

The problem of the brain drain within the borders of the Baltic region

Forum: Baltic Forum

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INDEX

Introduction	2
Background information	2
Major Organizations Involved	3
Relevant Treaties and UN resolutions	3
Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue.....	3
Reliable and Useful Sources	5

Introduction

The problem of the brain drain within the borders of the Baltic region is becoming more and more significant nowadays. This issue can be defined as the mass emigration of technically skilled and high educated people from one country to another. It has a straight impact on cultural, economic and political stability of the countries. Therefore, if the countries become unstable in the most important spheres, the emigrational range will grow and it will bring more problems to the Baltic countries' governments. That is why the issue of brain drain needs consideration and solution.

Background information

The issue of brain drain mostly concerns the following countries of Baltic Sea region: Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and partly Germany and Russian Federation. The majority of emigrants are the most educated, talented and literate people who are aimed to settle down in larger and developed European countries. The most significant reasons of emigration are healthy risks, lack of career opportunities, economic crisis, substandard living conditions, low and unstable wages, deteriorating quality of educational system etc. Such mass emigration puts less developed and smaller countries in hard positions by many reasons. At first, as citizens are dissatisfied with conditions of life in the countries, it means that the countries' governments have to change their forms, budgets, laws (which is practically impossible). Secondly, there will be not enough high educated people to continue countries' development and it may lead to new issues. Thirdly, there will be a lack of population. As today the issue of brain drain is growing, the EU is worried about the effects of foreign population on culture and environment of Europe, so it is implying some strict rules to regulate flow of immigrants. The countries where the percent of immigrants is the highest are the economically leading countries of the EU, Germany, France, and the USA. However, if emigration continues and the population of European and American countries increases, there will be a growth of unemployment, homelessness, excessive spends of resources, crises. Evidently, the issue of brain drain is considered as one of the most global one, and the serious attempts were made to deal with it.

Major Organizations Involved

To stop the brain drain Europe community also launched a provision called “Blue-card”. (It’s same as green-card lottery of USA).

OECD (Organization for Cooperation and Development) – the organization that discusses and launches programs for countries’ collaboration.

TUAC (Trade Union Advisory Committee) – the organization that focuses on the solutions of the economic crisis, concentrating on the need for anti-crisis policies that stimulate growth of emigration and create jobs in order to decrease the emigrational rate.

GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) – the organization that assisted representatives of different nationalities working abroad to return to their home countries.

Relevant Treaties and UN resolutions

In 2003 UNESCO’s Section on International Migration and Multicultural has focused on migration policies, immigrant entrepreneurship in UN and the human rights implications of international migration. The organization published essays on the Free Movement of emigrants.

Since the brain drain debate began in the 1960s, the UN adopted resolutions that suggested to launch a new tax system for emigrants.

On the 5th session of the Baltic Assembly (in Vilnius, Lithuania) a resolution was written concerning the Baltic States in the regulation of emigration.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

A statistic of emigration from Poland (2001) shows that emigration led to an increase in wages for high skilled workers in the country. In 2013, the study showed that emigration from Eastern Europe after the 2004 EU expansion increased the wages of young workers in the country while it had no effect on the wages of old workers. The wages of Lithuanian citizens increased because of post-EU growing level of emigration. Since that the UN governments had to deal with the wage

instability by launching new employment laws and writing the UN resolutions on this question.

Also, the EU recognizes a need for extensive immigration to facilitate and stable an aging population. That's why nationalist political parties have gained support in many European countries by calling for stronger laws restricting immigration.

Lithuania, for example, has lost about 100,000 citizens since 2003 (many of them young and well-educated) because of emigration to Ireland in particular. A similar phenomenon occurred in Poland after its entry into the European Union. In the first year of its EU membership, 100,000 Poles registered to work in England. By the research of PKO Bank Polski, 63% of Polish immigrants to the UK were aged between 24 and 35, with 40% possessing a university degree. To slow the emigration of Poland citizens, the government of the country fixed a rapid growth of salaries, its stability in economy, the strong value of the currency and decreasing unemployment.

Possible Solutions

- Developing measures to stabilize the economic system and wages in countries experiencing active brain drain.
- The countries of Baltic region with weaker economies should aim at creating better working conditions for the citizens. This should also be supported by countries with stronger economies by, for instance, financial investment or help in creating development programs. In perspective, this will allow citizens to stay in their own countries and develop the economies of these countries instead of moving to more prosperous countries of the region. The latter, as a result, will avoid overpopulation.
- Create awareness among people, holding different campaign programs, provide job opportunities at a local level, adopt the developed-countries technologies, business and employment systems and programs.
- Create new and develop the existing universities and colleges, develop new spheres of activity to involve young people.

Reliable and Useful Sources

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