

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION PAPERS

39

**The Ambiguities of Emigration:
Bulgaria since 1988**

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Foreword

The *International Migration Papers* (IMP) is a working paper series designed to make quickly available current research of ILO's International Migration Programme on global migration trends, conditions of employment of migrants, and the impact of state policies on migration and the treatment of migrants. Some ten to fifteen such papers are published each year as working papers. It continues the *Migration for Employment* series started in 1975 under the World Employment Programme.

Its main objective is to contribute to an informed debate on how best to manage labour migration, taking into account the shared concerns of countries of origin and employment for generating full and productive employment of their nationals, while at the same time respecting the basic rights of individual migrant workers and members of their families.

In this paper August Gächter examines available evidence on the migration movements of Bulgarians, especially the highly-skilled, out of and back to their country. The study was prompted by concerns expressed by the Bulgarian Government that emigration is setting back the country's economic recovery and policies may need to be adopted to encourage the return of Bulgarian professionals abroad as well as to discourage further exodus of talents. Gächter's research reveals that these concerns appear not to have taken into account the capacity of the country to absorb its large supply of scientists and engineers into employment, nor the largely unrecorded flows of remittances coming from Bulgarians working abroad. Additions to Bulgaria's workforce continue to consist of a high proportion of tertiary educated people, much higher than the average for other countries in Europe at the same level of per capita incomes. The paper was presented at a national seminar in Sophia organized for the Ministry of Labour of Bulgaria by the ILO in cooperation with the Institute of Advanced Studies in Vienna.

Geneva, February 2002

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Abstract

Total net emigration, i.e. the excess of emigration over immigration, from Bulgaria to other countries than Turkey has been no more than 200,000 persons at most since 1947. Over the same period net emigration to Turkey totalled close to 700,000 persons. Slightly more than half the net emigration occurred during just six years, from 1988 to 1993, when it exceeded 470,000 persons. From 1994 onward net migration was practically zero because net outflows of Bulgarian citizens to the tune of about one percent of the population per year were compensated by net inflows of citizens of other countries.

There has been very little emigration of highly qualified personnel from Bulgaria. Even at the end of the 1990s, Bulgaria the percentage of the labour force with completed tertiary education was unusually large. Like Greece, Bulgaria has had difficulties making adequate use of the highly educated workers at its disposal. Few of the personnel leaving the science sector at the beginning of the 1990s emigrated. They had not completed an MA and came largely from the vastly overstaffed technical sciences.

The whereabouts of Bulgarian emigrants outside Turkey are not well known. About one sixth seems to reside legally in Germany, and between one quarter and one fifth in Greece, mostly without permission. In other countries there seem to be, at most, only a few thousand Bulgarian citizens at a time. There seems to be substantial coming and going, especially in Greece.

The size of remittances by emigrants to their relatives in Bulgaria is also unknown. They are estimated to range between \$120 million and \$350 million per year. It would seem important to remove disincentives to use the official banking system for these transfers in order to increase their public benefit in addition to the private one.

Overall it seems fair to conclude that Bulgaria has not suffered a loss of national development potential from emigration but that it has failed to seize the opportunities the emigration has been offering.

1. Introduction

In Bulgarian politics, while few have emigrated, and comparatively few of those living in Bulgaria are planning or even hoping to emigrate, emigration is widely being perceived as a major problem. The argument put forth is that emigration has resulted in serious brain drain implying loss of development potential for the country. In this report the veracity of this proposition is being investigated, the likelihood of return migration to Bulgaria is discussed, and an attempt is made to explore the feasibility of measures furthering return, on the one hand, and, on the other, alternatives to a policy of return. In the course of doing so the history of emigration from Bulgaria since 1947 is reported in brief and the more recent history of migration is researched in as far as the data permit. To some degree the Bulgarian experience is evaluated against the experience of other countries in the area. The presentations at and contributions to the ILO Workshop on “The Return of Highly Qualified Emigrants to Bulgaria”, held in Sofia on 29 and 30 June 2001, are also partly incorporated. Some emphasis is put, first, on estimating recent return flows to Bulgaria, and, second, on outlining the skill composition of the emigration. The data clearly indicate an exodus from the lower academic rungs of the technical sciences only, and only a small fraction thereof was due to emigration. MA holders and PhD holders of all fields of science can be shown to have remained in Bulgaria, and the share of workers with completed tertiary education has been on the increase. In addition, as other countries in transition from communism, Bulgaria has been experiencing an influx of highly skilled personnel, both, from countries farther east and farther west. Further, the immigration from Bulgaria or of Bulgarians to Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and the U.S. is examined. It is found that from Germany, in particular, a substantial return flow to Bulgaria could be observed which was linked closely to previous inflows. The employment participation of working age Bulgarians in western countries appears to be low while in the Czech Republic it seems to be high but also highly responsive to the business cycle. Finally, since there are no publicly available data about the volume of migrants’ remittances to Bulgaria, an attempt is made to assess the potential for remittances by comparing Bulgaria with other countries and their experience. The literature on the impact of remittances is very briefly reviewed. Overall the report finds little to support the notion that Bulgaria has experienced a serious brain drain or that it could gain much from the return of the emigrants. It is suggested to focus on remittances from emigrants and on incentives to transfer remittances through official banking channels.

2. Past and current emigration

2.1. Net migration

Given data on the size of the population, and on live births and deaths it is possible to compute net migration from and to Bulgaria. By this reckoning net migration was negative in almost all years since 1960, i.e. there was more emigration than immigration. There were two periods when it was particularly negative, one from 1968 to 1984 and the second from 1988 to 1993.

During the first of those two periods, total net emigration from Bulgaria was 188,000, or 11,000 per year. Almost all of this was emigration of Turkish speaking Bulgarian nationals to Turkey based on a bilateral agreement (SOPEMI 1994:113; Beleva/Kotzeva 2001). This was particularly intense between 1974 and 1979, with a highpoint in 1978 when net emigration from Bulgaria

reached 33,000. Nevertheless, over the whole period from 1960 until 1987, the population of Bulgaria increased every year, but the trend was for the increases to get ever smaller.

From 1988, Bulgaria's population went into an increasingly rapid decline. After peaking at almost 9 million in 1988, it was only 8.5 million by 1993. In 1994 the reduction in population was only about 36,000, but the annual reduction increased to about 50,000 by 1997 and 1998. By then the total reduction since 1988 was more than 740,000 or 8% of the 1987 population.

This decline was partly homemade. The fertility rate underwent a much commented dramatic decline from 13.1 births per 1,000 population in 1988 to only 7.7 births in 1997 from where it has since risen to 8.05 births per thousand population in 1999 (World Bank 2001). There were 116,672 live births in 1988 but only 72,743 in 1996 with a further decline since then. At the same time, aggravated living conditions contributed to an increase in mortality. The number of deaths was 107,213 in 1987, 117,056 in 1996 (The Statesman's Year-Book), and 122,300 in 1998 (World Bank 2001). Most of the increase was due to cardiac and circulatory diseases (UNICEF 1994:47). As a result, the difference between births and deaths has been getting increasingly negative since 1990. In total, between 1990 and 1998, the demographic imbalance reduced the resident population by about 283,000. From 1994 onward, for all practical purposes, it was the negative balance between births and deaths alone that was responsible for the continuing decline in population. Over the whole period 1994 to 1999 net migration was in fact zero.

Table 1. Annual population change during the year, annual balance between births and deaths, and annual net migration, weighted period averages, thousands per year

	Population change	Natural increase	Net migration
1960-87	+63.6	+74.2	-10.6
1988-93	-87.1	-8.1	-79.0
1994-99	-45.5	-45.5	+0.0
1960-99	+8.7	+25.3	-16.6

Data source: See table 3.

That was different between 1988 and 1993. During this six-year-period net emigration reduced the population of Bulgaria by 474,000 or 79,000 per year. Natural increase was also negative, but at only 8,100 per year it only contributed a negative balance of 49,000 to the population decrease of the period.

A very large part of the 1988-1993 emigration, net or gross, was of Turkish-speaking Bulgarians to Turkey: "Following the liberalisation of passport regulations in 1989, over 500,000 Bulgarians have emigrated. ... According to the 1992 Census, some 345,000 Bulgarian citizens of Turkish origin emigrated to Turkey between 1989 and 1992" (SOPEMI 1997:81). "The census identified persons who had left Bulgaria in a given year with the intention of residing abroad for more than one year. This can obviously only be done if at least one member of the original household remained in Bulgaria [or returned before the census]. The counts therefore represent a lower bound for out-migration" (SOPEMI 1995:134).

Table 2. Emigration of ethnic Turks according to the 1992 census

	Total	Women	Men
1989	218,000	111,568	106,432
1990	71,195	31,326	39,869
1991	32,164	13,900	18,264
1992	23,490	10,336	13,154
Total	344,849	167,130	177,719

Source: SOPEMI 1995:135.

The very rapid decline in the emigration of Turkish-speakers after 1989 was thought to be due to “... the restoration of the right for Turks and Pomaks to use their native names, the introduction of Turkish language in schools and freedom of religious expression. Another important reason behind the decline in outflows to Turkey has been the introduction of restrictive visa regulations by the Turkish authorities” (SOPEMI 1995:135). As is often the case, Turkey not only made entry harder but also passed legislation conducive to the integration of the immigrants already in the country. Due to these legal changes the return of the Turkish-speaking Bulgarian emigrants has become even less likely than it was (SOPEMI 1999:114).

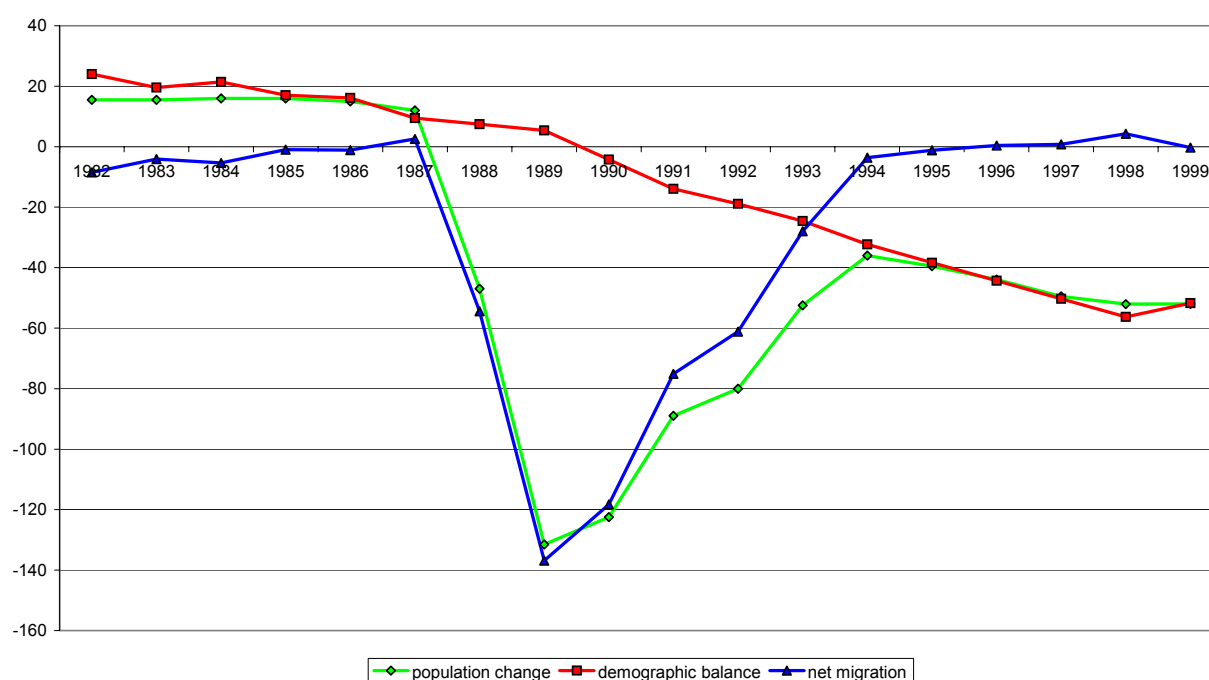
Figure 1: Components of population change in Bulgaria, 1982 to 1999, thousands

Table 3. Demographic change in Bulgaria, 1980-1999, thousands

	Population at the beginning of the year	Population change during the year	Natural increase (births minus deaths)	Estimate of gross emigration	Net migration	
					Number	Percent of mid-year population
1980	8,844	26.0	30.1		-4.1	0.0
1981	8,870	16.0	26.6		-10.6	-0.1
1982	8,886	15.5	24.0		-8.5	-0.1
1983	8,902	15.5	19.6		-4.1	0.0
1984	8,917	16.0	21.4		-5.4	-0.1
1985	8,933	16.0	17.0		-1.0	0.0
1986	8,949	15.0	16.1		-1.1	0.2
1987	8,964	12.0	9.5		2.5	0.0
1988	8,976	-47.0	7.4		-54.4	-0.6
1989	8,929	-131.5	5.4	-218.0	-136.9	-1.5
1990	8,798	-122.5	-4.3	-85.0	-118.2	-1.3
1991	8,675	-89.0	-13.9	-45.0	-75.1	-0.9
1992	8,586	-80.0	-18.9	-65.0	-61.1	-0.7
1993	8,506	-52.5	-24.6	-54.0	-27.9	-0.3
1994	8,454	-36.0	-32.3	-64.0	-3.7	0.0
1995	8,418	-39.5	-38.3	-54.0	-1.2	0.0
1996	8,378	-44.0	-44.3	-66.0	0.4	0.0
1997	8,334	-49.5	-50.3	-44.0	0.8	0.0
1998	8,285	-52.0	-56.3	-52.0	4.2	0.1
1999	8,233	-52.0	-51.7		-0.3	-0.0

Data source: World Bank 2001; Statesman's Yearbook; Beleva/Kotzeva 2001. Author's calculations and estimates.

Total net emigration from 1960 to 1998 was 665,000. The largest part of it, a net emigration of 479,000, occurred between 1988 and 1995. Between 1996 and 1998 Bulgaria gained about 5,000 people from migration. Available evidence – which will be reviewed in subsequent sections – seems to suggest that these gains were due to the continued emigration of Bulgarian nationals being overcompensated by the net immigration of nationals of other countries.

The foregoing discussion, like figure 1, is based on the data reported in table 3. Net emigration was estimated from available demographic data. If the difference between births and deaths during a year is subtracted from the population change during the year, whatever remains has to be net migration. Since the population figures accord to the periodic censuses, the procedure leads to an estimate of total net migration, regardless of the legal status Bulgarian emigrants had or sought in the receiving country. There are two sources of error. One is an element of subjective misperception in census answers. Persons in fact no longer resident in Bulgaria may be claimed to still be resident by their relatives. A second source of error is that undocumented immigrants in Bulgaria may not appear in the census.

Emigration did, of course, not commence in 1960. Before 1960, a major wave of emigration occurred in 1947 to 1951, based, like most of the emigration of the 1970s, on bilateral agreements. It consisted of about 156,000 Muslim Turkish-speakers going to Turkey and about 43,000 Jews going to the U.S. and Israel (Beleva/Kotzeva 2001). While these figures refer to gross emigration it is safe to assume that none of these 200,000 emigrants ever returned to Bulgaria to settle.

Assuming that net emigration between 1952 and 1959 was 2,000 to 3,000 annually, we are left with a rough estimate of about 880,000 net emigrants from Bulgaria between 1947 and 1998. About 680,000 or 700,000 of them seem to have belonged to the Turkish minority – those that left between 1947 and 1951, about 170,000 or 180,000 between 1968 and 1984, and at least 350,000 between 1989 and 1992 (SOPEMI 1995:135). They have probably all assumed Turkish nationality since then or will do so soon. This leaves us with an estimated 180,000 or, at most, 200,000 emigrants who went to other countries than Turkey. This includes the Jewish emigrants mentioned above. On average, for the whole 52 years under review, this is a net emigration to other countries than Turkey of less than 4,000 per year – not exorbitant by any means.

2.2. Gross emigration

Table 3 also contains a column of gross emigration figures. The source is the National Statistical Institute (NSI) which, in accordance with UN standards, “defines emigrants as all those who leave the country for more than one year (this group includes students, employees under fixed term contracts abroad, Bulgarian diplomats, etc.)” (SOPEMI 1998:87). The definition clearly leaves margin for error. It is not usually possible to determine accurately at the time of emigration how long the stay abroad will end up being. Error could be both ways: People planning to return in a few months but not doing so, and people planning to stay abroad for several years or for good but in fact returning within months. The NSI estimate conforms to some degree with the net migration figures estimated from the population data, but there are years where the data clearly do not match. Both, in 1990 and 1991 the gross emigration estimates are less negative than the net migration, which in reality cannot possibly be true. For the time being, I can only point this out, but I have no way of resolving the inconsistency. The much more important point is that the gap between the gross and the net estimates gets wider as time passes. In other words, immigration and return migration have become more important over the years. As we will show below, an important share of this is in fact return migration. The other important point about the gross emigration estimates is that “it is believed that a high proportion of these emigrants are highly skilled” (SOPEMI 1998:87). This belief seems to be at the heart of the alarm in Bulgaria about losing development potential. We will return to an examination of the veracity of the belief later.

First we will look some more at the gross emigration flows of Bulgarian nationals. We can compare the estimated emigration to gross inflows recorded elsewhere. In the table below the known data are assembled. The blanks indicate missing data. The entry for Greece in 1990 is a guess, and the other entries for Greece involve some double counting. The asylum column is the world-wide number of asylum applications outside Germany by Bulgarian nationals. They are included in the table because the inclusion of asylum applicants in the destination countries’ immigration figures, except Germany, is, if at all, partial and delayed. The ‘Other’ column contains the difference between the Bulgaria column and the other seven columns. This is the column requiring our attention.

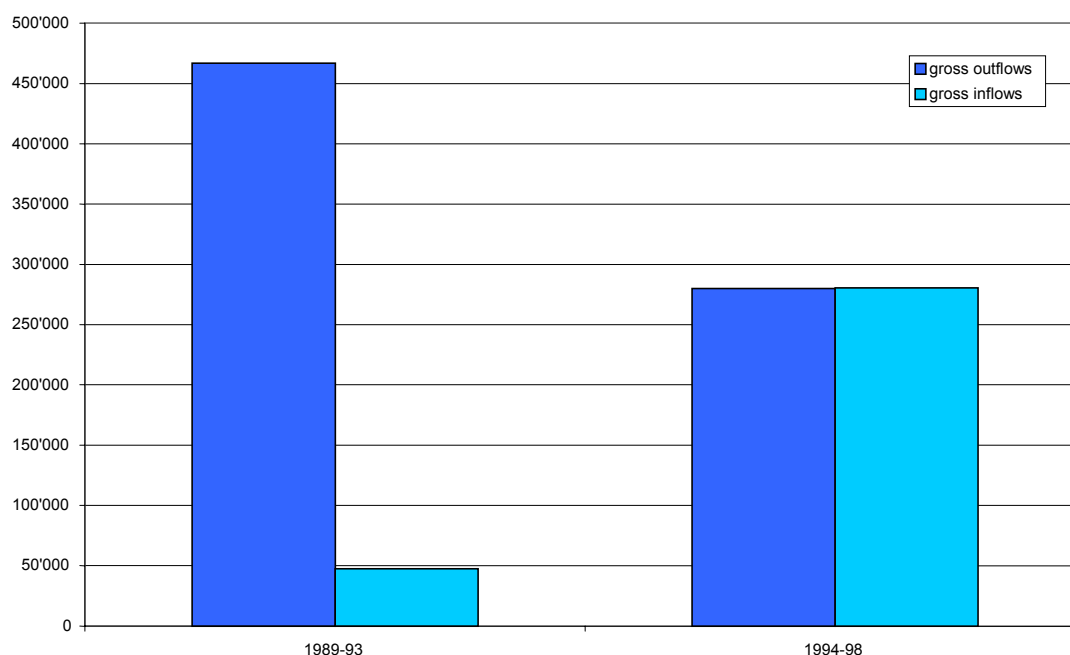
Table 4. Gross emigration of Bulgarian nationals by destination country

	BG	AT	CH	DE	GR	TR	US	Asylum	Other
1988			126					404	
1989	-218,000		150		1,965	218,000		6,836	-8,951
1990	-85,000		169	11,193	2,500	71,195		7,724	-7,781
1991	-45,000		191	17,420	2,773	32,164		7,187	-14,735
1992	-65,000		252	31,523	2,631	23,490		3,233	3,871
1993	-54,000		247	27,350	2,620			4,349	19,434
1994	-64,000		224	10,478	3,532			2,979	46,787
1995	-54,000		241	8,165	3,657			1,959	39,978
1996	-66,000	566	228	6,433	4,300		1,143	2,364	50,966
1997	-44,000	645	257	6,485	5,600		2,042	3,133	25,838
1998	-52,000	661	294	5,336	3,400		3,122	1,815	37,372
1999		644						2,105	
2000		686						3,021	
1989-98	-747,000	1,872	2,253	124,383	32,978	344,849	6,307	41,579	192,779
1989-93	-467,000		1,009	87,486	12,489	344,849		29,329	-8,162
1994-98	-280,000	1,872	1,244	36,897	20,489		6,307	12,250	200,941

Data source: Tables 2, 3, 22 to 24, 26; SOPEMI 1995:91, 2000:193; UNHCR.

A positive value in the ‘Other’ column indicates we have not identified sufficient immigration in destination countries to accommodate all the estimated emigration from Bulgaria, and a negative value means the immigration recorded in destination countries can only be satisfied if Bulgarians emigrated not from Bulgaria alone but from at least one other, unidentified country as well. In practice a negative value means that either the immigration in destination countries is exaggerated or the emigration from Bulgaria is underestimated. In 1989, for instance, the immigration to Turkey is probably exaggerated by at least 9,000, while the 1991 emigration from Bulgaria was probably underestimated by about 15,000. The 1990 emigration also appears to be underestimated but by only 10 percent. The lack of Austrian and U.S. immigration data before 1996 does not make much difference, but the lack of data relating to Turkey does. For the period 1993 to 1998 the ‘Other’ column adds up to around 220,000 emigrants not accounted for by our patchy immigration data. The difference may quite possibly result from migration to Turkey. A second option is substantial unauthorised migration of Bulgarians for periods longer than one year. Of course, there is a third option, which is to declare the NSI estimates since 1993 exaggerated. Which of these is true will not be known until more complete data have appeared.

The National Statistical Institute’s estimates and guesses suggest a gross outmigration of about 747,000 Bulgarians between 1989 and 1998. Since net emigration during the same period was only 470,000, gross immigration must have been about 276,000, more than 80% of which took place after 1993.

Figure 2. Emigration and immigration Bulgaria, 1989 to 1998**Table 5. Estimated migration flows from and to Bulgaria**

	From Bulgaria	To Bulgaria	Balance
1989-93	-467,000	47,700	-419,300
1994-98	-280,000	280,600	600
Total	-747,000	328,300	-418,700

Data source: See table 3.

As figure 2 and table 5 reveal, the difference between emigration and immigration was large between 1989 and 1993 but practically nil between 1994 and 1998. This pattern resembles very much the evolution of migration flows between eastern and western Germany from 1989, except that in the German case flows were much larger. In fact, while the GDR had less than twice Bulgaria's population the emigration, between 1989 and 1998, from the former GDR to the former FRG was about three times as great as the emigration from Bulgaria, and eastward flows were more than three times as large as the flows into Bulgaria, mostly because return flows started sooner than in Bulgaria's case. One difference, of course, is that Germans, from 1989, enjoyed freedom of movement – from the end of 1990 within a united Germany – while Bulgarians did not, requiring visas to travel to western Europe. This is likely to have influenced not only the emigration from the former GDR but also returns, since return is much facilitated by the certainty of being able to reverse the decision at will at any point in time. The other difference is proximity. As is well known, migration flows decline rapidly as the distance between origin and destination increases. In Germany, migration distances were small, much smaller than, say, the distance between Sofia and Athens or Sofia and Budapest.

Figure 3: Gross migration flows between the areas of the former GDR and the former FRG, 1989 to 1998

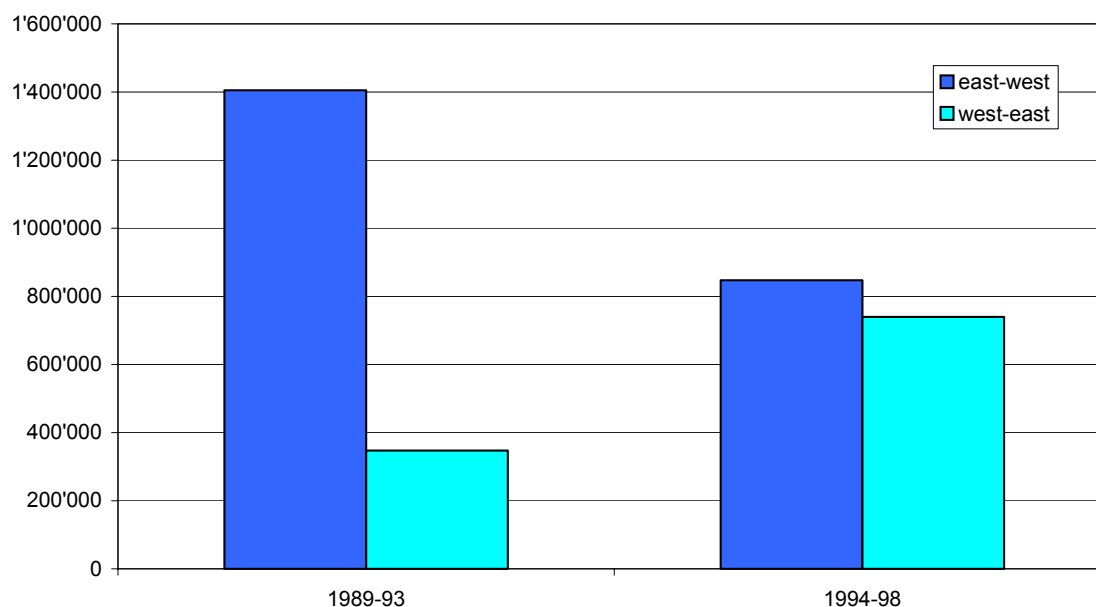
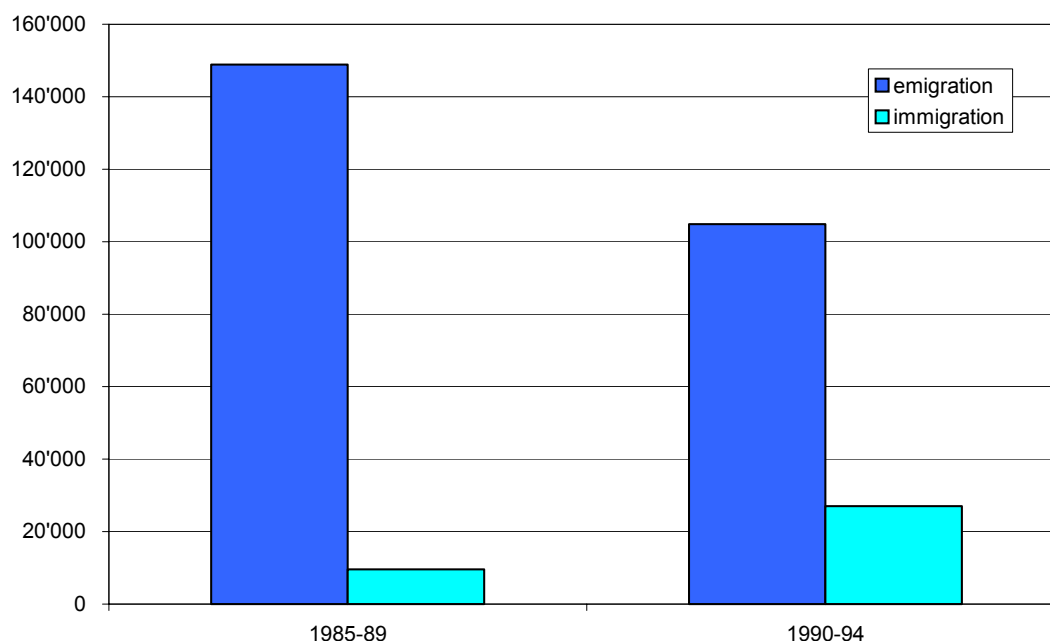


Table 6. Migration between the areas of the former GDR and the former FRG, 1989 to 1998

	East-west	West-east	East's balance
1989-93	1,405,081	346,804	-669,877
1994-98	847,644	739,899	-107,745
Total	2,252,725	1,086,703	-777,622

Data source: Statistisches Bundesamt; Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung.

Poland experienced a similar but much less pronounced pattern a few years earlier (SOPEMI 1994:135, 1997:140, 2000:237; Iglicka 2000, 2001). According to Polish data, emigration peaked in 1986 and 1987, and immigration, including the return of Polish nationals, increased, at first slightly, from 1988, and more vigorously at the beginning of the 1990s. Comparing the 1985 to 1989 period with the subsequent five years, the reduction in emigration between the two five year periods was less in the Polish case than in the later Bulgarian and German cases, and the increase in immigration was also less. A possible reason for the more subdued pattern is that Poland had already experienced a substantial emigration as recently as 1981, before the declaration of martial law in December of that year. Secondly, it had already been in a state of cautious transition since then, and confidence in its continuation may have been greater than elsewhere (Iglicka 2001:6). This may have contributed to Polish migrants planning to stay abroad only temporarily. As a consequence they did not deregister upon departure or re-register when returning. Destination country data tend to add up to greater flows of Polish migration than Polish data do.

Figure 4: Gross migration flows into and out of Poland, 1985 to 1994**Table 7. Migration from and to Poland**

	From Poland	To Poland	Balance
1985-89	148,900	9,600	-139,300
1990-94	104,812	27,009	-77,803
Total	253,712	36,609	-217,103

Data source: SOPEMI 1994:135, 1997:140, 2000:237; Iglicka 2000:63, 2001:20.

At the ILO Workshop on the Return of Qualified Emigrants to Bulgaria, held 29 and 30 June 2001 in Sofia, Krystyna Iglicka reported that more than half of the current immigration to Poland is made up of return migration, and that this has been true for more than a decade.

2.3. Immigration and emigration by citizenship

So far we only compared the emigration from Bulgaria with total immigration. But, as far as the data permit, we are also able to compare the emigration with just the immigration or the return of Bulgarian nationals. In order to do this it is necessary first to examine the net migration of foreign nationals. Bulgaria, at the end of 1998, only had a population of about 93,000 statistically recorded foreign nationals. This was about 32,000 more than in 1993. During the same period about 11,000 foreign nationals received Bulgarian citizenship (SOPEMI 1995:136, 2000:155). Consequently, between the end of 1993 and the end of 1998 there was a net immigration of foreign nationals to Bulgaria of about 43,000.

Table 8. The population of foreign nationality in Bulgaria

End of year	Number of permit holders			Asylum applications	Naturalisations
	Long-term	Permanent	Total		
1991	22,000				
1992					
1993	28,000	(Sept.) 32,640	60,640		1,800
1994					
1995	43,700	37,300	51,000	100	2,200
1996	40,000	38,800	78,800	1,400	3,000
1997	45,400	40,600	86,000	400	1,100
1998	51,700	41,100	92,800	200	2,300
1993-98	23,700	8,460	32,160		

Data source: SOPEMI 1997:82, 2000:154f.

This enables us to draw two conclusions. First, if the net migration of non-Bulgarian nationals during this five-year period was about +43,000 while the total net migration during the same period was only about +600 (table 5), then the net migration of Bulgarian nationals must have been about -42,000, or close to -8,500 per year. This is about one percent per year of the population of Bulgarian citizens. By all indications this continued in 1999. Second, if this was the net migration of Bulgarian nationals, and if the gross migration of Bulgarian nationals during the same five years, as estimated by the NSI, was approximately -280,000 or around -57,000 per year, then, for the five years 1994 to 1998, there must have been a gross return migration of Bulgarian nationals of about +238,000 or, on average, a little less than +48,000 per year.

3. Current inclination to emigrate

Surveys of the desire to emigrate from the formerly communist countries have become a fixture of political life. In reality they say little if anything about future or even current emigration. They gauge a current sentiment, and so, at best, they provide some information about current satisfaction and current aspirations, but they leave us completely in the dark about, both, current and future migration.

The 1996 crisis, for instance, does not seem to have triggered a greater propensity to emigrate. "In 1996, over 80 percent of Bulgarians said that 'things are going in the wrong direction' and that the situation of their family was worse than before. Surprisingly, given this context and despite the fact that over three-quarters of the respondents believe that the main reason why people migrate is economic, the number of Bulgarians who might be described as potential migrants appears to have fallen. 60 percent of persons surveyed in 1996 reported that it was very unlikely that they would live in another country for a few years to work, compared to 47 percent in 1992. There may be several explanations for this apparent reduction in the number of potential migrants. One reason could be that many of the highly skilled individuals who could emigrate more easily have already left Bulgaria" (IOM 1997b; IOM 1997a, 1998). More recently, a further IOM-sponsored survey found "Belarus, Bulgaria and Slovenia have a very low migration potential. ... In Bulgaria, people have been encouraged to stay by the recent stabilization of the economy after years of economic chaos" (IOM 1999). The causal connections made in these state-

ments are, perhaps, a little facile, and should not be taken literally. The fact to emerge is that there does not appear to be a direct link between current economic circumstances and the desire to leave Bulgaria.

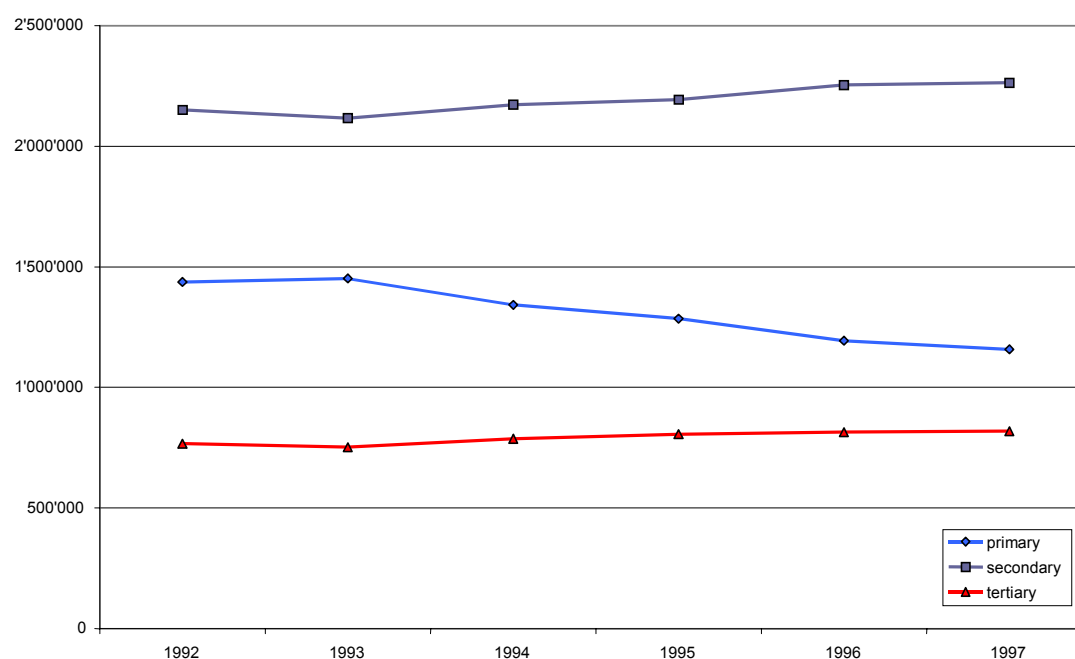
Beleva and Kotzeva (2001) in a sample of 450 students in Sofia in the spring of 2001 found 15 percent to be planning to go abroad for a period, though most were not picky whether this would be for work or for study purposes. It seems to be the experience of another place more than anything else that motivates the wish to move.

4. How great a loss of academics?

Bobeva (1993) thought that any emigration from Bulgaria after 1992 was due less to the attractions of the West than to the difficulties of transition at home. In particular, she noted the low wages, poor employment chances and poor working conditions of scientists and researchers. Very similar sentiments were voiced in Croatia (Golub 1998). Employment in the Bulgarian science sector plummeted from 86,310 at the beginning of 1990 to 46,880 at the end of 1992, Bobeva wrote, and added that, in her opinion, emigration must have played a significant part in this reduction. However, she did not offer any evidence to back up her opinion.

The findings of a 1996 study run contrary to that proposition: "According to the results obtained in 1996, 6,005 scientists separated from their jobs during the period 1989 to 1996 of which 600 emigrated" (Beleva/Kotzeva 2001). There are two important points here. The one is that only 10 percent of the personnel reduction was connected to emigration. The other point is that the emigration of scientific personnel was negligibly small. This also implies that nearly all of the gross emigration during the latter half of the 1990s was made up of persons who did not possess a tertiary education degree. On the contrary, since migrants tend to be young, they may have left Bulgaria precisely in order to get a degree, or they have gotten a degree after their return.

Today, there seems to be no dearth of highly qualified workers in Bulgaria. According to World Bank (2000) data, in 1997, 19.3% of the labour force of 4.2 million had tertiary education, up from 17.6% in 1992. Not only their share had risen over the period 1992 to 1997 but also their number, from 767,000 to 818,000. The lowest number, 752,000, was estimated for 1993. Likewise, the mainstay of the Bulgarian labour force, workers with secondary education, kept rising in numbers after 1993. Reductions were observed only among workers with no more than primary education, not because of emigration but because of retirement and succession by more educated workers. Thus, there would appear to be little reason for alarm over a loss of educated or skilled manpower. Unfortunately, the reliability of the World Bank data is uncertain. For whatever reason, the 2001 edition of the World Development Indicators (World Bank 2001) does not contain the detailed and nearly complete labour force data by educational attainment any more. Instead it offers only a few data points for some countries and some years. For Bulgaria, in particular, it does not contain any information on the labour force with tertiary education, while the 2000 edition offered a complete set for the 1992 to 1997 period.

Figure 5. The educational level of the labour force in Bulgaria**Table 9. The educational level of the Bulgarian labour force**

	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
1992	1,437,282	2,151,568	766,550	4,355,400
1993	1,451,762	2,117,153	751,805	4,320,720
1994	1,342,177	2,172,434	787,239	4,301,850
1995	1,285,200	2,193,408	805,392	4,284,000
1996	1,193,237	2,254,365	813,958	4,261,560
1997	1,157,289	2,263,709	818,157	4,239,125

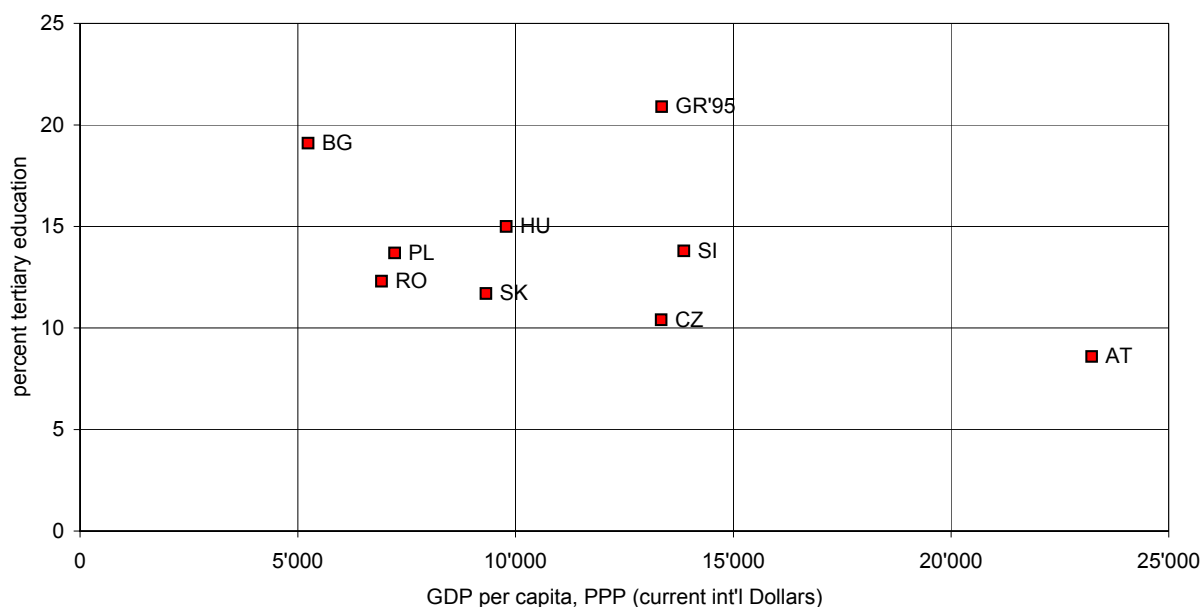
Data source: World Bank 2000.

Table 10. Share of the labour force with tertiary education (%)

	GDP per capita PPP (\$) 1996	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Austria	22,671				8.1		8.6		<u>17.0</u>
Bulgaria	5,109		17.6	17.4	18.3	18.8	19.1	19.3	
Croatia	6,436	13.8							
Czech Rep.	13,021	9.6		10.4	9.9	10.5	10.4	10.7	
Greece	13,544			<u>18.8</u>	<u>20.0</u>	<u>20.9</u>		<u>22.9</u>	
Hungary	9,550		13.4	13.5	13.5	14.3	15.0	13.9	
Poland	7,053		13.0	12.7	12.8	13.8	13.7	14.0	
Romania	6,757				7.6	<u>13.0</u>	<u>12.3</u>	<u>12.4</u>	
Slovakia	9,095			12.4	11.7		11.7		
Slovenia	13,530			15.1	15.3	14.7	<u>13.8</u>	13.5	<u>14.1</u>

Data source: World Bank 2000, 2001. Only the underlined values are confirmed by World Bank 2001.

Figure 6: GDP per capita at purchasing power parity (current int'l Dollars), and the percentage of the labour force with tertiary education



If the 19.3% of workers with tertiary education are put in an international context (figure 6, table 10), Bulgaria's position appears as still more favorable. Among countries in the area, only Greece has a higher percentage, 20.9% in 1995. In Hungary and Slovenia the share is about 14%, in Romania and Slovakia about 12%, in the Czech Republic between 10% and 11%, and in Austria, in 1996, it was below 9% (World Bank 2000). This diversity may also serve to indicate that a country's wealth is not straightforwardly related to the educational level of the labour force. Were it not for Greece, a look at figure 4 would in fact suggest that the greater a country's wealth the smaller the share of the highly educated in the labour force.

Bulgaria also has a fairly large number of physicians among its working age population. In 1999, the number of physicians was about 4,842 per million working age people, only slightly less than the 4,907 in 1990. This is the same 1999 level as enjoyed by Hungary or Greece (which seems to have experienced a substantial decline from nearly 6,000 physicians per million of its working age population in 1996 to below 4,900 in 1999). In all other countries of the region the number of physicians per million working age population is considerably lower ranging from about 4,200 in Slovakia to to 3,500 in Germany and as little as 2,700 in Romania, and in Turkey probably only two thirds of that. Set in relation to GDP per capita at purchasing power parity Bulgaria's number of physicians is still more impressive. After all, Greek GDP, in 1999, was nearly three times and Hungarian GDP was still twice the Bulgarian. Romania, with a GDP per capita (PPP) exceeding Bulgaria's by about 20% had less than 40% the share of physicians among its working age population.

While, in Bulgaria, the number of physicians held fairly steady between 1990 and 1996, the same was not true of scientists and engineers in research and development. There were more than 9,000 per million people of working age in Bulgaria in 1990. By 1994, this number was down to only 2,200, less than a quarter the original level. While this decline is staggering, the outcome is less than impressive. By 1994, Bulgaria had reached about the level of other coun-

tries in the area, in particular that of Poland, Austria, Romania, and the Czech Republic, who were all to be found between about 1,900 and 2,400. Hungary had a level of about 1,700. Croatia, Slovakia and Slovenia were doing better ranging between 2,900 and 3,500. Two years later, Bulgaria had nearly caught up with Croatia and Slovakia. Greece had only 1,100 to 1,200 scientists and engineers in research and development per million people of working age (1993), and Turkey much less than that. As with the physicians, it needs to be emphasised that the number of scientists and researchers among Bulgaria's working age population remains high, especially in relation to GDP per capita (PPP), even after the 1990 to 1994 reduction.

There are also data on technicians, and a table is provided below, but as the table shows, the data is too sketchy to really make much of it. For Bulgaria a substantial reduction is discernable between 1990 and 1993 which then evens out and turns into an increase in the second half of the 1990s. As with the scientists and engineers, it appears that the reduction only served to bring the number of technicians to a more realistic and sustainable level more or less in the same league as other, frequently much wealthier countries in the area.

Figure 7: Physicians per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64 in selected countries

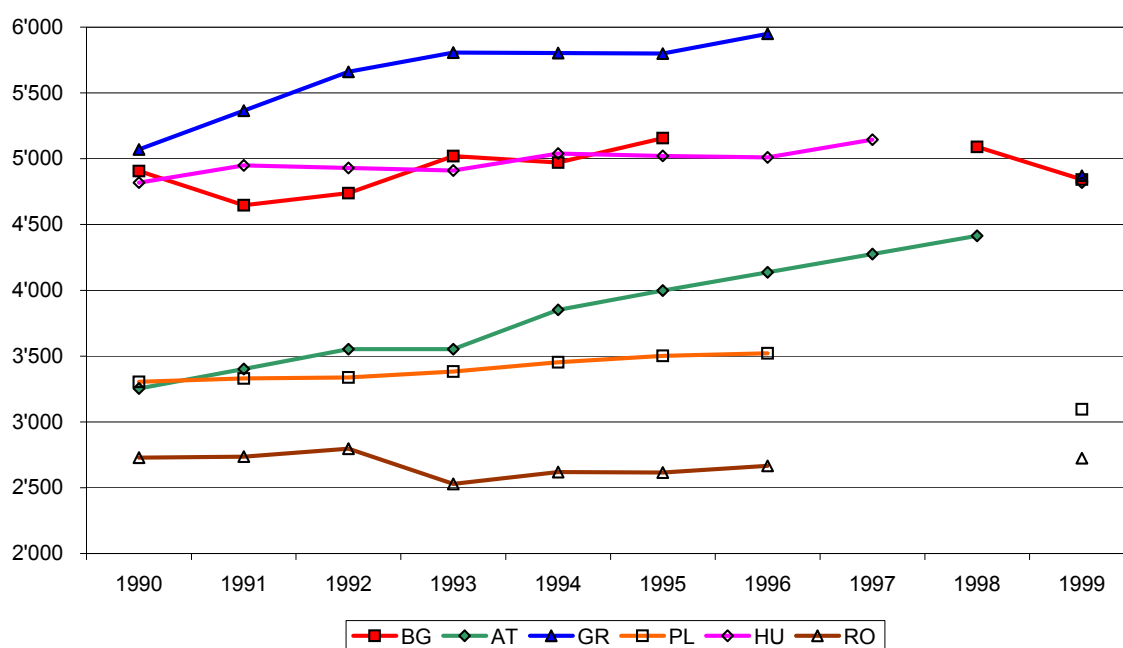


Table 11. Physicians per million people aged 15 to 64

Country	1990	1993	1996	1999	1990-99
Albania	2,222	2,854			
Austria	3,254	3,553	4,137		
Bosnia	2,259	729		3,851	1,592
Bulgaria	4,907	5,020		4,842	-65
Croatia	3,115	2,972		3,130	15
Czech Rep.	4,195	4,094	4,277	4,029	-166
Germany	3,625	4,651	4,952	3,525	-100
Greece	5,071	5,806	5,950	4,872	-199
Hungary	4,818	4,911	5,009	4,818	0
Macedonia	3,478	3,523			
Moldova	5,558	5,535	5,479		
Poland	3,304	3,382	3,522	3,095	-209
Romania	2,729	2,529	2,665	2,724	-4
Slovakia	4,577	4,399		4,243	-334
Slovenia	2,973	2,959		2,942	-31
Turkey	1,482	1,598	1,710		
Yugoslavia	3,007	2,960		3,014	7

Data source: World Bank 2001.

Table 12. Scientists and engineers in R&D (per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Austria	4,710	4,966		2,409				
Bulgaria	9,058	8,594	6,562	4,750	2,203	2,454	2,594	
Croatia	3,014	2,814	2,900	2,938	2,870	2,907	2,808	
Czech Rep.			2,911	1,961	1,906	1,696	1,828	1,776
Germany		4,395	4,235	4,132		4,121		
Greece		905		1,151				
Hungary	2,550	2,101	1,785	1,711	1,699	1,517	1,506	1,616
Moldova						767	646	385
Poland			1,654	1,876	1,983	2,052		
Romania		1,841		2,069				
Slovakia			3,091	2,558	2,909	2,732	2,789	
Slovenia			4,287	2,746	3,466	3,539	3,229	
Turkey	64	342	350	367	381	405	452	
Yugoslavia		1,763						

Data source: World Bank 2001.

Figure 8. GDP per capita at purchasing power parity and physicians per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64, 1999

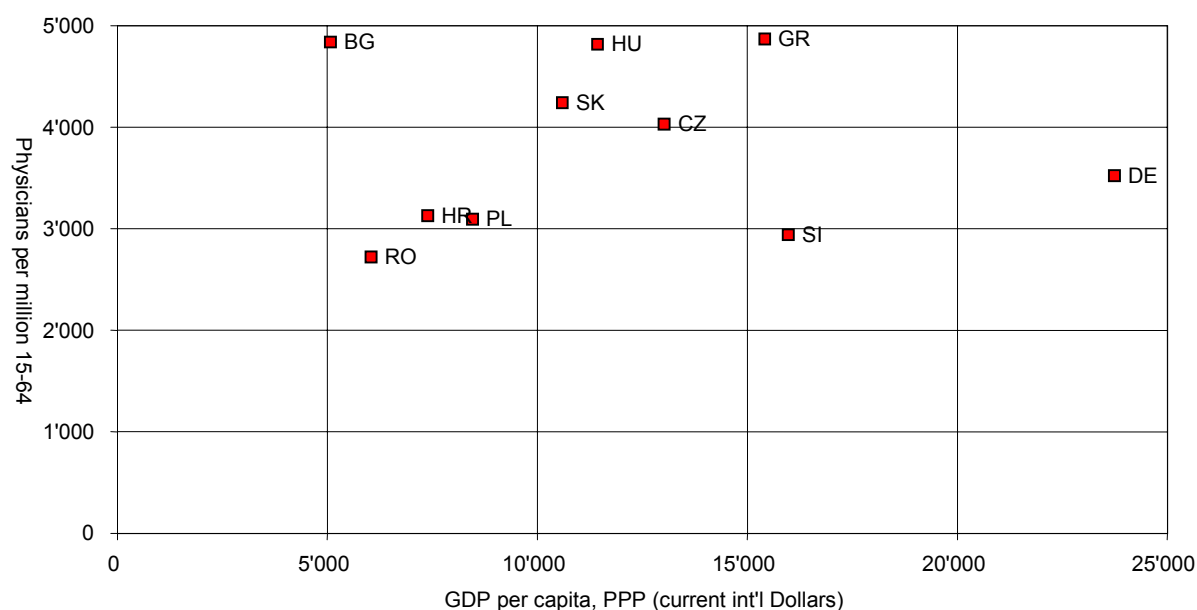


Table 13. Physicians, engineers and scientists per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64, and GDP per capita at purchasing power parity

Country	1995		1999	
	GDP per capita (PPP) Int'l \$	Scientists & Engineers	GDP per capita (PPP) Int'l \$	Physicians
Albania	2,771		3,189	
Austria	22,672		25,089	
Bosnia				3,851
Bulgaria	5,680	2,454	5,071	4,842
Croatia	5,906	2,907	7,387	3,130
Czech Rep.	12,414	1,696	13,018	4,029
Germany	22,029	4,121	23,742	3,525
Greece	13,358		15,414	4,872
Hungary	9,577	1,517	11,430	4,818
Macedonia	4,300	2,007	4,651	
Moldova	2,403	646	2,037	
Poland	6,795	2,052	8,450	3,095
Romania	6,543		6,041	2,724
Slovakia	8,668	2,732	10,591	4,243
Slovenia	13,191	3,539	15,977	2,942
Turkey	5,925	405	6,380	
Yugoslavia	3,007	1,656		3,014

Data source: World Bank 2001.

Figure 9. Engineers and scientists per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64, and GDP per capita at purchasing power parity, 1995

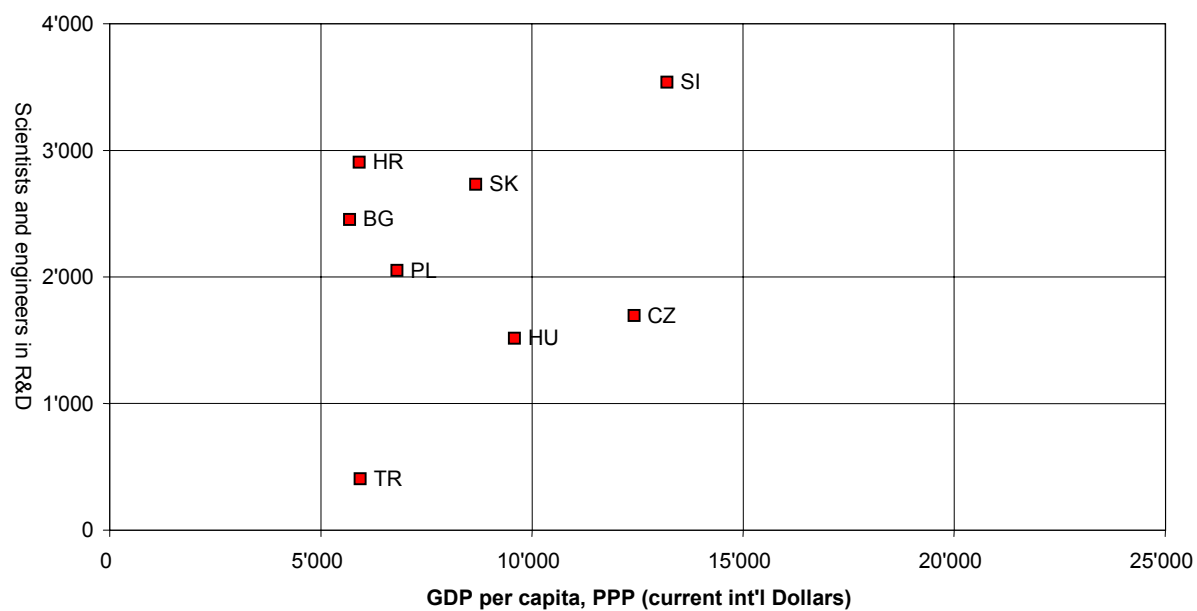


Figure 10.
Scientists and engineers in research and development per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64

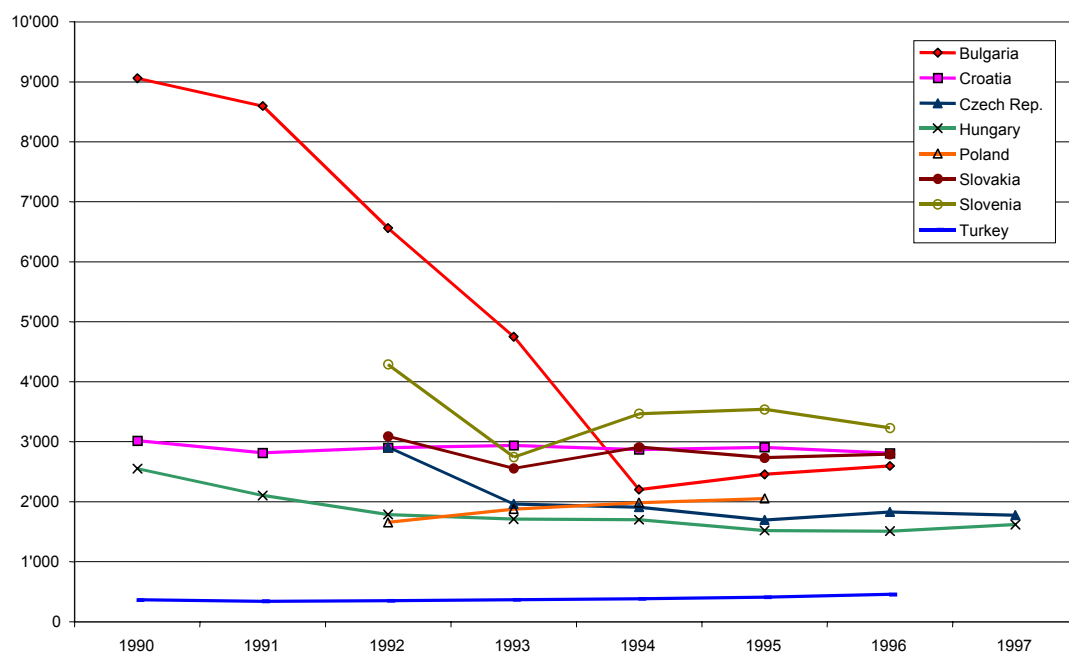


Table 14. Technicians in R&D (per million inhabitants aged 15 to 64)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Austria				1,202			
Bulgaria	2,112	1,973	1,866	1,360	1,339	1,350	1,436
Croatia	1,448	1,281	1,241	1,083	1,002	1,023	1,046
Czech Rep.						1,017	
Germany				2,139			
Greece				467			
Hungary	1,701	1,293	1,038			753	
Moldova					2,992	2,413	2,511
Poland			2,107				
Romania		732			862		
Slovakia			1,622	1,299	1,205	1,149	1,184
Slovenia			3,418	1,715	1,690	1,577	1,473
Yugoslavia		786					

Data source: World Bank 2001.

According to the National Statistical Institute (NSI), between the year-ends of 1985 and 1999 the number of academic employees in Bulgaria decreased by 2,985, or 11.1% of the total. Decomposed by academic degree, important differences appear. The number of PhD holders among the scientific employees did not decrease but increased by 66.5%, from 1,016 in 1985 to 1,581 in 1999. The number of MA holders (or equivalent) also increased but by only 6% from 9,616 to 10,407. On the other hand, the number of academic employees without advanced degree decreased by more than a quarter from 16,288 to 12,053. This is a reduction by 4,235. Quite obviously, all the losses of academic personnel occurred at the lower levels of academic achievement and were partly offset by increases at the upper levels.

More particularly, the NSI's data on academic employment by field of science suggest the reduction of personnel without an advanced degree to have been largely from the technical sciences. They, in turn, seem to have been suffering from vast overstaffing.

It may bear emphasising that the reduction in academic personnel is only that, a reduction, and says nothing about whether these people emigrated or retired or went into other occupations. Given the findings reported earlier, about the low number of highly educated emigrants, emigration seems to have been the least likely cause for leaving the academic system.

Overall, the data make it impossible to evade the conclusion that "brain drain" is far too big a word to describe what has been happening in Bulgaria. There has been a trickle of highly qualified emigrants, no more, and even cumulatively it is not big enough to make any difference at all.

If there is a science problem for the nation, it is the excessively low wages necessitating non-science work on the side which eats into the time devoted to research, and, second, the totally

inadequate funding of research facilities. A third problem appears to be the lack of demand outside Bulgaria for Bulgarian scientists. If there were more demand, more of them would be employed abroad at adequate incomes and with adequate facilities allowing them to make a more viable contribution to world progress and a greater monetary contribution to their family budgets. This would, of course, be desirable.

Figure 11. Academic employment by academic degree, end of year

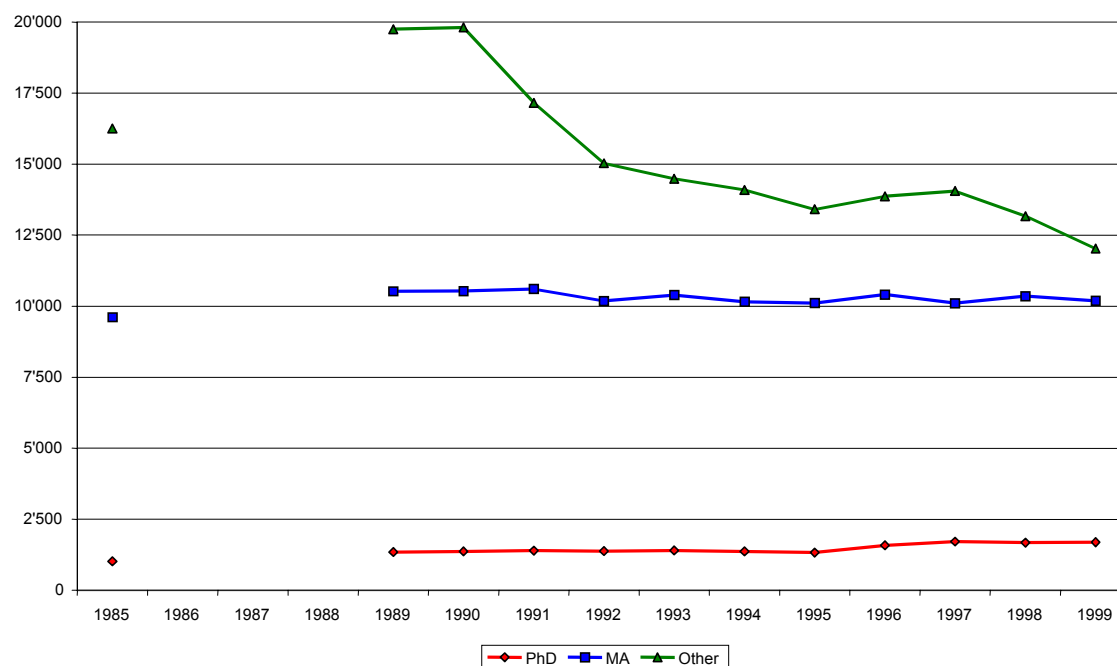


Table 15. Changes in the number of academics by academic degree

Number	PhD	MA	Other	Total
1985	1,016	9,616	16,259	26,891
1990	1,316	10,528	19,810	31,704
1995	1,326	10,112	13,410	24,848
1999	1,692	10,190	12,024	23,906
2000	1,566	10,214	11,035	22,815
Change				
1985-90	350	912	3,551	4,813
1990-95	-40	-416	-6,400	-6,856
1995-99	366	78	-1,386	-942
1985-99	676	574	-4,235	-2,985
Percent change				
1985-90	34.4	9.5	21.8	17.9
1990-95	-2.9	-4.0	-32.3	-21.6
1995-99	27.6	0.8	-10.3	-3.8
1985-99	66.5	6.0	-26.0	-11.1

Data source: Statistical Reference Book of the Republic of Bulgaria.

5. Immigration of highly qualified personnel

In Bulgaria, work permits are issued only for persons with at least a secondary school degree or equivalent and only for work requiring specialised knowledge and skills. They have to be applied for by the employer, and issuing began on 1 September 1994. In this way, the number of work permits gives an indication of the inflow of highly skilled non-Bulgarian personnel, but only an indication because there are many exceptions from the permit requirement. Sometimes persons who are employees for all practical purposes are formally made partners in an investment which, of course, frees them of the permit obligation. As shown in table 17, the number of registered persons of any nationality usually exceeds the number of work permits issued to that nationality quite substantially. However, not all of the difference can be expected to be attributable to permit exemptions. Some of the registered persons not also holding a work permit may be emigrants returning to Bulgaria with a pension and another country's citizenship.

There is continuous and rapid growth in the number of work permits. "The number of [work] permits issued from September 1994 to October 1996 amounted to around 600, of which one fourth were granted to nationals of the United States, followed by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Kingdom, Ukraine and Russia. Work permits are issued only to qualified foreign workers. The main occupations were engineers, senior managers, consultants and teachers" (SOPEMI 1997:82). By 23 November 1997 1,042 work permits had been issued, and by 30 September 2000 1,497 permits had been issued. The largest number of permits went to managers: 261 until late 1997 and 435 until the end of September 2000. They largely originated from Greece, Great Britain and the U.S. In 1997, they were closely followed by instructors, almost all of whom were U.S. American, but by 2000 there was a large difference between the two skill groups. The third largest group are technicians, a quarter each of whom are from Macedonia, Romania and Ukraine. Apparently, 76 permit holders classified as "workers" in 1997 were classified "technicians" in 2000. Engineers, half of them from Russia and Ukraine, come next. The number of permits issued to engineers rose very little between 1997 and 2000. Only a small part of the permits was issued to consultants. Between 1997 and 2000 they were overtaken by sports people, half of them from Yugoslavia and Russia (Anonymous 2000).

In a similar manner, Poland has been experiencing "brain gain" from immigration in the latter half of the 1990s: "Foreigners applying for permanent residence permits in Poland are quite highly educated. Each year the majority had either a secondary education (41 percent) or university education (31.7 percent). The percentage of persons with only a primary education, or (non-secondary) vocational education, oscillated around 11 percent" (Iglicka 2001:13).

The number of work permits issued in Poland varied between 1,500 and almost 4,000 per year. The requirements are not as strict as in Bulgaria. Still, it was noted that towards the end of the 1990s – in contrast to the earlier part of the decade – only very few were issued for less-skilled occupations: "The vast majority of work permits are granted to skilled workers (entrepreneurs, consultants and teachers). The proportion in unskilled employment is declining as the number of consultant positions and other more skilled jobs increases; it fell from 5% in 1997 to 3% in 1998. Furthermore, the number of workers who are self-employed or employ a small number of Polish workers has risen (by nearly 40%). One quarter of the entrepreneurs are Vietnamese, over one quarter of the teachers are from the United Kingdom and 40% of the manual workers (both

skilled and unskilled) are Ukrainian. Senior managers come mainly from four Western countries: Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States” (SOPEMI 2000:238f). Less skilled work appears frequently to be done without state authorisation (SOPEMI 2000:239).

Figure 12: The number of work permits issued since 1994-09-01 by 1997-11-23 and by 2000-09-30

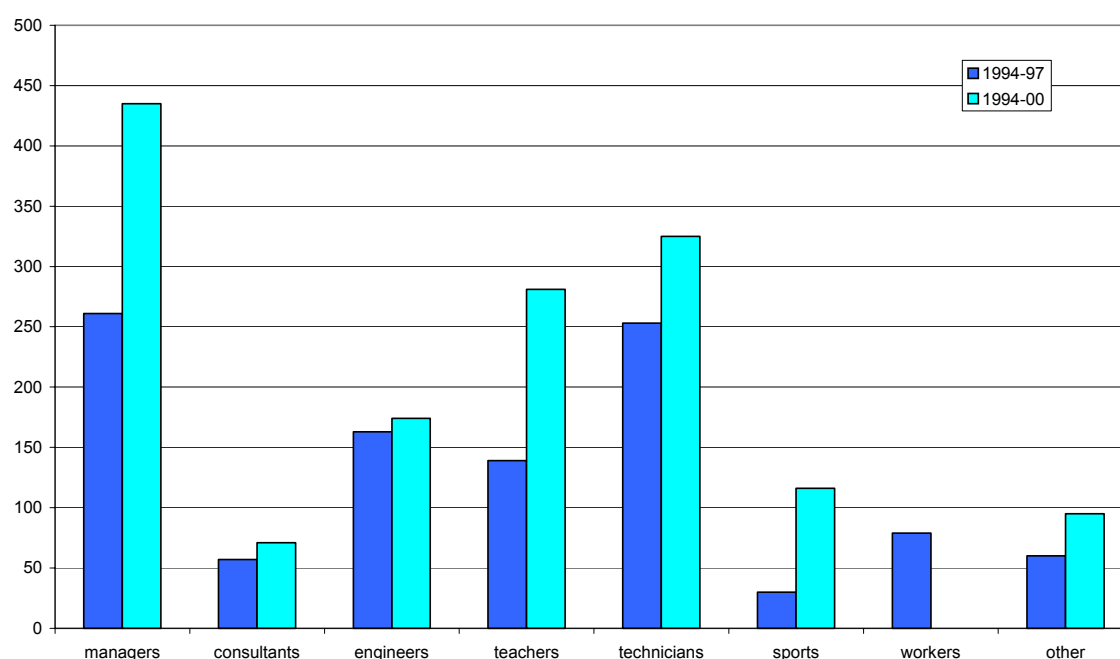


Table 16. The number of work permits issued until 1997-11-23 and until 2000-09-30 by skill class

	1997	2000	change	percent change
Managers	261	435	174	66.7
Consultants	57	71	14	24.6
Engineers	163	174	11	6.7
Technicians	215	281	142	66.0
Instructors	253	325	72	28.5
Sports	33	116	86	260.6
Other	60	95	35	58.3
Total	1,042	1,497	455	43.7

Data source: Anonymous 2001.

Table 17. Non-Bulgarian physical persons registered and the number of work permits issued until 2000-09-30

Country	Registered persons	Work permits	
		Number	Percent of persons
Belgium	138	16	11.6
France	206	73	35.4
Germany	886	78	8.8
Italy	1,421	59	4.2
Netherlands	150	16	10.7
Russia	2,785	95	3.4
Turkey	5,334	54	1.0
Ukraine	1,306	134	10.3
United Kingdom	234	99	42.3

Data source: Anonymous 2001.

Figure 13:
The number of work permits issued since 1994-09-01 as of 1997-11-23 and 2000-09-30 by nationality

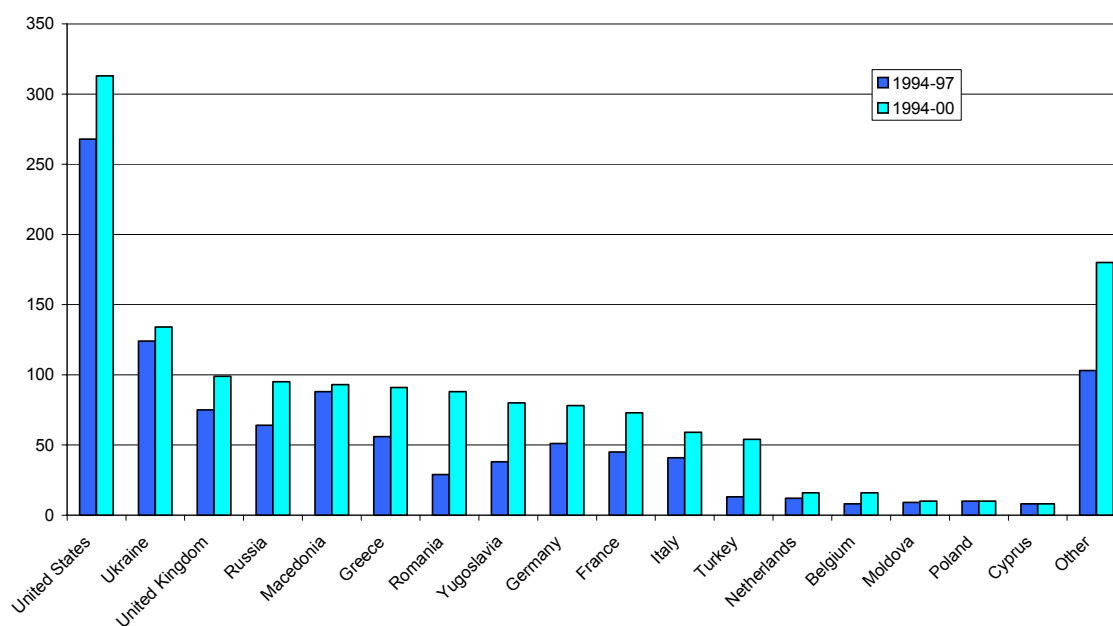
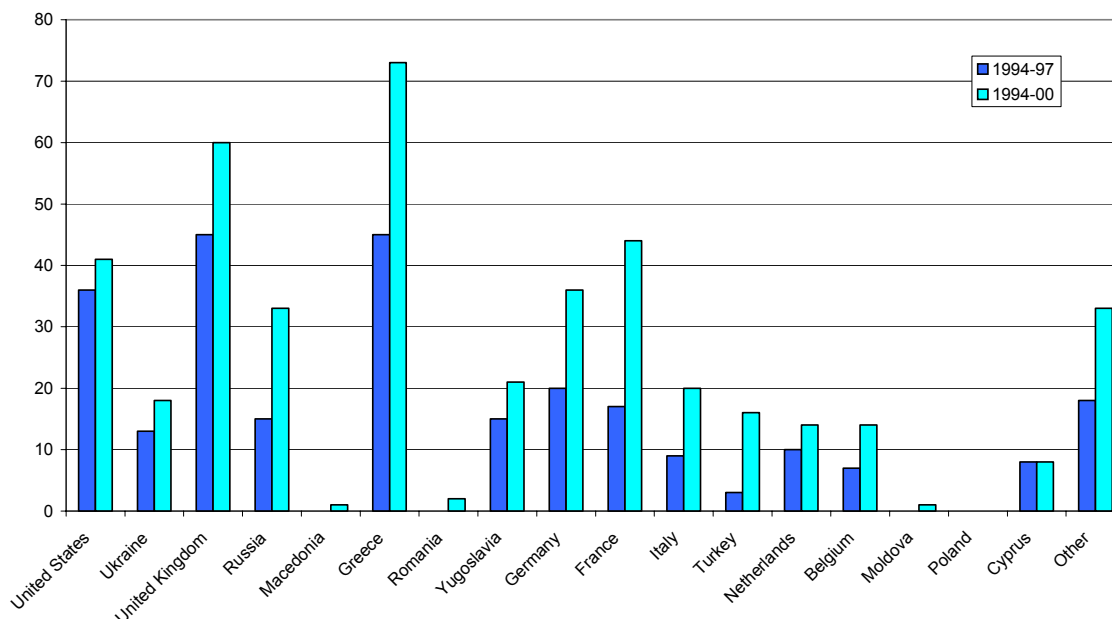


Figure 14: The number of work permits issued to managers since 1994-09-01 as of 1997-11-23 and 2000-09-30 by nationality



6. The direction of emigration

Part of the emigrants from Bulgaria applied for asylum in a transit or in a destination country in the West. To some degree this helps to identify the countries Bulgarians emigrated to, but it must be kept in mind that a large part moved on, or back to Bulgaria, and does not now live in the country of asylum. UNHCR recorded 134,062 applications for asylum by Bulgarian nationals between 1980 and 2000. This is not exactly identical with the number of persons involved in the applications but for our purposes the difference matters little. More than 63 percent of the applications were filed in Germany, and 89 percent in today's European Union plus Switzerland. 83 percent or 111,169 of the 1980 to 2000 total number of applications were made between 1988 and 1994. After 1994 there were a further 20,096 applications. Between 1980 and 1987 there were only 2,797 applications made, 350 per year. If we accept this annual average to have been true over the longer term between 1947 and 1987, then we arrive at an estimate of about 14,000 Bulgarian asylum seekers during that entire period. The total for the period 1947 to 2000 would then be about 145,000.

Also, from the data it is quite evident that the number of applications for asylum is dependent on the receiving country's willingness to accept applications. When, for instance, Austria introduced more stringent requirements in 1992, and Germany in 1998, the number of applications by Bulgarians dropped immediately. This could be due, in part, to Bulgarians choosing more favourable asylum countries, but for the most part the authorities simply refused to accept applications deeming them unfounded. As a consequence, Austria, while it had been the second most important country of asylum for Bulgarians before 1988, and in some years the most important, lost all significance from 1992. Germany, until 1997, was far and away the most important asylum destination for Bulgarians. As the UNHCR noted: "During the 1989-1993

period, some 96,000 Bulgarians applied for asylum in Western Europe, constituting some four percent of all asylum seekers in the area. The annual number of Bulgarian asylum applications increased from 7,000 in 1989 to 34,000 in 1992, after which it fell to some 25,000 in 1993. Bulgarian asylum seekers are highly concentrated in Germany: 78 percent of all Bulgarian claims [in Western Europe] during the 1989-1993 period were submitted in Germany, followed by Sweden (six percent). In 1992 and 1993, 90 percent or more of all Bulgarian asylum applications submitted in Europe were submitted in Germany” (UNHCR 1994). Of the 104,000 world-wide asylum applications during the 1989-1993 period, 75,000 (72%) were made in Germany. Between 1998 and 2000 this was no longer so. Germany’s share in the total world-wide asylum applications by Bulgarians dropped to only 3.8 percent by 2000, half the 1999 share and only slightly more than one quarter the 1998 share or one eighth the 1997 share. Italy, the third most important asylum destination for Bulgarians before 1986, recorded no applications between 1987 and 1989 or in most years since 1996. In neither of these cases can a firm conclusion be drawn that the actual migration of Bulgarians to the respective country declined as much as the asylum figures did. People may have found other ways of entering these countries and may now be residing there either as regular immigrants or clandestinely.

Table 18. Applications for asylum by Bulgarian emigrants

	1947-87	1988-94	1995-00	1947-00
Austria	4,018	4,296	148	8,462
Belgium	431	3,252	4,269	7,952
Czech Rep.	0	2,256	2,504	4,760
Denmark	21	595	86	702
Finland	0	277	44	321
France	1,184	1,661	1,661	4,506
Germany	4,474	78,457	5,699	88,630
Greece	502	195	0	697
Hungary	0	0	61	61
Ireland	0	1	338	339
Italy	2,270	1,087	17	3,374
Netherlands	123	2,008	353	2,484
Norway	21	304	51	376
Poland	0	11	599	610
Portugal	10	34	17	61
Spain	210	1,714	167	2,091
Sweden	0	5,907	106	6,013
Switzerland	810	1,070	422	2,302
UK (cases)	210	1,064	1,565	2,839
Canada	0	3,857	1,176	5,033
USA (cases)	51	3,123	732	3,906
Australia	0	0	81	81
Total	14,335	111,169	20,096	145,600
Total Europe	14,283	104,189	18,107	136,579
EU-14	13,453	100,548	14,470	128,471

Data source: UNHCR. 1947 to 1979 estimated by the author.

EU-14 is the current EU except Luxemburg for which no data were available.

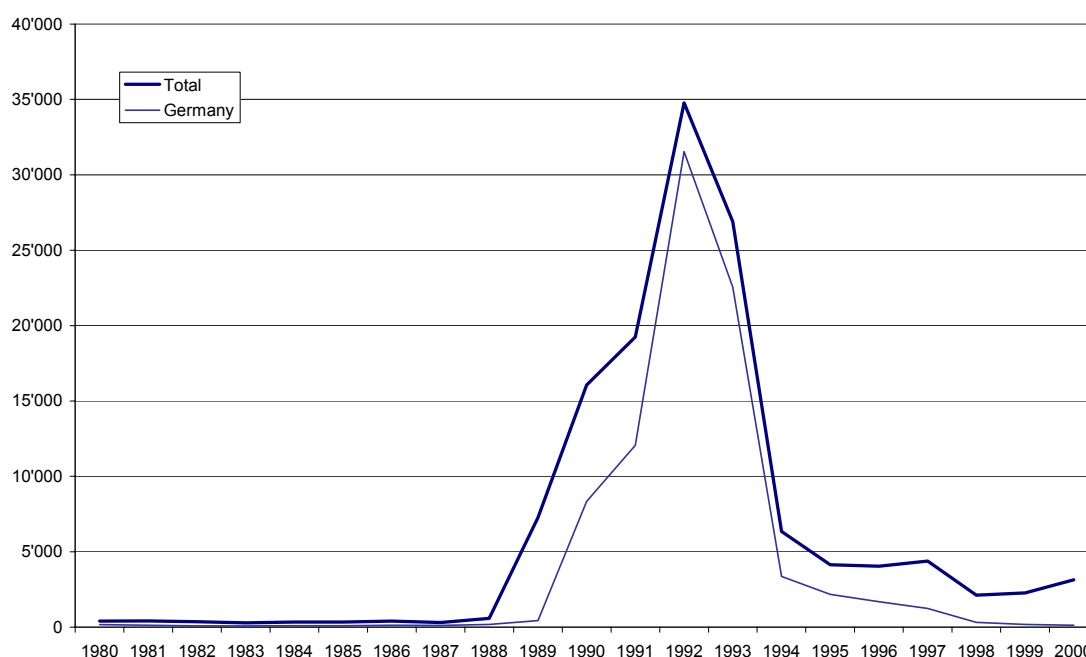
Table 19. The distribution across the top ten 1947-2000 receiving countries of asylum

applications by Bulgarian emigrants, percent

	1980-87	1988-94	1995-00	1947-00
Germany	31.2	70.6	28.4	60.9
Austria	28.0	3.9	0.7	5.8
Belgium	3.0	2.9	21.2	5.5
Sweden	0.0	5.3	0.5	4.1
Canada	0.0	3.5	5.9	3.5
Czech Rep.	0.0	2.0	12.5	3.3
France	8.3	1.5	8.3	3.1
USA (cases)	0.4	2.8	3.6	2.7
Italy	15.8	1.0	0.1	2.3
UK (cases)	1.5	1.0	8.6	2.1
Total	86.7	93.5	81.2	91.1
EU+Switzerland	99.5	91.4	74.1	89.8

Data source: UNHCR. Author's computations. 1947 to 1979 estimated.

Figure 15: Applications for asylum by Bulgarian nationals



As a result, the asylum destinations of Bulgarians became more diverse as the 1990s progressed. Between 1995 and 2000, the EU together with Switzerland received only 74 percent of Bulgarian asylum applications, in contrast to the 99.5 percent during the 1980 to 1987 period. Within the EU, first Britain, then Belgium became important asylum destinations which they had not been before. Outside the EU, first the Czech Republic, then Poland rose to prominence, and Canada and the U.S. also gained a greater share of the asylum applications by Bulgarians. At the

end of the 1990s, asylum applications by Bulgarians rose from 2,125 in 1998 to 3,140 in 2000. Belgium was now far and away the most important asylum country. Its share rose from 22.2% in 1998 to 39.0% in 1999 and to 53.9% in 2000. France, Germany, and Canada were the next three most important asylum countries of Bulgarians in 1998. This has changed very much since then. Canada ranked third in 1999 and in 2000, but in 1999 it was the Czech Republic and Poland that ranked second and fourth, and fourth and second in 2000. As already noted, these shifts reflect legal changes in destination countries at least as much as choices made by Bulgarian emigrants.

It may bear repeating that the country where asylum is applied for is not necessarily the country of final destination. Before 1987, or even 1997, it was often a spring board on to the emigration country of choice. Since then, more and more often, applicants are given short shrift and returned to Bulgaria.

7. Bulgarian citizens living abroad

When looking at Bulgarians abroad, it must be understood at the outset that the demographically based estimate of net migration undertaken above cannot be verified by adding up stocks of Bulgarians recorded in other countries. There are several reasons for this. One is that people who were Bulgarian nationals at the time of emigration may have changed nationality. In many countries they will then no longer be counted as Bulgarians. A second reason is that receiving countries may not be able (or willing) to count persons not in possession of some legal residence status. Usually such unofficial populations are not included in official data, and in most cases even the census reports them only incompletely, if at all. Thirdly, there are very few countries in the world where the number of persons of Bulgarian nationality or born in Bulgaria is known at all. Consequently, not much is known of the size or composition of populations with Bulgarian nationality or origin.

It is often thought that official population figures may not be worth all that much in the face of undocumented immigration. However, few Bulgarians are found to be residing in the European Union without the necessary papers. Apprehensions of undocumented Bulgarian nationals in Austria, for instance, were only 444 in 1999, ranking eleventh among nationalities, up from 179 in 1998 and 301 in 1997. Contrary to the 1997 and 1998 data, the 1999 data include apprehensions when people were leaving the Schengen area at an Austrian border crossing. Therefore, in the 1999 data, persons may be included who had never been resident in Austria but were only transiting after overstaying their visa elsewhere in the Schengen area. This is less likely for the previous years but not impossible. The total number of apprehensions in 1999 was 525, including the 81 Bulgarians who were apprehended either entering Austria clandestinely or assisting others in doing so. This same total was 961 in 2000. While the increase in numbers was substantial, it only moved Bulgaria from 13th place to 12th in the apprehensions ranking.

7.1. Bulgarian citizens in Greece

The Greek authorities, between 1989 and 1998, issued about 33,000 residence permits to Bulgarian nationals. Nearly two thirds of them were issued between 1994 and 1998. Between 1995 and 1998 slightly more than two thirds of the residence permits were issued to women (SOPEMI 1997:111; 2000:193). "Residence permits are valid for one year but may be renewed annually for a period up to five years. After five years of legal residence and employment, a foreigner can request authorisation for family members to enter Greece" (SOPEMI 1997:110). There is some

double counting. How many of the Bulgarian nationals that were issued residence permits in Greece still reside there and how many went back to Bulgaria is unknown.

Based on arrival and departures data the Athens Labour Centre estimated a stock of about 7,000 undocumented Bulgarian nationals in Greece in 1993. This compared with 11,800 Russians, 11,600 Poles, 9,200 Filipinos, 8,400 Romanians, 5,200 Lebanese, 3,900 Iranians, 3,500 Iraqis, 2,700 from the former Yugoslavia, and 2,500 Ethiopians (Markova/Sarris 1997). Of the 100 undocumented Bulgarian workers Markova interviewed in the summer of 1996 in the Athens area, three quarters were female, four fifths were over age 30 (and usually under 50), and one fifth had education exceeding completed secondary school. 34 percent were married but few spouses were in Greece. The majority came from cities in northern Bulgaria. Four fifths had last worked in the Bulgarian public sector, only five percent had never been employed before. A majority, it seems, had last worked as skilled crafts or trades people or in such skilled service occupations as accountant or social worker. About ten percent had been employed in highly skilled occupations and between five and twenty percent in low skilled positions. In Greece, 47 of the 75 females worked either caring for small children or for the elderly, 12 as housekeepers, and 6 as cleaning ladies. Another 6 worked in restaurants and bars, 2 in retail trade and 1 in an office position. Of the 25 males 14 worked in construction related crafts, 4 as craftsmen in manufacturing, 3 in unskilled transportation jobs, and the remaining 4 in a hotel, in agriculture, in retailing, and in an office. 40 said, they found their current or most recent job through an informal employment office, 27 through Bulgarian friends or relatives, 17 by themselves, 14 through Greek friends, 1 through a newspaper, and 1 in some other unspecified way. At the time of the survey, 33 of the 100 respondents had been working in Greece for less than one year (17 for less than half a year), 33 were in their second year, 23 in the third year, and 8 in their fourth year, and 3 had completed at least four years. As shown in table 20, people tend to work in many jobs in a short period of time. Very few are lucky enough to find long-term, acceptable employment.

Table 20. The duration of work experience in Greece and the number of job changes of Bulgarian undocumented migrants in the Athens area, summer 1996

Years worked in Greece	Number of job changes				Total
	0	1-5	6-10	>10	
First year	12	19	1	0	33
Second year	4	25	3	1	33
Third year	2	19	1	1	23
4 th and more	2	7	0	2	11
Total	20	70	5	5	100

Source: Markova/Sarris 1997, table 10, adapted.

Only four out of the 100 were medically insured, one working in a household and three in construction, and for three of the 100 a work permit had been issued at the behest of the employer. 15 of the undocumented had had encounters with the police over their status. Respondents were also asked about problems on the jobs. Around 30 percent of the females as well as the males saw no problems. Hard manual work was an issue for 16% of the males and for 19% of the fe-

males; the employer was a problem for only 8% of the males but for 19% of the females; unbearable working conditions were a complaint for 13% of the females but none of the males; and low pay was complained about by 28% of the males but only 7% of the females. Some of the differences will perhaps be explained by the fact that 38 of the 75 females lived in their employer's house while none of the males did. Hostility by Greeks was a problem for 19% of the females and for 16% of the males, and hostility by other migrants for 7% of the females and 12% of the males. Unspecified other problems were experienced by 11% to 12% of the males and the females. 42 thought they were doing jobs for which there were also Greek applicants, while 39 thought there were not. 19 said, they did not know. 81 believed that Greeks get paid better for the same work, and 10 thought they did not. 35 thought that legal migrants got paid more, but 36 thought they didn't. Half of the 100 mingled preferably with other Bulgarians, 23 did so occasionally, and 27 sought to avoid other Bulgarians.

The 100 respondents gave 196 reasons for leaving Bulgaria, and 140 reasons to come to Greece. For 54 of the 100 a lack of money or insufficient income was the main reason for seeking work abroad while 26 gave reasons associated with problems in the labour market, and 8 gave reasons associated with either legal, political or economic uncertainty. Twelve gave unspecified other reasons. Of the 60 who also gave second reasons for leaving, 29 mentioned money, 16 the labour market and 9 uncertainty. Greece was not necessarily the first choice of destination but often the only one available: For 41 the relative cheapness of reaching Greece was the major reason for going there rather than elsewhere. For 48 job prospects or friends and relatives in Greece were the most important reason. Only five mentioned the higher expected income as the major reason for choosing Greece, while six gave unspecified other reasons. 32 gave a second reason for choosing Greece, and here, at 13 mentions, cheapness was more important than others, while job prospects and friends or relatives ranked second at 8 mentions, and higher expected income was mentioned 7 times. However, 90 planned to stay on in Greece (69 females and 21 males) and only 10 wanted to return home soon. Of the latter, for all four males the reason was dissatisfaction with the incomes they were earning while half of the six females had their family waiting for them.

Only 8 said, they never sent money home, of whom 5 had less than a half year of work experience in Greece. Possibly they had just not been able to send money. 12 said, they sent money sometimes. 80 sent home money regularly, and 60 said, they sent at least half their earnings while another 13 sent more than 40 percent. For 60 the main objective was to help their family at home to survive, while 18 wanted to invest in their children's education, 17 wanted to save to emigrate to another country than Greece, 14 hoped to buy a house, and 11 meant to start a business in Bulgaria.

Out of 369,629 applications in the 1998 regularisation programme 24,859 were made by Bulgarians. Of those, 56.2% were women, and 65.5% applied for a so-called "green card" which, if granted, would enable them to stay in Greece for three years (SOPEMI 2000:194). Although it was expected that "the ratification and entry into force of the recently signed bilateral agreement with Greece to facilitate the seasonal employment of Bulgarian workers should lead to a normalisation of emigration flows towards Greece" (SOPEMI 1999:116), Nicholas Glytsos suggested at the ILO Workshop on "The Return of Highly Qualified Emigrants to Bulgaria", that between 40,000 and 45,000 Bulgarians may have been living in Greece in 2000 without authorisation to do so. As evident from the table above, their stays, so far, tend to be rather brief. Consequently, it is unclear how many of them are included in the net emigration figures reported

in chapter 2, since their absence may not have been recorded in the Bulgarian population estimates. A new regularisation programme was initiated in 2001.

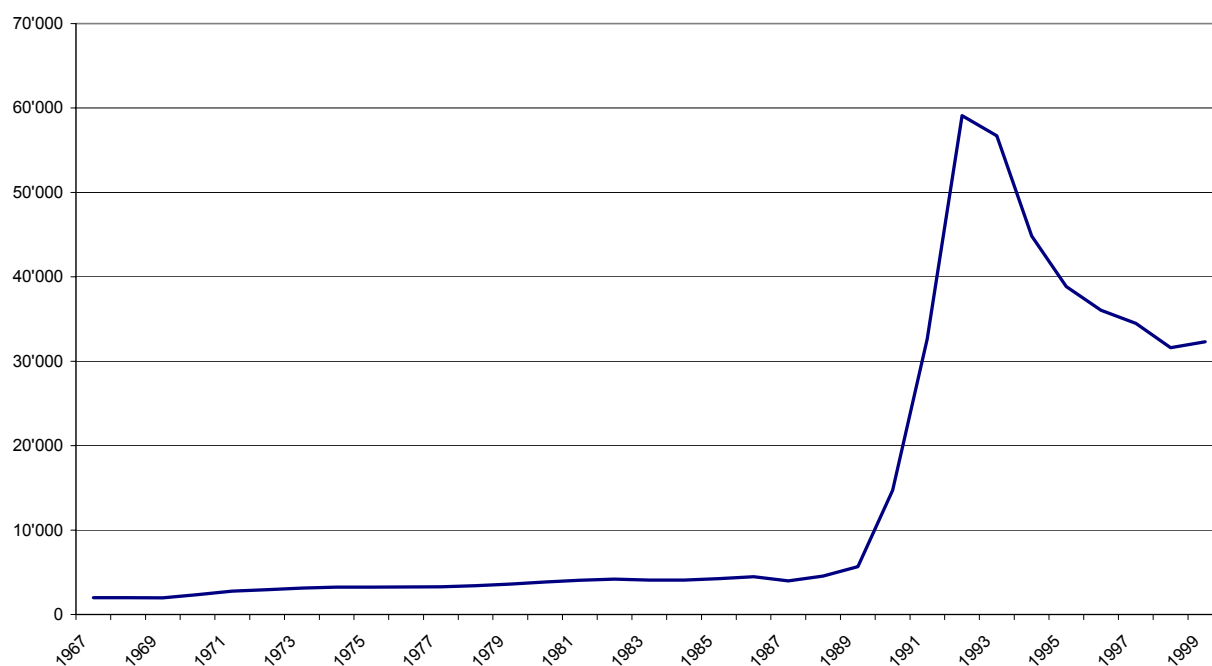
7.2. Bulgarian citizens in Germany

As noted when reporting asylum data, Germany was an important destination country for emigrants from Bulgaria. There are fairly complete German migration flow data for the period since 1988, and stock data reaching back to the 1960s. They distinguish inflows to Germany and outflows, but the latter are probably less complete than the former, and the population figures in table 21 may therefore be inflated.

After a fairly steady long-term increase, western Germany recorded a stock of 4,548 Bulgarians in 1988. Including, from 1991, any Bulgarians that may have been living in the former GDR, the number peaked at 59,094 at the end of 1992, and declined to about 32,000 at the end of 1999 (Lederer 1997:49f and personal communication). This is about one sixth of the roughly 190,000 Bulgarian-born emigrants thought currently to be living abroad. It must be remembered, that emigration was estimated regardless of the legal status currently held in the destination country. Emigrants may have become German nationals, or they may be staying there invisible to the German authorities. In neither case would they be included in the German data on resident Bulgarians. On the other hand, there may be several thousand overstaying their visa who may well be included in the German figures given that they are not permit-based but registration-based. People overstaying the visa have little incentive to have themselves removed from the population register when their visa runs out, but they do have incentives to remain registered. It is difficult to tell, therefore, how severely an undercount the 32,000 Bulgarian nationals are. It may even be an overcount because people could have given up residence in Germany without deregistering.

Between 1995 and 1999 the number of women among the Bulgarian nationals in Germany was steady at about 14,000 while the number of men declined from 24,000 to about 18,000 (Statistische Bundesanstalt). Among them there were 1,742 Bulgarian students in Germany in academic year 1997-98 (Beauftragte 1999:39) and 2,291 a year later (Beauftragte 2000b:41). In western Germany there had been only 1,116 students during the winter term 1994.

As can be seen from table 21, inflows to Germany from Bulgaria peaked in 1992 and 1993. Until 1993, a large share of the Bulgarians arriving in Germany applied for asylum. This was no longer true from 1994 onward. Asylum seekers were about one seventh of the inflows of Bulgarians in 1995 and 1996, about one ninth in 1997, and only about 3% in 1998. Applications peaked in 1992 at 31,540. In 1988 there had only been 177, and in 1998 there were 172 asylum applications (Lederer 1997:275f, Lederer et al. 1999:68). Evidently, as elsewhere in the formerly communist countries, the political uncertainties of the early transition years drove most of the emigration. Economic differences, so far, seem of little consequence for east-west migration in Europe.

Figure 16: Bulgarian nationals resident in Germany, 1967 to 1999**Table 21. Bulgarian nationals in Germany, and migration between Bulgaria and Germany, thousands**

	Bulgarian nationals			stock	Bulgaria			Asylum applications
	in	out	net		from	to	net	
1988				4.6				0.2
1989				5.7				0.4
1990				14.7	11.2	2.0	9.2	8.3
1991				32.6	17.4	3.6	13.9	12.1
1992	31.4	10.8	20.6	59.1	31.5	10.9	20.6	31.5
1993	27.2	34.9	-7.6	56.7	27.4	35.0	-7.7	22.6
1994	10.4	17.8	-7.5	44.9	10.5	18.0	-7.5	3.4
1995	8.0	10.3	-2.3	38.9	8.2	10.5	-2.3	1.2
1996	6.3	7.0	-0.7	36.1	6.4	7.1	-0.6	0.9
1997	6.3	6.3	0.1	34.6	6.5	6.4	0.1	0.8
1998	5.2	4.8	0.4	31.6	5.3	4.9	0.5	0.2
1999				32.3				
Sum	94.9	91.9	3.0		124.4	98.2	26.2	

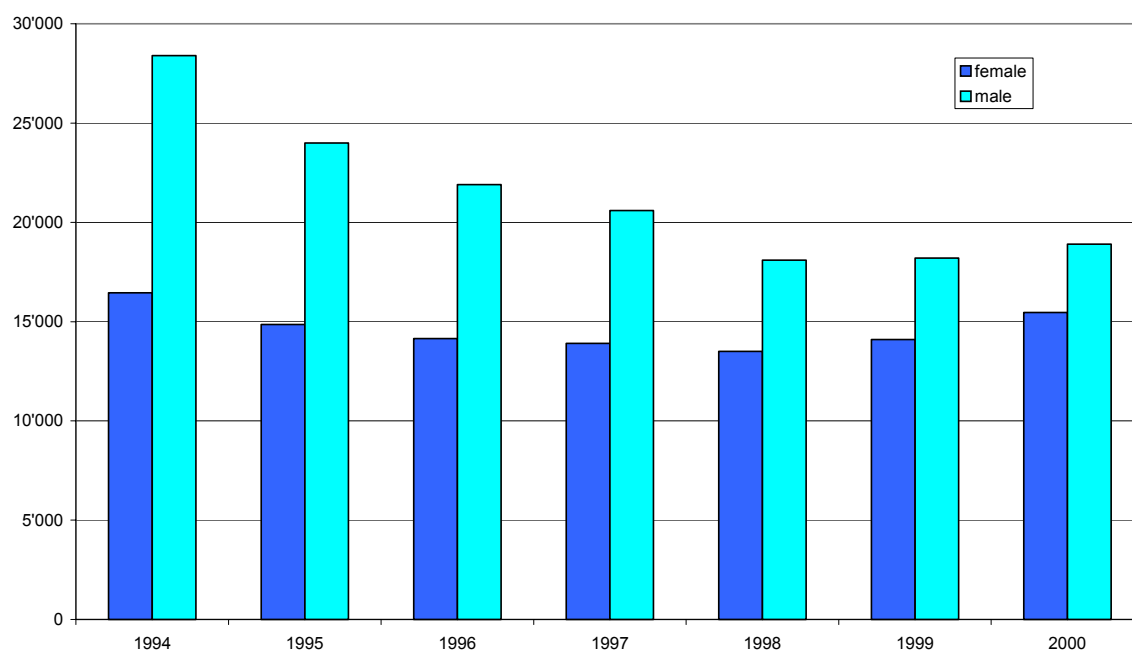
Data source: SOPEMI 1999:271, 277, 281; Lederer 1997:49f, 275f; Lederer et al. 1999:58-60, 68; Lederer – personal communication.

The inflows to Germany were followed by an exodus from Germany (table 21, figure 18). The difference between inflows to Germany and outflows from Germany ('net' columns in table 21) was greatest in 1992, when the inflows exceeded the outflows by more than 20,000. Between 1993 and 1996 the outflows were greater than the inflows, resulting in a substantial decline in the population of Bulgarian nationals. The net outflows were almost the same size in 1993 and 1994, and fell off after that. From 1997, the balance turned slightly to Germany's favour again. Over the period 1990 to 1998 about 123,000 Bulgarians took up residence in Germany and about 97,000 returned to Bulgaria. The net loss of population to Germany was a mere 26,000. Assuming that the entire 26,000 were highly trained – not a plausible assumption – their return to Bulgaria would add a mere 3.2% of the labour force with tertiary education.

The lag between inflows to and outflows from Germany seems to have narrowed during the first half of the 1990s (figure 18). The 1992 returns to Bulgaria seem to be linked to the inflows of 1990, i.e. a lag of two years, while the returns of 1995 seem to be linked to the inflows of 1994, i.e. a lag of only one year. In fact, if the inflows of 1990 are matched with the outflows of 1992, the 1991 and 1992 inflows together to the outflows of 1993, and the inflows from 1993 to 1997 to the outflows one year later, a remarkable correlation coefficient of $r=0.99$ is obtained. In other words, it was in 1993 that the lag narrowed from two years to one. This may indicate that the emigration driven by political uncertainty ended in 1993 to be succeeded by much lower levels of economic migration. The latter, apparently, is almost wholly short-term, i.e. for about one year.

Can this be accounted for by pointing to short-term labour programmes? Not at all. "In 1991 and 1992, Bulgaria concluded with Germany several bilateral agreements relating to the employment of Bulgarian nationals (essentially workers seconded from Bulgarian enterprises or workers in the hotel and catering sector), and to their vocational and linguistic training. Fewer than 2,000 Bulgarian workers benefited from these agreements in 1997 and 1998, and the number of those taking advantage of them is constantly falling" (SOPEMI 1999:116). These agreements cover seasonal employment for up to three months, and guestworker employment of persons aged between 18 and 40 for up to 18 months (once during a lifetime) with a training component. The latter programme had about 300 annual participants in the mid-1990s – less than one third of the annual quota of 1,000. The former went from 70 annually in 1993 and 1994 to about 200 in 1996 to 1998 and 151 in 1999. All of these figures relate to formal placements, and it is unclear how many of the placements were subsequently really filled. An additional programme, operational since 1991, permits firms to bring their own workers to Germany for up to three years. The firms can be subsidiaries of German companies. The number of Bulgarian participants varied greatly. On annual average – this is a stock figure now rather than a flow – there were 365 Bulgarians employed in Germany in this way in 1991 and 1,968 in 1992 when in both years the ceiling was 4,000. The 1993 ceiling of 3,850 was almost exhausted when there were 3,802 employees. Afterwards the ceiling and the number shrank to stand at 1,690 and 989, respectively, in 1996. They were 1,610 and 1,229, respectively, in 1997, and 800 and 688 in 1998 (Lederer 1997:352, 255, 258; Lederer et al. 1999:75f; Werner 1996, 2001).

Figure 17: Bulgarian nationals in Germany, 1994 to 1999



Above, the role of political uncertainty in motivating migration during the early phase of transition was noted. It would merit greater attention in all the formerly communist countries, since its implications for extrapolating future migration from past experience, as is commonly done, are potentially large.

The 1999 data on inflows and outflows of Bulgarian nationals were broken down by five broad age groups: below 18, 18 to below 25, 25 to below 50, 50 to below 65, 65 and older. The second of the five we would expect to feature prominently among migrants. This is the age group comprising students, au pairs, young workers who are mobile because they do not yet have a family and civic responsibilities or feel a need to be mobile exactly because they have a family and are in desperate need of a greater income. We computed a migration frequency for each age group by dividing the number of migrants by the number of years in each age group. The age group 65 and older was assumed to be composed of 15 years, i.e. persons aged 65 to 79. The results from this exercise can be seen in the next three charts. The first of the three shows the frequency of immigration to Germany in 1999 per year of age for each of the five age groups and by gender. For both sexes together, the pattern meets conventional expectations. The frequency distribution among the women is also as expected: little migration while they are below age, much migration during early adulthood which then falls off and tapers out as one moves up the age brackets. The male immigration does not quite conform to this pattern. For one thing, the age group 25 to 50 can be seen to be more likely to immigrate to Germany than the 18 to 25 age group, and secondly the males in the 18 to 25 age groups are substantially outnumbered by the females. The reasons are not known. A demographic cause is unlikely. Temporary work programmes have been too insubstantial to serve as a likely explanation, although, as the chart shows, the number of migrants per year of age are generally low. More likely, the unusually low number of 18 to 25 year old males is due to this category of persons being least likely to be given a visa for Germany.

Figure 18: Inflows from Bulgaria and outflows to Bulgaria, Germany, 1990 to 1998

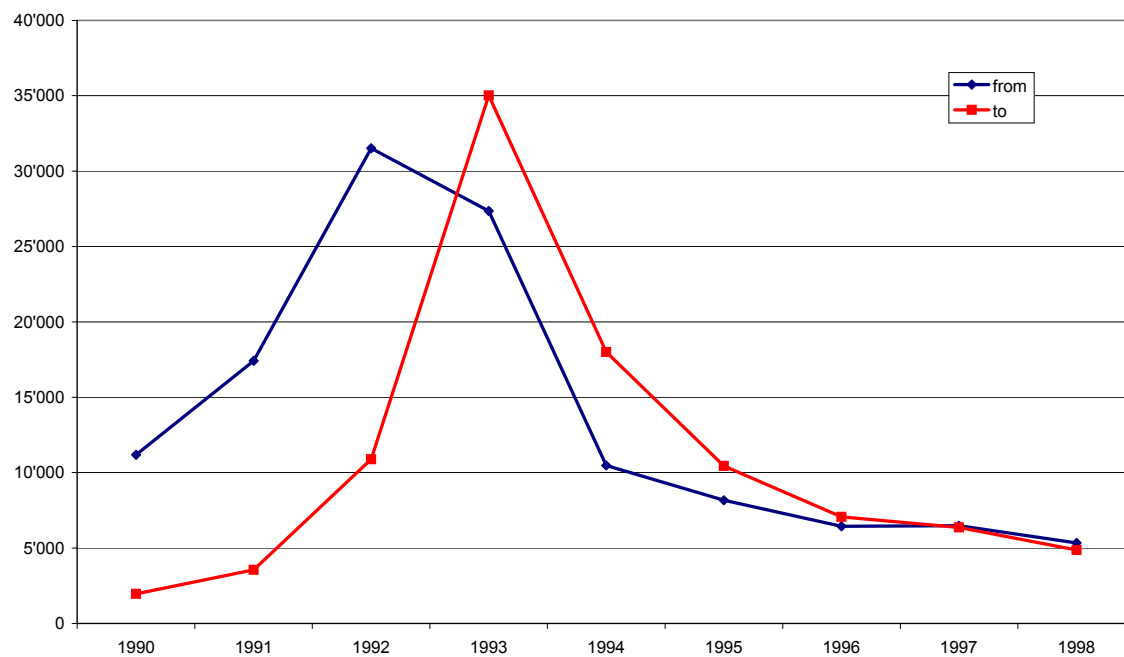


Figure 19: The immigration frequency of Bulgarians by age group to Germany in 1999

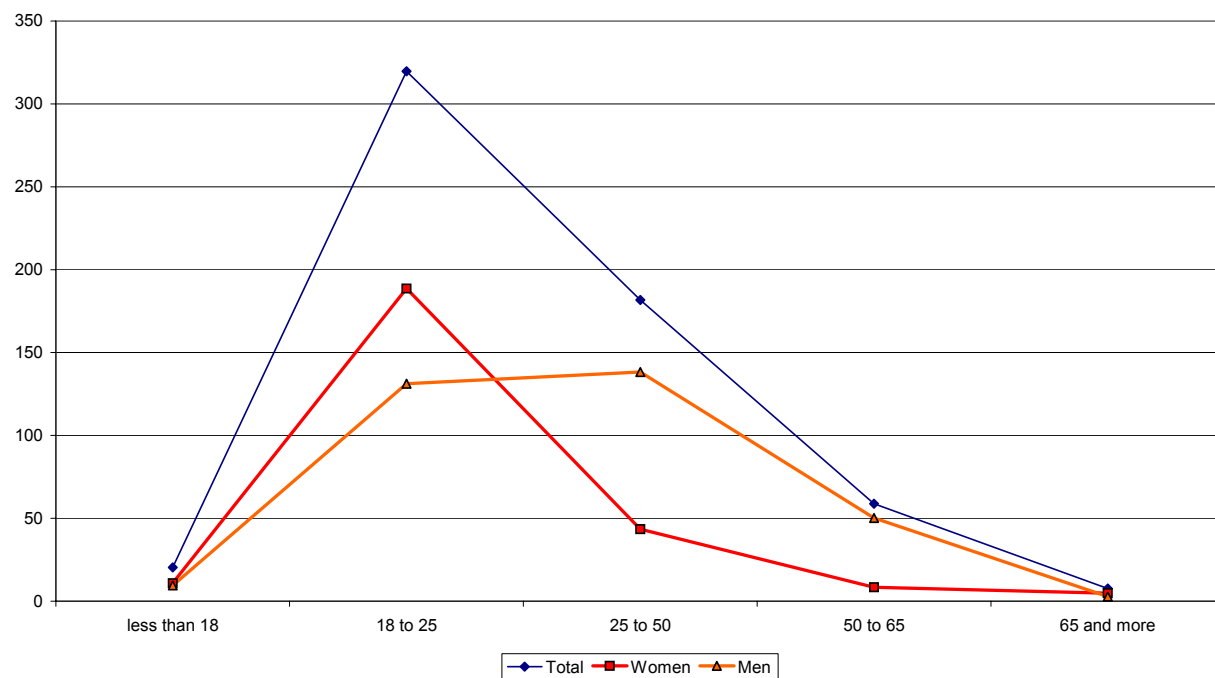
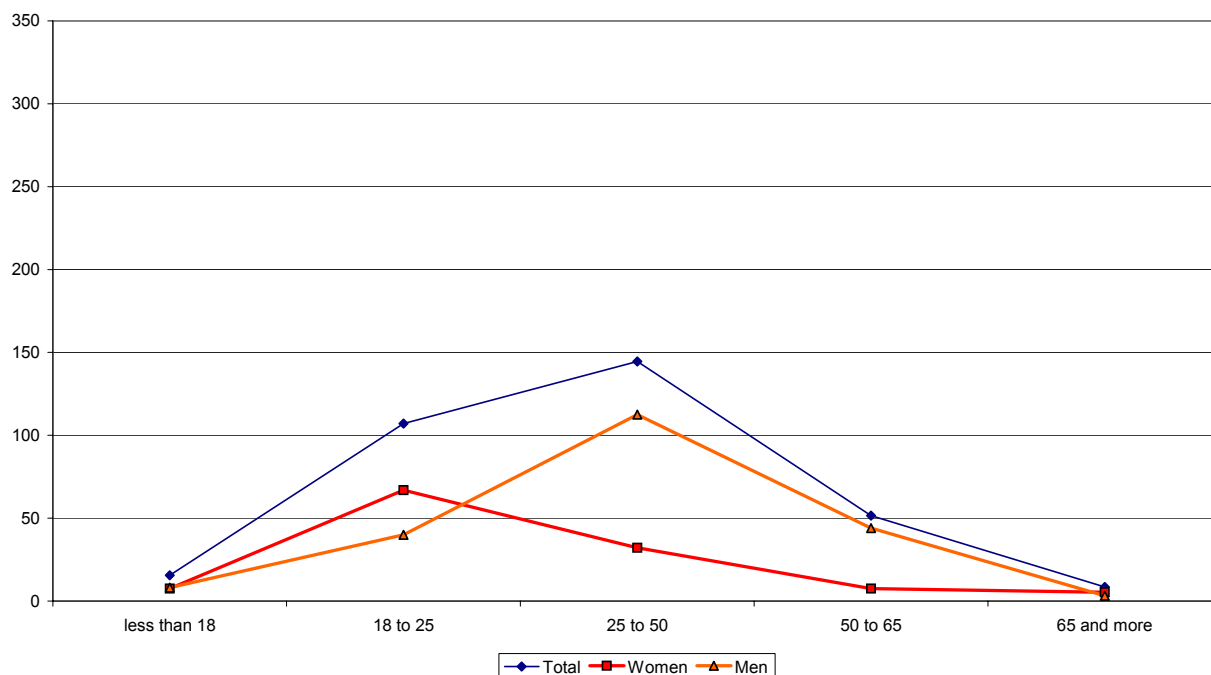


Figure 20: The emigration frequency of Bulgarians by age group from Germany in 1999

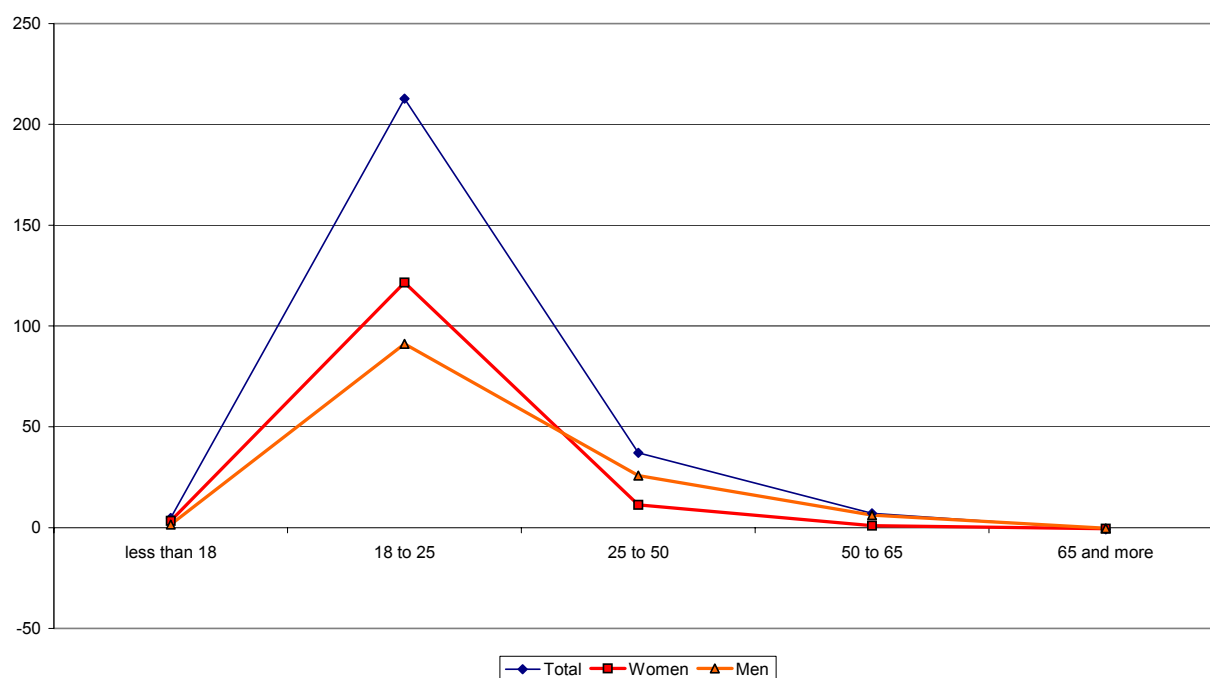


The second chart exhibits the emigration frequency pattern. For easy comparison it is scaled the same as the immigration chart. Values are obviously much lower. Among males the dominance of the 25 to 50 age group is more pronounced than in the immigration chart, and as a result the emigration frequency for both sexes together also peaks in that age group.

The final of the three images shows the frequency distribution of the net immigration to Germany. As can be seen, the difference between the immigration frequency and the emigration frequency is greatest in the early adult age bracket (18 to 25) while it is very small before that and declines rapidly after that. Above 65 a small negative value is observed, i.e. there was more emigration from Germany than immigration to it. In other words, at least in 1999, it was the early adult age group that contributed far and away the most to the growth of the stock of Bulgarian citizens in Germany.

According to Federal Statistical Office data, in 1997 only 12.9% of the Bulgarian nationals in Germany were employed in jobs paying more than DEM 630 (about Euro 315) per month, in 1998 only 14.4%. Taking into account the non-working students makes little difference for these meagre shares: They are then 13.5% and 15.4%, respectively.

Figure 21: The net migration frequency by age group of Bulgarians to Germany in 1999



7.3. Bulgarian citizens in Switzerland

Switzerland recorded inflows into the population register of only 2,379 Bulgarian nationals over the entire eleven-year period from 1988 to 1998. During the same period 1,117 deregistered in Switzerland. Switzerland's net population gain from the immigration of Bulgarian nationals was only 1,262 persons. No stock figures were available. Over the period, net gains of Bulgarian nationals have been rising gradually. This was due almost entirely to increasing immigration, while the number of Bulgarians leaving Switzerland has been rising only very slowly and intermittently. Short-term labour or training programmes have been insignificant: "In 1995, Bulgaria concluded a bilateral agreement with Switzerland relating to the exchange of apprentices, but only 11 Bulgarian apprentices have so far benefited" (SOPMI 1999:116).

Table 22. Immigration and emigration of Bulgarian nationals in Switzerland

Year	Migration			Asylum applications
	in	out	net	
1988	126	73	53	30
1989	150	106	44	90
1990	169	100	69	681
1991	191	77	114	217
1992	252	118	134	27
1993	247	108	139	25

1994	224	114	110	0
1995	241	107	134	0
1996	228	102	126	25
1997	257	91	166	118
1998	294	121	173	155
1999				66
2000				58
1988-98	2,379	1,117	1,262	1,368

Data source: Swiss Statistical Office; UNHCR.

7.4. Bulgarian citizens in Austria

For Austria, detailed migration data based on the population register are available only from 1996. The statistics pertain to persons taking their main residence in Austria. They show a net immigration of 1,251 Bulgarians between 1996 and 2000 with a discernable upward tendency. The tendency was due in some years to receding return migration to Bulgaria and in others to increased immigration from there.

Between 1980 and 1999 Austria received 5,228 Bulgarian asylum seekers, the bulk of them, 3,759, between 1989 and 1991. Still, at the time of the census, in May 1991, there was a Bulgarian resident population of only 2,923, less than 500 in excess of the number of asylum applications of 1989 and 1990. Several reasons are likely to have contributed to this low number: Recent arrivals may not have been regarded a part of the resident population; some may have moved on (but only 666 had done so during the entire period from 1980 to 1990 assisted by IOM, and only 23 and 270, respectively, in 1989 and 1990; so the total number of onward migrants was probably not great); most pre-1985 immigrants from Bulgaria will have been naturalised by 1991 (see below).

Table 23. Migration of Bulgarian nationals into and out of Austria, 1996 to 1999

Year	Migration			Asylum applications
	in	out	net	
1996	566	387	179	25
1997	645	451	194	42
1998	661	377	284	16
1999	644	366	278	25
2000	686	370	316	22
Total	3,202	1,951	1,251	130

Data source: Statistik Austria. Earlier data are not available.

According to embassy guesses there were about 6,000 Bulgarian nationals living in Austria in the first half of 2001. This included about 2,300 students.

We saw that in Germany in recent years the employment of Bulgarian nationals was extremely low. In Austria, at the time of the 1991 census, close to 37% of the Bulgarians enumerated were in the labour force. Some of them will have been unemployed, but as unemployment was generally low this would also have been true of the Bulgarian nationals. Of the working age Bulgarians, 45% were in the labour force, 41% among the women, 47% among the men. This was much lower than the labour force participation rate of the overall population. The working age labour force participation rate of Austrian nationals was 72.1% (women: 62.7%; men: 80.8%) and that of non-Austrian nationals 75.8% (women: 62.7%; men: 80.8%).

Table 24. Bulgarian nationals in Austria by age group, census, May 1991

Age group	Resident population			Labour force participation rate		
	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
Below 15	570	266	304			
15-19	198	81	117	21.2	25.9	17.9
20-24	588	232	356	31.5	36.6	28.1
25-29	660	213	447	40.2	40.8	39.8
30-34	614	218	396	50.7	40.8	56.1
35-39	379	137	242	55.4	51.1	57.9
40-44	251	96	155	63.7	50.0	72.3
45-49	114	47	67	65.8	42.6	82.1
50-54	59	21	38	66.1	57.1	71.1
55-59	38	22	16	42.1	31.8	56.3
60-64	36	14	22	33.3	0	54.5
65-69	29	14	15	10.3	7.1	13.3
70-74	12	9	3			
75+	34	19	15			
15-59/64	2,923	1,067	1,856	45.0	41.1	47.2
Total	3,582	1,389	2,193	36.8	31.7	40.0

Data source: Statistik Austria.

Employment data on Bulgarian nationals, excluding Convention refugees, are available from 1991. They show employment to have peaked in 1992 at an annual average of 1,663, up from 1,407 a year earlier. Since then, the number has declined to only 1,128 in 2000. The decline may in part be an artifact of official record keeping and ongoing legal changes (as the relevant law was changed twenty times between 1989 and 1998). The reductions since 1994 can be attributed to the successive exclusion of spouses and children of Austrian nationals from the statistics, to naturalisations, and to some degree, perhaps, to outflows from Austria.

In 1991, almost all Bulgarians were employed on an “employment permit”. This indicates that their employment in Austria was very recent, less than one year, because more than 12 months of employment during the most recent 14 months creates an entitlement to a “work permit” which itself is valid for two years. There is a very strong incentive for immigrants to apply for a “work permit” as soon as they can, since it provides much greater security and much easier

access to further or new employment than an “employment permit”. Consequently, the employment of Bulgarians holding a “work permit” rose rapidly between 1992 and 1994 and largely in consonance with the decline in “employment permits”. By 1994, having accumulated five years of employment, they became entitled to a “licence”, and, indeed, from 1995 the employment of Bulgarian “licence” holders rose fast while the employment of “work permit” holders went into decline. This decline, however, was considerably faster than the rise in “licence” employment pointing to naturalisation as a likely cause of the attrition in the employment of Bulgarians.

Figure 22: Bulgarian nationals employed in Austria, annual averages, excluding Convention refugees

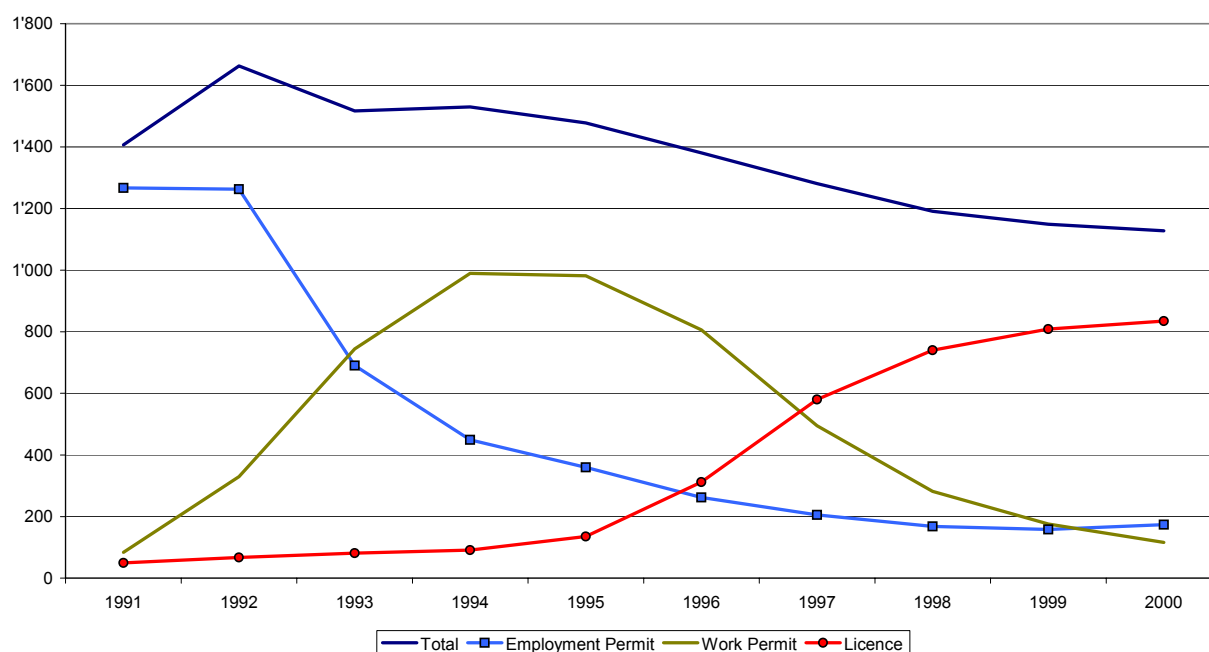


Table 25. Bulgarian nationals employed in Austria, annual averages, excluding Convention refugees

	Total	Employment Permit	Work Permit	Licence	Other
1991	1,407	1,267	84	49	7
1992	1,663	1,263	330	67	3
1993	1,517	690	744	81	2
1994	1,530	449	989	91	1
1995	1,478	360	982	135	1
1996	1,381	262	806	312	1
1997	1,281	205	495	580	1
1998	1,191	168	282	740	1
1999	1,149	158	176	809	6
2000	1,128	174	116	835	3

Source: Public Employment Service (AMS).

The female share in Bulgarian non-refugee employment in Austria peaked in 1995 at 40 percent. It had risen from 35 percent in 1992 and has since declined to slightly more than 38 percent. Until 1995 the share of licence holders was greater among female than among male employees, although it was below 10 percent among both sexes. When it started to rise, it rose much faster among the males, i.e. to more than a quarter in 1996, more than half in 1997, more than two thirds in 1998, and more than three quarters in 1999. Among the female employees the share of licence holders, by 1999, had risen to 62 percent.

While Germany and Switzerland are extremely hesitant to naturalise the same is not true of Austria. Between 1981 and 2000 there were 2,330 naturalisations of Bulgarians, more than half of them, 1,211, resident in Vienna at the time of naturalisation. Until 1988 the annual number oscillated between 22 and 59, around an average of 44. Over the next five years, 1989 to 1993, 51 and 73 were the lower and the upper bounds and the average was 63. From 1994 naturalisations of Bulgarians skyrocketed. In the 1994 to 2000 period the average was 237 per year with a low of 131 (1995) and a high of 385 (2000). It should be noted that the timing of the rise in naturalisations coincides with the decline in employment of Bulgarian nationals. It seems likely, therefore, that the Bulgarian immigrants remained employed, only they were now being recorded as Austrians. It should also be noted that the rise in naturalisations coincided with the rise in Bulgarian nationals being employed on a "licence" indicating that an increasing number had been living and working in Austria for at least five years. Four years of continuous residence is an important threshold in Austrian citizenship law.

For the period 1984 to 1996 more detailed data on naturalisation are available. They show that Bulgarians, if they naturalised, tended to do so quickly. There was a total of 1,006 naturalisations of Bulgarians. Of these, 187 had been granted asylum and, together with a further 162 possessing valued skills or having shown special accomplishments, were naturalised before completing the standard ten years residence requirement. Another 199 were naturalised as spouses of Austrian nationals, also before completing the ten years. 130 were naturalised as spouses and 224 as children of other persons being naturalised. Another 19 were naturalised as the children of previously naturalised Bulgarians. Only 68 were naturalised under the standard procedure requiring ten years of continuous residence, and nine received Austrian citizenship after more than 30 years of continuous residence in the country. Altogether, 55% of the naturalisations of Bulgarians are certain and another 30% are likely to have taken place after less than ten years of residence.

Austria, similar in population size to Bulgaria, has about 364,000 of its nationals abroad, half of them in Germany, and many of them likely to be highly educated and trained (Ladstätter/Pinc 1999). Our figure of about 190,000 Bulgarian emigrants outside Turkey is small by comparison, especially since it includes the emigrants naturalised abroad while the Austrian figure did not. Of course, Austria has had open borders since 1945 and Germany as a nearby magnet.

7.5. Bulgarian citizens in Belgium

Belgium, at the end of 1997, recorded a population of about 800 Bulgarian citizens (SOPEMI 1999:61) and the same number at the end of 1998 (SOPEMI 2000:66). This unchanged figure does not include refugees because Belgium cannot or does not break down the refugee population by nationality. During the year in question, 471 applications for asylum were made by Bulgarian citizens. This was 22.2 percent of the worldwide asylum applications by Bulgarians in

that year, and the largest percentage in any country. Belgium's share, in 1999, rose to 39.0 percent (887 applications) and to 53.9 percent (1,693 applications) in 2000. Overall, between 1980 and 2000, 7,605 asylum applications were made by Bulgarians.

The French census of 1990 also counted about 800 Bulgarian nationals (SOPEMI 1999:61), but including refugees. During the preceding ten years, from the beginning of 1980 to the end of 1989, only 342 asylum applications were made by Bulgarians. By contrast, 4,470 asylum applications were made by Bulgarians in Belgium during the ten years preceding the end of 1998.

7.6. Bulgarian citizens in CEFTA countries

In the second half of the 1990s, more Bulgarians travelled to Hungary, Romania, and the Czech Republic (SOPEMI 1999:114), and some of this seems to be connected with labour migration, though probably not of the highly skilled. Hungary reported a population of about 1,700 Bulgarian nationals in 1997. This was the same number as in 1994. In 1995 the number was put at 1,600 and in 1996 at 1,500, while by 1999 it was deemed to have declined to only 1,300 (SOPEMI 1999:293, 2000:340, 2001:323). The number of residents born in Bulgaria was put at 1,400 both in 1995 and in 1999 (SOPEMI 2001:315). No details on their status were available.

In the Czech Republic – the only CEFTA country reporting detailed figures on Bulgarians – the number of Bulgarian residents rose from about 2,900 in 1992 to about 6,600 in 1997 and declined to about 6,000 in 1998.

The number of “permanent permits”, “generally granted following marriage to a Czech national, on family reunion or humanitarian grounds or for reasons of state” (SOPEMI 2000:166), varied considerably between 1994 and 1998. Long-term permits are “generally granted for employment or studies, valid initially for a maximum of one year but renewable” (SOPEMI 2000:166) and exhibited a more predictable pattern of rise and decline going from 1,100 in 1994 to 4,200 in 1997 and 3,600 in 1998. A similar pattern is visible among the “work permits”. The number of work permits can be shown statistically to be very, very closely associated with the number of permanent and long-term residence permits ($R^2=0.99$) (but in a manner that does not readily make sense: work permits decline by 1.43 for each additional permanent residence permit, and rise by 0.75 for each additional long-term permit; if residence permits were zero, there would be nearly 3,500 work permits – this is clearly nonsense). More plausibly, the change in the number of work permits between year 1 and year 2 is very closely associated with the real economic growth rate of year 1 ($r^2=0.95$). The number of Bulgarian workers seems to change with one year's delay following economic changes. This may just be an effect of permits expiring later than the actual end of employment, but, regardless, it suggests Bulgarian workers to be employed in a range of industries that together are about as cyclical as the entire economy. Also noteworthy are the changes of the relation between work permits and the size of the population, i.e. the number of residence permits. In 1994 only about one sixth of the Bulgarian population – total population, this time, not just working age – also held a “work permit”. By 1996 this had risen to 65%. In 1997 it fell back to 50% and in 1998 to 45%.

Table 26. The number of Bulgarian nationals in the Czech Republic, end of year

Residence permits	Work permits	Asylum
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	Total	Permanent	Long-term		applications
1994	3,700	2,600	1,100	600	512
1995	4,300	2,700	1,600	800	330
1996	4,300	1,800	2,500	2,800	835
1997	6,600	2,400	4,200	3,300	724
1998	6,000	2,300	3,600	2,700	138
1999	5,000	2,300	2,700	1,700	273
2000					204

Data source: SOPEMI 1999:125, 2000:165, 2001:151; UNHCR.

The Czech Republic had experienced economic growth rates in real terms of 2.6% in 1994, 5.9% in 1995 and 3.8% in 1996. This no doubt created expectations for more to come but in 1997 growth was only 0.3% and in 1998 the economy contracted by 2.3% (OECD 2000:245). So far the series of data are too short to tell if this interplay of expectations and reality is apt to explain the rise and decline of the officially registered Bulgarian population in the Czech Republic.

A bilateral agreement with the Czech Republic to facilitate seasonal employment in order to soak up some of the illegal flows, though under negotiation since 1994, has proved elusive. Social benefits, travel expenses, and the legal and professional conditions to be met by candidates seem to be the main stumbling blocks (SOPEMI 1999:116).

7.7. The Bulgarian-born in the United States

There are detailed data on recent U.S. immigration. Between 1986 and 1988 there were between 205 and 221 admissions of persons born in Bulgaria for permanent resident status. From 1989 the number began to climb, at first to 1,049 in 1992, and then, after decreasing in 1993 and 1994, it rose to 3,735 in 1998.

Admissions are composed of new arrivals and of status adjustments of persons already resident in the U.S. In the case of Bulgaria, new arrivals increased rapidly between 1996 and 1998, from 1,143 to 3,122. Of these, only about 200 each in 1997 and 1998, and only 158 in 1996, took place outside the Diversity Program, which awards visas by lottery and is capped at 3,850 visas per country and year. The growth of Bulgarian emigration to the U.S. between 1996 and 1998 was obviously not due to recruiting by U.S. employers but to Bulgarians trying their luck in the diversity program lottery. It would be interesting to know the number and composition of admissions between 1988 and 1995 but, unfortunately, data on Bulgarian immigration to the U.S. before 1996 would be costly to obtain.

Table 27. Admissions of persons born in Bulgaria to permanent resident status in the United States, 1996 to 1998

	1996	1997	1998
Admissions total	2,066	2,774	3,735
– Adjustments	923	732	613
– New Arrivals	1,143	2,042	3,122
– Diversity	985	1,843	2,925
– Other	158	199	197

Data source: <http://www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/ybpage.htm>

About 500 of the annual admissions of persons born in Bulgaria are immediate relatives of U.S. citizens. In addition, there are a few admissions under the heading “family preference”. Both of these can be lumped together as family unification. As the number of admissions rose between 1996 and 1998, the share of family unification in the admissions halved. The share of admissions under employment preference dropped even faster, from 20% (414 admissions) in 1996 to only 7.4% (277 admissions) in 1998. The diversity program’s share, on the other hand, rose rapidly from 47.7% in 1996 to 78.3% in 1998.

Table 28. The distribution of admissions to permanent resident status of persons born in Bulgaria by major categories, percent

	1996	1997	1998
Diversity program	47.7	66.4	78.3
Family unification	27.0	19.9	13.2
Employment preference	20.0	10.9	7.4
Other	5.3	2.7	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Data source: <http://www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/ybpage.htm>

Occupational data refer to the actual employment held in the U.S. at the time of applying in the U.S., in Bulgaria, or in another country. They are not totally complete. For our purposes it is sufficient to collapse the more detailed breakdown of the INS data into three broad categories. Our ‘highly skilled’ category consists of “professional specialty and technical” and “executive, administrative, and managerial”. ‘Medium skilled’ includes the two categories “precision production, craft and repair” and “sales”. Under ‘low skilled’ the categories “administrative support”, “operator, fabricator, and laborer”, “farming, forestry, and fishing” and “service” were added together.

Table 29. Occupations of persons born in Bulgaria who were admitted to permanent resident status in the United States in the years 1996 to 1998

	1996		1997		1998	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Admissions total	2,066	100.0	2,774	100.0	3,735	100.0
Thereof occupied	965	46.7	1,361	49.1	1,662	44.5
- High skilled	586	28.4	821	29.6	1,033	27.7
- Tech, profess.	502	24.3	711	25.6	920	24.6
- Administrative	84	4.1	110	4.0	113	3.0
- Medium skilled	55	5.9	107	4.4	107	5.1
- Low skilled	83	12.5	64	15.1	103	11.7

Data source: <http://www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/ybpage.htm>

Less than half the Bulgarian-born admitted to permanent resident status between 1996 and 1998 were employed at the time of applying. The highly skilled have been forming a stable share of the admissions – about 28%, or 60% to 62% of the employed. Most of them belonged to the technical and professional subcategory, few to the executive, managerial and administrative one. The medium skilled, i.e. trained workers, formed a small part – around 5% over the period. The share of the unskilled varied between 12% and 15% of the admissions. It is important to note, perhaps, that the share of the highly skilled has been exceeding the share of the admissions under employment preference more and more. By 1998 the highly skilled were nearly four times as many as the admissions under employment preference. It can only be concluded that they individually availed themselves of the diversity program's opportunities. This implies that upon migrating they had no knowledge of whether they would be able to find adequate employment or not. It is not known how many subsequently stayed in the U.S. Normally, re-emigration rates of 20 to 30 percent, sometimes even more, within ten or twenty years of immigration have been observed (Warren/Peck 1980; Woodrow-Lafield 1996).

The U.S. also provides recent data on nonimmigrant visas by nationality of applicants. Only 1,772 Bulgarians were granted such visas in 1998, although this was a vast increase over the 1,065 visas issued two years earlier. Bulgarians came largely under the heading "exchange". Only 24% in 1996 and 28% in 1998 were granted H-1B or L1 visas, which can be lumped together under the title "special work". In absolute numbers there were less than 500 H-1B or L1 visas awarded to Bulgarians in 1998, but even this was almost double the number of 1996. Culture (including religion) and entertainment (including sports) were important purposes under which nonimmigrant visas were granted to Bulgarians in 1996 (17%) but a minor one in 1998 (5%).

For comparison: more than 5,000 of the 8 million Austrians and more than 6,000 of the 9 million Belgians were granted nonimmigrant visas in 1998 with "special work" visas making up 43% and 64% of the total, respectively.

Table 30. Purposes under which Bulgarian nationals were granted nonimmigrant visas to the U.S. in 1996 and 1998

	Number		Percent	
	1996	1998	1996	1998
Special work	257	493	24.1	27.8
Culture & entertainment	181	88	17.0	5.0
Exchange	624	1,179	58.6	66.5
Other	3	12	0.3	0.7
Total	1,065	1,772	100.0	100.0

Data source: <http://www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/ybpage.htm>

Unfortunately, there are neither figures on emigration from the U.S. nor any figures on the resident population.

8. The return orientation of emigrants

If the experience of other countries is any guide, it would seem that improving economic conditions in Bulgaria along with an absence of corruption from the administration and from public life may trigger noteworthy return flows. Ireland, for instance, is a country where for decades the emigration to the U.S. and the UK of the highly educated was a regular and even encouraged feature. All the while the government kept using public funds to raise the overall levels of education, to eradicate illiteracy, and to create a percentage of university degree holders. From the mid-1980s the country underwent rapid economic growth. The highly educated appear frequently to return to Ireland at a later stage in their careers. “Estimates based on 1991 Irish Census data, reveal that no less than 30% of the population aged over 40 years with third level qualifications had resided outside the country for at least one year. The corresponding proportion for the adult population as a whole (i.e. 25 years of age and over) was 10%. This represents a very high return rate (it is undoubtedly higher now) for the most educated emigrants ...” (SOPEMI 1999:156). “Since 1985 high economic growth in Ireland has encouraged the return of the more qualified emigrants without slowing down the exodus of young, less qualified people” (Lobo/Salvo 1998:257). Similar observations could be made for New Zealand, where more than 20,000 New Zealand nationals per year return (Lidgard 1993), or for Taiwan, which has also had considerable rates of skilled emigration while developing rapidly and which is attracting return migrants in substantial numbers (Migration News April 1995). Austria would be another case in point, less of the return flows, but definitely of rapid economic growth while at the same time experiencing a continuous emigration of skills, knowledge, experience, and talent, mainly to Germany.

For Bulgaria it is reported that a survey by the Centre for the Study of Democracy in 1996 “showed that 20% of those who left the country after 1989 came back” (Beleva/Kotzeva 2001). As was to be expected, this return seems to be going to urban rather than rural areas while the original emigration was from rural areas. This is rural-urban migration, except that it included a temporary stay abroad.

Greece, Portugal, and Spain are all countries that experienced substantial return flows of emigrants immediately after the end of the dictatorships. Italy has a whole history of return migration, earlier from the U.S., in the 1970s from Germany and Switzerland (Rogers 1991). These intra-European return flows, including the ones to Turkey, were composed of labourers, and do perhaps not yield much insight when the question is about the return of the highly educated or the highly skilled.

More comparable, perhaps, is the experience of the Return of Qualified Nationals Programme run for many years by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (Pires 1992). Participation is not terribly impressive. For instance, between 1983 and 2001 less than 2,000 Africans returning to 11 African countries were recruited through or assisted by the RQN Programme (Omelaniuk 2001). This amounts to only 1 case per country and year.

Anecdotally, very low wages, poor employment chances, the lack of social security, rampant crime, and alienation from Bulgaria are being cited as obstacles not only to return but to even consider having any kind of return orientation among the highly skilled males. Some of these sentiments appear to be borne out by the facts. Their wives' interest in returning may be alive, though, since the women experience problems in finding employment in tune with the education and training they had received in Bulgaria. They appear to be under considerable dequalifying pressure.

9. The conditions awaiting returnees

In regard to the return of its (former) nationals, Bulgaria finds itself competing in a market for highly skilled workers that has become successively more a seller's market in recent years. Highly skilled workers can currently pick and choose the country and the company. This may change, eventually, but there are also indications that the phenomenon is spreading to further occupations like nurses, actuaries, even masons and other craftspeople for whom there is a demand as the expansion of education, the demographic changes, and the limits to immigration have dried out the local markets in the richer parts of the European Union. Less than it used to be is the country of origin a "natural" place to choose for an emigrant not wishing to stay at the current place of residence. All this places more emphasis on the ability of an origin country to *attract* back its (former) nationals. By analogy, this also applies to the highly skilled and highly educated still resident in Bulgaria. National sentiment is rarely enough to retain valued personnel and especially young talent (Mahroum 1999a, 1999b).

However, even attracting them back may not be good enough. Turkey, for instance, has experienced a very large number of cases of re-emigration of return migrants whose expectations were not fulfilled. As far as is known, re-emigration occurs within one or two years of return. Dikaiou (1994) has shown for Greece that return migrants – mostly from Germany – take two or three years to adapt their aspirations and expectations to what Greek society has to offer (see also Arowolo 2000; Glytsos 1995). IOM, too, has seen participants in its Return of Qualified Nationals Program re-emigrate from the countries they returned to (Pires 1992).

Given the high share of workers in Bulgaria with tertiary education, any highly qualified returnees would be facing an adverse labour market. Indeed, Bulgarian graduates from Austrian academies and universities have found it hard to find employment in Bulgaria.

As mentioned, there are still several thousand asylum seekers originating from Bulgaria every year. While a single asylum seeker is usually taken as a curiosity, a regular flow, even if small, serves as an indication that politically not all is well and that a significant risk of arbitrary treatment by the authorities along with unreliability of the judicial system, i.e. court corruption, remains. The International Helsinki Federation has been documenting substantial numbers of cases (IHT 1999:52-61).

10. Investment in the country of origin

Indian entrepreneurs in the U.S. have become important sources of and conduits for investment in India (Khadria 2000). In as far as Bulgarian emigrants are also entrepreneurial they may come to play a similar role. Not much reliable information on such activities seems to be available: “According to some authors, those emigrants who came back invested their savings in starting their own business (43%) or in buying real estate (31%)” (Beleva/Kotzeva 2001).

Lending interest rates were at 12.8 percent in 1999, down from 13.3 percent in 1998, after they had been at prohibitive levels since 1991, peaking at more than 123 percent in 1996 (World Bank 2001). If the new lower level is maintained, one important obstacle for investment, and thus for the employment of returnees’ skills, is removed.

At least as grave an obstacle is the uncertainty over being able to get fair treatment. Return migrants do not usually have a dense network of personal relationships. Unless they can rely on the courts for justice they may find themselves easy prey for local operators. Freedom House, in 1999-00, graded Bulgaria 2 in political rights and 3 in civil liberties on a scale of 1 (very good) to 7 (very bad). Greece rates 1 and 3, Hungary and Poland 1 and 2, Romania 2 and 2, Russia 4 and 5. While the Bulgarian rating is not bad, Freedom House described the reasons for the less than perfect ratings in the following words: “Under the constitution, the judiciary is guaranteed independence and equal status with the legislature and executive branch. Corruption, inadequate staffing, low salaries, and lack of experienced personnel continue to hamper the system. Police frequently mistreat prisoners and detainees, according to domestic and international monitoring groups. ... High rates of corruption, widespread organized crime, and continued government control of significant sectors of the economy impede competition and equality of opportunity” <http://freedomhouse.org/survey99/country/bulgaria.html>. Clearly, there is scope here for the authorities to improve the conditions for legitimate investment.

11. Policies towards emigrants

Bulgarian governments, since 1989, have altered the previously negative stance towards emigrants. There is now an emphasis on inviting emigrants to return. The new Bulgarian Nationality Act, dating from 1997, permits dual citizenship “and lays down the principles of an integration policy for Bulgarians living abroad aimed at facilitating their economic and social links with Bulgaria. ... the Act abolished the principle under which Bulgarian emigrants lost their nationality when leaving the country” (SOPEMI 1999:117).

If return is a less than likely option, supporting emigrants politically while abroad could be considered as a measure to foster positive feelings towards the home country and its institutions. It is sometimes useful, if home country governments remind receiving country governments of their obligation to protect the rights of migrants. International forums could serve as a stage.

Emigrants may, however, have ambivalent feelings about receiving political support from home country institutions. Educated emigrants, perhaps especially, might feel they are being cast as a group and hindered in their effort to blend into the receiving society. It would be imperative to pursue a support policy quietly, except after truly grave occurrences.

12. Remittances

Given the large share of asylum seekers among the Bulgarian emigrants since 1989, the lack of return orientation is perhaps less than surprising. But being a refugee does not exclude having relatives nor supporting them. The complete absence of remittances from the Bulgarian balance-of-payments statistics is therefore, in a way, astonishing. Between 1980 and 1993 workers' remittances, as reported by the World Bank, were zero. Since then they went unrecorded (World Bank 2001). This is not to say, there were none. There certainly were remittances outside the banking system such as money and goods brought back personally and given to relatives. Given Bulgaria's monetary tribulations in the 1990s it is all the more likely that any remittances avoided the banking system. This is deplorable, since better liquidity would have enabled the banks to offer lower interest rates, and this would have helped to spur investment (Glytsos 2001). Given a trustworthy and fast banking system and restraint in the taxation of private transfers, this position could probably be much improved (Karafolas 1998; Taylor et al. 1996a, 1996b).

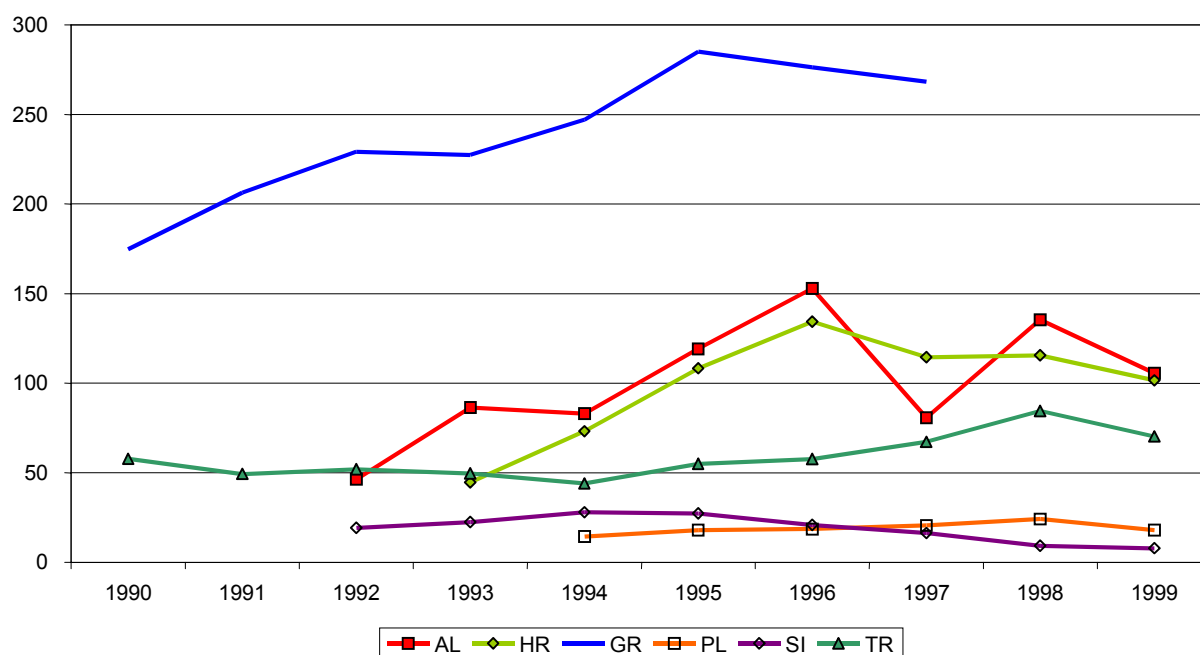
Anecdotal evidence in Austria would seem to suggest remittances to Bulgaria run at an average level of, perhaps, \$100 per month and income earner. If there are around 190,000 former and current Bulgarian nationals living in the West, and if a third of them are employed, this would be a sum of about \$75 million per year. This does not include the remittance flows from Turkey. Nothing is known about them, but if we assumed them to be only \$10 per month sent by 350,000 employed, this would add up to another \$42 million per year. Together, this is below \$120 million per year. These figures, it must be emphasised, are worse than anecdotal, and research would be needed to verify them.

Greece, Turkey, Macedonia, and Croatia, in the latter half of the 1990s, all received remittances from emigrants in the range of 2% to 3% of GDP. The same was probably true of Yugoslavia (see Grečić 1990 for an earlier period). If Bulgaria had been in the same league, remittances would have totalled between \$250 million and \$350 million in 1998. Austria, with a similar number and perhaps similarly skilled emigrants in the West, received annual remittances of \$540 to \$570 million at the beginning of the 1990s, and about \$330 million at the end of the decade (World Bank 2001). This was in the vicinity of \$70 per inhabitant of Austria in the early 1990s, and about \$40 at the end. This is meagre, if compared to the \$285 per inhabitant Greece received in 1995, or even the \$153 per inhabitant that reached Albania in 1996. If Bulgaria had indeed been receiving the less than \$120 million we guessed, this would have been below \$15 per inhabitant. This is clearly far below potential. A level of at least three times as much would be more in line with expectations. So, perhaps, the guesses made above about the number of persons remitting and about their average amount remitted were too much on the conservative side.

Table 31. Workers' remittances per inhabitant (current US Dollars)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Albania			47	86	83	119	153	81	135	106
Austria	74	69							41	40
Croatia				45	73	108	134	115	116	102
Greece	175	206	229	227	247	285	276	268		
Hungary						1	1	2	3	3
Macedonia							23	28	31	35
Moldova						0	1	0	0	0
Poland					14	18	19	21	24	18
Romania					0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovakia							1	1		
Slovenia			19	23	28	27	21	16	9	8
Turkey	58	49	52	50	44	55	58	67	85	70

Data source: World Bank 2001. Rounded to the nearest Dollar.

Figure 23: Workers' remittances per inhabitant, current US Dollars

Denominating remittances in U.S. Dollars can be misleading because exchange rate fluctuations intervene. If, for instance, the German Mark appreciates against the Dollar, remittances to Greece will appear to increase in Dollars but will not do so in Greek Drachmas, if the Drachma appreciates in tandem with the Mark. Or, if the Mark and the Dollar both appreciate against the Drachma, remittances from Germany to Greece will appear to be unchanged, if looked at in Dol-

lars, while they would have converted to more Drachmas than before. It is therefore important to look at remittances in local currency units while correcting for inflation. This was done, and the next table reports the results per inhabitant at 1999 purchasing power of the local currencies.

Table 32. Workers' remittances per inhabitant, thousands of local currency units at 1999 purchasing power

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Albania			15,510	21,193	15,413	20,100	25,784	14,571	20,483	14,547
Austria	1,034	954							507	522
Croatia				412	547	679	839	771	763	723
Greece	65,065	73,990	74,169	77,343	80,171	81,102	75,465	78,762		
Hungary						141	234	424	595	610
Macedonia							918	1,391	1,693	1,992
Moldova						2	6	2	2	3
Poland					70	72	70	81	90	72
Romania					3	3	8	1	2	3
Slovakia							0	0		
Slovenia			4	5	6	4	4	3	2	1
Turkey	27,984	23,033	23,449	21,570	24,988	25,707	26,540	31,088	36,329	29,458

Data source: World Bank 2001.

Figure 24: Workers' remittances per inhabitant, thousands of local currency units at 1999 purchasing power

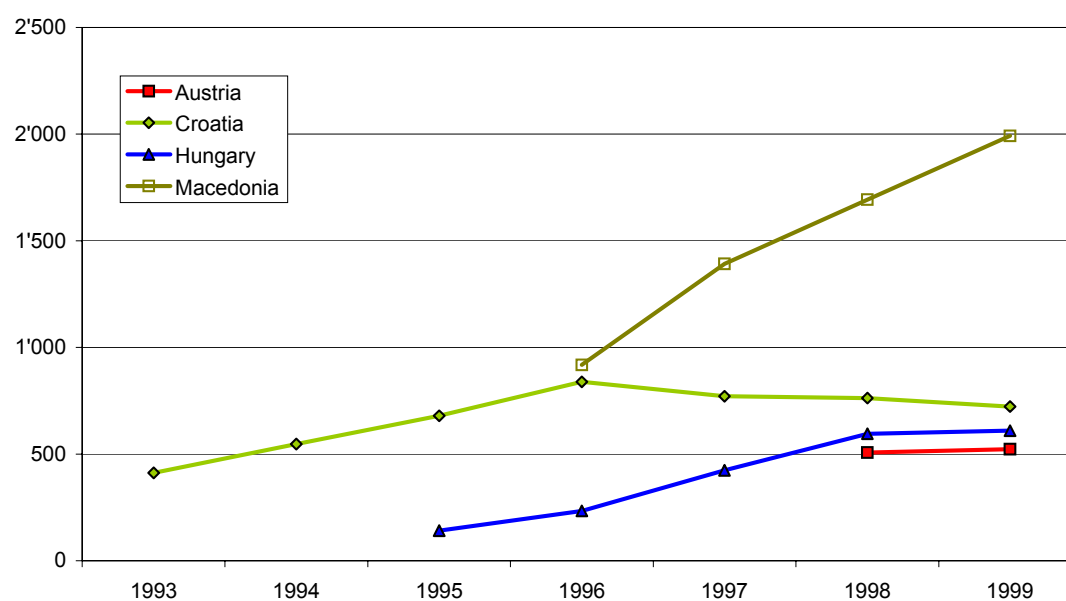
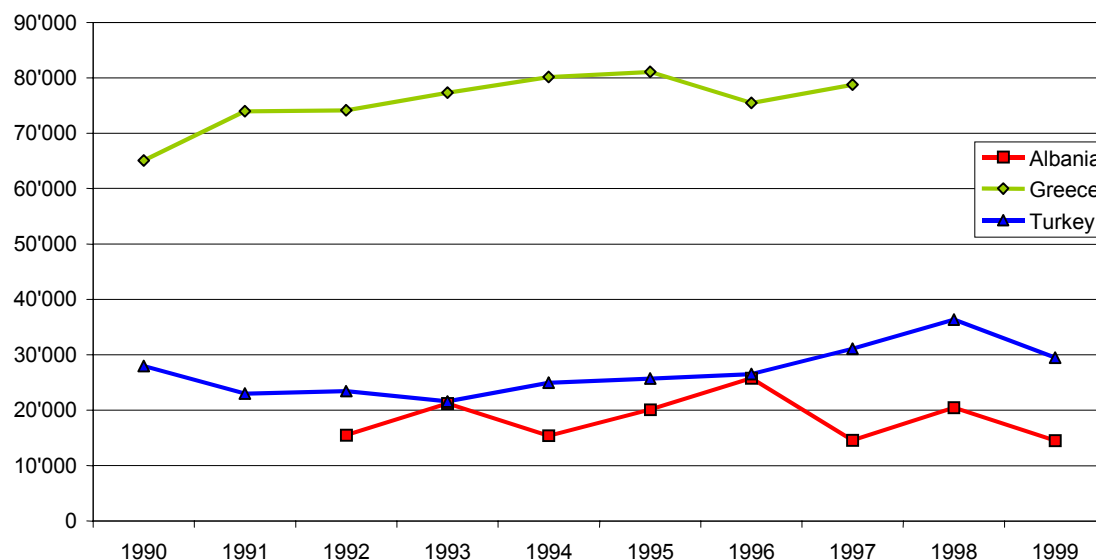


Figure 25: Workers' remittances per inhabitant, thousands of local currency units at 1999 purchasing power

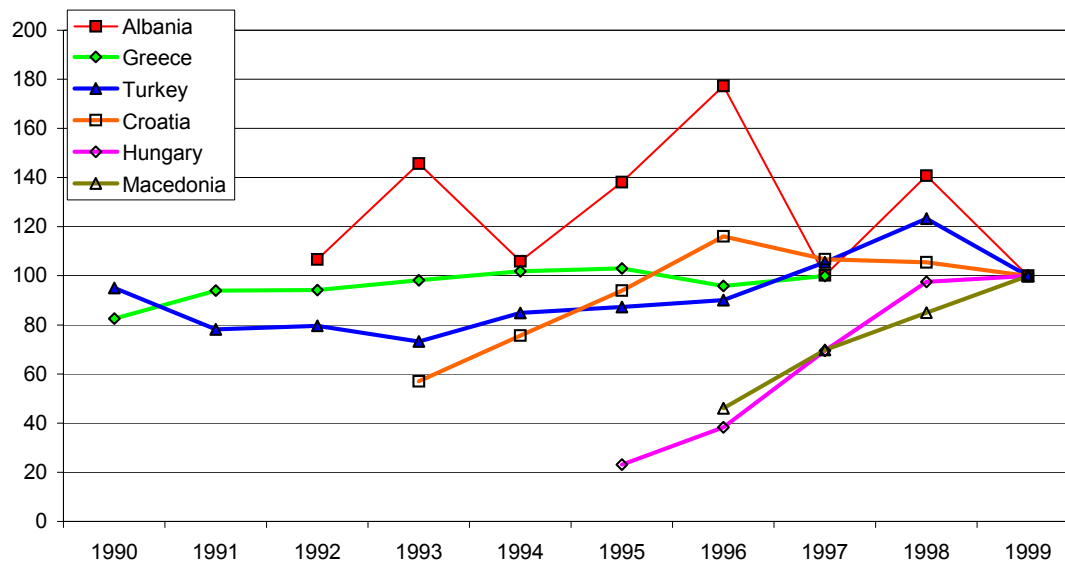
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As can be seen, remittances (measured in local currencies at constant prices) have fluctuated widely in most countries, notably Albania, but also Poland, Romania, Moldova, Greece and Turkey, and, to a lesser degree, Croatia. Hungary and Macedonia experienced a constant rise over the period for which data are available. In Macedonia remittances per inhabitant doubled between 1996 and 1999, in Hungary they more than quadrupled between 1995 and 1999, though from a much lower initial level. Slovenia has been seeing a constant decline since 1994, Croatia since 1996. In Austria, the level in 1998 and 1999 was only half that of 1990 and 1991. In Slovakia, official remittances in 1996 and 1997 were less than half a 1999 crown per inhabitant. As Glytsos (2001) warns, remittances are useful in the medium and longer term, but they are difficult to rely on in the short run.

Adelman and Taylor (1988, 1990; Taylor et al. 1996a, 1996b) and Glytsos (1993, 2000, 2001) have been showing that it would be a grave mistake, concerning remittances, to look at only the sheer amount. The receiving household spends the money, and in this way it becomes other households' income. They, in turn, spend the money again, and so on. It has been estimated for the Greece of 1971 that "about GDR 14 billion of migrant remittances generated GDR 24 billion worth of gross output" (Glytsos 1993:149), i.e. the increase in economic product was 1.7 times the remittances. For Mexico this same multiplier was shown to be even greater, about 3. These are multipliers for the national economy, but the effect is also felt locally. In Mexico, as in El Salvador, each Dollar remitted raises average wealth in the receiving community by about 1.8 Dollars (Taylor/Yúnez-Naude 2000:28; Adelman/Taylor 1990; Taylor et al. 1996b). The multiplication effect does not arise from any particular economic activity of the receiving households as "the normal sequence of priorities is to pay off debt, to build a house, to buy land, to send the children to better schools, or to stay in school for longer, and then perhaps to invest in a small enterprise if money remains" (Lucas 1994:212). From Glytsos' analysis it emerged that "contrary to popular opinion, expenditure on housing is very productive, with a multiplier of 2.0, which is actually much higher than the multiplier of spending on machinery (1.7)" (Glytsos 1993:149). In other words, it appears to be best if households spend remittances in a manner customary to them rather than venturing into new activities for which they lack the experience and the training. Their demand for consumption goods, be they durable or not, will create increased production and investment by other households and firms who are versed at these activities. It is from this that the major development benefit of remittances arises.

**Figure 26: Workers' remittances per inhabitant,
local currency units at 1999 purchasing power, 1999 = 100
(except Greece, 1997 = 100)**



Karafolas (1995, 1998, 2001), although primarily concerned with banking rather than with remittances, has made some observations on the link between the expansion of home country banks in migration destination countries and the volume of remittances originating from these countries. Investigating the cases of Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, he concluded that the banks' expansion abroad was not very strongly fuelled by a wish to service the emigrants. Nonetheless a statistically significant link between the banks' presence in migration destination countries and remittances from these countries emerged: "The growth of the banking presence in the host countries had a significant impact on the growth of migrant remittances. However, remittances and migrant population are neither the unique nor main reason for banking expansion abroad" (Karafolas 1998).

Table 33. Remittances per Greek migrant living abroad, current US Dollars

	Current USD per Greek emigrant			Percent change	
	1970	1980	1992	1970-80	1980-92
Germany	504	1,074	1,094	113.1	1.9
Belgium	124	744	1,460	501.0	96.2
Sweden		2,413	1,015		-57.9
USA	100	235	300	135.1	27.4
Canada	150	126	163	-16.0	30.0
Australia	36	42	73	14.9	75.5
All six countries	159	310	384	95.3	24.1

Data source: Karafolas 2001. Author's calculations.

Table 34. Remittances per Portuguese migrant living abroad, current US Dollars

	Current USD per Portuguese emigrant			Percent change	
	1973	1982	1992	1973-82	1982-92
France	620	1,303	2,303	110.2	76.7
Germany	1,836	2,387	3,789	30.0	58.8
Switzerland		2,826	6,058		114.4
Great Britain	2,375	1,425	2,615	-40.0	83.5
Belgium		1,611	4,000		148.3
USA	969	1,155	1,632	19.3	41.2
Canada		451	287		-36.4
South Africa		120	112		-6.9
All eight countries	832	964	1,585	15.8	64.5

Data source: Karafolas 2001. Author's calculations.

In fact, it can be shown, at least for the Portuguese case, that about 60 percent of the variance in the percent change of banking units in the host country may be attributable to the percent change of remittances per migrant. Posing the question in the reverse, i.e. did an increase in the number of banking units result in increased remittances per emigrant, the statistical outcome is slightly less convincing: only 55% of the variance in the percent change of remittances per emigrant can be accounted for. Thus remittances perform slightly better in explaining the banks' behaviour than the banks perform in explaining remittance behaviour. But the differences are too small to tell, and so we can only show remittances and banking presence to grow simultaneously but we cannot establish a causal connection or its direction. A second caveat about these regressions is that the results were obtained by denominating remittances in current US Dollars, and they might not hold, if remittances were available denominated in constant US Dollars.

13. Overall assessment and conclusions

A cautious overall assessment would include the following points:

- A substantial share of the non-Turkish 1989-1993 emigrants did in fact return to Bulgaria since 1993.
- Bulgaria enjoys a large and rising supply of highly educated personnel. As in the case of Greece, this supply is far in excess of the requirements of the economy and cannot be absorbed productively.
- The reductions, at the beginning of the 1990s, in the number of science employees were focused on personnel without an advanced academic degree, mostly in the technical sciences, and represent an adjustment of numbers to a sustainable level of science employment. Emigration played only a minor role in the reductions.
- By comparison with other countries, and in relation to Bulgaria's GDP per capita at purchasing power parity, Bulgaria keeps enjoying a large share of workers with completed tertiary education, a large number of physicians, and a sufficient number of scientists and engineers in research and development.
- The question may be asked whether changes to the infrastructure, the institutions and the legal environment would not increase the remittances sent by emigrants, and whether this would not also increase the economic growth to be gained from each quantity of remittances.
- There has been an appreciable immigration of highly skilled foreign personnel.
- As with remittances, further improvement of conditions in the country may make investments from abroad more likely and may facilitate a further inflow of highly skilled personnel, some of which would likely be (former) Bulgarian nationals now in the employ of international firms.

All this can serve as evidence that Bulgaria has not been suffering a decline in national development potential from emigration, but it has been unable to make the best use of the opportunities arising from having a stock of emigrants abroad. There is, thus, no reason for alarm over emigration. Confidence in the capabilities of Bulgarian society would, in fact, be far more appropriate, along with a decided push to improve the legal and political framework for economic activity.

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