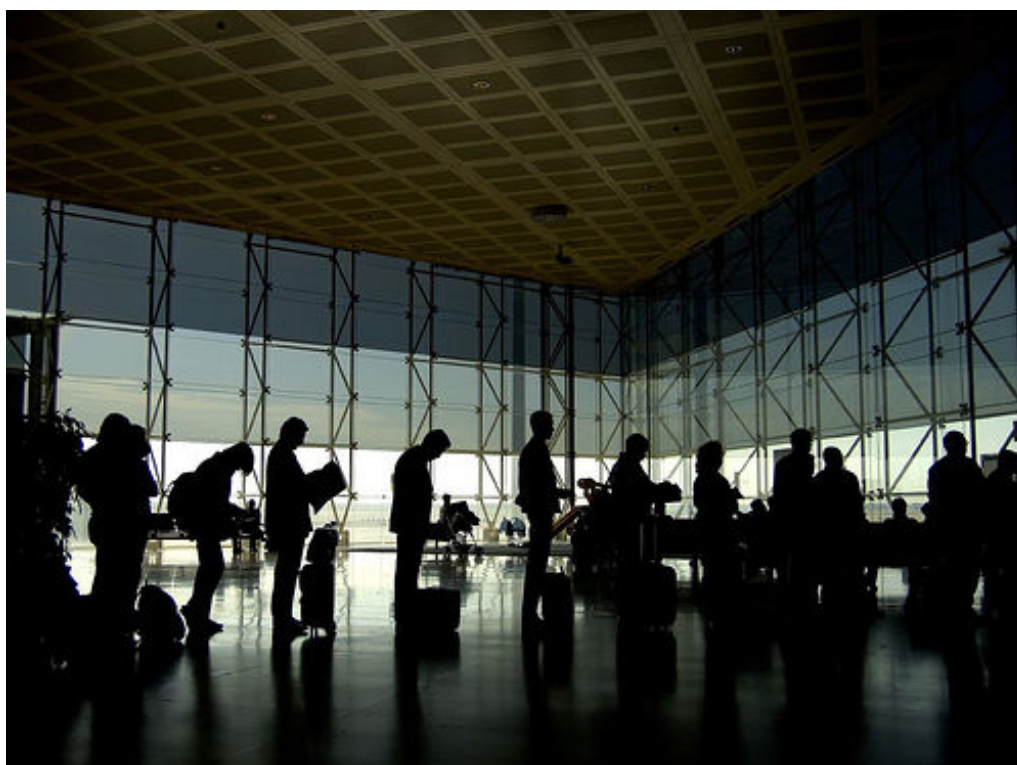


Lithuanian youth emigration



<http://Itemigration.wordpress.com/2011/12/04/the-glass-of-lithuanias-future-half-full-or-half-empty/>



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Table of Content

Introduction	4
Chapter 1: Migration history and patterns in Lithuania	15
Chapter 2: Lithuanian youth emigration	28
Chapter 3: Case study. Uzupis year 2006	33
Chapter 4: Policy response	43
Conclusion	49
Bibliography	52

Introduction

Lithuania is a small Baltic country. It is also a new nation. Twenty years ago it restored its independence from the USSR. Less than ten years ago Lithuania joined the EU. Authorities of this new state feel they need people to build the nation. However, statistics and the most recent population census show that the population is decreasing and one of the main reasons for this decline is emigration.¹

Lithuania's role in the global perspective has changed: from a migrant receiving country at the end of the 20th century it became a sending one, with migration numbers being the highest in the whole of Europe. This increase in emigration rates has been observed since the country became part of the EU. The number of emigrants grew with the start of the economic recession. Currently, Lithuanian authorities see emigration of Lithuanian citizens as one of the most serious social-demographic threats. It is believed to lead to losses in business development, investment and competition, preservation of cultural identity and national intelligence. Discontent with the country's social, economic, political and cultural conditions encourages an increase in emigration. Between 2002 and 2009, emigration rates were the highest in the whole of the European Union and emigration of the youth, particularly those with higher education, caused concern. There is quite a lot of scholarly work on the Lithuanian "brain drain".² However, as yet there is no study on youth as a separate group. Furthermore, youth emigration has not yet been related to the young people's choices regarding higher education and labour market opportunities. I chose to concentrate on youth emigration, to study its patterns and identify reasons that determine Lithuanian youth emigration. My leading research question is: *why do young Lithuanians leave their home country and how does the Lithuanian state respond to their emigration?*

Theory

There is a large literature on why people migrate and what causes changes in migration.³ The *neo-classical* or *push-and-pull model* and the *family strategy model*

¹ Lithuanian Population Census 2011.

² Edita Petuškiienė, 'The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country's labour market', The International Conference on Administration and Business (Bucharest, 2009) 602-609; Audra Sipavičienė and Vlada Stankūnienė, 'The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications'. Paper presented at conference 'The economic impact of emigration in Latvia and the other Baltic countries: challenges and policy implications' (Ryga 2012) 1-20.

³ See for instance: Everett S. Lee, 'A theory of migration', *Demography* 3:1 (1966) 47-57; S. Castles and M.J. Miller, *The age of migration. International population movements in the modern world* (London

have long been used to explain migrations and changes within it.⁴ The migration decision is seen as the outcome of a cost-benefit calculation, either by an individual (in the neo-classical model)⁵ or by the family or household (in the family strategy model). In the *integrative model* the social context is given greater importance, and individuals or families are replaced by networks.⁶ Migrant networks create ties between former migrants, migrants and non-migrants in the countries of origin and destination. Networks reduce the costs and risks of movement and increases the expected net returns to migration. These connections represent a form of social capital that eases the process of finding employment in foreign country. Private institutions and organizations can play a role in facilitating migration. Moreover, institutional support from churches and governments in sending and receiving countries influences the nature of migration.⁷

Once a large number of migrants establish themselves at the destination, migration becomes self-perpetuating for it sets social and economic structures – migration systems.⁸ These systems consist of a core receiving region, which can be a country or even a group of countries and a set of sending countries linked to it by large number of migrants.⁹ In the *migration system model* it is acknowledged that a migration system can continue after the original profitability has expired.¹⁰ Microeconomic theory concentrates on individual choice – migration is seen as a form of investment in human capital. A ‘new economics of migration’ tends to drive attention from an individual into a bigger groups or units – families or households – in which people act collectively not only to maximize expected income, but also to minimize risks and to loosen constraints associated with a variety of market failures, apart from those in the labor market.¹¹ Emigration caused by economic situation in the home country and destination creates a vast number of economic migrants.

1993); Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J. Edward Taylor, ‘Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal’, *Population and Development Review* 19: 3 (Sep., 1993) 431-466.

⁴ Lee, ‘A theory of migration’, 47-57.

⁵ Larry A. Sjaastad, ‘The Costs and Returns of Human Migration’, *Journal of Political Economy* 70 (1962) 80-93; Michael Todaro, ‘A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries’, *American Economic Review* 59(1) (1969) 138-148; Michael Todaro, *Internal Migration in Developing Countries* (Geneva 1976).

⁶ Hania Zlotnik, ‘Women As Migrants and Workers in Developing Countries’, *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* 30: 1 (1993) 39-62.

⁷ Massey et al, ‘Theories of International Migration’, 448.

⁸ Oliver Bakewell, Oliver, Hein de Haas, and Agnieszka Kubal, ‘Migration systems, pioneers and the role of agency’, Working paper 48, November 2011, International Migrations Institute, 1-26, pg 6.

⁹ Massey et al, ‘Theories of International Migration’, 454.

¹⁰ S. Castles and M.J. Miller, *The age of migration. International population movements in the modern world* (London 1993) 22.

¹¹ Massey, et al, ‘Theories of International Migration’, 436.

There is also literature specifically about the migration of young people.¹² This literature puts emphasis on factors such as love, and lust for adventure as well as need for or opportunities for (higher) education. Age, gender and marital status will influence migration and how migrants are monitored.

Highly-skilled migrants are people who have higher education, as well as students, and they are attributed to a “brain drain” group. This phenomenon is not new. Recently it has affected a vast number of people. “Brain circulation” and “brain waste” are two concepts connected to the “brain drain”. “Brain circulation” (or exchange) characterizes both emigration (or loss) and immigration (or gain) of highly-skilled persons. The best examples of the brain gain countries are the USA, Germany or, in general, highly developed countries in Western Europe. Lithuania is a good example of a brain loss country, where highly-skilled migration is increasing. Brain waste is used to describe people with high-skills who take low-skilled or unskilled positions. The USA is attractive as a destination because it offers excellent research centres, flexible and open career opportunities, strong entrepreneurial culture and high living standards. Therefore, it is not surprising that a great number of Europeans, who have doctoral degrees, choose the USA for their further work. However, European countries are following the US example and have initiated similar programmes to attract highly-skilled migrants.¹³

One of the reasons for Lithuanian brain drain to occur is absence of orientation of high school curricula towards the needs of the Lithuanian labour market. Among long-term unemployed people, there is a large group young people who finished school or graduated from university and are unable to find a job in Lithuania.¹⁴ Furthermore, a large number of non-economic factors such as geography, culture, and demographics influence migration flows and their size. Mobility is greater among the people who are 20-30 years old and who have already finished higher education and are starting their

¹² For a review of the literature see: Christine M. Tucker, Pilar Torres-Pereda, Alexandra M. Minnis; Sergio A. Bautista-Arredondo, ‘Migration Decision-Making Among Mexican Youth’, *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 35: 1 (2013) 61-84; Fatima Juárez, Thomas Legrand, Cynthia B. Lloyd, Susheela Singh, Véronique Hertrich, ‘Youth Migration and Transitions to Adulthood in Developing Countries’, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 648: 1 (2013) 6-15; Fatima Juárez, Thomas Legrand, Cynthia B. Lloyd, Susheela Singh, Véronique Hertrich, René Zenteno, Silvia E Giorguli, and Edith Gutiérrez, ‘Mexican Adolescent Migration to the United States and Transitions to Adulthood’, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 648: 1 (2013) 18-37.

¹³ Aušra Kazlauskienė and Leonardas Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, *Engineering Economics* 1:46 (2006) 27-37, 28.

¹⁴ Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, ‘The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications’, 12.

career.¹⁵ Family connections make the departure more complicated and families who are left behind in the country of origin encourage the return migration. Personal characteristics also have an influence. People who are not afraid of taking risks, are motivated and easily adapt to the new environment tend to migrate more often than those who do not have these personal qualities.¹⁶ Moreover, new friendships abroad stimulate staying in the country of destination. Social networks that consist of countrymen become centres of attraction and promote emigration. Cultural differences make the adaptation difficult and can lead to return migration. Migrants often leave the country without clear information about the destination country. When reality is disappointing they return. The immigration policy pursued in the receiving country plays an important role too – policy may restrict rights of foreigners or offer incentives to qualified migrants.

Not only kin networks but also ethnic associations and ethnic enclaves that have an impact on migration. Ethnically based associations that focus on sports, religion or recreation act as conduits for information and help. Moreover, they also may link migrant members to the communities of origin and facilitate reintegration upon return. However, it also promotes a debate on the consequences of participation in the enclave economy. Ethnic enclaves are seen as an advantage since they facilitate the economic adjustment. These ethnic ties provide networks of social support and improve learning of new skills.¹⁷ As an outcome, reciprocal relations develop, which are integrated in ethnically based social networks. On the other hand, exploitation of the newly arrived migrants can be a disadvantage. The newly arrived receive lower wages, are exploited and have to work in bad conditions.

The factors that influence the process of the young people's labour market integration can be grouped into exogenous and endogenous clusters. Economic, social, demographical, geographical, and political factors are all exogenous (external) and impervious to a specific individual. Meanwhile endogenous (internal) factors depend on a specific individual. The process of the young people's labour market integration is related to the interaction between both groups of these factors.¹⁸ This shows that the

¹⁵Egidijus Barcevičius c.s., 'Ekonominių migrantų skatinimo grįžti į tėvynę priemonės', Viešosios politikos ir vadybos institutas (Vilnius 2005) 1-75, 6.

¹⁶ Barcevičius c.s., 'Ekonominių migrantų skatinimo grįžti į tėvynę priemonės', 6.

¹⁷ Boyd, 'Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas', 653-654.

¹⁸ Petuškienė, 'The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country's labour market', 606.

youth's position in the labour market depends on both the economic situation in the country and professional qualifications of a particular person.

As was said above this thesis is not only about why (young) people leave but also about how authorities respond to their departure. States were as a rule more interested in the people who came, than in those who left.¹⁹ Exceptions are states like the Philippines and Morocco that stimulated emigration in the hope of receiving remittances. During the heydays of postwar Northwestern European emigrations – the 1950s and 1960s – states were not too keen to see the most useful people leave. They stimulated the migration of those who could be missed and discouraged the emigration of those who could help rebuild post-war societies.²⁰ Lithuania might in a similar fashion have reason to discourage the migration of those who might be able to build post-independence society.

Historiography

There is a rather large literature on current Lithuanian emigration. It emphasises that young emigrants go abroad mainly for economic reasons – pull factors in the country of destination are seen as decisive. Sipavičienė, Stankūnienė and Petuškienė pay attention mostly to 'damages', which were done to the labour market when large numbers of the qualified and young people leave the country.²¹ Another popular topic is a loss of the country's investments in higher education; the country supports students and their higher education, but the graduates, instead of working for their country, leave and use their knowledge and experience in a foreign country. A common feature of numerous articles was that most attention was devoted to a loss of labour force, brain drain and youth emigration.²² The research into the policy response and the programs introduced by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania to address the migration-related issues did not get any attention from scholars yet. With the exception of Audronė Sipavičienė, no authors address the programs or initiatives encouraging return migration, or

¹⁹ Nancy Green, 'The politics of exit: reversing the immigration paradigm', *The Journal of Modern History* 77:2 (2005) 263-289.

²⁰ M. Schrover and M. van Faassen, 'Invisibility and selectivity. Introduction to the special issue on Dutch overseas emigration in the nineteenth and twentieth century', *TSEG* 7:2 (2010) 3-31.

²¹ Petuškienė, 'The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country's labour market', 602-609; Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, 'The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications', 1-20;

²² Y. Stolz and J. Baten, 'Brain drain in the age of mass migration: Does relative inequality explain migrant selectivity?', *Explorations in Economic History* 49: 2 (2012) 205-220.

maintenance of relations with those who have left.²³ With an exception of a few articles in the popular media, I did not find any information about organizations that stimulate ties.²⁴

To my knowledge, only one survey was carried out in order to depict pushes and pulls in young people's migration.²⁵ For that survey 500 Lithuanians living abroad were interviewed. The survey identified the main causes of the youth emigration. However, the survey was carried out in 2005 and since then the situation will have changed.

In the existing literature, factors such as the quality of the education offered in the home country and the conditions created for students at foreign universities are not given much attention. Moreover, the career possibilities after graduation are often ignored as well. Personal happiness, the possibility to improve and develop, to have a job in which knowledge acquired while studying could be used, are likely to be factors of great importance to the youth and they are often forgotten when emigration of the youth and its causes are discussed.

Even though emigration is an important issue in Lithuania, at the present information about it, characteristics of a migrant and the reasons for migration is limited. The research on this topic is fragmentary and does not include the whole complex phenomenon. Most of the surveys concentrate on one group of people only – mainly on specialists that have high qualifications – or analyze a few economic activities. In some cases research is orientated only towards a specific aspect of emigration – economic emigration or relations with the diaspora, for instance. In this thesis I concentrate on the youth and qualified émigrés.

Materials and Method

The thesis is based on two types of sources: interviews and government material. My interviewees belong to one cohort: one age group, which is united by its school-year experiences. All interviewees were of similar age (born mostly in 1987, with some in

²³ Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, 'The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications', 1-20.

²⁴ Z. Norkus, 'Gal vis dėlto „išganymas“ ateis iš emigracijos?' Available online at: <http://www.veidas.lt/prof-z-norkus-%E2%80%9Egal-vis-delto-%E2%80%9Eisganymas%E2%80%9C-ateis-is-emigracijos%E2%80%9C> [Accessed 20/08/2013]; 'Globalios Lietuvos lyderiai': mobilumas nera gresme. Available at: <http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/emigrants/globalios-lietuvos-lyderiai-mobilumas-nera-gresme.d?id=60328139> [Accessed 20/06/2013]

²⁵ Ruta Aidis and, Dovile Krupickaite, 'Jaunimo emigracijos tyrimas: Lietuvos universitetinių aukštųjų mokyklų studentų nuostatos emigruoti', *Lietuvių migracijos ir diasporos studijos* (2006) 36-50.

1988 or 1986). All are young Lithuanians who emigrated from Lithuania a few years ago and either came back or are still living abroad. They are the people I went to high school with. Through their class mentors I managed to get in touch with 30 former students who were willing to share their life experience with me. A large number of the people are residing in different countries so most of information was collected via emails and skype conversations. I sent the participants a few general questions to begin with and depending on their answers I decided whether or not to go further and get more personal information. To my surprise, most of the people whom I contacted were willing to share their experience and gave me full answers. With some of them I exchanged many emails, others agreed to have a chat with me via skype. All in all, it took me about a month to gather all information. I met with some of them in person during my visits to the UK, the Netherlands and Lithuania.

Also, I visited Vilnius Uzupis Gymnasium. With the help of the staff, I managed to get access to school archives and collect data on how many pupils finished school in the same year as I did, how many girls and boys there were, which languages they studied. Unfortunately, only some years after I left that gymnasium, the school secretary started register how many pupils entered universities, and what they studied.

In 2006 137 pupils left Uzupis Gymnasium. There were 5 classes each with 23-30 pupils. I received interesting information and data during the meetings with the former school principal. He worked at the school for more than twenty years and retired recently. However, he is so devoted to the school, he takes part in almost all events, openings, and graduation ceremonies. He has a large collection of school memoirs from over twenty years, has a description of each pupil who finished that school. Figure 1 presents an overview with information about my interviewees.

Figure 1. Basic information about the interviewees

Name	Occupation before leaving LTU	Age when he/she left LTU	Destination	Occupation at destination	Age when he/she came back to LTU
Class A					
Vytautas	BA student in engineering; degree	22	Leeds, UK	Low skilled job in a	-

	not completed			warehouse	
Inesa	Arts student at Vilnius College	20	London, UK	Barista/ musician	-
Laurynas	student*	19	Reading, UK	Work in finance (work related to studies completed in the UK)	-
Gaile	Fine arts student at Vilnius Academy of Arts; degree not completed	22	Rotterdam, The Netherlands	Ma student in fine arts	-
Daiva	Fine arts student at Vilnius Academy of Arts; degree not completed	23	Rotterdam, The Netherlands/ Berlin, Germany	Ma student in fine arts	-
Vytenis	Ba and Ma degrees in Political Sciences at Vilnius University	25	Brussels, Belgium	Employee in one of the EU institutions	-
Kornelija	Ba in industrial engineering at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University	22	Copenhagen, Denmark	Employee in local publishing house	-
Domile	Ba degree in sociology at Mykolas Romeris University	23	Annemasse, France	Climbing instructor	-
Class B					
Andrius	Ba in engineering at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University	22	Stockholm, Sweden	Ma student at Stockholm University	-
Class C					
Saule	Student	19	London, UK	Full-time mum	-
Tautvile	BA degree in economics at ISM University of Economics and Management, Vilnius	22	London, UK	Model	-
Indre	Student	20	Freiburg, Germany	Contemporary dance teacher	-
Nerijus	Student	19	Barcelona, Spain	Sales manager	-
Class D					
Monika	Student	19	London UK/ Florence Italy	PhD student at European University Institute	-

Greta	Student	19	Bristol, UK-Lithuania	Ba studies in economics at UWE	22
Marija	Ba student in philosophy at Vilnius University; degree not finished	22	Bristol, UK	Catering assistant	-
Ieva	Student	19	Copenhagen, Denmark	Event manager at the International House of university of Copenhagen	-
Igne	Ba student in chemistry at Vilnius University; studies not completed	20	Paris, France (before that-Bristol, UK and Sicily, Italy)	Actress	-
Joris	Ba in graphic design at Vilnius Academy of Arts	23	Milan, Italy	Self-employed graphic designer	-
Kotryna	Student	19	Milan, Italy	Events manager	-
Antanas	Student	20	Alicante, Spain	Employee at Russian Business Center Spain	-
Dovile	Ba in economics at ISM University of Economics and Management in Vilnius	23	Madrid, Spain	Ma in economics at University of Madrid	-
Edvinas	Ba in management and business studies at Vilnius College	21	Melbourne, Australia-Lithuania	Work and travel Australia	23
Inga	Student	18	London, UK	Full time mum	-
Morta	Ba student in design at Vilnius Art Academy; haven't completed her studies	21	Berlin, Germany/ London, UK/ Amsterdam, The Netherlands	Freelancer	-
Class E					
Juste	student	19	London, UK	Hotel management	-
Brigita	Ba degree in interior design, Vilnius Academy of Arts	22	London, UK	Self-employed photographer	-
Adele	Ba degree in architecture at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University	22	London, UK-Lithuania	Work in catering	23
Lina	Ba studies in fine arts at Vilnius Academy	20	Stockholm,	Ba student at Konstfack	-

	of Arts; degree not completed		Sweden	(Univeristy college of arts, crafts and design in Stockholm)	
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* Student refers to completion of secondary education at Vilnius Uzupis Gymnasium

My second set of information comes from material I collected during my two-month internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. I worked for *the Lithuanians living abroad Department*. My main task was to write a report on transnationalism. I collected information during meetings and discussions with the Heads of the Department of Lithuanians Living Abroad Divisions, the Ministry's partners and NGOs. The data collected during the meetings and interviews show not only programs and initiatives directed towards the return migration and preservation of ties with the Lithuanian émigrés but also indicate society's response to this policy: programs directed to emigrants have an effect on the people who are still residing in Lithuania and serve as a push factor from the home country.

Professor Audronė Sipavičienė, Director of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Lithuania, is one of the researchers into migration-related issues in Lithuania whose work has made a contribution to academic studies in this field. In cooperation with other scholars she carried out research into the social-economic impact on emigration from Lithuania. She also studied programs and strategies that encourage return migration. I made use of her expertise.

To understand the current situation in Lithuania and to get an idea of the effects and influence of emigration for those who leave and those who stay behind in the home country, I studied the materials of conferences and seminars held by the European migration network and Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania.²⁶ I also made use of the material from the Lithuanian Department of Statistics and the latest Lithuanian Population Census, which was carried out in 2011.²⁷

Structure

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter concentrates on the history of Lithuanian migration, its main stages and the largest groups of migrants. In the second

²⁶ Lietuvių emigracija: problema ir galima sprendimo būdai (2005), Pilietinės visuomenės institutas, pg 1-47.

²⁷ International migration of Lithuanian population 2011, Statistics Lithuania.

chapter, I concentrate on the youth and young émigrés. The third chapter is devoted to my case study of the one school-year generation. This study serves as an example of how massive migration is, and it also depicts destinations and main reasons for migration. The fourth chapter presents a brief policy response towards return migration.

Chapter 1: Migration history and migration patterns in Lithuania

Lithuania, like almost all other countries in the world, has a long migration history. In this chapter, I will concentrate on more recent migrations – starting with the 20th century. Lithuanian scholars who study migration from different social, economic, demographic and cultural perspectives agree that recent migration can be divided into four long periods. The last period, as well as changing push and pull elements, will be the focus of this study.

The beginning of international migration in Lithuania can be related to the rule of Gediminas the Great (ruled in the period 1316-1341). During his rule Lithuania's territory extended from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. However, emigration in the Middle Ages was not extensive – the feudal rule restricted the free movement of people in all countries. Emigration increased during the division of the Great Duchy of Lithuania (second half of the 18th century).

The first migration wave occurred in the nineteenth century and is related to the Tsarist Russian regime. In 1863, when the Lithuanian uprising failed, intense cultural and administrative russification of the nation started. One of the most important features of this period was the 1864-1904 ban on the Lithuanian publications in a Latin and Gothic script. The ban initiated a creation of an illegal network of book smugglers working from Eastern Prussia. The ban also served as an 'inspiration' for nationalist movements that started in the 1880s. When the language ban was removed, the first Lithuanian political parties were created. These parties became a place where Lithuanians were allowed to develop their national culture without persecution.²⁸ Idea of an independent nation-state of Lithuania was 'born' under very complicated circumstances; i.e. the disorder caused by the First World War.

Lithuanians, in contrast to Jews, for instance, did not receive political pressure from Russian authorities. Political persecution was not the cause of emigration for Lithuanians. The key motive for Lithuanian emigrants was the lack of economic opportunity.²⁹ Moreover, Lithuanians started to develop their national identity which created ties with the homeland. This encouraged circular, rather than permanent emigration among them. Main destinations were found within the borders of the

²⁸ Tomas Balkelis, 'Opening gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish migrations from the Lithuanian provinces, 1867-1914', *Ethnicity studies* 1; 2 (2010) 41-66, 47. .

²⁹ Balkelis, 'Opening gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish migrations from the Lithuanian provinces, 1867-1914', pg. 48.

Russian Empire - Lithuanians chose major industrial cities in the north (Mitau, Riga, Saint Petersburg and Moscow), south (Odessa and Kiev) and agricultural labour markets of Southern Ukraine as their primary destinations.³⁰ International migration started in the 1907 with Lithuanian migration towards the USA. Yet the highest number of Lithuanian emigrants was reached in 1913–1914 with 46,200 leaving.³¹ In total, between 1860s and 1914, Lithuania lost one fourth of its population due to emigration. Emigration took place at the same time as the nation-making process. The recent emigration and the worries it creates do have a precedent in this earlier period. The nation-making process united not only Lithuanians, but also other nations within the Russian Empire. These nationalistic movements led to creation of independent nation states after the First World War.

The second wave of emigration was during the World War II. Lithuanians were fleeing to Germany from the Soviet occupation and persecutions. There was also emigration to the USA. Soviet authorities at the same time deported entire families and villages to Siberia.

The third wave of intensive labour migration from Lithuania began in 1990s, when independence was established. The emigration movement became more intense when Lithuania was accepted into the EU. Migration from Lithuania can be divided into two types: first, the emigration that occurred up until 1990s was mainly political, while the second, starting during 1990s, can be seen as economic.³²

Main periods of Lithuanian migration history from the twentieth century and onwards

Scholars differ on how best to break down different periods in the history of Lithuanian migration. One group of authors sees four main emigration waves, others separated political and economical emigration, and there are also authors who highlighted historical events or processes, which influenced an increase in people's outgoes from Lithuania in different time periods. However, the most relevant time periods, which describe the migration processes in Lithuania during the recent decades, are the period

³⁰ Balkelis, 'Opening gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish migrations from the Lithuanian provinces, 1867-1914', pg. 52.

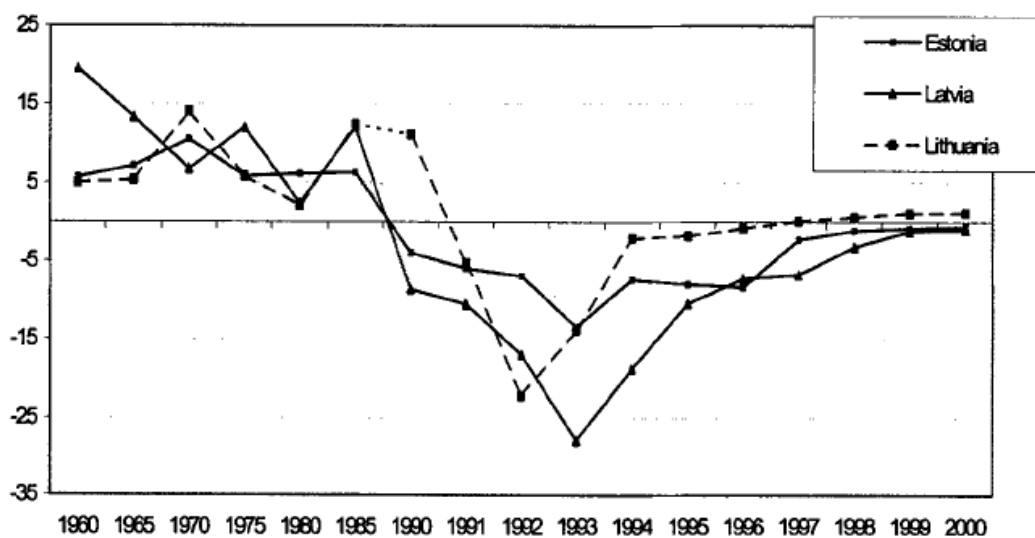
³¹ Balkelis, 'Opening gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish migrations from the Lithuanian provinces, 1867-1914', pg. 55.

³² Gabija Didziokaite, 'Ethnicity in Lithuanian emigrants' public letters', Amsterdam Social Science, 47-66, 50.

of the Soviet occupation, the re-establishment of Independence, accession to the European Union and the global economical crisis.³³

Lithuania was not very different than that from other Baltic states. During the Soviet period, the Baltic states were immigration countries (see figure 2). Since independence (1991), immigration declined. Immigration flows, began to decline in the late 1980s, and fell sharply in the early 1990s. The negative total net migration was to a large extent caused by out-migration of the so-called "Russian speaking population". The main destination for the majority of emigrants was the Russian Federation, followed by the Ukraine and Belarus. These three nationalities alone account for 80 per cent of net migration from Estonia in 1996 and Latvia in 1997 and for 60 per cent from Lithuania in 1997.

Figure 2. Net Migration in the Baltic states 1960-2000



Julda Kielyte and d'Artis Kancs, 'Migration in the enlarged European Union: Empirical evidence for labour mobility in the Baltic states', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 33:3 (2002) 259-279, 262.

The main countries receiving immigration from the Baltic states in 2002 were Germany and Finland: 80 per cent of the population who immigrated from Baltic states into the EU reside in Germany and Finland. In all other EU countries, the share of population from the Baltic states in total population is negligible (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Stock of Baltic Population in the EU Member States, 1998

³³ Petuškienė, 'The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country's labour market', 603.

	Germany	Finland	Sweden	Denmark	Netherlands	Italy	Greece	Spain	Portugal
Estonia	3.173	9.689	1.124	384	100	98	36	31	2
Latvia	6.147	134	387	449	110	168	73	36	1
Lithuania	6.631	163	358	555	260	174	109	65	10
Total	15.951	9.986	1.869	1.388	470	440	218	86	13

Kielyte and Kancs, 'Migration in the enlarged European Union', 263.

In all three Baltic states, the transition to a market economy was followed by a sharp increase in the unemployment rate. In 2001, the unemployment rates in Baltic states varied from 12.6 per cent in Latvia to 11.3 per cent in Lithuania in comparison to 7.6 per cent on the average in EU countries (see figure 4). The two important forms of unemployment are long-term and youth unemployment. Youth unemployment (15-24 years) was high in 2002 in all the three Baltic countries (30 per cent). A 2002 study by the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour concluded that especially young unemployed persons as well as high school and college graduates wanted to go abroad and to look for a job there.³⁴

Figure 4. Unemployment Rates in the Baltic states and in the EU~ 1996-2001, in %

		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Total	Estonia	10.8	10.6	9.6	11.7	11.3	11.5
	Latvia	22	15.7	14.5	13.7	13.1	12.6
	Lithuania	19.2	13.6	12.5	10.2	10.8	11.3
	EU-15	10.8	10.6	9.9	9.1	8.2	7.6
Men	Estonia	11.8	11.5	10.5	13.0	12.9	12.7
	Latvia	22.3	16.2	15.4	14.1	12.1	11.8
	Lithuania	20.6	14.9	14.1	11.2	10.9	11.6
	EU-15	9.6	9.3	8.6	7.9	7.6	7.3
Women	Estonia	9.7	9.7	8.6	10.2	10.1	10.2
	Latvia	21.6	15.2	13.6	13.3	13.1	13.3
	Lithuania	17.5	12.1	10.8	9.2	10.1	10.3
	EU-15	12.4	12.3	11.7	10.9	10.8	10.5

Kielyte and Kancs, 'Migration in the enlarged European Union', 267.

Until the beginning of the 1990s, international migration flows were constant. The population was growing as the number of immigrants from the republics of the former

³⁴ Julda Kielyte and d'Artis Kancs, 'Migration in the enlarged European Union: Empirical evidence for labour mobility in the Baltic states, *Journal of Baltic Studies*', 33:3 (2002) 259-279.

USSR was increasing with every year. Lithuanian net immigration was positive and amounted to 6000-8000 persons a year.³⁵

With the accession to the EU, Lithuanian emigration came to be seen by authorities as one of the greatest dangers to the nation. Alleged problems included loss of the resources invested in the education of people, loss of specialists, changes in the demographical situation (a decrease in the able-bodied population, a decline in productivity, problems related to a departure of taxpayers), reduction in GNP, decreased consumption, a growing demand for qualified work force because of a massive “brain drain”, which simply could not be met because of shortage of such workers.³⁶

The greatest consequence for the country in terms of a loss was believed to be the emigration young educated persons. The country’s investment in people’s education is wasted; it is not only intellectual but also demographic capital of the country that is lost. Furthermore, when skilled and highly-qualified specialists leave the country, the chance to maintain the economic and social growth is lost. Lithuanian emigration affects not only the intellectual and demographic capital but also various direct (financial and psychic), indirect (due to crime, ill health and the deteriorating environment), opportunity (associated with a loss in tax revenue from the income tax, national insurance contributions and value-added tax on purchases) and infrastructure costs (they are incurred to create jobs in socially and economically deprived areas).³⁷ Reduction in these costs is perceived as a serious issue in the country.

The Department of Statistics of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania notes that most of those who leave are between the ages of 20 and 29 (see figure 6).³⁸

Figure 6. Emigrants by age, per cent 2007-2011

³⁵ Petuškienė, ‘The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country’s labour market’, 603.

³⁶ Petuškienė, ‘The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country’s labour market’, 604.

³⁷ Petuškienė, ‘The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country’s labour market’, 605.

³⁸ Petuškienė, ‘The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country’s labour market’, 602.



<http://web.stat.gov.lt/en/news/view/?id=11136&PHPSESSID=4c865e7e59c2a0d92fd28c3736043a82>

Figure 7 presents the same type of information in a different manner.

Figure 7. Emigrants by age group (2007 – 2011) (in %)

Age	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
0-14	15.7	14.1	11.9	10.2	10.5
15-19	6.4	5.2	5.6	5.9	7.2
20-34	44.7	46.6	45.6	54.9	55.5
35-39	9.9	10.8	12.5	9.4	8.6
+60	3.7	3.2	2.6	0.9	1.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

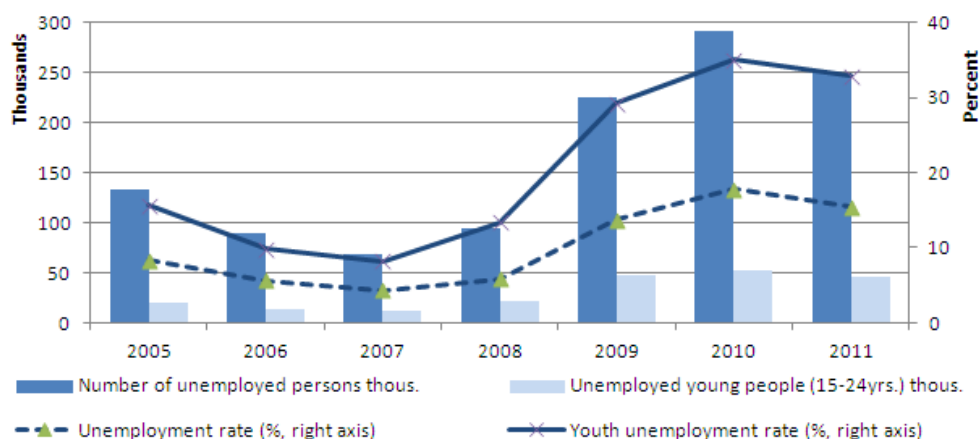
Source: Department of Statistics

Lack of work is one of the mains reasons why people leave. Higher education and a university degree do not help people find a job because unemployment is high in Lithuania. Bachelor or Master's degree holders hardly find work. The number of available jobs is small, especially for those who are entering the labour market for the first time.³⁹ Furthermore, there are many qualified specialists who have lost their jobs due to bankruptcy or closure of their enterprise. The young graduates compete with experienced professionals. Employers have neither sufficient funds nor time to train the graduates.

³⁹ Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, 'The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications', 7.

In recent years the number of unemployed young people has increased (see figure 7). Not every young person has a higher education. According to the data presented by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange, every third young unemployed person is unqualified.⁴⁰ A lack of qualification is regarded to be one of the biggest obstacles for finding a job. Other barriers are a lack of practical skills and intelligence. Furthermore, young people's attitude to work is surprising – even if they do not have necessary qualifications or work experience, they tend to turn down job offers because of low wages.

Figure 7. Unemployment and youth unemployment, 2005-2011



Source: Central Bank of the Republic of Lithuania; Department of Statistics

The fact that Lithuanian migration involves mainly young people has an effect on the demographic composition of the population and on labour resources. Several surveys have shown that the population is aging. This has an impact on the family formation and fertility of those who stay.⁴¹ A lack of labour encourages import from third countries. The “brain drain” reduces the economic, innovative and competitive potential of the country.

Long-term unemployment accounts for 80 per cent of adult emigration. The number of the unemployed people in Lithuania has steadily increased. If there had been no emigration the unemployment rates would be even higher and social tension greater. The pressure on the social welfare system has increased due to emigration. Since 2007

⁴⁰ Petuškienė, ‘The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country’s labour market’, 605.

⁴¹ Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, ‘The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications’, 10.

welfare support has increased in terms of beneficiaries as well as expenditures. Those who left were the ones who were able to work and wanted to work, they are business-oriented and do not want to live on social benefits.⁴² The result that on the one hand there is unemployment, but on the other hand there is lack of skilled labour. This shortage might become a problem when the economy starts to grow.

According to the Lithuanian 2011 Population Census, the population totalled 3.43 million: 1,4 million men and 2,03 million women. The number of women is thus considerably larger than the number of men. Two thirds of the population lives in urban areas. In the past decade the population decreased by 12.6 per cent. The largest decrease was due to migration – almost 800,000 people left Lithuania in the period 1991-2011.⁴³ The population under 15 decreased (compared to the 2001 data), whereas a part of the population of retirement age increased. In 2012, as much as 41 per cent of all migrants was 20-29 years old, and people between the ages 30 and 34 accounted for 12 per cent. In 2012, a total of 41,1 thousand citizens left Lithuania. This is 12.8 thousand people less than last year. Most of the emigrants said they left for one of the member states of the European Union (79 per cent). In 2012 26 per cent of all returning Lithuanian citizens were 25-29 years old, a group of 20-24 year-olds accounted for 22 per cent and people between the ages 30 and 34 equalled to 14 per cent. The net migration totalled 38.2 thousand.

Currently, women tend to migrate more than men, though the difference is not large. As mentioned before, it is mostly young people who decide to leave the country of origin – a group of 20-34 year old emigrants is the largest (see Figure 8). When it comes to pre-departure economic activities, most common occupation fields are wholesale and retail trade (repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles), manufacturing, construction, accommodation and catering activities.⁴⁴ There are no statistical data on brain drain from Lithuania. An analysis of the migration discourse in the Lithuanian press has shown that the concept ‘brain drain’ is used as a synonym for emigration. It is mostly used in a negative connotation.⁴⁵

The countries of destination have not changed as compared to the most favourite ones during the pre-crisis period. In 2011, every second emigrant left for the United

⁴² Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, ‘The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications’, 15.

⁴³ Lithuanian 2011 Population Census.

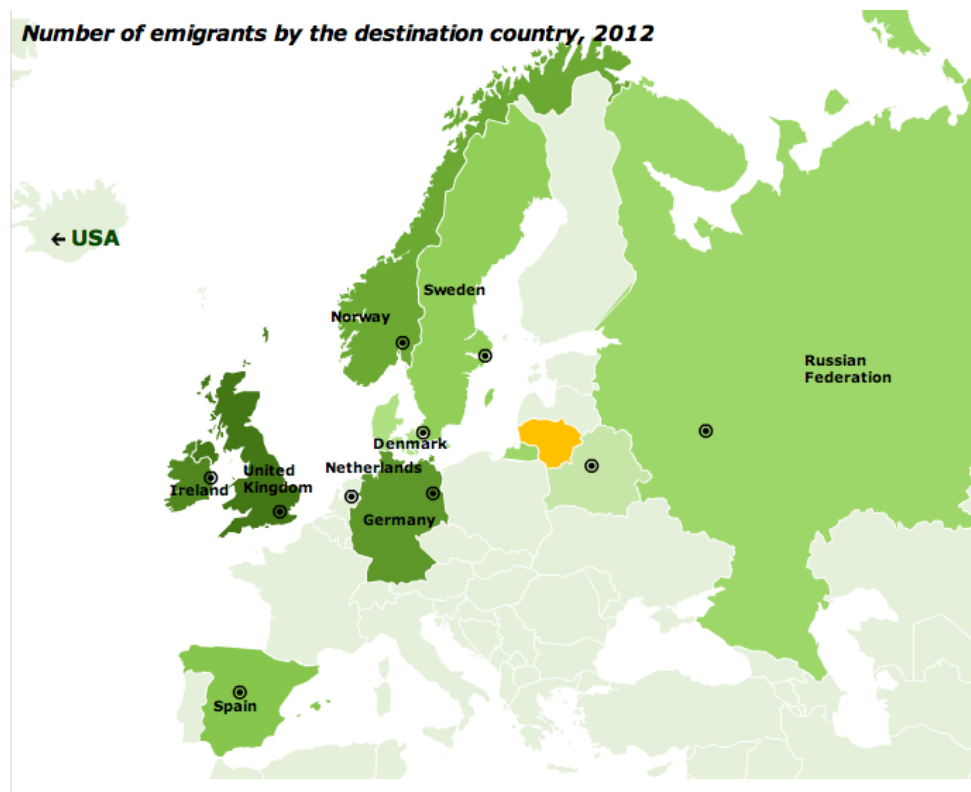
⁴⁴ International migration of Lithuanian population 2011, Statistics Lithuania, 18.

⁴⁵ Juozas Bagdanavičius, Zita Jodkonienė, ‘Brain Drain from Lithuania: the Attitude of Civil Servants’, *Engineering Economics* 2: 57 (2008) 55-60.

Kingdom, one-tenth went to Ireland, 7.1 per cent chose Norway, 7 per cent preferred Germany.⁴⁶ However, Ireland is losing its popularity at the present time. Larger numbers of migrants are directed towards the Scandinavian countries (see figure 8, Lithuania highlighted in yellow).

⁴⁶ International migration of Lithuanian population 2011, Statistics Lithuania, 61.

Figure 8. Lithuanian migrants by country of destination.

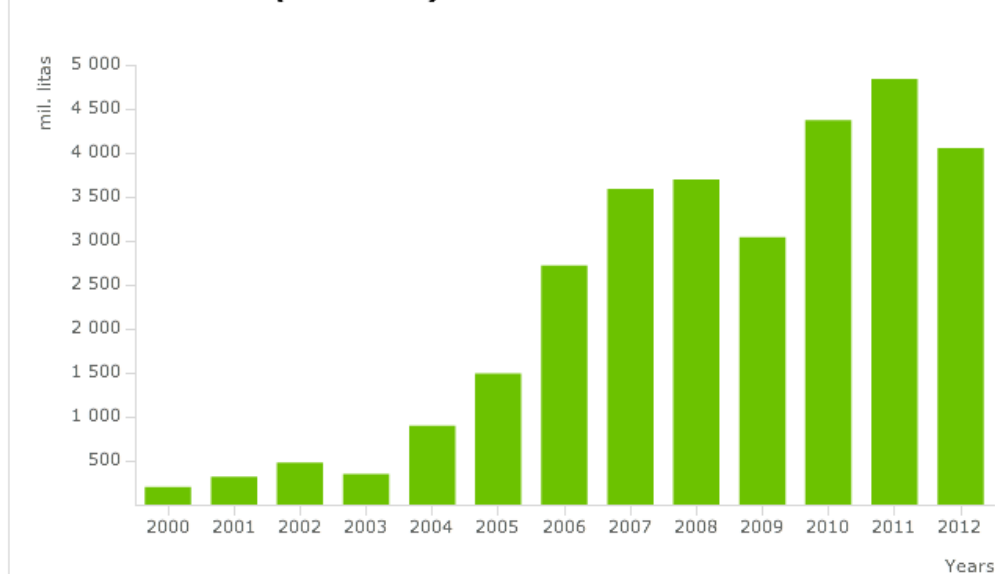


Source: <http://123.emn.lt/en/emigration/top-10-destinations>

Lithuanian emigrants do send money home. Rather surprisingly this is apparently no reason not to problematize emigration (see figure 9).

Figure 9. Remittances by Lithuanian emigrants 2000-2012 (one litas is 0.29 euro).

Private remittances (million litas)



Source: <http://123.emn.lt/en/emigration/top-10-destinations>

The literature mentions several reasons why Lithuanians leave. Economical reasons are the most common: unemployment, bankruptcy, which occurred frequently during the first years of the crisis, bank loans and debts, etc. Family separation is also in some cases a reason why the whole family decides to emigrate, or why members of the family do. Dissatisfaction with the educational system in Lithuania is a determining factor for the youth when choosing studies at foreign universities. Highly skilled persons migrated because they have attractive job options abroad, because of a low the socio-economic status in Lithuania, because of the academic system, the country's macroeconomic status and governmental policy.⁴⁷

It has been estimated that if the number of migrants keeps growing, by 2020 the Lithuanian population is going to be 3 million. In order to counter this process of emigration, the Government of Lithuanian, together with several partners and NGOs, has initiated programs and projects that should encourage return migration. Also, more attention is given to the youth and students in order to preserve the country's investment in "bright minds". Following Irish and Polish examples, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania has introduced the Global Lithuania program. Its main goal is to maintain ties with the people who have left and to promote Lithuania as a country. The

⁴⁷ Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, 'Lithuanian "Brain Drain"', 35.

programme should make Lithuanians abroad be aware of possibilities, in the home country.

High unemployment, poverty, unsatisfactory working conditions and corruption are push factors. In the countries of destination there are work opportunities, better wages or living conditions, and study programmes. As described in the section on theory, people leave for countries where the demand for labour it is higher. From the economic point of view this process is useful for countries with an unused or under-valued labour force.⁴⁸ However, in Lithuania it is not the unemployed who leave. From Lithuania doctors leave and in some cases move down the 'professional ladder'; at the destination country they work as assistants or change their career.

A number of studies show that motivation and the ability to migrate, as well as the pattern of migration, are influenced by the resource levels of households, the age and sex ratio of the family/household and stages in the family life cycle.⁴⁹ Households with average financial resources can be more willing and able to support migration of one or even more members of the family than the households with few resources can. Moreover, an important decisive factor may also be family-induced chain migration. When labour migration occurs, the man in the family is usually the first to migrate followed by his wife and children. Furthermore, adult offspring, siblings and parents are later participants in the migration process.⁵⁰

Lithuanian scientists residing abroad gave a few reasons, which prevented them from coming back and working in the home country. Firstly, they mentioned limited opportunities to find a job, which would correspond to their qualification. Secondly, they talked about scientific institutions and their limitations, unfair competitions to obtain an academic position, inadequate support for scientific research and very low wages.⁵¹

The number of economic migrants, who return to Lithuania is increasing. The return migration is determined by social-cultural and economic factors. Returnees indicate that they could not overcome difficulties, which they encountered during the integration process in a foreign country. Some say that their patriotism, the desire to take part in social and political life of Lithuania, and, first and foremost, their longing

⁴⁸ Barcevičius c.s., 'Ekonominių migrantų skatinimo grįžti į tėvynę priemonės', 6.

⁴⁹ Boyd, 'Family and Personal Networks in International Migration', 643.

⁵⁰ Boyd, 'Family and Personal Networks in International Migration', 649.

⁵¹ Barcevičius c.s., 'Ekonominių migrantų skatinimo grįžti į tėvynę priemonės', 15.

for the family were factors that made them come back.⁵² Wages and career perspectives, the country's general economic and business environment are also mentioned. However, the quality of life is the most essential. Absence of good friends, alien culture and 'poor' social life are reasons for return. Furthermore an illegal job abroad, employability problems in Lithuania, a lack of information about the current situation at home, or their children's education are also reasons not to return.

⁵² Barcevičius c.s., 'Ekonominių migrantų skatinimo grįžti į tėvynę priemonės', 13.

Chapter 2: Lithuanian youth emigration

Influential internal and external factors that determine youth migration

In this chapter I provide more details on why young people leave Lithuania, according to the literature. Most migration researchers in Lithuania relate migration to the economic needs and highlight the impact of factors, which either push or pull, and which also create society's response to migration. These factors are:

- political, social-economic (wage level, unemployment, lack of balance between demand and supply of unqualified workforce, social security, small and average business situation) processes;

- cultural (the country's political-cultural-legal environment, infrastructure) processes;

- demographic (population and birth rate, able-bodied population, migration of workforce) processes;

- personal factors (professional improvement, self-realization, career opportunities, relations with family members, marriages to foreigners, material conditions of life).⁵³

One of the explanations why youth is excluded from the labour market is that the youth, as well as women and elderly people have an alternative for occupation roles. Women can be housewives and mothers, the old have their pension, and the youth are students. Employers, assume these groups have alternative roles, and unconsciously relate these individuals to lower productivity of work.⁵⁴ Therefore they get lower positions and receive fewer wages.

Another big issue, which is common to the Lithuanian citizens, is discontent with social justice and the immoral policy, when work is depreciated, the individual income is low and support in case of disease, unemployment and old age is insufficient.⁵⁵

⁵³ Aušra Repečkienė, Nida Kvedaraitė and Renata Žvirelienė, 'External and internal migration insights in the context of globalization: higher school graduate's attitude', *Economics and management* 14 (2009) 603-610, 605.

⁵⁴ Petuškienė, 'The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country's labour market', 606.

⁵⁵ Petuškienė, 'The Lithuanian youth emigration as the problem of entrenchment into the country's labour market', 607.

Moreover, the youth feels redundant and does not believe in the future, especially when it comes to a professional career.

Migration of a person with high qualification or the so-called “brain circulation” is perceived as a natural and even commendable occurrence. However, in Lithuania this phenomenon has negative outcomes: migration is occurring only in one direction – the ‘brain drain’ process is prevailing.⁵⁶ This topic has been given a lot of attention in research. Moreover, the factors that determine emigration of highly qualified professionals and the measures that could prevent them from doing that have been studied most extensively.

Supply of specialists with high qualification increases slower than demand for them in the country’s economy. This imbalance between supply and demand is determined by two trends. Firstly, a large number of specialists with high skills emigrate to countries with more developed economies. Secondly, those who stay and are unable to find a job that corresponds with their qualifications reduce labour costs and replace specialists who have lower qualifications.⁵⁷ They become unemployed and decide to emigrate. The supply of workers with higher education is much larger than the country’s demand. As it has already been mentioned, emigration occurs at a young age, usually a few years after graduation or even right after taking a degree. A large number of highly skilled persons have to go down the professional ladder and do not use skill gained during the years of study.⁵⁸ The number of people who leave Lithuania is much higher than that of the ‘newcomers’. Highly-skilled emigrants are not replaced with similarly skilled immigrants. The result is that the quality of governmental services deteriorates and the average qualification level of the country’s labour force decreases reducing economy’s competitiveness on the international stage.⁵⁹

Survey results of Lithuanian brain drain in 2004-2005

The 2004-2005 survey on Lithuanian brain drain indicates pull factors in the country of destination as main determinants of emigration. The results of my research enable me to test this outcome seven years later, and see if it still applies to the current “brain drain”.

⁵⁶ Martinaitis and Žvalionytė, ‘Emigracija iš Lietuvos: ką žinome, ko nežinome ir ką turėtume žinoti?’, 116.

⁵⁷ Martinaitis and Žvalionytė, ‘Emigracija iš Lietuvos: ką žinome, ko nežinome ir ką turėtume žinoti?’, 120.

⁵⁸ Martinaitis and Žvalionytė, ‘Emigracija iš Lietuvos: ką žinome, ko nežinome ir ką turėtume žinoti?’, 126.

⁵⁹ Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 27.

For the 2004-2005 survey more than 500 Lithuanians with a university degree living in 27 countries were interviewed. When asked to evaluate their life in Lithuania before departure, they gave the highest marks to cultural, inner life and socialization. Conditions of professional realization were rated much lower, followed by economic and financial conditions which ranked the lowest.⁶⁰ Economic factors and better possibilities for self-realisation at a destination country determine if people migrate and explain the shortage of labour in Lithuania in certain sectors.⁶¹

According to this study, the largest number of young people left their country for economic reasons. One fourth of the respondents indicated studies as the main reason for leaving. Smaller numbers migrated for family reunification or for travelling. The choice of a migration destination is also an important factor. For instance, those who went to Great Britain indicated doing jobs unrelated to their skills, while those going to other North-Western European countries did work according to their level of skill. To the Scandinavian countries most Lithuanian migrants migrated for studies, to countries of Southern Europe for family reunification, and to the USA and Canada Lithuanians migrated and did work in which the competencies gained during the years of study were not applied. It is important to point out, that the choice of a destination country also depended on the respondent's education and qualification level. Those with a Bachelor degree, unlike college graduates, claimed to be working according to their speciality, whereas candidates for a Master's degree indicated studies as their occupation, and PhD students worked in line with their studies.⁶² The field of studies played a role. For instance, those who graduated from the humanities did not work in their field, whereas graduates of social sciences, biomedicine and physical science either carried on with their studies or had a job where their professional knowledge could be applied in practise.

In order to find out the main causes of highly-skilled migration, the questions were formulated so that it could be possible to track two things: the main reasons (economic, professional or other) and whether push or pull had a stronger impact on their decision to leave. The greatest differences between push and pull factors existed in labour conditions. Good materials to work with and labour conditions, which enable individuals to use and develop their professional skills and feel appreciated in the work

⁶⁰ Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, 'Lithuanian "Brain Drain" Causes: Push and Pull Factors', 30.

⁶¹ Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, 'The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications', 12.

⁶² Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, 'Lithuanian "Brain Drain" Causes: Push and Pull Factors', 30.

they do, served as an important pull factor. The respondents indicated that these conditions were missing in the home country. Facilities and equipment necessary to do the job were inadequate and insufficient. The only factor that was mentioned as a push effect was unfavourable relations within the academic society in Lithuania. Furthermore, the respondents indicated that socio-economic conditions were not bad and did not exert a considerable impact on the labour migration or cause the “brain drain”. More than half of the interviewees had permanent jobs before their departure and their general assessment of socioeconomic status in Lithuania was higher than satisfactory. However, as it has been shown, even though the socioeconomic status was promising, the “brain drain” would not stop as long as the quality of life and work was higher in foreign countries. The pull effects were highlighted by the individuals who rated their profession as prestigious in Lithuania.⁶³

The aforementioned socio-economic status with push effects was a second most influential migration determinant. Those effects included unsatisfactory wages, insufficient possibilities for professional realization and improvement, unsatisfactory material conditions, bad labour conditions, poor equipment, and a little demand for the profession acquired.⁶⁴ Material living conditions were identified as one of the main pull effects. However, the most profound dissatisfaction was expressed over the individual payment and the existing labour relations. The problem lies in a large number of “unlawful” or “black” salaries, which are still frequently paid to the employees. The companies often use this way of remuneration to avoid paying taxes.

The state educational system is named as an important push factor. The respondents pointed to the state’s unwillingness to adopt innovations and try new things, as well as to authoritarian hierarchical academic relations.⁶⁵ The problems lie not only in tuition fees that are increasing every year, poor financing of studies and research, but also in unfair competitions to occupy academic positions. Management is described as very formal and hierarchical, and what is more, it does not encourage or appreciate original ideas of young people or innovations. Corruption was also mentioned. This is especially common practice when admitting young people to study at well-known art schools: “you have to know someone in order to get to a good position...” (a 25 year-old Bachelor drama student). The holders of a doctoral degree

⁶³ Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 32-33.

⁶⁴ Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 33.

⁶⁵ Kazlauskienė and Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 34.

expressed the greatest concern over the educational system of Lithuania and a great impact of its push factors on migration. They accentuated the relationship in the academic society in particular.

Migration of the educated people was affected by a microeconomic and social situation in Lithuania more strongly than was the position of Lithuania within the global context.⁶⁶ Dissatisfaction with the current economic situation in Lithuania and the economic, fiscal and social policy of the state “helped” people make up their mind to leave. Their opinions about life in Lithuania before they left the country differed. The majority of the respondents evaluated their inner life negatively. The ecological factor did not play a significant role in taking the decision to emigrate. Although the percentage of those who left for family reunification was not high, some of the respondents indicated it as one of the main reasons, which encouraged them to go abroad.⁶⁷

Interestingly, it is not the absence of possibilities at home but more attractive and better possibilities abroad that are the decisive factor. Lithuanian migrants are quite happy with their economic status; the majority of them were employed and had jobs before their departure. The level of education in the structure of push-pull revealed some significant correlation: the higher the level of education of the respondents is, the greater influence better conditions for professional realisation rather than economic factors exert on their departure.⁶⁸

The 2004-2005 survey showed that push factors played a decisive role in taking a decision to emigrate. The attraction to foreign countries and the possibilities there determined the decision of young educated people to emigrate. I am going to test in the following chapter if these results hold true for my group. Since 2005 migration trends may have changed and today new motives pull or push young individuals to leave for foreign countries.

⁶⁶ Aušra Kazlauskienė and Leonardas Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 34.

⁶⁷ Aušra Kazlauskienė and Leonardas Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 35.

⁶⁸ Aušra Kazlauskienė and Leonardas Rinkevičius, ‘Lithuanian “Brain Drain” Causes: Push and Pull Factors’, 35.

Chapter 3: Uzupis year 2006

In this chapter I present the results from my interviews and questionnaires. Also, I compare information from my survey with the data from the 2004-2005 survey, discussed in the previous chapter. However, my group of the interviewees is smaller and more specific: a group of young women and men who studied at the same secondary school in the last four years of their education.

My assumption was that young people migrate not primarily for economic reasons. There are differences between countries. For instance, migration to the United Kingdom differs from that to France. Differences not only spring from economic possibilities but also from differences according to the emigrants' educational background and their personal characteristics. Choices are also influenced by how migration is perceived. If migration is perceived as an inevitable and positive process potential migrant will make different choices than when it is portrayed, for instance in the media, as a negative process, and harmful to the country.

Outcomes of the survey

During the interviews I asked why people chose certain country. Did they have relatives, friends over there? We also spoke about their life in Lithuania before migration, as not all of the respondents moved to a foreign country straight after finishing school. We discussed education and their current occupation, and some of them shared their future plans with me.

In 2006, five groups of pupils – A, B, C, D, and E – finished Uzupis Gymnasium. The largest number of migrants came from class D – 13 out of the 28 pupils are currently living abroad. Class B, whose pupils were always reserved and did not communicate much with others, produced only one émigré. There were 4 emigrants from C and E each, whereas A 'lost' 8 of its pupils. The average age of those who have left was 21. This indicates that most of the leavers left the home country in the middle of their studies (to the best of my knowledge, only 3 out of 30 never studied and did not try to get higher education either at their home country or abroad).

According to the responses, the most popular destination is the United Kingdom. 13 out of 30 respondents regarded this country as the best place to study and start their career. Some of them indicated that they were unemployed in their home country or

found low skill jobs that did not fit their qualifications. At the present time one of them is a student, one is housewife and her main task is to take care of her little daughter. Only one of all respondents indicated having a job where his competencies gained during the years of study at an English university were applied. The rest of the respondents said they had jobs that were not related to their education. None of them complained about their current situation. Even though most of them had low skilled jobs, their income was much higher than in their home country. Economical freedom and independence enabled them to compensate for the boring job with hobbies and other leisure-time activities that they could not afford when living in Lithuania. Self-realization in different fields which were not necessarily related to their job was a very common feature pointed out by the interviewees. Moreover, the majority of them indicated better opportunities in the country of destination:

“I work as a barista during the day. In the evenings I am a leading vocal in one of the bands in London. I must admit we are still at the beginning of our musical career and we are not very famous. So I don’t really earn from music. My day job pays bills, moreover, I am able to travel, take part in various festivals. I love it here, I can do whatever I like, make a living and am not jugged that I haven’t done anything with my life or that I don’t sit in the office, Monday to Friday, 8 to 5 as most Lithuanians of my age do back home. This kind of life is not for me. I am happy here, I love London and I do not think of going back to Lithuania. At least not now (Inesa, 25, class A).”

“Straight after school I got into well-known university in Vilnius. I wasn’t sure what I really wanted to study, but at that time I was happy I was accepted to a good educational institution.

However, I failed my first year, had to retake my exams, I failed them gain, had to retake the whole year and to pay more money. I managed to finish three out of four years of bachelor degree. In the end, I gave up. I ended up being unemployed and living at my mum’s for a half year. Then one friend of mine told me about this Lithuanian agency that hired Lithuanians and provided them with jobs and accommodation in the UK. The agency fee wasn’t too high so I thought I’d give it a go. Even though I have been studying German as my first foreign language at school, the fact that I’ll be living in the UK and that my English wasn’t good enough, did not put me off. And look at me now! After three years I am still here, in Leeds. After six first months of my stay in the

UK, I left this Lithuanian company and found a job in another warehouse. I can't say that it's my dream job, but it allows me to maintain myself and covers my expenses, which at the moment is the most important thing. Will I go back to Lithuania? I don't think so. Usually I go back just once a year to see my family, but flights are too expensive, so I prefer going somewhere else and visiting new countries. (Vytautas, 26, class A)."

The UK, as the most popular destination, is followed by Spain and the Netherlands. Two of my schoolmates living in Spain are young professionals. They both work in their fields and one of them is a candidate for a Master's degree.

"I came to Barcelona as a tourist with my back pack and few euros in my pocket. I did not have any initial ideas of staying there for a longer period of time. It was meant to be just one stop of my "Eurotrip". However, during the first few days I met some really nice local people, we spent loads of time together and I've decided to stay for a bit longer. At the beginning I was doing different jobs: working as a gardener, doing a bit of waiting and bar work. Till one day I met Jose, my best mate, who said I should use my eloquence and English language skills and this is how I got a job in an international sales company. I started as a call center boy and now, after three years I am part of the management team. My Spanish is still very basic, but I manage to get around with my English. I am also glad, that I did not 'waste' time at university and managed to get opportunity to learn things in practice rather than studying from books. I don't really miss Lithuania, but then at the same time I have always been a 'free spirit' where the whole world is my home (Nerijus, 26, Form C). "

In the meantime the Netherlands has become a big center for art students, who, unable to enroll on particular courses in Lithuania, chose this country for educational purposes. Currently, there is a tendency in Lithuania to study architecture or graphic design at Dutch universities, in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in particular. Due to the increasing numbers of Lithuanian students, small Lithuanian communities are being set up. However, these groups of student are rather closed and do not interact with the main Lithuanian community in the Netherlands.

Until recently, there was a Lithuanian community in Delft with about 200 members on its list, which organised recreational activities for its members such as a picnic in the

park. According to one of the initiators, Maris Jaunimas, the community broke up because the 'old guard' no longer had time to spare and they have not found any new enthusiasts yet.⁶⁹ A big gathering, that attracts large numbers of Lithuanians and their friends in the Netherlands is an annual event LTartNL. This art project LTartNL provides a stage for Lithuanian, Dutch and expat artists to show their work, which was created under the influence of the Dutch culture. The event presents various forms of art including painting, sculpture, photography, ceramics, jewelry, live music and even Lithuanian cuisine for Dutch, Lithuanian and international community placed in the Netherlands.⁷⁰ It is the interactive and live platform to experience and be a part of art by Lithuanian, Dutch and expat artists. The event is implemented for the 3rd time, becoming annual tradition, and is initiated by Lithuanian community in the Netherlands together with Lithuanian Embassy.

Lithuanian community in the Netherlands does not have a separate webpage, but there are various groups created on other social networks. Facebook is the most popular one and has groups such as Lithuanians living in the Netherlands, Lithuanian students in the Netherlands, Lithuanian youth in the Netherlands. Besides these groups, there are private websites on the Internet whose aim is to unite their fellow-countrymen, such as <http://nyderlandai.eu/forumas/>, <http://andrius.sunauskas.lt/>, <http://www.stichtinglitouwen.nl/stichting/> and www.baltischevereniging.nl.⁷¹ However, only a small number of people join these communities: they have between 13 and 45 members each (and in some cases, the number of participants is unknown).

In the Dutch case personal connections and a good feedback about this particular specialization in The Netherlands serve as a strong pull factor when it comes to making a decision to leave. Tuition fees at Dutch universities are lower than in Lithuania. A semester of Master studies at Vilnius Academy of Art costs about 1 300 Euros (Master's program consists of four semesters, 4×1 300= 5 200 Euros). This amount is three times higher than Master studies at Dutch universities (the tuition fee there is around 1 700 Euros). Thus it is not surprising that the latter often becomes a natural option for students to continue higher education abroad.

⁶⁹ Natalia Berger and Suzanne Wolf 'Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians in the Netherlands', Forum survey (Amsterdam 2011), 15.

⁷⁰ See the website of the lithuanian, dutch and expat art project in Amsterdam <http://ltart.nl/about/>

⁷¹ Berger and Wolf, 'Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians in the Netherlands', 14.

“Two years in a row I failed to enroll for a desirable course at Vilnius Academy of Art. I satisfied all the requirements, attended preparatory courses that cost thousands of litas. What can I say, I was not lucky. Then my friend, who was already studying graphic design at Rotterdam University invited me to come over. I went there, gave it a go and entered the university without any stress or extra costs. I feel happy here, I met a lot of like-minded people – a large number of them are Lithuanians, so I don’t really feel homesick (Gaile, 26, Form A, Master’s in graphic design, Rotterdam)”.

Those who are living in Denmark are employed in their professional fields. One of them is a so-called ‘love migrant’. Having met her later husband in Ireland, she followed him to Copenhagen (he was sent there for his job). It did not take her long to find a job in her field – the press and publishing industry. Another interviewee chose Denmark because of the conditions created for young students and free university education. After graduation she decided to stay there and does now live in Copenhagen for seven years.

Young Lithuanians also chose universities of Italy, France, Sweden, and Germany to study. However, no general patterns can be applied in these cases. These destinations were chosen for personal reasons. The only uniting aspect could be that people who went to these countries did not have any relatives or friends there. The decision to emigrate was influenced either by a particular study program or because they had always liked one or another country and wanted to live there.

The destination furthest away was Australia. My classmate who has been living there for almost three years did not have any initial intentions to prolong his stay. His aim was to earn some money and travel around – he signed up for work and a travel program, which was quite popular among students. Being a sociable person he formed a new circle of friends soon and stayed there for a longer time. Failure to set up his own business and homesickness drove him back to Lithuania.

If the national borders are crossed once, it becomes easier to migrate again. Five out of 30 people indicated that during the past seven years, since they left school, they have lived in several foreign countries. Three respondents named studies as the main factor that made them change countries every couple of years, two said it was their jobs (both work in clothes design) that made them adopt a migratory lifestyle. Each person from this group agreed that taking the first decision to leave was most difficult thing for them. A lot of pros and cons were put on scales. Travel expenses and funds needed to

maintain oneself during the first month proved to be the major obstacle. However, once the decision was made, there was no going back. The decision about a second and in some cases a third migration was made much easier and quicker.

Three of the people I spoke to lived in foreign countries for a few years and then returned to Lithuania. They had different reasons for living abroad: bachelor studies, a desire to have productive summer holidays (to work and get to know a new continent) or earn enough money to pay the tuition fee and carry on with studies in the home country. Those three people accentuated the pull factors in Lithuania in particular: one named the native language and friends, another spoke about the family, and the last one pointed to the patriotic feelings for the home country.

“My boyfriend and I left for the UK after our third year of bachelor studies. We knew we would come back and that it was a temporary visit. Moreover, we wanted to graduate from university (bachelor studies in Lithuania last for four years). We just had to earn some money to be able to maintain ourselves during the final year at university. We had a big group of friends in London, so we went there. I was doing split shifts in 2 cafés and my boyfriend worked in construction. We worked a lot and hardly found time to see each other. On the other hand, we had very little spare time and had no many opportunities to spend the money we earned. Everything went according to the plan and we came back to Lithuania the following summer. We both managed to finish our studies and with the money we earned that summer we set up our small business. This short experience abroad helped me understand that I really loved my country and I would not be able to live anywhere else” (Adele, Form E, 24, a bachelor in architecture).

Family, friends and networks in foreign country have a profound impact on the choice for a country of destination. Most of the interviewees indicated having a close friend or at least an acquaintance in the ‘host’ country. However, the family reunions were not listed. More attention could be paid to the pattern observed in Class D. Straight after leaving school one of the classmates went abroad to study. A year later another classmate joined her and followed the same pattern and started studying at the same university. In another year two more girls from the same class went to the city. This pattern is a clear form of chain migration. The first one invited the second, and the latter

invited others. Personal connections and knowing that there is someone waiting for you in the country of destination served as a pull factor.

When it comes to the educational background, this group of people can be divided into four smaller subgroups: those who have gained higher education in Lithuania (9), those who studied abroad (5), those who have started their university studies in Lithuania and then either graduated and did a Master's degrees abroad, or did not complete their studies and took up their bachelor studies in a foreign country again (13), and those, who did not receive higher education (3). The most common degrees among those who studied in the home country were engineering, architecture, and industry. Those who studied abroad chose the humanities. Interestingly, the group that has been studying in both countries are the art students.

One can argue that knowledge of a particular foreign language might also be a determinant factor. At Uzupis gymnasium, pupils were divided into two groups: those who studied German as the first foreign language belonged to one group, and the other group consisted of the pupils learning English. According to the Lithuanian system of education, pupils are started to be taught a foreign language beginning with the second form. Most schools offer English as the first foreign language. German and French can be an option, though they are not so popular. The second foreign language is usually introduced in the sixth form (it is compulsory to learn until the eleventh form when pupils have to choose which subject they want to study and which A levels they are going to take). In Uzupis case, the dominating group consisted of students, who studied English (both, as the first foreign language and as the second foreign language). In this case the decision to go to an English speaking country is quite natural. However, when asked if the language was perceived as a major obstacle, in making a decision to leave, the respondents unanimously agreed that the language factor was not too influential. They named personal connections – family and friends – as more important ones.

If not to study, young people migrate for economic reasons, mainly in search for work. People who I spoke to named a very wide range of occupations. However, a very small percentage indicated having a job related to their education. They indicated the spheres of customer service, constructions, work in a factory or warehouse. A few respondents said that one third of their earnings is send home to support their relatives and families. None of them was unemployed or lived on benefits. They knew that social security was much better and more developed in the country of destination than in their home country.

It is often argued in literature that international migration flows are directed towards the rich states. However, that does not necessarily mean that people who migrate come from poor countries or poor families. Approximately 80 per cent of the interviewees said that they came from middle class families. This means that actually none of them had to migrate to maintain the family. There was no pressure on the youth from the family and this decision was taken for other reasons.

Another important observation I made related to the role of Lithuanian communities in foreign countries. For instance, the Lithuanian community in the United Kingdom is very large and also highly fragmented. There are over 200 000 Lithuanians residing in the UK at the moment, and over 100 000 of them are currently living in London. There are three church choirs, two folk dance groups, scouts association, and an association of Lithuanian doctors and dentists in London. As other minorities, Lithuanians also have their own “district” in London, where Lithuanian shops, bars, and beauty salons can be found. The large and well-known shopping center *Lituanica* attracts not only Lithuanians residing in other cities, but also English customers. There are quite a few concert halls where artists from Lithuania come and perform their shows, plays, concerts and comedy acts. Since Lithuania's presidency for the European Union has started in July, more international events, conferences and exhibitions are taking place. The most recent big gathering was on the 6th of July, the Coronation Day, where all Lithuanians were invited to meet up and together sing the national anthem.

The main center for Lithuanian Youth Association in the UK is based in Birmingham. To my surprise, none of the people who I interviewed mentioned any connections or taking part in events or activities organized by the Lithuanian Association UK, even though this association is one of the largest. Most of the Lithuanian community centers are established next to Lithuanian churches or cultural centers or Sunday schools for children and other big Lithuanian gathering places. Moreover, the picture of Lithuanian community in the UK does differ a lot from that in the Netherlands. Lithuanian community in the Netherlands is smaller; instead of being closely ‘attached’ to a church, it works with Lithuanian embassy in The Hague. Most of the events and gatherings are organized under embassy supervision. However, the supremacy that is held by the embassy is justifiable: embassy and the funds received from the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs are the main sponsors of community's activities and events organized by the community.

Figure 10. What the respondents do

Country	Total	Student	Work related to studies	Low skill job
United Kingdom	11	1	1	9
Spain	3	1	2	-
The Netherlands	2	2	-	-
Denmark	2	-	2	-
Italy	2	2	-	-
France	2	1	1	-
Germany	2	-	2	-
Sweden	2	2	-	-
Belgium	1	-	1	-
Lithuania-Destination country-Lithuania	3	1	-	2
TOTAL:	30	10	9	11

Figure 10 shows that there is no one specific pattern that can be applied to this group. One third of the respondents chose to emigrate in order to get higher education at a foreign university. The group of working people interviewed can be divided into two parts – the first one is made of the people who do skilled jobs where knowledge acquired at university is put into practice and the second part consists of the people whose jobs do not require high qualification. In this particular case, it cannot be said that the ‘down migration’ or brain drain are prevailing.

Another general characteristic that could be applied to Lithuanian migration is large numbers of female migrants. Experts from Scandinavia state that emigration is an outcome of absence of equal opportunities for both genders.⁷² Scholars claim that it is difficult for women to pursue their professional career. Moreover, women in Lithuania tend to be more qualified and have a higher level of education than average men. Also, in most cases women’s values scale exceeds considerably that of men. It is becoming even more difficult for a woman to find a worthy partner – chances to have a family based on equal rights and respect are slim. It is not surprising that many Lithuanian women look for a suitable partner to start a family beyond the borders of Lithuania. Seven out of 22 women I have interviewed have foreign male partners. These women, however, did not say that their main reason for emigration was to find a man who was good ‘husband material’.

⁷² Ona Gražina Rakauskienė and Olga Ranceva, ‘Strengths of emigration from Lithuania: demographic, social and economic consequences’, *Intellectual economics* 6:2 (14) (2012) 245-257, 250.

Lithuanians have always been known as a rather melancholic and unhappy nation. They would complain about the current situation in their homeland but would not do much in order to improve it. Migration and a search for better life abroad may serve as a solution to this problem. Therefore a hypothesis can be that emigration and happiness are closely related in Lithuania's case.⁷³ People understand happiness very differently. However, three main sets of factors that determine happiness are the same as in migration: demographics and personality; economic factors, and political and institutional factors.⁷⁴

⁷³ Mige Sarvutyte and Dalia Streimikiene, 'New concepts and approaches of migration', *Economics and management* 15 (2010) 226-233, 229.

⁷⁴ Sarvutyte and Streimikiene, 'New concepts and approaches of migration', 229.

Chapter 4. Policy response

In recent years, interest in the return migration policies in the Eastern and Central European countries has increased considerably.⁷⁵ One of the main reasons was a lack of local labour. Therefore, in order to maintain ties with the émigrés, home countries provide their migrants with special information, consult them and organize special information exchange fairs in foreign countries.

Support for returnees in Lithuania makes a distinction between repatriates (people who were deported from Lithuania in the Soviet period or their descendants who are now coming back to live in Lithuania) and voluntary migrants (the majority of this group are labour migrants, who left independent Lithuania and now want to come back). The policy pursued with respect to these two groups differs: the repatriates receive quite generous and long-term support (this rule has been in effect since the 1990s and each year around 150 families come back), whereas the programs promoting the return migration are still new, although they are expanding. Even though massive emigration is still going on and its negative impact is obvious, up until recently, the return migration initiatives have not received sufficient attention. Only after a lack of workforce had gone to the extreme and the local employers started to complain, were two alternative options selected: either to bring the workforce from the countries of the third world or try to attract the people who left previously. Measures have been introduced for both options: the process of importing workforce from third world countries has been facilitated, and several programs promoting return migration were developed.⁷⁶ The priorities are clear on a political level: to use national resources to cover the shortage of workers, and try to attract (former) emigrants. Import of foreign workforce was seen as the last alternative solution.

The return migration policy of Lithuania is based on three pillars: education and pupils' return to school; a return of scientists and researchers; dissemination of information and consultations. All these aforementioned measures introduced by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania are regarded as only the first step and an illustration of the actions planned for the future. Some of these measures are appreciated and acknowledged by the migrants and the Lithuanian citizens, some of them are needed, some are unknown to those living abroad and the efficiency of some of the

⁷⁵ Barcevičius, c.s., 'Ekonominių migrantų skatinimo grįžti į tėvynę priemonės', Viešosios politikos ir vadybos institutas (Vilnius 2005) 1-75.

⁷⁶ Sipavičienė, Gaidys, and Dobrynina, 'Grįžtamoji migracija: teorinės įžvalgos ir situacija Lietuvoje', 27.

measures is doubtful. In general, the question whether support for the return migration is needed is debatable. Who should take care of it and what measures are going to be most effective? Are there people who actually want to come back? To what extent does the implementation of the return migration policies depend on the populations' attitude to the migrants in Lithuania? How is this attitude created, what are these notions based on: personal experience, rumours or reports in the media? What is the media's role?

Lithuania does not have a single document that determines the policy on migration, asylum and other issues related to movement of persons. Even so, one of the main Lithuanian targets is to attract citizens to come back to their home country. Immigration of third-country nationals is an additional goal. In her report, Doctor Sipavičienė distinguished five most important strategies:

- 1) The long-term development strategy of the state (this mentions only the problems of emigration of citizens but does not envision measures to tackle the problem);

- 2) The national demographic (population) policy strategy (this stipulates the strategic goal of the economic migration policy);

- 3) The economic migration regulation strategy (by 2010 almost all activities under the strategy had been terminated);

- 4) The Lithuania's immigration policy guidelines (the first and only political document presenting the position of the state on migration, and immigration of third-country nationals);

- 5) The program for the creation of "Global Lithuania" (involvement of Lithuanian emigrants in life of the state) for 2011-2019, as approved in 2011. It introduced a new approach to emigrant Lithuanian citizens - they may be useful to Lithuania when residing not only in Lithuania but also abroad. This program has expanded the subject group it wants to tackle - it aims not only at promoting return migration but also at drawing in various activities those citizens who do not plan to come back, though could contribute to exchanging information and creating networks.⁷⁷

The "Global Lithuania" program

⁷⁷ Sipavičienė and Stankūnienė, 'The social-economic impact of emigration from Lithuania: challenges and policy implications', 17.

According to the data collected from Lithuanian embassies, consular offices, the migration department, the Department of Statistics and the World Lithuanian Community, there are over 1.3 million Lithuanian citizens living beyond the Lithuanian borders 300 000 of whom have Lithuanian nationality. As was mentioned above, in 2009, the Government of Lithuania introduced the program “Global Lithuania”. Its idea was borrowed from similar programs being carried out in Ireland and Poland. Its main goal is to change the relations between the Lithuanian nationals and the migrants, as well as to maintain close contacts with them and promote return migration.

As I mentioned in the section on materials and method, I gathered information about the “Global Lithuania” program via participant observation during my internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. “Global Lithuania” is presented as a program for the Lithuanian nation living abroad and in Lithuania, related by the Lithuanian identity and historical memory. While using its creative potential it is engaged in national, political, economic and cultural life and takes part in creating modern Lithuania. Currently, strengthening the relations with the Lithuanians living abroad and their organizations directly or indirectly are outlined in strategic planning documents. Thus far, however, there has been no such document, according to which the Governments’ policy would be carried out, allowing the Lithuanians living abroad to maintain their national identity and encouraging the Lithuanian Diaspora to get engaged in the creation of state-building processes.

The “Global Lithuania” 2011-2019 program was developed in cooperation with the Lithuanians living abroad, the Lithuanian World Community, state institutions and enterprises, NGOs and in consultation with Lithuanian society. The program is aimed at making the Lithuanians, no matter where they live, feel part of “Global Lithuania” and take part in the state’s life. Preparation for this program was based on the data collected from other states that already have wide diaspora policies. Lithuanian migration processes are similar to those in Ireland, Poland and other countries. These states managed to have their diaspora engaged in state-creation processes – economic, cultural and social life. In this way they also strengthened national interests in this competitive global world. This program was designed by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and was approved by the Seimas (Lithuanian parliament).

The purpose of this program is to foresee the mechanisms that will keep the Lithuanian language, national identity alive and strengthen the Lithuanian diaspora’s relations with Lithuania – the diaspora will be engaged in various fields of the state’s

life and will contribute to the creation of Lithuanian well-being.⁷⁸ The first aim is to seek to achieve that the Lithuanians, living abroad in globalization conditions, should preserve their national identity; protect the rights of the people living abroad. The second target is to motivate the Lithuanians living abroad to become engaged in the political, economic, scientific, cultural and sport life of Lithuania. According to the surveys conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the European Migration Network and the Institute for Social Research, almost half the members of the Lithuanian community, even though they do not plan to come back to Lithuania in the near future, would like to take part in Lithuania's life. Special interest is shown in politics. Now, when the migrants are allowed to vote, they would also like to have their own representatives in the Seimas. This aim combines preservation of cultural heritage abroad, keeping in touch with Lithuanian scientists, and fostering economic co-operation. Another purpose is to promote the return to the homeland, replace a brain drain with the 'brain metabolism' process. Periodical surveys and research into the lives of the Lithuanians living abroad should provide a useful tool for indicating emigrants' experiences, needs and decisive elements for return migration. Moreover, it is becoming difficult to 'track' everyone, as the number of people living abroad is unclear – not all of them have declared their exit. Young people who are studying abroad need to have a chance and inspiration to come back; for this reason, internships in various governmental institutions and in the private sector should be organized in Lithuania. Dissemination of information is perceived as the issue to be dealt with and should be given special attention. There is a lack of information about Lithuanian institutions, economic stability, jobs and re-qualification possibilities for those who return. For this reason, authorities feel a digital space connecting the Lithuanians living abroad with their natives at home should be created through modern technologies and dissemination of information. Moreover, this digital space should meet the leavers' informational, social, cultural and other needs. In this case, access to Lithuanian television and radio is a good measure to meet these needs. One global TV channel already exists. It is called 'LTV World'. At the moment this program is broadcasted in North America and Europe, in the East – as far as the Ural Mountains, Georgia, Armenia, and Turkey. However, this channel is thought to be insufficient and the new goal is to create another space, which would provide useful information to those who are going abroad and those

⁷⁸ Regulations of "Global Lithuania".

who are coming back. The idea is to divide the circle of the recipients to satisfy everybody's needs: students and youth, families, workers, and the elderly. Besides, thus far a large mass of comprehensive data has been placed on the Embassies' websites. Unfortunately, these websites are not often visited. A discussion has been taking place for several years about whether or not to create a new separate informative platform that would contain all relevant information, including legal matters, the events calendar and advertisements. A special survey including the question: "Is there a need for a new separate website for emigrants to be created and would you use it?" was conducted a few years ago. Unfortunately, the results did not give a clear answer – half the participants said yes, the other half said no. Since then it has been decided to concentrate on the already existing social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter.

The implementation of the "Global Lithuania" program is entrusted to the Ministries of Finance, Transport and Communications, Culture, Social Security and Labour, Health Care, Education and Science, Justice, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Interior and other governmental institutions and enterprises.⁷⁹ The institutions that are concerned with the implementation of this plan, submit information to the monitoring system about the workflow and tasks accomplished on a quarterly basis. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs performs its role as coordinator.

When the main tasks and tools of "Global Lithuania" are studied, a few clear highlights stand out: support for the communities' activities and youth organizations abroad, encouraging to pursue formal and informal education and support for Lithuanian education. It is seen as important to draw people living abroad in political, economic, scientific, cultural and sporting life. Moreover, the migrants' businesses abroad should collaborate with Lithuanian associations and structures. Artists, as another important target group, should not be excluded: a dialogue between those residing 'there' and 'here' should be held. Preservation of cultural heritage and archives that are abroad should not be forgotten, coordinators feel. More attention should be paid to the youth and students – they should be encouraged to stay at home and seek higher education at national universities. If they decide to leave, programs and possibilities for them to come back to should be created; do internships, get work experience, create cultural and sports activities and events and gatherings abroad.

⁷⁹ Regulations of "Global Lithuania"

Even though it is only some years since this program has been introduced, with help of the Ministries and NGOs a large number of the aforementioned priorities and aims have already been achieved. At the moment main attention is being devoted to supporting the continued projects and preparing information platform projects.

During my internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania I had a chance to meet high representatives from the World Lithuanian Community, the World Lithuanian Youth Association, creators of youth initiative Create for Lithuania and the Director of the Global Lithuanian Leaders network. They all spoke about various programs that have been created to boost the return migration. They also told me about the events that promoted interaction between the émigrés and their home country. The interviewees presented initiatives directed towards the youth – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with other Ministries and their partners have set an internship program for Lithuanian youth who studied abroad. The main idea is to get these young educated people involved in the country's affairs and take part in the decision making processes. It is hoped that after that this would help most of these bright minds decide to stay in their home country. However, the question arises, how fruitful are these programs and if they actually give any results.

The above mentioned youth internship program 'Create for Lithuania' received around 200 applications last year. Twenty 'lucky ones' were accepted and came back to Lithuania. This year 'Create for Lithuania' received more attention, the number of applications increased ten times and reached over 2000. Once again only 20 young professionals were selected. The program lasts one year, all the applicants get a chance to work with different projects initiated by different ministries and government's partners. However, the chances to get permanent employment with one of the institutions at the end of this program are low. So the question arises how many of these participants actually stay when this internship program ends. The first group is about to finish their year (program started last September and will end at the end of August). It would be interesting to know what impact did it actually have on youths decision to stay or to leave the home country. Moreover, to hear if their attitude towards Lithuania has changed. As so far none of this information has been posted in the official site of 'Create for Lithuania'.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ <http://www.kurkl.lt/>

Conclusions

This research has tried to add to the literature on youth emigration by offering an insight of the main reasons that determine Lithuanian youth emigration and by showing how Lithuanian government responded to these emigrations. It has revealed that the economic reasons are the dominant ones, though other factors, such as migration systems, networks, migrant's age and social status also play a significant role. This research has also presented two Lithuanian communities – one in the Netherlands and other in the United Kingdom. Although none of the interviewees takes part in activities and events organized by these communities, their role is important for Lithuanian emigrants in the country of destination. This shows the separate spheres in which migrants function, even within the same country of settlement.

Choosing a cohort for my survey enabled me to have a deeper insight into youth emigration. The fact that I have known most of the interviewees for four years enabled me to take into account their personal characteristics and qualifications as an important and influential factor that led to emigration. Moreover, it was also easier to track these émigrés using personal contacts.

As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, a large number of migration theories can be applied to this case study. Lee's stages of life cycle and migration streams can be easily identified. All of the respondents said that they were single when they left. Apart from the family and friends, no other personal attachments were left behind in the home country. Their average age upon leaving the country was 22. This confirms the assumption that migration usually takes place at a young age. Moreover, it is easier to travel and overcome such obstacles as distance, for instance, when there are no commitments to another person (a wife/ husband/ partner or children). The fact that the UK is the most popular destination can also be explained with the help of Lee's statements. The more people migrate to this particular country, the larger migration streams are directed towards this destination. Positive comments and opinions by those who went first on a favourable labour market, good working conditions, well-recognised and accessible higher education attract more people. However, not everyone is able, has enough courage, skills and motivation to start a new life in a foreign country. Migration is selective.

When pushes and pulls are studied, specific factors that prevail in Lithuania can be named. In the first place this is the economic situation and labour conditions for

young people in their homeland (for the people with work experience – professionals, and those who are without it – students). Youth unemployment exceeded 30 per cent. The labour market is very competitive. This creates few opportunities for young professionals and university graduates to join the labour market and use their knowledge in practise. Discontent with the educational and medical systems, poor social security – all these factors “add up” and encourage and speed up migration. Moreover, unfavourable conditions for self-realization are also important. University or college graduates do not see any future in the home country and prefer to go abroad and do low skill jobs rather than be unemployed and unhappy in the home country.

On the basis of the results of my survey, it is clear that the reasons for emigration from Lithuania are mainly economic, intertwined with lack of opportunities in order respects. First of all, university and college tuition fees are high. This is an important push factor. Student loans offered by banks are quite low and fail to cover the whole amount of education costs. Conditions are very unfavourable and only few students dare to borrow money. In the United Kingdom the loan and grants system is advanced, and terms for acquisition and repayment are extremely favourable.

Secondly, even if young people manage to enrol for the desirable course and obtain financing for it, future perspectives after graduation are not promising. The perspective of a professional career in Lithuania is vague – a career and the material status do not depend on the level of one’s education or qualification. Young people are likely to be unable to realise their professional potential.

Thirdly, educated youth cannot realise their professional expectations – not only is it hard to find a job, a search for an interesting job where one could grow and develop his or her personality is often fruitless. Self-realisation and being able to do what you want to do are important reasons why art students leave for foreign universities. Freedom and the ability to express oneself, to evolve and discover the fields of interest by oneself are the major pulls to foreign universities. Moreover, educated youth also expressed their concern about and disappointment at the socio-political processes in Lithuania and people’s intolerance.

My research confirms the outcome of previous research. It adds to the literature by emphasising the intertwining of reasons why young people leave. More important is the combination with the government’s response to emigration. So far, both have seldom been analysed in the same context. In 2009, inspired by the Irish and Polish examples, the Government of Lithuania introduced the “Global Lithuania” program. Its main aim

is to maintain contact with Lithuanian émigrés, provide them with useful information and promote the return migration. Not only are different ministries and the Lithuanian Parliament involved in carrying out this program. There are many NGOs, the Government's partners and private individuals who also take part in this initiative. However, a lot of strategies, developed under this program, never see the light of day. Moreover, the participants often have different opinions about and goals of migration-related issues, and quite a few participate in "Global Lithuania" program for private interest and profit.

Authorities hope the situation will change with the arrival of new generations. If the people who gained experience when residing in foreign countries returned and got high positions in important state government and administration institutions, "bolder steps" could be expected to be made both in politics, the educational, health care systems, and the number of emigrants would start to decrease. Before this happens, educational reform should attract more students willing to study at Lithuanian universities, local companies should increase possibilities for students to put their theoretical knowledge into practice and that a single uniform system of internship should be created. Very few of these goals have as yet been realised.

Lithuania is trying to rebuild as a nation at the very same time as the opportunities to leave increase, as well as the incentives. In the past decades the country has gone through periods of very rapid change. From a country with very little emigration it became a country with extensive emigration. Employment options for young people decreased dramatically, driving people out. But they also migrated because they suddenly could, taking opportunities their parents never had, and protesting corruption and other problems by simply leaving. Authorities had to create new policies in many fields while conditions and practices were changing. This especially applies to migration, where authorities saw a large part of the high-skilled population leave – especially its (former) students – while trying to build the nation. It is clear what the goals of the Global Lithuania program are, although few have been realized as yet. It is not clear what the effect of this very strong interest in emigration, and the attention paid to emigration, will be. It could encourage people to return, as authorities hope, but it might as well encourage more people to leave. Thus authorities might stimulate the very migration it is trying to stop. What is the outcome can only be shown by future research.

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