movement of someone from one country to another does not necessarily represent a loss (De Haas 2008). Even within a nation or ethnic group, migration effects tend to change over time.

Hence, within the same generations or groups, the results are quite nuanced, given that migrants do not represent the communities they come from due to their differences in skills, knowledge, demographic characteristics, etc (De Haas 2008, 6). Migrant communities are often more diverse than their compatriots in their home countries. They are often inclined to be more open to new cultures and acquaintances since even within the networks of migration they do not cultivate relationships based on kinship ties. If in the sending country their circles were dominated by family ties, such a thing happens less in emigration since their ties are built more by common ethnic or economic characteristics rather than kinship. This is important to understand the dynamics of migration and migrant communities.

Similarly, the migrant's influence in the sending country takes different and various pathways. Kapur and McHale (2012) argue that emigrants have different ways through which they impact the developments in the sending countries, starting from prospect and absent channels to diaspora and return (Kapur and McHale 2012, 4-10). They also influence the political economy

of the sending country in various direct and indirect ways, not only impacting numeric data but also the attitude of the people towards the state institutions and their functionality (Kapur and McHale 2012, 11-13).

However, as De Haas (2010, 227-8) argues that migration should not be seen as uncontextualized from other social and economic developments, through which it forms its causes and effects. Thus, migration's effects, as well as causes, are heterogenous (De Haas 2010, 228), and it is the context made by social and economic directs them one way or another.

In light of this, deterministic approaches uncontextualized do not help us understand the real effects of migration on sending countries. While it results true in our case that migration, referring to the pessimistic view, generates more migration (migrant syndrome) because migration networks tend to decrease the emigrating costs and integration in the receiving country, this is not the case with the remittance and other forms of transactions from receiving countries to the sending country. Kosovo migrants, through remittances and other forms of transfers, have been very important for the improvement of the welfare of those left at home. Migration in this case proves to be a household strategy to share risks, by diversifying and stabilizing incomes - the new economics of labor migrations (NELM) (De Haas 2008, 34-5). This is the case in the conditions of market constraints as well. As De Haas argues (2008, 34-5), unable to overcome the market imperfections, households chose migration as a strategy that through remittances enables them to access the markets through investments. In our case, we see that most of the migrants in various waves come from rural areas - people who because for many reasons (lack of education, social capital, etc.) could not overcome market constraints, therefore migration for them was the only option to increase income. Another indicator is the fact that a large number of households in Kosovo - over 30% receive remittances (Haxhikadrija

2009, 77). This shows that remittances and migration in Kosovo are quite related and the NELM remittance explanations are relevant.

What both pessimistic and optimistic views fail to interpret in regard to migration's impact on the sending countries, according to the NELM, is that migration at first is a household livelihood strategy. Migrants cannot be seen as only subjects of capitalist or external structures which somehow, as they are active in the efforts to improve the living conditions within all the contrasting circumstances, therefore isolating them from wider cultural and social context diminishes the quality of analysis and research (De Haas 2008, 36-7). Given that in our case, families were key pillars of society, migration decisions therefore can be better understood from the household living strategy to diversify resources through jobs and reduce income risks through remittances and other transaction forms. The most illustrative example of this, as pointed out by Möllers et al. (2017, 177), is the fact that the migrants could be ordered back and substituted with another family member if they failed to send money home in a regular way.

The same applies to the loss that is assumed to occur together with the departure of people. Assumptions from structuralist and neo-classical views do not take much into account that in certain cases, even though people leave, they continue to maintain relations with the sending country for a long time, more than it is assumed (De Haas 2008, 37). As we can see in the case of Kosovo, almost all migrants of the first generation continued to maintain ties with the homeland for their entire lives. If they did not return, they continued to stay connected and contribute as much as they could, and they even passed this ‘culture’ to second and third generations, something that De Haas (2008, 38) “transgenerational” transnationalism. The maintenance of ties of migrants with the sending country is a topic that, with technological developments, becomes even more prominent. In the globalized world of today, migrants have

turned into transnational agents with double loyalty, since today communication is many times faster than in the past, and the notion of global citizenship is becoming more and more relevant. Separating migrants from the sending country from the moment they left is not something that helps us analyze the effects they produce with their departure. Therefore, what is known as brawn drain, or the negative effects from the distance of people with their origin, which is quite emphasized by the structuralists tend be questioned.

Regarding the brain drain which is almost at the center of the structuralist theory on the effects of migration in the countries of origin, we see that there are cases like Kosovo when such a thing is not observed much. This is due to the simple fact that most of the migrants from Kosovo belong to the categories of low educated and unskilled people. Until the last few years, even though the number of people making up the labor force has decreased, this has not had many effects on the country's development trajectory. All the economic development indicators show that Kosovo has had a steady growth rate over the years. Only after the declaration of independence, some of the sectors such as healthcare have started to feel the effects of brain drain. The healthcare workers, driven more by pull factors, have begun to leave the country for developed European economies. In this case, the brain drain effect is argued in a selective manner in specific sectors but has not had significant effects on the economy of the sending country as a whole.

Furthermore, since most immigrants are low educated and unskilled, migration has influenced them to gain skills and knowledge in the host countries. This is seen in the case of Kosovo, since hundreds of associations of diaspora professionals have been formed. And as mentioned above, taking advantage of technological advantages, they look for ways to contribute back to the sending country.

Meanwhile, regarding brain gain as one of the advantages highlighted by the emigration optimists, there is little evidence in our case that emigration has stimulated significant investment in education in Kosovo or abroad. A large majority of Kosovar students abroad are results of international scholarship schemes rather than private investments of households. While students in-country do not represent a correlation between migration and investment in education. Studying in Kosovo is not seen as a means of raising the opportunities for migration since the "supply" of the education system in-country does not reflect the demand of either the local or international market.

However, despite the pull factors, what is identified to be the case in the recent drivers of Kosovar is what Hirschman (Möllers et al. 2015) describe as an exit strategy. It is not just employment or the economy that are driving factors. While on the one hand there are many pull factors as mentioned above, recently a considerable part of skilled young people have lost hope that by voicing their concerns their situation and well-being will improve. Consequently, since the opportunities for migration are increasing, the importance of the voice is decreasing. Therefore, exit is seen as a strategy of escaping from dissatisfaction with all political developments and state affairs of the country. Meanwhile, loyalty does not seem to play a role in the case of Kosovo. This is so because migration has been "cultivated" for so long that migrants are somehow perceived as "role models" (Möllers et al. (2017, 176). Political instability in this direction seems to have had an extraordinary impact.

Kosovars had high hopes that after the declaration of independence the country would take the right direction and that the antagonistic political forces would find a common ground. However, this did not happen since the political environment since 2010 has been very unstable. Since then, the country has experienced the change of 7 governments and 5 prime ministers, something that has had a negative effect on al policymaking and policy-implementation

processes. This political instability has been also accompanied by a heavy toxic public discourse. Regardless of political beliefs, citizens are desperate about the country's progress in some areas such as European integration or freedom of movement. Especially for the latter, there has been a protracted process for more than ten years. Kosovo continues to remain the only country in continental Europe without visa liberalization. Isolation combined with an unstable political environment has made many young people see the strategy of exit before that of voice and loyalty.

Beyond the causes of migration, its effects are inevitable. Adding to the elements of remittances, what we see in the case study is that migrant communities also contribute through other forms of transactions. In this regard, a very specific element that is not covered much by the different approaches to the effects of migration, and which is encountered in Kosovo, is investments from the diaspora. the specifics of these investments are the motive.

Since Kosovo does not represent a country with great potential for foreign investments, investments from the diaspora are not lacking. The problem is that they are mainly focused on the real estate sector, which does not generate much wealth and employment. the specifics of these investments are the motive. Since Kosovo does not represent a country with great potential for foreign investments, investments from the diaspora are not lacking. The problem is that they are mainly focused on the real estate sector, which does not generate much wealth and employment - thus they are considered more as remittances rather than investments. In this regard, the structuralist pessimistic view and its assumptions that remittances tend to go to non-productive sectors in the sending country seem to be closer to reality in our case study.

Meanwhile, investments in other sectors have another special characteristic. Diaspora investors often have subjective motives for investing in Kosovo (Haxhikadrija 2009, 56-60). Their investment approach is emotionally sensitive based, meaning that they do not look for profits primarily when investing in the country of origin. Even though small in numbers, diaspora investments seem to have gone beyond remittances. In this regard, a huge impact that diaspora and migrant communities bring back is through their holiday visits to the country of origin. In the case of Kosovo, it has taken the form of a pilgrimage since the number of migrants returning for vacation is quite high.

As Haxhkadrija (2009, 61) points out, diaspora members have turned into a ritual that savings the entire year to spend during holidays in the homeland. The data shows that diaspora homecomings have been the steadiest form of financial support over the years. This phenomenon, otherwise called "diaspora tourism", is something that now is getting more and more attention not only from Kosovo but also in other states with large diasporas. It is becoming a profitable industry worth paying attention to, since different approaches to migration did not identify it as an important transaction form.

In terms of social and political transactions, as we could see in our case, the contributions of migrants are much greater than what is presented through the lenses of different views on migration. Even in the matter, our case study - Kosovo proves that the structuralist views are challenged by a continuation of the political and social commitments of the migrant communities in the country of origin. From long-distance nationalism to engagement in direct decision-making through out-of-country voting, the engagement of the diaspora has been crucial in the political and social developments of the country of origin. A new element here is also the engagement to advocate for the interests of the country of origin to the host countries

and global and international relations. Xharra and Waehlisch (2012) point out that the generations among diaspora communities are changing, and together with that is changing the role they play in both host and origin societies. Given that the new generations tend to be more educated and integrated within the host societies, they represent a great potential for the sending country. This goes in line with the optimistic developmentalist views, which attributes to the migrant communities the positive effects of their political and social commitment and effects in relation to the countries of origin' developments.

5. Summary and Conclusions

The increase of migration has influenced the development of different perspectives on this phenomenon and the effects it causes on the sending countries. Among the main perspectives, this study presents the arguments of the structuralist / deterministic approach and the neo-classical / developmental theory. Regardless of the fact that both theories have empirical bases to support their assertions, they are not always accurate in measuring and evaluation the effects of migration in the countries of origin.

The arguments presented in this research emphasize the need of assessing the migration effects on the sending countries from a wider range of perspectives. Nevertheless, both optimistic and pessimistic approaches present very important arguments that provides us with the right tools to further analyze a phenomenon like emigration. Starting from the former, neo-classical theory on emigration helps us to understand the it reduces the disparities between developed and underdeveloped countries. Migrants as rational individuals that make their decisions based on cost-benefit calculations turn out to positively affect the sending countries' economies since through financial transactions they increase the well-being their families in the country of origin.

Meanwhile, the pessimistic approach by emphasizing the losses from emigration, rightly presents the syndromic effect of emigration that makes it unstoppable. Structural disparities between countries produce the constant willingness of people to move from the less developed to developed ones. People tend to create migrants' network in received countries with the aim of making the integration easier and reducing the opportunity costs. These networks then help other non-migrants because they lower the overall cost of emigration. Therefore, the emigration creates a basis to sustain over time.

However, assumptions of these two theories tend to be questionable is specific contexts of migration such as that of our case – Kosovo. There are many indicators that proves that the local context can be much more nuanced and complex than it is presented. As De Haas (2010) argues, nowadays it is difficult to use a one-dimensional theoretical framework to explain the effects of migration in the sending or even receiving country. In this regard, we find out that in the local context of emigration does not fit fully or in parts with some of the main assumptions of either optimistic or pessimistic approaches.

Initially, emigration does not always cause brain drain and stagnation of development of the sending country. In Kosovo, the characteristics of the population have shown that the majority of emigrants are low educated and unskilled. Even though signs of brain drain have started to appear and be worrying in specific sectors such as healthcare, the phenomenon is still not so relevant in macroeconomic terms and cannot explain the economic stagnation. Contrary, emigration in Kosovo has influenced the reduction of labor force surplus, since a large part of the Kosovo active population until late was outside the labor market due to market constraints and imperfections.

Secondly, the creation of the 'migration syndrome' has not had a negative impact on the development path of Kosovo. Although emigration been stable over the years given the increase of migration networks and the decrease of migration costs, the effects have not turned out to be as negative as the structuralist theory alludes. This is because Kosovo migrants have continued to maintain very strong ties with the sending country and have continued increasingly to remit, something that have played a very important role for the financial stability of households as well as the entire country's economy. Moreover, migrants' contributions beyond remittances

have had a huge impact for the country's development goals. Diaspora networks and their political engagement has been crucial for the Kosovo liberation and independence. This is correlated with the nature of the different migration waves in Kosovo, since most of the first-generation migrants from the second and third wave were "forced migrants" as they were fleeing from the repressive Serb regime. Therefore, their leave was always meant to be temporary and the life abroad was 'homeland oriented' (Brubaker 2006). This proves the second hypothesis of this study as positive, as the context and empirical evidence in the case of Kosovo show that the positive effects of "migration syndrome" surpasses the negative ones.

Thirdly, remittances present a much greater impact than both pessimistic and optimistic views show. In this regard, an important view comes from the New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM), which puts an emphasis on migration as a household livelihood strategy. In the case of Kosovo, the evidence shows that for a long-time emigration was seen as a survival strategy of households, and the decisions to emigrate were made within this strategy. This is illustrated by the fact that migrant members of households who failed to send remittances were replaced with other non-migrant family members.

Nevertheless, the importance of remittances in the economic development of Kosovo beyond the households income stabilization strategies seem to be weak. This is due to the macro-economic circumstances and the way remittances are used. Spending of remittances on daily consumption given that Kosovo has a very negative trade balance for the daily use products, means that the role of remittances for development of the sending country is not as positive as assumed by the neo-classical theory. Moreover, even remittances that are invested go to the non-productive sector such as real estate. In this regard, the third hypothesis of this research is tested negative, as the increase of remittances in our case is not reflected in the country's economic growth trajectory.

Lastly, there is the time indicator which influences the migration's effects on the sending countries. As the time passes the effects of emigration are revealed to be multi-dimensional, making it hard to evaluate or measure them from a one-sided perspective or approach. Huge technological advancements have created new conditions for the connection between migrants and their home countries. Therefore, the latter are not far anymore to be disconnected with, and the two-way relationship between the sending and receiving countries and the contribution for the former does not necessarily need a physical return. Moreover, the new dynamics of migration and the change of generations of migrants are insurmountable factors in reshaping the migration effects on the sending countries. Second and third generations of migrants represent very valuable assets for the sending countries in the developed world. All these factors show that the first hypothesis of this research is tested positive, as the migration effects to the sending country cannot anymore be explained by one-sided approaches.

5.1. Research limitations and future research prospects

This research has nevertheless some limitations. Migration is a complex issue, with many dimensions and various trade-offs, that are context dependent. The dichotomy between optimistic and pessimistic views elaborated here are a little simplified given the research space limitations, and it needs further and deeper analysis and elaboration. In addition to that, there is lack of reliable, updated and larger data on various aspects of migration in regard to the case study, which further limits accuracy of the emigration effects' evaluation. However, the findings of this research create room for new research pathways and questions to be answered in regard to emigration effects. In this regard, a new comprehensive dataset on migration in the case of Kosovo would greatly help identify the effects it has on the sending country, as well as it would add more to the existing knowledge on the field for similar cases

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