

Developing future scenarios of demographic, migratory and labour market processes in Hungary:

Foresight findings

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Executive Summary (Réka Geambaşu)

This report presents the results of the foresight scenario exercise carried out in Hungary within the framework of the SEEMIG project in November and December 2013. The aim of the study was to explore possible future paths of Hungarian migration processes for the period 2013–2025. In contrast to other social scientific approaches relied upon by SEEMIG experts, foresight scenario development is a highly participative method that not only gives the opportunity to map out and understand relevant stakeholders' views and opinions concerning present and future flows of migration, but which at the same time creates an adequate context for sharing these visions, collaborating in building new understandings and translating them into evidence based policy recommendations. As opposed to demographic forecasts, however, foresight scenarios are not meant to 'predict' the future, but to offer several alternative scripts of social processes and to draw policy makers' attention to the inherent opportunities and threats emerging from these scenarios. The report is composed of four chapters. The first one is dedicated to the methodological, as well as the sociological-political background of the study. The second is a more in-depth description of the methodology. The third contains the empirical outcomes of the foresight scenarios. The last chapter focuses on analysing the empirical results.

The first chapter sets the method into a larger context, describing the general history and use of similar participative methods. The second part of the first chapter offers a short economic, political and social contextualisation of the migration processes discussed by foresight participants, paying special attention to the post-socialist history of Hungarian migration. While all migration experts draw attention to the lack of reliability of statistical accounts of out-migration, most of them agree that over the past two and a half decades Hungary has registered a positive net migration. This was primarily due to the massive immigration of ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring countries which started even before the 1990-collapse of the communist regime, as well as to the more modest but significant inflow of other ethnic groups and third country nationals. According to expert calculations, these net migration gains were never fully outbalanced by flows of out-migration, even though brain drain accelerated in the mid-2000s. The third section of chapter 1 summarises the conclusions of a population forecast carried out for the period 2010–2060 which – similarly to the preceding decades – estimates that the number of immigrants will at least equate or more probably outnumber that of emigrants.

The second chapter concentrates on more practical and theoretical aspects of the way foresight scenarios were carried out in Hungary. Following the SEEMIG methodological guidelines, three groups of stakeholders were involved: experts, representatives of non-governmental organisations and decision makers. Through the selection and recruitment process we aimed at including not only the domain of migration, but attempted to cover the larger fields of demography and labour market. The chapter summarises the most important difficulties met during the organising and application of the method, as well the ways they were handled by the facilitators. The building of the foresight scenario was preceded by three brainstorming sessions, separately with each group of stakeholders. These workshops were aimed at identifying those drivers that determine the present and future evolution of Hungarian migration processes. The outcome of the brainstorming events was a list of

drivers and clusters of factors out of which we chose the seven most significant and relevant groups. During the fourth meeting – the foresight scenario workshop itself – participants chose two drivers out of the seven as the most relevant ones determining future migration flows: international context and Hungary’s domestic economic development. These were the grids of a matrix defining four scenarios. These scenarios were the following:

- (1) International context favouring migration and improving economic situation in Hungary
- (2) International context favouring migration and degrading economic conditions in Hungary
- (3) International context not favouring migration and improving economic situation in Hungary
- (4) International context not favouring migration and degrading economic conditions in Hungary

The detailed discussion of the four scenarios was followed by “imagining” the life paths of two heroes embedded within the positive and the negative scenario. Participants chose scenario (1) as the positive and (4) as the negative scenario.

Concerning participants’ view of the drivers determining future migration processes we highlight the following aspects. On the one hand, most stakeholders were primarily interested in approaching international migration from a human capital perspective, that is, by evaluating the losses or gains of Hungarian society in terms of human capital. As a result of this interpretation, participants proved to be primarily interested in out-migration and brain drain. In addition, all other migration processes were looked at through the lens of gains or losses of labour force. In opposition to the political and policy interpretation of the immigration of ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring countries, stakeholders shifted the emphasis from regarding this issue in terms of kin-state or nationality politics to re-interpreting it as a migration phenomenon. Lastly, throughout all brainstorming sessions, discussions regarding drivers revolved around the state vs. individual dichotomy. That is, according to the dominant interpretation the state (along with other macro-level social and political actors) was seen as primarily responsible for not providing adequate living and social mobility conditions for its citizens. Thus, a significant amount of human capital is being ‘wasted’ due to the emigration of ‘deserving citizens’ and the insufficient integration of ‘deserving immigrants’. Both individual life paths embedded within the two scenarios were primarily preoccupied with describing and understanding the limits and possibilities of individual action within the specific set of macro-structural constraints.

The development of the four scenarios gave participants the opportunity to think about not only a possible future evolution of migration in Hungary, but at the same time to ponder the role of a series of factors in shaping migration processes. Of these, the economic driver was seen as primordial, along with the international context. Stakeholders saw Hungary’s semi-peripheral position in the global system of distribution of resources as defining for its future path, as well as for shaping Hungarians’ migration strategies. From this point of view, the scope of action of Hungarian economic policy making was seen as rather limited. Nevertheless, the responsibility of the Hungarian political elite in attempting to reconsider this marginal position was seen crucial. Similarly, deepening social inequalities and educational segregation were regarded as crucial in pushing especially the low-skilled labour force to emigration. In terms of opportunities and threats emerging from the positive and the negative scenario, the most important were the following. Within the framework of the

positive scenario the general openness of countries of destination contributes to enhancing protection offered to migrants, while on the other hand, at the national level, immigration is regarded as a means of increasing gains in human capital. Threats were considered inherent in both scenarios. In the positive scenario the out-migration of the low skilled labour force was a response to inadequate labour market integration policies, coupled with deepening segregation of the education system. The threats of the negative scenario included the increasing vulnerability of migrants, losses of human capital due to both brain drain and low levels of immigration. Lastly, participants emphasised the lasting and accelerated demographic costs of the declining economy.

INTRODUCTION (Réka Geambaşu)

This report presents the results of foresight exercise carried out as part of the SEEMIG project in Hungary in November and December 2013. The period covered by the foresight method was the almost one and a half decade between 2013 and 2025. The aims of the foresight scenario building were to identify the most significant social, economic, political, cultural and demographic drivers that shape the present and future Hungarian migration processes and to develop several, more or less probable scenarios of the future evolution of migration. This method was aimed at complementing all other empirical research endeavours of the SEEMIG project, but mostly the population forecast carried out simultaneously with the foresight exercises. As a participative approach, the development of future scenarios was built upon the active involvement in the workshops of relevant stakeholders in migration-related, as well as demographic and labour market issues in Hungary: decision makers, experts and representatives of non-governmental organisations. This was on the one hand meant to foster joint thinking of the factors that influence and could impact migration in the future, while on the other, to supply policy makers with relevant information to be used in preparing migration policies.

The report presents the main findings of the scenario building exercise and it focuses on describing both the scenarios developed by participants and the life paths of imaginary heroes as they unfold within the context of the 'positive' and the 'negative' scenario. The first, introductory chapter is dedicated to the short description of the method, as well as to pinpoint the ways it was used within the framework of the project. It also embeds the main findings concerning the possible future evolution of migration processes into the past two and a half decades of Hungarian economic and political development. The main focus of the country overview is describing the most important Hungarian migration flows. The second chapter deals with the methodological aspects of the study, concentrating on both practical and more theoretical details of the organisation of the workshops. The third part presents the empirical results of the brainstorming sessions and foresight exercise, providing the basis of and the input for the fourth chapter dedicated to analysis and synthesis.

1.1. Foresight as a method

Foresight scenarios are "stories about the future with a logical plot and narrative governing the manner in which events unfold" (Gallopín *et al.* 1997: 5). Developed during the past approximately 3–4 decades, the foresight scenario approach has been one of the most popular participatory methods of social sciences that step beyond the walls of academia both by actively involving relevant stakeholders and by providing empirically informed and logically sound material to inform decision makers. Most methodological texts begin the description of the method by specifying that in spite of what its name would suggest, foresight scenarios do not provide predictions of the future. On the contrary, they aim at identifying all those uncertainties that shape the possible future pathways of the social entity or phenomenon under study.

These long-term visions of the future constructed and negotiated by the participants of different professional background are regularly fuelled to policy making. However, conveying possible and probable anticipations of future trends to be used as tools of decision making is just one of the two basic objectives of the method. The other one refers to the active mobilization and involvement of stakeholders. Let us have a closer look at these two goals. The first one may be labelled as content-related objective. Throughout the brainstorming and scenario building events participants are expected to create, discuss and evaluate images of the future which Gallopín *et al.* call *snapshots* linked by several versions of “account[s] of the flow of events” (Gallopín *et al.* 1997: 5). Although they envisage different variants of the future endowed with varying degrees of probability, these models are important in incorporating reflections upon present critical concerns, challenges and states-of-the-art. This means among others that while the method itself belongs to the group of qualitative approaches, participants rely upon historical patterns and (often numerical) scientific evidence in order to identify the present conditions which set the stage for future evolutions. Scenario building exercises allow participants to ponder the uncertainties, threats and challenges shaping the future, as well as the impact of decisions to be taken on different levels of policy making. While scenarios may leave room to unconventional – ‘outside the box’ – thinking in acknowledging the role of ‘wild cards’ and unexpected decisions in the future, the models built should comply with criteria like plausibility, self-consistency, sustainability (Gallopín *et al.* 1997: 5). Nevertheless, scenarios developing exercises are never value free as individual models are subject to participants’ explicit or implicit choice for underlying values.

As for the second objective of the method, i.e. strengthening its participatory character, it is not just an aim in itself and does not limit its rationale to using and channelling stakeholders’ knowledge and experience into scientific analyses. That is, stakeholders are not involved as mere informants, but as potential active shapers of the strategies that tackle the changes of the subject matter. Promoting debate among different groups of stakeholders is, thus, one of the core objectives of the methods as a means of creating the standards of cooperation between the relevant actors of policy making. In other words, by putting the different or conflicting visions of the future on table and by encouraging participants to reach a consensus regarding these representations, the method assumes a socializing role through preparing the actors for a more consensual decision making process. The dialogue between participants is meant to foster communication and to overcome isolation and fragmentation of the different perspectives and subject positions (For-Learn Foresight Guide). Ultimately, the aim is to create a pool of shared visions and representations of the future, along with the commitment of participants to join efforts in designing a common strategy for the future.

Scenario development has been used as a tool for policy making either within the framework of certain social or political entities, or as a means of understanding and tackling the challenges posed by strategic social or technological issues. The method has many of its roots in the attempt of private companies and organisations to encourage strategic planning. However, administrative units such as cities or regions have used the same approach to anticipate future scenarios and to design adequate responses. Certain topics and phenomena have motivated the use of foresight scenario exercises: the future evolution of the healthcare in certain countries or regions (CEEHPN 2012), the role of technological advance in several domains of social life (ISTAG 2001) or in the area of demographic or

environmental issues affecting smaller or larger communities (Király *et al.* 2012). Migration may be regarded as such a highly critical and influential process and phenomenon that is seen as already having a significant impact on most populations of the world. The countries of South Eastern Europe are no exception. In their capacity of both sending and receiving societies, they have been affected by migration flows for the past decades. The rationale of including foresight scenarios into the SEEMIG project derives both from the role migration plays (and is estimated to play in the future) in the participant countries and from the advantages foresight exercises offer compared to other methods of social investigation.

First, many of these states have failed to address the problem of migration in terms of carefully designed and implemented migration strategies; therefore it was considered that evidence-based policy making would highly benefit from the input of relevant stakeholders. Second, within the logic of the project, the foresight method was an important contribution to its methodological portfolio made up of historical analysis, online survey and population projection. Third, from a more practical perspective the decision to carry out one foresight scenario in each participant country was based upon the relative lack of popularity of the method, especially in other topics but technological ones. Thus, the implementation of the method served as a means for improving the knowledge of participatory investigative approaches in SEE countries. Fourth, the active involvement of relevant stakeholders into the process of shared thinking about future flows of migration aimed at creating ‘a foresight culture’ among the actors in order to put the topic back on the stage of strategic thinking and to encourage the development of policies in this field.

As the conceptual framework of the entire project itself, the foresight approach defined migration as a social phenomenon closely interlinked with labour market and other demographic processes. In order to effectively convey this underlying operationalization to participants, the professional background of stakeholders took this threefold determination of relevant expertise into consideration. Thus, the selection of experts, decision makers and civil society representatives aimed at including all three fields mentioned above. Decision makers were invited from all levels of the administrative and political life, but we were careful to include policy makers from labour market, demographic and migratory areas. The same pattern was followed throughout the invitations launched to experts.

COUNTRY CONTEXT (Endre Sik)

1.2. Political and socio-economic overview

Hungary’s post-socialist economic path has been described by many authors in terms of a Central Eastern European success story, attributable – among others – to the central role of foreign direct investment (FDI) (Nölke and Vliegenthart 2009, King and Szelényi 2005). The prevalence of multinational companies (MNCs) over endogenous small and medium enterprises (SMEs) has had multiple consequences upon the evolution and structure of the Hungarian economy. The allocation

of a significant share of state budget resources to supporting foreign investors has had a negative impact on social, health, educational and labour market-related spending. The reproduction of human capital, as well as the labour opportunities of the active population was thus disadvantaged by the series of economic policies favouring international capital (Nölke and Vliegenthart 2009). The emerging ownership structure of the Hungarian economy has impacted labour force and migration in several ways. On the one hand, MNCs provided a significant demand for both skilled and highly skilled workforce, attracting inward skilled labour migration (Hárs 2010) and contributing at the same time to white collar job creation for Hungarian graduates. On the other, the lower share of Hungarian owned SMEs is called upon, among others, as one of the crucial factors preventing the country from attracting larger populations of immigrants. Hárs claims that while there are a range of similarities between the Hungarian and the Mediterranean patterns of immigration, a more developed SME sector would enhance the Hungarian economy's reliance upon migrant labour force (Hárs 2010). Let us in the next paragraphs sketch the most significant economic and social processes of post-socialist Hungary that have shaped the flows of inward and outward migration.

The mass industrialisation and total employment policy of the socialist regime was followed by an overarching restructuring of the Hungarian economy. The beginning of the transition was characterised by falling GDP, but analysts argue that 'the shock therapy', the 1995 austerity program, as well as privatisation resulted in a decade-long prosperity and economic growth fed by the inflow of FDI. However, this led to the dismantling of industrial production, costing the Hungarian population around 1.5 million jobs. MNCs were not able to fill the employment gap, as they were primarily in the service sector (finance and telecommunication) and in automobile manufacturing. Mass unemployment and rising rates of inactivity were dealt with by the state in numerous ways. On the one hand early retirement was one of the means providing some sort of financial security to the masses of laid-off workers, while on the other the level of social transfers and family support has been kept rather high compared to other Central Eastern European countries. While providing a relatively significant level of economic competitiveness in a Central Eastern European context, these neo-liberal economic instruments contributed to the aggravating of a series of social phenomena in Hungary. First, in terms of the demographic structure, population decrease which had already commenced around the 1980s continued, paralleled and fed by declining fertility rates, high death rates, the ageing of the population and consequently unfavourable old age dependency ratios. Second, the most alarming trends affecting Hungarian population are deepening social and geographical inequalities, although the former are still considered as belonging to the European medium level. Third, the 1995–2008 period of economic growth and prosperity was neither fed, nor followed by the growth of the labour market: employment and activity rates alike remained low in European comparison, a situation further aggravated by the existence of a 'grey economy' of informal work. All these factors created and deepened the disparities between those considered 'the winners' and 'the losers' of the post-socialist restructuring. The most vulnerable social categories include the Roma, the elderly, the rural population, as well as the homeless (Gödri *et al.* 2013).

1.3. Development of international migration

Participants of the brainstorming events were encouraged to map the relevant social, economic and demographic drivers of Hungarian migration, and they focused especially on those pertaining to the

labour market, to the wage gaps between Western Europe and Hungary, and to social inequalities. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged at the beginning of all discussions that Hungary cannot be considered either a highly mobile or an especially welcoming country towards immigrants. According to expert estimations in 2012 there were around 230,000 Hungarian citizens living in European countries, while the share of immigrants living in Hungary did not exceed 2% of the usually resident population in the same year. Before however turning to the more detailed description of migration flows and migrant stocks, let us briefly pinpoint the most transient characteristics of the Hungarian migration regime.

Following 3–4 socialist decades of full restrictions, the 1980s brought a gradual opening of the frontiers, especially for ethnic Hungarian immigrants from neighbouring countries. The entire institutional framework of Hungary's migration policy was laid down at the very beginning of the 1990s and it was mainly centred on ethnic Hungarians. One of the great responsibilities of the Hungarian political elite – often emphasised as such by brainstorming participants – was the failure to elaborate a comprehensive migration policy until 2013. While both before and especially after the accession to the EU, Hungary complied with all formal EU norms, this was not backed by the adoption of its principles. In Hungary, immigration was either interpreted in terms of 'nation' or 'kin-state policy' due to the special concern for ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries, or it was addressed as a public safety issue. The main administrative institution responsible for the management of immigration is the Office for Immigration and Nationality (Bevándorlási és Állampolgársági Hivatal, BÁH) subordinated to the Ministry of Interior. The state – as it was often underlined by brainstorming participants – has failed to develop and implement integration policies leaving that task to NGOs supported mostly by the European Integration Fund. Finally, the scope and possibilities of addressing outward migration by the Hungarian state has been seriously hindered by the lack of reliable data concerning these flows, thus comprehensive policies were replaced by heated debates around brain drain.

Hungary gradually adhered to the international network of migration in the 1980s and during the next decade. In 1988 Hungary granted its nationals the right to free movement. The most important groups of immigrants at the beginning of the post-socialist period were citizens of the neighbouring countries (either ethnic Hungarians or of other ethnicities), Chinese and other Asian groups, EU15 nationals and citizens of the former Soviet bloc. The immigrant population went through a significant diversification over the years in terms of country and region of origin. Immigration flows reached their peaks around 1990, in the years after Hungary's EU-accession (2004) and after 2008. Citizens of the neighbouring states made up the entire period the majority of immigrants, representing over 70% by 2000. Refugees coming from third countries are being looked at from the perspective of the 'myth of the transit country'. Currently around 1.5–2% of Hungary's population are foreigners: as a tendency they are younger, more concentrated around the capital city and better educated than the Hungarian average. As a result, their vulnerability to unemployment is lower.

It is more difficult to give a comprehensive picture of emigration due to the lack of reliable statistical data. It is estimated, however, that the flows of emigration culminated at the end of the 2000s, due to the international financial crisis. The most important target countries are Germany, Austria and the United Kingdom, having received so far approximately 70–76% of Hungarian labour migration. In

opposition to Germany where Hungarian migrants tend to settle down, the type of migration characterising the movement of those leaving to Austria and the United Kingdom is rather circular. Further countries of destination include Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Slovakia. According to recent surveys, migration potential is higher among men, the young, among families with children, people of active age, among the unemployed, students and the Roma, and among the inhabitants of the Western regions of Hungary. Speakers of foreign languages also show higher propensity to have migration intentions. The complex system of inward and outward migration is embedded in Hungary in a rather hostile environment, xenophobia and rejection of immigrants, as well as suspicion towards outward migrants (Gödri *et al.* 2013).

The uncertainties regarding international migration statistics have influenced the extent to which demographers were able to rely on migration data in their attempt to develop forecast hypotheses. While statistical information about migration inflows is regularly rendered more reliable, the emigrant population, as well as the number of return migrants has been more difficult to assess during the past two and a half decades. Researchers used various data sources, including mirror statistics made available by the most important countries of destination. As a rule, the number of out-migrants has always been underestimated in Hungary, which has led to an overestimation of the gains in net migration. According to statistical calculations, in the period between 1990 and 2011 the gains in net migration in Hungary exceeded 350,000 persons and although it has been widely acknowledged that 'real' out-migration must have been larger than the one registered officially, especially after the mid-2000s, population projection hypotheses are regularly built upon the assumption of a continuing positive net migration.

In one of her most recent population forecasts covering the period between 2011 and 2060, Földházi developed three projection models: the basic hypothesis is considered the most plausible one, while the minimal and the maximal set the lower and upper limits of the Hungarian population size in 2060. While according to the basic model Hungary's population will be around 7,920 thousand by 2060, the minimum and the maximum are forecasted to be around 6,920 and 8,590 thousand, respectively. In addition to fertility and mortality statistics, migration was also taken into account, with the underlying assumption according to which migration in-flows will balance or exceed out-migration in the coming half century. Földházi acknowledges that most probably the volume and character of international migration will change in the upcoming decades, contributing significantly to the decrease of the gains in net migration. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that both the decrease in the propensity of ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring countries to migrate to Hungary and the growing Hungarian out-migration point toward increasing losses of population, Földházi assumed that the Hungarian labour shortage thus created will attract migrants from third countries. Therefore, net migration is assumed to be at least zero or more likely, positive during the entire period in all three hypotheses. According to the most pessimistic scenario, immigration will level out out-migration during the upcoming half century. At the other end of the scale, the optimistic hypothesis assumes a gain of half a million resulting from higher in-flows compared to emigration. The most realistic scenario, however, estimates a net population gain of around 340,000 in the period between 2011 and 2060, partially compensating thus the population decrease resulting from low fertility and high mortality. The increasing propensity of third country nationals to fill in the

labour shortage created by accelerated emigration has got the additional advantage of correcting the age structure of the Hungarian population, enlarging the share of the 20–64 age group within the total population of the country (Földházi 2013).

2. METHODOLOGY (Réka Geambaşu)

2.1. Workshops

In Hungary, brainstorming sessions were carried out at the end of November, followed by the foresight scenario organised on December 6th. The timing of the workshops was the following:

- November 25: representatives of the civil society and migrant NGOs
- November 28: decision makers
- November 29: experts on migration, labour market and demography.
- December 6: foresight scenario.

All brainstorming workshops lasted around 3 hours and they took place in a room of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO). The foresight scenario was planned as a much longer event: it started at 9 o'clock and the participants left at around 4 pm. The setting was again provided by HCSO, in a larger conference room. While the brainstorming was led by a moderator and by her assistant, in the scenario workshop there was an additional assistant included in order to be able to monitor and help the work of both groups.

Brainstorming workshops

The scenario of the brainstorming workshops was organised around the following steps:

- 1) Reading out the introduction by the moderator, stressing again (after the invitation letter) the role of the participants in building scenarios.
- 2) The introductory question was read out from the paper in order to be formulated similarly every time. It sounded as follows:

'What are, according to your opinion, the main characteristics and what is the status-quo of the migration processes today in Hungary? Please take into consideration all of its possible labour market and demographic drivers and determinants!'

If there were no answers emerging, we helped them by asking about the micro and macro level motivations (social, demographic, economic and so on) of people's decision to move in whichever direction.

- 3) All answers were succinctly written down by the assistant on the flipchart. Participants were encouraged to provide an explanation or a description in addition to their answers.

- 4) The moderator had the role of involving everyone into the discussion and making sure that no particular (but possibly significant) aspects were left out. However, moderator bias was kept minimal.
- 5) The step of clustering the drivers was skipped all three times. First, because participants argued these were so interrelated that no clear cut categories could be formed. Second, they could not come up with any other conception that the one introduced from the very beginning: migratory, other demographic and labour market related drivers. Third, we considered that the clustering was in fact a research question to be answered after the coding and the analysis of the brainstorming.
- 6) Prioritisation failed in the first brainstorming (for the same reason: it made no sense in participants' opinion). This compelled us to think of a better way of engaging them into this work. That is why we decided to use the classical matrix of the foresight methodology, structured around two aspects: importance and probability (Table 1). As a continuation of what the group had been discussing up to that point – i.e. the drivers determining present migration processes – the prioritisation exercise aimed at clustering *the drivers that would significantly determine migratory processes in the 2013–2025 period*. We provided each of the participants with a hand-out displaying these empty cells, asking them to fill them in individually. Besides the fact that we succeeded in motivating them to think over the question individually and to provide some sort of a grouping, we also managed to have *all cells* filled in, not only the very probable and very important cell.

Table 1: Drivers grid used during the decision maker and expert brainstorming session with the aim of mapping drivers of future migration processes (SEEMIG project – HU, 2013)

		Importance	
		High	Low
Probability	High		
	Low		

- 7) The exercise was closed with a common discussion of the clustering.

Between the last brainstorming and the foresight scenario we had a week to prepare. During this time, of course, we sent reminders to the participants of the former events. However still, there were people not showing up or cancelling their participation because of illness, or the other way round, some of those missing from the first event were considering participating at the second.

As for the content, we decided to change the script and instead of developing a positive and a negative scenario, as suggested by SEEMIG foresight methodological guidelines (Tóth 2013), we switched back to the initial methodology of four scenarios. We considered this a better solution mainly because of the normative stance this implied. Instead of labelling one scenario positive and the other negative by ourselves the facilitators, we asked participants to rank the four scenarios on a negative-positive scale and to continue working with the scenarios placed at the two ends of the scale. After the first step of discussing the four scenarios, the second phase of the foresight scenario

exercise was dedicated to imagining two individual life courses, one embedded in the positive, and one in the negative scenario.

Scenario building: Steps, phases and activities

- 1) After the three brainstorming events we coded and clustered the most significant drivers emerging out of the three discussions. This was followed by the selection of the most typical and common groups. In our case these were: economic development, cultural drivers, demographic drivers, inequalities within Hungarian society, the international context, the role of the Hungarian state in controlling migration and the development of the Hungarian educational system. As a short reminder, we let them know what the drivers mentioned by them were and how we grouped them.
- 2) Out of these 7 clusters, we asked them to select the two most important which they considered the most crucial in determining Hungary's migration processes during the next decade. Many voices argued that this was a difficult task as many of these drivers were strongly interrelated. Nevertheless, we asked participants to make their choices. Again, individual work was a good strategy. We printed the 7 categories as separate cards and gave every participant a package of 7 cards. Thus, we managed to exclude all forms of bias, such as displaying the 7 clusters in a given order on a screen.
- 3) A short voting followed and we reached the conclusion that economic development and the international context were seen as the two most important groups of factors.
- 4) Out of these two categories we formed four scenarios, in a dichotomous logic.
- 5) After dividing the participants into two groups, they were asked to develop 2-2 scenarios.
- 6) It was very useful to provide assistance and coordination during the group work: one moderator in each group was indispensable in reminding the participants of the dimensions and indicators they were supposed to build the scenarios on.
- 7) During and as a result of the group work (where they gathered their thoughts on a flipchart) the participants were asked to answer the following questions:

Please provide a coherent 'story', a scenario of what is most likely to happen in Hungary in the context defined by the two axes (economic development and the international context) in the period of 2013–2025, taking into consideration all sorts of social, economic, political factors and processes (in order not to omit the most significant ones, moderators were required to remind them of these).

Use the year 2013 as a real starting point and whenever hesitating of possible outcomes, try to reach a consensus regarding the most likely outcome.

To make the task more comprehensible, we formulated three questions:

a) What does a developing economy and an international context favouring migration exactly mean for Hungary? Choose at least 5-5 dimensions and indicators and try to draw the economic and political context of the next decades' migratory processes.

b) What are the determining factors of the economic development and that of the international context?

c) What are the social, migratory, political, demographic, educational, economic etc. consequences of the economic development and that of the international context?

Lastly, the groups were asked to choose a name or a title for their scenarios.

- 8) After the lunch break the scenarios were presented by the spokespersons chosen beforehand. This was followed by an attempt of ordering them on a negative-positive scale (this was a successful endeavour) and then on a least likely – most likely one (where they failed to reach a conclusion). The first one helped us to pick a negative and a positive scenario, as a result of half an hour of fruitful and constructive negotiation of what a clear cut definition of positive and negative might be.
- 9) The two groups (still together) chose a hero for the positive and another one for the negative scenario. The drawing of his/her profile was a collective action. We named the 6 most significant ‘hard variables’ (socio-demographic characteristics) – gender, age, nationality, type of residence, level of education, marital status – which they needed to take into consideration when choosing a possible typical social actor/stakeholder for each of the scenarios.
- 10) After doing so, they developed two life paths of the two selected heroes within the framework of the positive and the negative scenarios. This was broken down for each year in the 2013-2025 period.

2.2. Participants

The recruitment process

Although previous experience with focus group interviews informed and helped the recruitment process, every new such endeavour teaches the organiser new skills. In fact, our conclusions can only repeat the guidance received at the beginning of the work: it is worth starting the recruitment process well in advance (we started it 3 weeks before the first brainstorming session) and at the beginning, organisers should target at least twice as much people as really needed for the event.

The e-mail invitation was followed by phone calls approaching those who did not respond, approximately 3–5 days later, calling them repeatedly during the next 2 weeks, reminding them of their promised feedback. For those who accepted the invitation, we sent a package with practical information (if possible) immediately after their acceptance, while for those who were pending, we sent a final RSVP reminder 2 working days before the event. In spite of these arrangements, we had people who either cancelled on the day of the brainstorming or just did not show up.

The first contact mail itself informed the reader shortly about the SEEMIG-project, about the use of the foresight-method, their expected role in it, the reason behind choosing that particular

organisation/institution/expert. The e-mails were written and sent separately to each person. We assumed that by avoiding mailing lists and group e-mails we would succeed in conveying the message: it is that very person who we expect to participate because his/her particular expertise is important to us.

We attached to the first e-mail the recent SEEMIG newsletters, as well as other materials that were supposed to provide additional information regarding the project and the method. Four important (but not unexpected) conclusions we need to draw are:

- 1) We did not manage to prevent the over-representation of the experts: using the social and symbolic capital of the sociologists working for SEEMIG project, the easiest way was to persuade other experts to participate. This did result not only in numerical superiority, but it made us be extremely careful in balancing 'expert' and especially 'civil society' voices during the joint foresight scenario building.
- 2) Taking into consideration the professional background of the invitees, it was crucial for their successful recruitment to be able to highlight their role both within the discussion and within the larger project. At the beginning of the planning phase we decided to invite not only scholars and decision makers strongly related to the issue of migration, but we enlarged the circle and included many other experts too, especially on demography and labour market issues. In the case of the latter two categories, people were somewhat confused at the beginning about their role in a migration-related project.
- 3) Also, given that we faced difficulties in the first brainstorming to engage the participants in the brain-mapping exercise, we adopted a different strategy for the second time. Namely, in order to avoid skipping brain-mapping and the prioritisation of the drivers altogether, we asked participants to first write their individual answers down and then read them out loud to the group.
- 4) As gifts, we offered participants packages of statistical (and, when possible, migration-related) publications provided by the HCSO and the DRI. Given that every invitee had a professional interest in migration or in social sciences, we may conclude that given the budget constraints this was the best option. Besides, according to their feedback and having seen their eagerness to pick three items from the list of available publications, let us conclude that this gesture was well received and understood as 'valuing their expertise'.

The initial list of invitees was compiled by the entire Hungarian SEEMIG team, taking into consideration everyone's ideas and input. The general idea was to include as many relevant names as possible. The number of persons invited and their distribution according their way of reacting to the invitation is included in Table 2 below. The biggest share of those either not replying at all or declining participation we found among decision makers, something the organisers had not been counting on. The much higher ratio of positive responses among the representatives of the civil society and experts is, in our opinion, due to the personal and professional networks of SEEMIG researchers. Nevertheless, several successful attempts were made to avoid biases in the selection process by enlarging the circle of invitees to people beyond the personal network of the SEEMIG project team.

Table 2: Statistics of the recruitment process for brainstorming and foresight sessions (SEEMIG project – HU, 2013)

	Civil society	Decision makers	Experts
Total number of persons invited, of which:	16	26	20
... replied, but declined participation	4	4	2
... replied, and participated	8	6	12
... replied, promised to participate, but did not show up	3	3	0
--- did not reply	1	13	6

Although we emphasised several times the importance of people's presence at both events, there were a few cases in which a participant was not able to show up at one of the meetings. However, this did not affect more than 1 or 2 persons per group. In the following we attempt to give a short description of each of the groups present at the sessions.

Civil society

We decided to involve representatives of non-governmental organisations instead of individual migrants. We acknowledge the impact this choice has had upon the outcomes of the scenario workshops. The option of the Hungarian team was based on two considerations. On the one hand, the organisers argued that a random invitation of migrants – immigrants and emigrants alike – fails to address in any ways the issue of representativeness. Our approach to the concept of representativeness was not linked to its statistical aspect, but to its thematic dimension. That is, we considered that the sample of migrants would have been inevitably arbitrary and it would have been impossible for it to reflect in any way the diversity of migrants coming to and leaving Hungary. The second, more important reason for relying on NGOs was related to the very logic of the method. Since one of its aims was to engage all relevant actors of a future policy making process in a dialogue and to build a shared understanding of the present and future challenges of Hungarian migration, we assessed that professionalised representatives of migrants' interest are more likely to profit both in the medium and the longer term from the networking opportunity with experts and decision makers.

Our most important aim during the selection of the participants was to involve the representatives of at least two types of civil society organisations: those directly representing immigrants and those dealing with (professional) issues related to migration. We did not specifically ask them to present themselves on a personal note, therefore we do not have any information regarding their social and demographic status, however, listening to the discussion we can deduce that most participants have been actively involved in their organisations' work for several years.

Experts

By the selection process we did not limit the inclusion of experts to sociologists of migration. We invited economists, historians, anthropologists, demographers, statisticians, whose area of expertise was related to, besides migration, other issues related to labour market and education.

Decision makers

Although initially we planned to cover the entire spectrum of Hungarian and international institutions dealing with migration, we were the least successful in involving representative participants in the decision maker group. We invited altogether 26 persons from 21 different institutions: national level institutions and ministries, international level institutions; and only six institutions were represented at the two sessions.

2.3. Approach to analysing the material

Throughout the foresight research all sessions were recorded (using audio recording devices) with the prior acceptance and upon the agreement of the participants. Taking notes was primarily the responsibility of the assistant of the moderator, but during the two parallel sessions of scenario development the moderator had the chance of taking notes, too. Pictures were only taken for reasons of project reporting. The analysis had two phases. We already touched upon the first one in details when describing the preparations made for the foresight exercise. It consisted of a re-listening of the recordings of the three sessions of brainstorming, paralleled by the use of the flipchart material. The careful reading of the drivers made it possible for us to adopt an open coding strategy in order to create the clusters of drivers identified by the participants. Furthermore, experts and decision makers were asked to fill in the matrix displayed in Table 1 which we used during the analysis. This work was necessary for us to identify the seven most important clusters that we shortlisted for the foresight exercise and out of which participants had to select two. As for the foresight scenario development event, during the analysis phase we listened again to the audio material, read the flipchart and carried out a detailed discussion with one of the assistants in order to summarise our most important experiences and conclusions.

2.4. Problems and difficulties

There have been several marginal and more crucial difficulties we encountered during the organising of the brainstorming sessions and the foresight exercise. We already touched upon some of them; others will only be highlighted within this sub-chapter. Some of them are more practical and are related to communicating with (potential) participants; the others are somewhat more theoretical or connected to methodological aspects of the foresight exercise.

One of the problems was caused by the supposed lack of trust of one of the participants in the civil society group, the person representing an organisation supporting refugees. Although both during recruitment and at the beginning of the foresight scenario we emphasised several times how everything was to be analysed anonymously, and that there were no good or bad answers, the suspicion that person held of some of the other participants prevented her from being completely open and straightforward. We only found this out once the brainstorming was finished: after making sure the recorder was stopped, she started expressing her own opinions to the assistant moderator. Furthermore, in spite of repeated attempts to contact her she decided not to join the large group in the foresight exercise. Since we do not think this suspicion was general among participants, we do not consider this attitude as biasing or threatening the results of the foresight scenario development.

The relative size and the composition of the groups, however, did influence the output of the sessions. As we already detailed it before, at the beginning of the recruitment process the Hungarian team made the decision to rely upon representatives of NGOs instead of individual migrants. According to their self-presentation, at least half of the participants were immigrants themselves and one person regarded herself as a returnee migrant. Nevertheless, due to their professional background their approach to migration was more self-reflexive and holistic than what we could have experienced with 'simple migrants'. Additionally, we consider that the gap between the size of the civil society and the expert groups was a major threat for the former's willingness to engage in discussions. During the entire scenario building the role of the moderator and the assistant moderator was crucial in counterbalancing the numerical dominance of the experts.

One additional factor having an impact upon how scenarios were developed, was related to the differences in conceptualising and defining *international context* during the foresight exercise. Although this cluster of drivers was built *emically*, that is, using only the drivers named and highlighted by the participants themselves during brainstorming events, there were dissimilarities concerning their operationalization within the two groups afterwards (see details in the description of the scenarios).

Lastly, based on our own observations and on the feedback we received from participants, networking was regarded as an important motivation of participants' active involvement in developing scenarios mainly by the experts. Furthermore, we do not consider that the other possible target of the foresight exercise – to have an incipient impact on future policy making by involving relevant decision makers among whom a shared vision of desirable future would be created (see For-Learn Foresight Guide) – was fully reached. In spite of our efforts, we did not manage to involve top decision makers having a real influence upon migration policies. According to our hypothesis this is very much because migration issues and policies are not featured as a high priority area in the contemporary Hungarian political thinking.

3. RESULTS OF THE FORESIGHT EXERCISE (Réka Geambaşu)

The three brainstorming sessions conducted with the representatives of the civil society, with public officials and lastly, with experts on migration and related social phenomena were dedicated to exploring those drivers that influence present and future flows of migration from, towards and within the boundaries of Hungary. The aim was to reveal the internal and external context of migration processes, to understand the key individual and collective motivations of migrants, as well as the way several types of social, political, demographic, cultural and economic processes interact in influencing emerging migratory patterns. From a methodological point of view, the idea was to list all those factors that were being considered relevant by participants of professionally somewhat homogeneous groups so that they are able to channel these drivers to the mixed group discussions. Reaching a consensus was not among the aims of the brainstorming sessions, but rather a careful overview of all factors and drivers that might impact migration flows in the present and in the future.

Before embarking on presenting the outcomes of the workshops, as well as analysing the scenarios and the individual life courses of the heroes, we would like to make two observations regarding the way the discussions were carried out. First, the general approach, as well as the particular terms of defining migration were deeply embedded in and determined by each and every group's specific professional background. These specificities will be highlighted in the individual descriptions of the expert, decision maker and civil society brainstorming workshops (sub-chapter 3.1). Second, the way drivers and their contexts were first enumerated in brainstorming sessions and then integrated into foresight scenarios, reflects shifts in the interpretation of present and future evolution of migration processes. While some aspects and dimensions were seen as dominant in the present representation of migration, others were evidenced in future scenarios. The fourth chapter focuses on presenting the empirical data emerging from the three brainstorming sessions and the foresight scenario development, concentrating on describing all four scenarios and the life courses of the two heroes chosen for the positive and the negative scenario. It is chapter 5 that deals with sociological analysis and contextualisation.

3.1. Key drivers of migration

During brainstorming sessions participants were asked to enumerate all those factors that have an impact on migration flows in Hungary, and then, from this list (or by thinking of new factors), within the framework of the same session, to choose those drivers that were rendered *highly probable to influence* future migration processes. This second step was carried out by using the matrix presented in Table 1. In several cases participants themselves asked at the beginning to agree upon a common definition of migration and specify which types of movements were they supposed to think of. Brainstorming thus referred to the following forms of migration: outward and inward international, circular, internal, labour migration, refuge and asylum seeking, transit migration, cross-boundary migration and commuting. It is worth mentioning that although all these forms were carefully taken into account, scenario planning was much more restricted to international immigration and emigration (with scattered reference being made to circular migration) and to the case of refugees. Internal movements, cross-boundary migration and commuting were almost completely missed out throughout the development of macro-social scenarios. There are several other common elements of the three approaches to understanding the drivers of migration which we will discuss in detail later in the chapter. However, let us begin by presenting the results of each brainstorming, emphasising the major differences stemming from varying perspectives. The most important drivers are included in the table in Annex 1, separately for the present and future time horizon.

Experts

Among the three groups of stakeholders, experts were the most likely to combine theoretical knowledge with (often personal) empirical experience. Additionally, as expected, their approach was the most value-free, especially in the sense of not labelling some migration processes any more than others as 'positive' or 'negative'. As present drivers of migration are concerned, experts' *focus* of the

phenomena is almost exclusively on the national level. Most inputs are concentrating upon Hungary's economy, its demographic situation, the political climate or social inequality and regional disparities. Among the preferred topics – probably mainly also as a result of the composition of the expert group – demography is prominent: the ageing of the society, declining fertility and the *labour shortage* created both by fewer children born and the increasing rate of emigration are major drivers of both present and future migration. At the same time several participants, while not successful in creating a consensus, argued that the deep (political and cultural) divisions within the Hungarian society, paralleled by a relatively powerful suspicion towards migration can be clustered into a *cultural set of drivers*, decisive for both outward and inward migration. Economic factors were defined in terms of a pushing force of outward mobility and at the same time as pulling migrants from abroad (including refugees). Economic factors were foremost considered on the individual level, as the individual price to pay for an unbalanced and shrinking labour market with no incentives for potential entrepreneurs. Social inequalities, regional disparities and the gradual dissolution of upward mobility channels are regarded as significant drivers of migration and as such, are seen as a consequence of the Hungarian state's irresponsible management of resources and its inability to tackle social problems. Once the participants' attention was turned to highly probable and highly significant forces propelling migration in the future, an additional factor was emphasised, i.e. the international context, made up of supra-national legal framework, international conflicts and Hungary's position within a globalised world. In other words, the role of the international context only came up as important when *future processes* were discussed.

Decision makers

Public officials' approach was highly contingent upon their specific perspective of the phenomenon of migration. Their view of the social reality is most probably based upon their role as representatives of the central and local state administration. The most characteristic feature of their representation of the forces propelling migration is *placing the state in the centre of all processes*. However, unlike the rest of the groups the majority of the participants defined the state not as an *irresponsible manager of resources which failed to address the issue of migration in a comprehensive social policy*, but as a *creator of incentives and opportunities*. This does not however mean a complete overlooking of the economic push factors (unemployment or the rigidity of the labour market), the role of an unwelcoming or hostile attitude towards migrants, it is just the emphases that were not the same as in the case of other two groups. An additional consequence of the special perspective of state administrators was a *technical-pragmatic approach* to the role of the state in regulating migratory flows. That is, they assess both present and future migration as highly (and sometimes primarily) dependent on political and legal opportunities created by the state (along with macro-level actors of the economy, such as MNCs). Migration is a *proactive individual strategy of searching for economic opportunities and niches*, some of which were directly or indirectly created by the state (encouraging large-scale investments, securing the high quality of higher education, making pension transfers possible, providing reliable and high level social transfers or just tackling the consequences of the growing rate of suburbanization around Budapest etc.). As opposed to the expert group's vision, the role of the Hungarian state is complemented by the role played by neighbouring countries with and without ethnic Hungarian minorities. In other words, the spectrum

of drivers is somewhat enlarged compared to the image fostered by experts, as both minority policies of neighbouring countries and the future economic paths of receiving countries (such as Germany and Austria) are regarded as relevant in the future trends of Hungarian migration. Beyond that, Hungary is taken out of the context of a more globalised world. Finally, two additional features of the decision maker approach need to be emphasised. On the one hand, public officials tended to regard migration as a more individual strategy, disembedding social actors from their social contexts (definable in terms of class, ethnicity, gender, age, economic status, education etc.) and highlighted individual motivations as determinant factors of migration decisions. On the other hand, decision makers relied – more than experts and much less than the representatives of NGOs – on a *human capital framework* of migration. We define human capital approach as an interpretation and evaluation of migration as a process resulting either in a positive or a negative balance of human capital. While public officials only make scattered reference to this way of interpreting migration, civil society representatives embed their entire representation into a constant calculation of collective gains and losses of migration.

Civil society representatives

As in the other two brainstorming sessions, participants of the NGO workshop focused upon the role of the Hungarian state in the present and future evolution of migration processes. The most significant drivers emphasised during the brainstorming were the following: the economic situation of the country (including the lack of perspectives, precariousness of individual statuses), discouraging climate (the non-financial aspects of the unpredictable future, political and value-based cleavages experienced by social actors), demographic drivers, already established migration networks and Hungary's semi-peripheral position within the global division of labour. According to the dominant interpretation emerging from the brainstorming and agreed upon by most participants, migration was part of *self-made men's strategies of improving their quality of life and carrying out upward mobility outside of their native country, due to Hungary's inability to provide adequate conditions*. Most economic hardships motivating people to embark upon international migration were interpreted in terms of *individual costs of harmful political decisions*. While all three brainstorming sessions addressed in one way or another the relationship between the state (as well as other macro-social actors) and the individual citizen, this tension was most powerfully expressed by the members of the civil society. Within their discourse, they opposed the individual and the structural level by opposing the image of the *struggling and deserving migrant* and *the undeserving state*. Migrants – whether immigrants, asylum seekers, (potential) return migrants, internal migrants or emigrants – were defined as hard-working, highly qualified people whose potential has been wasted by the state, incapable of 'keeping its already existing human capital' and 'attracting newcomers to stay' instead of choosing transit migration.

The same crucial role of the state in shaping migration was 'foreseen' for the future, too. A permanent reference was made to the lack of migration and integration policy in Hungary, to the responsibility of the elite incapable to forge any minimal consensus on nationally relevant issues, but also to the incapacity of the political management of the country to overcome the deepening

inequalities and regional discrepancies within the country. Within this context, international migrants aim at accomplishing upward social mobility through geographic movement, while internal migrants tackle the regional inequalities created and deepened by misconceived development policies.

Matrix of key drivers

Based on the results of the initial brainstorming sessions we shortlisted the seven most often mentioned clusters of drivers by the next meeting, i.e. the scenario development. This consisted in selecting those drivers that were mentioned by all three groups and at the same time considered as significant in determining future migration processes. From this list, we asked participants to choose *two sets of drivers* considered most determinant and relevant for future migration processes. The drivers, along with their constitutive elements (as defined during brainstorming workshops) are listed in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Clusters of drivers considered relevant as shapers of future migration processes, as a result of brainstorming workshops (SEEMIG project–HU, 2013)

Clusters of drivers	Elements
1. Economic development	The evolution of the real estate market
	The wage gap between Hungary and foreign countries
	Demand- or supply-centred labour market
	'The possibility of getting by'
	The flexibility of the labour market
	Maintaining or increasing the number of jobs
	The level of social transfers
	Economic competitiveness
	Quality of life
	The precariousness of economic status
	General level of employment, activity and unemployment
2. Social inequalities in Hungary	The availability of upward social mobility channels
	Regional and geographic disparities
	The Budapest-centred character of infrastructural development
	General negative social climate in Hungary
	Final rupture or the integration of the Hungarian society
3. Cultural drivers	Social attitudes towards migration
	Attitudes toward immigrants
	The lack of consensus in the Hungarian society
	'The culture of migration'
	Cultural similarities
	Identity
4. Demographic drivers	Low levels of fertility
	Increasing life expectancy
	Ageing
	Demographic vacuum created as a result of the above factors
	The strength of family ties
	The health status of the Hungarian population

5. International context	Globalisation
	Hungary's (semi-peripheral) position within the global system
	Infrastructure: the availability and costs of transport and communication
	Supra-national legal environment, including the policies of sending and receiving countries
	Regional (and) political crises
	Minority politics of neighbouring countries with significant ethnic Hungarian populations
6. Education related drivers	The evolution of the education system in Hungary
	The evolution of higher education in Hungary
	The evolution of vocational education in Hungary
7. The role of the Hungarian state	'The policy of keeping citizens and pulling return migrants'
	The elaboration of a crisis management strategy in case of another global or regional crisis
	The state as a service provider or as a prescriber

Of the seven groups, participants were asked to choose two as most relevant for Hungarian migration processes in the future. These two were *economic development* and *international context*.

Development of scenarios

The matrix of drivers resulting from the two sets of factors has been displayed in Table 4. Based on that, the two subgroups were asked to develop two scenarios each. Their work was, as described in the Methodology chapter, divided into three steps. First, the character and evolution of the international context needed to be described, followed by a detailed exploring of the economic situation (paying attention to revealing its driving forces) and lastly, the most significant part of the foresight scenario was imagining the effects that the two sets of drivers would have on future migration processes. In the following we shall present all four scenarios below (scenarios A–D), focusing on the main results. In the closing analytic chapter, however, we will only focus on the two scenarios labelled as 'positive' and 'negative' by participants.

Table 4: The matrix of clusters of drivers set up at the beginning of the foresight scenario workshop (SEEMIG project – HU, 2013)

		Hungary's economic development	
		<i>Developing</i>	<i>Not developing</i>
International context	<i>Favouring migration</i>	1. Developing economic context and an international context favouring migration	2. Poor (or not developing) economic context and an international context favouring migration
	<i>Not favouring migration</i>	3. Developing economic context and an international context not favouring migration	4. Poor (or not developing) economic context and an international context not favouring migration

		migration	
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A. International context favouring migration & degrading economic situation in Hungary

In the present scenario Hungary faces a series of economic difficulties and bleak prospects in terms of economic growth, while on the international level political, economic and technological factors favour inward and outward migration to and from Hungary. Participants called this scenario “*Migration as a constraint*” as they considered that economic difficulties *push* potential migrants abroad due to the lack of employment and upward social mobility opportunities at home.

Members of this group spent a great deal of time defining the elements and characteristics of what constitutes an international context favouring migration. This definition followed the initial conception loosely. As a reminder, based on participants’ input during the brainstorming sessions we grouped four strongly interconnected dimensions in the cluster called *international context*. It included: economic (globalisation and Hungary’s peripheral position), political (regional and political crises, neighbouring countries’ minority politics), legal (migration, welfare and other laws including migration policies) and technological aspects (transport and communication) of the external environment influencing Hungarian migration. During the scenario exercise, participants’ approach was informed by this definition.

To start with, international context favouring migration was seen in terms of *a general openness*, without attaching any particular value judgements to it. The scenario was built on defining the international context driver along the same four lines: political, economic, legal and technological. In this scenario, the political dimension of the external conditions entailed the acknowledgement of the EU’s existence by 2025, the role of the USA in encouraging international migration, general political stability around the world, as well as the role of neighbouring countries’ favourable minority politics. Generally, participants assumed that in this scenario there will be no newly emerging political and regional conflicts. On the economic level, a precondition of the international context encouraging migration was the end of the global financial crisis. In legal terms, and in strong relation with the former two dimensions, barriers to international migration were assumed to be lifted in the next decade. Fourthly, technological aspects were seen as important in encouraging international migration, facilitating both transport and communication across countries. Although not typically considered as an element of the international context, participants argued that Hungary’s foreign policy forms a link between domestic and international politics, and decided to include it under the international context label.

The second driver chosen as a determinant variable of Hungary’s migration outcomes in the next one and a half decade is the stagnating economic condition of Hungary. It is important to underline that the precarious state of Hungarian economy was not only defined in itself, but as a *relative worsening of the situation of Hungary’s economy* compared to European countries, both sending countries and countries of destination. Among these, the central ones are: stagnating or decreasing GDP/capita, stagnating real estate market, an unchanged labour market, increasing or constant national debt

level, inflating pensions, the lack of external investors. Participants underlined that some of the most significant reasons behind precarious economic conditions are the following: economic policy decisions taken in a rush, the lack of political stability, the current economic policy aimed at nationalising important sectors of the social and economic life, as well as the structure of national economy. Economic decline has negative consequences on many areas of the individual and collective social, economic and cultural life. In terms of economic conditions, it results in lasting precariousness and insecurity of individual opportunities, in the shrinking share of the budget being spent on improving the quality of life (education, health etc.), in declining banking sector activity, including credit activities, and it also leads to the higher propensity of multinational companies leaving the country. On the social and economic level, the quality of education reflects the limitation of financial resources directed towards this sector, paralleled by deepening social inequalities and growing segregation, strengthening conflicts and xenophobia. All processes leading to and amounting to economic decline have an impact not only on Hungary's domestic conditions, but they contribute to the weakening of the country's position within the international division of labour.

The scenario development was aimed at imagining not only consequences upon migration, but overall demographic impacts as well. The *effects* of these two sets of drivers in *demographic* terms were: the growing rate of old age dependency, the decreasing share of the active population, and a rather unfavourable demographic structure. Declining economy and an international context favourable to migration were seen as generally encouraging Hungarian migration processes, particularly through a stronger 'culture of migration' and due to the impact of the growing Hungarian diaspora. However, the two drivers were considered to have an impact on the migratory behaviour of particular social groups in a differentiated way.

Out-migration was considered much more intensified than immigration and as such, treated by participants as the dominant stream of migration of the scenario. All social categories of the Hungarian population were seen as more prone to leave Hungary and at the same time more likely to choose settling down instead of circular migration: the Roma, the young, as well as the highly qualified national labour force. These processes are intensified within the present scenario by the aggravating educational segregation and social conflicts at the lower end of the social hierarchy; while among the young and the highly educated, both the poorer quality and increasing expenses of education and the missing employment opportunities were seen as forcing potential migrants to leave. In the latter case withdrawing MNCs were considered as one of the main driving forces of the 'flight' of the educated labour force.

Immigration, on the other hand, was considered less unequivocally affected by the two drivers, and also, less central to the scenario in general. Potential immigrant groups considered were ethnic Hungarians and non-ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring countries, third country nationals, migrant-entrepreneurs and pensioners. Participants considered that the migration of ethnic Hungarians from abroad is political and ethnic in nature, thus, economic conditions of the receiving country are not likely to impact the flows directly. On the other hand, it was found equally likely that Hungarians from non-EU member states will choose other countries of destination instead of Hungary. Third country nationals, including refugees, as well as non-ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring countries were considered to be discouraged to come to Hungary in the given domestic

and international context and as a result of the lack of integration policy in Hungary and powerful anti-migrant attitudes. As migrant-entrepreneurs and Western European pensioners (as a special group of immigrants) are concerned, participants considered it difficult to envision how their motivations and strategies could be affected by the evolution of the two drivers.

The atmosphere in which the scenario was discussed was determined by participants' views concerning the state-of-the-art of Hungary's today's economy: high national debts, long lasting financial crisis, lack of national consensus in core issues, as well as the structure of the national economy, inherited economic hardships, and Hungary's semi-peripheral position.

One of participants' central dilemmas was to define the underlying values, as well as their general attitudes towards the drivers and their envisioned evolution:

“Although someone mentioned here that the international context favouring migration is a positive thing, I would argue for us to consider it in rather neutral terms. Because it may be both positive and negative. At first glance it points to a general openness at the international level, but it can also refer to Hungary's special role within the international division of labour which can affect Hungarian welfare both positively and negatively”. (Expert, economist, own translation-GR)

Among its social consequences, the participants imagined the following: deepening social inequalities, growing segregation, strengthening conflicts and xenophobia, growing prejudices against immigrants, more powerful social conflicts among elite groups that decrease their willingness to reach consensus on certain core issues. Education is affected, too, in a negative way: its quality, as well as the introduction of tuition fees reflect the downward evolution of the economy. Lastly, social integration of the Roma is again postponed due to the decreasing amount of resources to be spent on integrating marginal social groups. Nevertheless, as we shall see in the following (B) scenario, participants did not seem confident about that the availability of financial resources will significantly improve the integratedness of Hungarian society – a core issue for almost all participants.

B. International context favouring migration & improving economic situation in Hungary

The second scenario developed by the same group that discussed scenario A was different in terms of the evolution of the domestic driver. While it was built on the same conception of an international context favouring migration (its description in scenario A was maintained), the emphasis was placed on imagining the more positive evolution of the Hungarian economy. To start with, participants entitled this scenario *“Migration as an opportunity”*, considering that while economic growth offers multiplied opportunities for upward social mobility, international out-migration is regarded by (potential) migrants and members of the Hungarian society at large as a chance of improving access to material, social, cultural and symbolic resources.

In imagining this scenario, participants started from the assumption that “every crisis ends sometime”. Nevertheless, they also admitted that Hungary's ability to improve its economic situation is largely contingent on the international context, especially when regional trends are concerned. For example it will be crucial how Germany will evolve in terms of economy. Hungary's economic growth

was not defined only in absolute, but in relative terms, in comparison with neighbouring countries. An important point of debate for participants was to decide about the model and route of accomplishing economic growth, as a cornerstone of the definition of the domestic economic driver. To what extent does it vary across economic sectors? The two possible paths were defined in the following way: (1) by improving productivity of work, innovation, increasing efficiency, (2) by decreasing costs of labour (wages).

“This means that one eye is laughing, the other is crying, because as true as it may be that the labour market is growing, many more people are working, but wages are lower. And judging from the present tendencies of the global economy I think the second scenario is more plausible (see Far East, in many sectors they are our competitors). Thus, one possible model to envision the future in a positive scenario is to assume that economic growth is propelled by innovation and technological advancement, or to assume that wages are lowered.” (Expert, economist, own translation-GR)

“The alternative scenario would be encouraging the export, focusing on products with a high added value and the integration of the Hungarian labour market.” (Expert, sociologist, own translation-GR)

While participants admitted that versions 1) and 2) do not necessarily exclude each other, they also agreed that both scenarios may be considered equally likely. Therefore, when defining this driver in its depth, they limited their endeavour to core economic indicators. Economic growth was thus first of all defined in terms of an improved competitiveness of the Hungarian economy globally. It entailed a growing labour market, increasing GDP, inflow of external capital, improving employment rate paralleled by a more accentuated integration of marginal social groups into the labour market, the shrinking share of employees hired on minimum wage, as well as the improvement of pensions' replacement rate. On a more positive note, participants assumed that these promising changes are triggered by an increase in the demand for Hungarian products on the external markets, including products with high added value, due at least partially to technological advancement in the production processes, but at the same time leading to important shifts towards a more sustainable sectoral structure of the Hungarian economy. The effects of the economic revitalisation were seen as manifold. In economic terms, participants envisioned a growing inclination towards entrepreneurship in the Hungarian society, resulting in an increased number of domestic owned SMEs. On the macro level – although not necessarily – an improved redistribution of national resources was forecasted, assumed to diminish social and economic inequalities and to improve the overall quality of healthcare and cultural services. However, against the general positive turn in the Hungarian economic and social environment (meaning also more powerful positive expectations among the Hungarian population), a rather negative consequence of the general growth might be Hungarian companies' reorientation towards external labour markets in search for lower wages.

The increasing general welfare of the population is expected to attenuate emigration. However, unlike in the case of the preceding scenario, both immigration and emigration were considered central to the present scenario. This is mainly due to the fact that unfavourable economic conditions in Hungary were seen as inducing a mass 'exodus' of economically active social categories, especially the young and the highly educated, but also that of the unskilled and the Roma population. In contrast, economic growth creates opportunities and acts as a force for maintaining a more equilibrated inflow and outflow of human capital. While members of the active and educated social

categories shall embark on labour migration, this was not regarded as leading to significant losses of human capital. In times of economic growth, participants highlighted, the highly skilled are more likely to define migration in terms of enriching one's personal skills and competencies, choosing circular migration rather than settling down in the host country. The poor and the low skilled are, however, equally prone to migrate as a response to the lack of means of upward social mobility and social integration programs. The transitional losses of human capital on the macro level are compensated for by gains in skills and labour provided by immigrants, especially entrepreneurs and third country nationals coming for tertiary studies. For both categories, improving economic conditions and the competitiveness coupled with relatively low costs of education represent important motivations. The two drivers – favourable international context and economic growth – were not directly seen relevant for the future migratory behaviour of citizens of neighbouring countries, neither ethnic Hungarians nor other ethnicities. The only exception is the scenario in which Hungary spends a significant amount of its resources in neighbouring countries in order to create better living conditions for ethnic Hungarians. Similarly, the basic features of the scenario were regarded as not having a special impact on the immigration of refugees who are typically interested in leaving to other countries of destination. As for cross-border migrants and commuters, participants assumed that two equally probable scenarios are to be taken into consideration. On the one hand, they were either expected to settle down in Hungary after shorter or longer periods of circular migration or commuting, or on the other, to suspend their migration completely. Lastly, pensioners from abroad, a special group of immigrants having targeted Hungary for some years, were considered to become more interested in settling down in Hungary as a result of improved social, housing and other types of services.

C. International context not favouring migration & degrading economic situation in Hungary

Taking into consideration the present state-of-the-art of globalisation processes, the group responsible for the elaboration of the two scenarios determined by an international context not favouring migration found that both were relatively unlikely. This made their endeavour fairly difficult. According to their arguments, even if scattered attempts may exist to limit the entry of migrants to some labour markets, they saw no real ground for assuming a European-level concentrated course of actions against international migration.

The group was hesitant in giving a definitive title to scenario C. However, based on the rather negative trends both drivers were supposed to follow during the next decade, they suggested the following possibilities: "Sad reality", "The Hungarian way".

As opposed to the previous two scenarios, the group carrying out the task of elaborating the two scripts limited the conceptualisation of the international context to the set of legal and administrative means to inhibit immigration.

The international context inhibiting migration was defined along a series of dimensions. First, this process was conceived as the result of potential host countries' attempt to 'close their gates' both within and outside the EU. In this respect, the basic instrument at hand considered was inhibiting

free movement either through interdictions or through limiting migrants' access to social transfers. Participants also envisioned the role of international organisations (UN, OECD) in shaping the supra-national legal environment of migration. Second, host countries might control migration through a more straightforward endorsement of the distinction between 'legal' and 'non-legal' migration, aiming at sanctioning the latter. Third, migration processes affecting Hungary are powerfully impacted by Germany's immigration policies: in a context not favouring migration, Germany is expected to 'whiten' its economy and limiting the entrance of low skilled workers. Fourth, newly emerging or long-lasting international conflicts were seen to limit out-migration from Hungary. The fifth dimension discussed was that of the technological aspects of international migration. Transport and communication were assumed to become more expensive, entailing the following processes: low cost flight companies get closed, mobile phone call costs, including roaming tariffs are raised, Skype introduces fees. The role of the EU, especially its economic evolution was discussed as the sixth dimension of the driver. Current processes point toward a more heavy reliance of the European Union on international migration, therefore participants needed to imagine rather unlikely economic trends and events as counter-incentives to Hungarian out-migration. On the one hand, degrading economic conditions all over the EU were foreseen, while on the other, a levelling of the regional differences within the EU might also prevent Hungarian nationals from embarking on labour migration. Lastly, Hungary's special situation as a host country of ethnic Hungarian immigrants from neighbouring countries was also covered. Participants assumed the inflow of ethnic Hungarians may primarily be halted by a more tolerant and inclusive minority politics in Romania (and to a lesser extent in Slovakia).

Degrading or stagnating economic conditions were defined in terms of relative worsening that is compared to the EU, and specifically to Germany and the United Kingdom. The economic indicators and their future evolution considered the most relevant for the lasting economic crisis were the following: increasing gap between the EU average and Hungary (in terms of GDP/capita), high unemployment, no new jobs, low added value, low productivity, shrinking labour market, increasing rigidity of the labour market, degrading social services, decreasing competitiveness of the Hungarian economy, lower quality of life, and a stagnating construction sector having a negative impact on the real estate market.

Following the general guidelines of SEEMIG project, as well as the specific instructions received from the facilitators, participants considered not only migration-related, but – where relevant – demographic and labour market consequences of the interaction of the two drivers.

In terms of demographic processes resulting from the evolution of the two drivers, the most significant considered was the continued shrinking of the share of the young population. Although the present scenario is not expected to directly impact fertility, it may be emphasised that fertility levels will not improve during the next decade under the conditions described above. However, economic processes were expected to contribute to the growing old-age dependency rate, to the diminishing of the fertile age population, as well as to the increase of the share of the Roma population within the total population of the country.

On the level of social and labour market processes, the impact of the two drivers was related to the deepening of inequalities and regional disparities within the country along the East-West division line. Social and educational inequalities and segregation, as well as the declining quality of vocational education were also highlighted as a crucial precondition of the formation of a dual labour market. Nevertheless, Hungarian higher education was expected to improve its quality, especially in the domains targeting the increased inclusion of international students.

Throughout the discussion of the impacts of the 'Sad reality' scenario on migration processes, the same 'human capital' perspective dominated participants' approach that in the case of scenarios A and B. Of the several possible social groups affected by out-migration, participants of the foresight group focused upon only one – that of the highly-skilled – as they assumed an increased propensity to migrate towards Western Europe and the USA in search of jobs requiring higher education degrees. On the other hand, in spite of the international context not encouraging migration, immigration to Hungary was foreseen as maintaining its intensity or even become more accentuated. There are several reasons for this rather unexpected outcome. First, international conflicts that were assumed to break out as a significant force inhibiting Hungarian out-migration would also be pushing third country nationals towards EU member states. Second, immigration was also assumed to increase as a result of the labour shortage created by out-migration and vacancies filled by immigrants. In parallel, however, return migration shall be discouraged in the context of economic recession.

D. International context not favouring migration & improving economic situation in Hungary

Participants used the same definition for international context unfavourable to migration as in the case of the previous scenario. The proposed title was 'Half growth'¹ and it was meant to express participants' reservations to the real positive turns and evolutions it entails. In the opinion of the spokesperson: "It is an improvement, but done in a Hungarian way."

The improvement is necessarily relative – compared to the Western European countries. The members of the group expressed their reluctance to unequivocally accept the positive and optimistic character of the scenario, as economic growth in itself might refer to the narrowing of the gap between the Hungarian and Western economies, however the former will most likely maintain its deep inequalities. Moreover, the scenario went as far as to envision the growth of social inequalities in the same pace as the improvement of the economy.

The discussion of the possible migration-related, demographic and labour market outcomes of the present scenario of domestic and international drivers was framed on the one hand by an underlying difficulty of integrating events and processes rendered highly unlikely in a scenario building exercise, i.e. that of the international context inhibiting migration. On the other hand, the discussions were

¹ The title in Hungarian sounds: "Félemelkedés" and it is a word-play combining the meaning of 'growth, emancipation' with 'something done only partially or halfheartedly'.

dominated by a constant preoccupation with inequalities within the Hungarian society, often seen as one of the major drivers of migration. Participants were reluctant to assume that economic growth could and would significantly narrow regional and social disparities in Hungary. This underlying concern explains why the group spent a great deal of time discussing not only migration-related, but also social consequences of the evolution of the two drivers.

According to their scenario, education will experience further segregation, allowing for great results to coexist with a growing segment losing any access to quality education. Additional resources will be directed towards extra-school activities (e.g. life-long-learning). In addition, the general social climate will not improve in a significant way.

The scenario called 'Half growth' was expected to have an impact on migration processes in three ways. First, both absolute and relative improvement of the quality of life (at least for middle and upper class Hungarians) contributes to a weakening of the push-effect of domestic economic conditions through making job and upward social mobility opportunities available at home. Second, this is further strengthened by the international context impeding migration. Lastly, as a third mechanism, the general international climate not favouring migration will interact with the improving Hungarian economic conditions in increasing the willingness of return migrants to settle down in Hungary.

The 'heroes' of the positive and the negative scenarios

The two heroes' socio-demographic profiles were elaborated involving all participants. Their basic social and demographic characteristics were the following:

Table 5: The socio-demographic characteristics of the heroes of the two scenarios (SEEMIG project-HU, 2013)

	Negative scenario	Positive scenario
Gender	woman	man
Age	30	18
Ethnicity/Nationality	Hungarian	Hungarian
Education	tertiary	secondary
Residence	small town	small town
Family status	married, one child	in a relationship

After presenting the two macro-social scenarios to the members of the other group, the participants were asked to choose one actor for each of the scenarios in order to be able to develop two individual life-paths through which the two persons need to tackle (and possibly make advantage of) the structural constraints described in the scenarios. Participants were given the six dimensions of the 'hard variables' of the heroes: gender, age, ethnicity/nationality, education, type of residence and family status. Participants attempted to 'create' actors that are at the same time representative of the Hungarian migration processes and reflect the basic assumptions of the population most prone to have migration intentions. It is also important to note that both are emigrants which can be

interpreted as a sign of the fact that major social concerns in today's Hungary do not refer to immigrants, but the brain drain, the loss of human capital and the hardship emigrants need to tackle when embarking upon migration. Both the man and the woman are in their active age. They are highly skilled (or just about to pursue university studies) and have access to a large set of relational, human and other types of capital. Nevertheless, they both live in Hungarian regions which struggle with economic difficulties. As it could be expected, the life path of the man is a 'story of a self-made man without a clear happy ending'. On the other hand the life course of the woman embedded in the negative scenario is almost a classical 'story of marginalisation and precariousness'.

The positive scenario

Karcsi is about to finish high school in 2014. He lives in Siklós, a small town in southern Hungary. He has a girlfriend. In 2014 he starts studying IT at the University of Pécs, graduating after 3 years. Between 2017 and 2019 he pursues a 2-year MA program in Berlin, receiving his degree in 2019. In the meantime, he breaks up with his girlfriend. In 2019 Karcsi obtains a good position at a multinational company where he earns 8-9,000 euros per month. During his time abroad he takes up work also in Switzerland where he is expected to work long hours. After three years he experiences burnout.

During his working period abroad he remits approximately 150,000 euros to his family, spending from the rest a significant amount of money to travel around the world.

In 2024 Karcsi is 28 years old. He makes up his mind to come home in order to find a Hungarian partner. As professional life is concerned, he founds together with some friends a small company, investing 85,000 euros in the company and in the acquisition of a flat in Budapest. He finally starts a serious relationship with a girl in 2025. By that year the company proves to be a good start-up, but only employing 2-3 people.

The negative scenario

Kata is 30 years old, lives in Mátészalka (a small town in north-eastern Hungary), where she works as a school teacher specialised in Hungarian and History. She had moved to Mátészalka after marriage. Her husband is an engineer, who hasn't been able for a while to find anything else but only contract work. In 2013 their child is 2.5 years old. They own a 3 room-house for which they are indebted. The husband's parents are only sometimes capable of helping them out, mainly because they are not retired yet. On the other side Kata is supporting her own parents.

Their main goals are to pay the debts, have one more child, and be able to work. Between 2013 and 2015 the husband takes up work in Germany as a skilled worker, earning 2,000 euros per month, of which he sends home on average 500 euros a month. Kata on the other hand is not able to return to the labour market after maternity leave, but earns around 35 euros per week as a private teacher working in the informal economy. Her husband comes home only rarely. Between 2015 and 2017 they are repeatedly taking into consideration Kata's migration as an informal care worker, but

because of the child she cannot do this. In 2015 Kata decides to leave to Germany to join the husband, deciding to arrange for their child to go to the kindergarten in Germany. The husband loses his jobs and he only receives unemployment benefit for only a short while.

In spite of the fact that their marriage is falling apart, she gets pregnant in Germany, deciding in 2017 to leave to Hungary to give birth to the child. In the period 2017-2019 the grandparents become ill and later on they die. Kata and the husband decide to sell the house to pay off some of the debts. Kata and the two children move to the grandparents' house. Starting with 2019 she experiences gradual marginalisation and crisis. As a divorcee she is struggling to get by, moving from job to job. She is being several times hired as a public worker, basically the only segment of the labour market still working in the north-eastern region of the country. There is no more demand for her linguistic knowledge; she is not able to find any work as a private teacher. Kata has jobs only for shorter periods.

Both life stories acknowledge and rely upon the structural conditions and constraints described in the macro-social scenarios. Karcsi takes advantage of the opportunity provided by the free movement of people and capital within the globalised world. He studies and works abroad for a period of 5 years in total. For this he needs a competitive BA degree the Hungarian higher education is able to provide him with, and also needs a profession which is demanded on the German and Swiss labour market. The lack of limitations of capital flow is important because he partially relies on foreign capital to start his firm. The fact that he needs to move to Budapest in order to embark upon entrepreneurship reflects the highly unequal distribution of resources on a regional level in Hungary. After presenting his life course over the decade, the members of the group emphasised how they were not able to 'create' a complete success story. For instance, in his private life he does not manage to start a family, while on the other hand as promising as it may seem, his start-up firm is struggling with all kinds of difficulties, being only able to employ 2 people in Hungary. Interestingly, among the two actors it is Karcsi who seems to be more reluctant to challenge in any way the structural constraints. His small failures – in his private and professional life – acknowledge two kinds of difficulties and shortcomings of the most positive scenario participants were able to come up with:

- (1) Migrants are most of the time compelled to bear the costs of labour and economic relations, instead of sharing them with capital owners. As a highly skilled labour migrant, Karcsi needs to work long hours in order to maintain his position. On the other hand – although not expressed as such – there is an assumption of the fact that his lack of ability to integrate in the host society prevents him from starting a family – a primary goal for him.
- (2) Participants were not able to envisage a completely positive scenario in which they would have granted Karcsi all the success he was striving for. As they put it: "we were not able to let him own a greater firm by 2025, it's just wasn't possible". This is very much in line with the same group's former remarks of the Hungarian economy according to which not even economic growth and an encouraging international context would be able to exempt Hungary from the economic path-dependency that has marked it so far. Path-dependency

was defined first of all in terms of unfavourable economic structure, semi-peripheral global position and growing social inequalities fed by the inability of the elite to form consensus around major political and social issues.

It seems that as favourable the conditions may seem, Karcsi needs to pay the price of these shortcomings, while of course he is definitely a winner of the post-socialist history of Hungary.

On the other hand, both stories are implicit allusions to some of the elements of social reality that feed Hungary's demographic problems. Although not affirmed as such, family formation and child bearing are seen by both groups as strongly interconnected with (if not victims of) current and future social and economic conditions. While Karcsi has difficulties in starting his own family due to his lifestyle as a migrant, Kata's story is a much straightforward example of unequal gender roles, the unequal burdens of caring for children, the inadequate child care system and family support policy. While it was only emphasised in Kata's story, we might assume that both heroes' partner relationships suffer as a result of migration. Kata's vulnerable life story is thus highly gendered: within a system of denied entry she has completely different possibilities to enter the German labour market both as a woman responsible for the child and a woman not compatible with the German demand for labour force. However, the informality of her work abroad is just one aspect of her continuing vulnerability. She supports the (material) consequences of the divorce from her husband, in spite of the fact that she is granted her in-laws' former house. All major elements of an economic recession have impact upon her life path: from unemployment, regional disparities, the systemic problems of the education to the inadequate system of social and family support. However, the gendered character of her story is one of its most powerful and striking features. They range from the gendered patterns of migration to her final inability to form a new relationship due to the gender unbalance of a region highly affected by out-migration. In fact, both individual life paths are profound and careful representations of the ways different social processes, opportunity structures and macro-social systems of disadvantages create and perpetuate social positions and pathways. The ways in which demographic, labour market and global processes interconnect in these individual lives, offer a much more comprehensive understanding of the place migration might occupy in the future than macro-scenarios were able to accomplish.

4. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS (Endre Sik)

As we already highlighted in the introductory part of the report, the three groups of stakeholders approached Hungarian migration in specific ways. Their interpretation were partly stemming from their particular professional background. The drivers they found most relevant in determining future migration processes were then built into scenarios and hero life paths in ways that reflected their conceptions regarding the future evolution of the Hungarian economy and society and migration's role within it. The fourth chapter is dedicated to analysing the outcome of the brainstorming sessions, as well as the scenario building exercises.

General overview of drivers

In addition to specific elements resulting from each of the three groups' special perspective there are several common features of the definition and interpretation of the most significant drivers of future migration. In the following we present the most important ones.

The human capital-approach

This mode of interpretation is most characteristic to the representatives of the civil society and least to experts. Migrants are regarded as bearers of human capital which is being lost or wasted by the irresponsible state that is not able to keep its labour force within its boundaries. Human capital is the result of the collective investment of the members of the society and by not granting adequate conditions for employment, these investments are being lost. This approach was dominant among most participants, making out-migration (and thus, brain drain) their primary concern.

Reinterpretation of the immigration of ethnic Hungarians from abroad

As Gödri *et al.* (2013) emphasise in their paper, while the issue of migration is being insufficiently addressed in Hungary due to the lack of a comprehensive migration policy, a significant group of immigrants – ethnic Hungarians originating from neighbouring countries – are typically regarded as a case of national and kin-state politics instead of defining them in terms of migrants. According to several of the accounts, their massive movement towards Hungary was evaluated in terms of improving the demographic landscape of an ageing population, as well as suppliers of highly educated and much needed workforce for *niches* of the Hungarian economy (construction and caring work, semi-skilled work in the automotive industry settled in the Western regions of Hungary etc.).

The reinterpretation of the role of international context in shaping future migration trends

The shift in the evaluation of the role of the international legal and political context in shaping Hungarian migration was obvious throughout all workshops. While it only rarely appears among the factors written on the flipchart, the matrix given to participants afterwards – in which they were supposed to enumerate all future drivers – mentions it several times. We labelled as 'international context' the following drivers: globalisation processes, technological advancement in (resulting in decreasing costs of) transport and communication, the semi-peripheral position of Hungary within the global world, regional political conflicts either in the region or elsewhere in Africa or Asia, as well as a lasting or newly emerging financial crisis. According to our hypothesis, this shift in emphasis is motivated by a reconsideration of the role of the state in managing Hungarian migration processes. The three possible approaches to evaluate the achievement of the state in controlling migration and turning it into the benefit of society stakeholders have recognised the rather limited scope of the state's actions in comparison with the weight of international trends.

The primary role of economic drivers

There has been a large consensus among the participants of all workshops that economic drivers are of key importance in determining present and future flows of migration. On the one hand, economy is seen as a push factor to people having migration intentions, but on the other Hungary's assumed economic hardships prevent refugees and short-term immigrants to consider long-term stay in the country. Within this cluster several factors were included: both hard economic indicators (such as unemployment, low levels of activity and employment, the rigidity of the labour market) and soft aspects of the quality of life (lack of perspectives, the precariousness of labour market conditions).

The actor-state relationship

Finally, having a more analytical look at discourses built around the most representative drivers of migration within the three brainstorming workshops, we may conclude that in one way or another they all address the issue of relationship between the individual and the state (along with other macro-social actors). This framework is most obvious in the case of civil society representatives and that of decision makers. While the former repeatedly emphasise the responsibility of the state (along with that of civil society) in not addressing or inadequately addressing the issue of migration, economic development or social inequalities, public officials highlight the role of legal provisions and administrative means to create incentives and opportunities (or else, to hinder) migratory flows. Experts are also inclined to underline the responsibility of the state of (not) creating opportunity structures for migration and economic development; however, mainly as a result of the theoretical and empirical knowledge they have relied on the social context of migratory decision and movement proved to be significant in their approach, as well.

Opportunities, threats and policy recommendations emerging from scenarios

After the presentation of the four scenarios, participants were asked two things. First, to choose among the four the positive and the negative scenarios and then to rank them according to the probability with which those evolutions of the drivers might indeed become true in the next one and a half decade. While labelling them as positive and negative was relatively easy and supported by an almost consensual vote, their probability could not be established. They labelled the scenario 'Migration as an opportunity' the positive, while the one 'Sad reality' the negative one. The group assigned to work on the two scenarios implying an international context not favouring migration claimed that exactly because of their low level of probability they were difficult to develop.

Key factors impacting content of discussions

At the beginning of the foresight scenario development workshop, participants chose among the seven shortlisted factors *international context* and *Hungary's economic evolution*. Beyond these two drivers, several others played a central role in shaping future migration processes. In the following paragraphs we describe all crucial factors.

International context

As we described earlier, international context was a complex cluster of drivers, including not only international political, but also economic and infrastructural dimensions. As participants describing

both the positive and the negative scenario argued, Hungary's past, as well as future evolution in political and economic terms is highly contingent upon the development of the international context. Both scenarios are built on the evolution of the international context, whether encouraging or on the contrary, inhibiting international migration in general and the migration of Hungarian nationals in particular. Within the framework of both scenarios, participants argued that Hungary will not be able to overcome its semi-peripheral position, or its dependence from Germany's future evolution within the next one and a half decade. The former has a direct impact on Hungarian labour force migration: as a consequence of the semi-peripheral position, Hungary's integration into the global economic system is being accomplished mainly through cheap labour force instead of growing innovation and export-oriented production. Low levels of wages are crucial in motivating the highly skilled labour force to migrate. Two further particular aspects were considered important within the international cluster of drivers: the role of neighbouring countries with large ethnic Hungarian communities and Hungary's future foreign policy. More inclusive and tolerant minority politics of the neighbouring states, as well as the economic development of these countries lead to lower propensity of ethnic Hungarians to emigrate.

Economic development

As a general rule, participants of both scenario developing groups agreed that the evolution of economy is on the one hand decisive for the individual migration decisions, while on the other, economic growth contributes significantly to preventing mass migration and brain drain. However, they also acknowledged that the impact of economic processes is not always this straightforward, for several reasons. First, in spite of improving indicators of economic life, there are a series of other factors motivating both out-migration and immigration decisions, such as enriching one's individual human capital, study migration and others. Second, increases in the GDP, along with other economic indicators, do not necessarily reduce social inequalities. The latter aspect leads us to the third important factor of future migration processes, that is, enduring social inequalities, regional disparities and educational segregation.

Lasting social inequalities and educational segregation

Similarly to the previous two drivers, inequalities as a basic factor of future migration were mentioned in both scenarios. In spite of the fact that the two scenarios were built on opposing economic drivers – the positive on economic growth, while the negative on longer lasting economic crisis – both scenario development exercises referred to enduring deep social inequalities as a key factor of low skilled emigration. Participants emphasised repeatedly that neither economic growth in itself, nor growing employment rates dissolve or at least diminish automatically social inequalities. On the contrary, the past decades' experience points to the fact that the scenario of economic growth without social integration is equally likely. Similarly, the improvement of both public and higher education may take place in a differentiated way, leaving the bulk of the education system unaffected and of low quality, while only a small minority – the (upper) middle class – benefits from

its improvement. Both aspects, as well as the deepening regional disparities are a significant push factor for the labour migration (especially) of the low skilled labour force.

The inability of the Hungarian political elite to form a national level consensus around key political issues

As discussed earlier in the analysis, both experts and civil society representatives concerned primarily with the human capital losses caused by out-migration were placing the bulk of responsibility upon the political elite for not being able to prevent the emigration of the highly skilled. In participants' opinion the recent history of post-socialist Hungary has been determined by the constancy of changes in political, economic and policy matters. The public and political life has been dominated by the omnipresent rivalry of the two major political forces, contributing to the deepening of social conflicts. The lack of consensus on both social and political level prevents the long-term development of the Hungarian economy, but it also fosters a general climate of tensions and distrust at the level of individual citizens. Both aspects were found crucial – although to a differing extent – for pushing Hungarians towards migration.

The most important opportunities emerging from the scenarios

While the negative scenario did not entail any opportunity for Hungary or Hungarian migration, the most significant ones arising from the positive scenario were the following. The general openness of the international context towards migration created the opportunity for Hungarian nationals to emigrate on a formal (legal) basis, benefitting from the advantages of formal labour migration, especially social and political security. While brain drain appeared in all scenarios as a threat – even in the most positive one, as we shall see – the improving economic conditions were expected to transform at least a part of out-migration into circular migration, decreasing thus the probability of long-term losses of human capital. The third most important opportunity stemming from the positive scenario was a gain in human capital through the immigration of highly skilled labour force. They were also expected to foster entrepreneurship in the Hungarian society. Lastly, another opportunity created by the positive migration scenario was the internationalisation and improvement of the quality of higher education, especially as a result of the attraction of fee-paying Asian students.

The most important threats arising from the scenarios

Two types of threats dominated the discussions throughout the development of all scenarios. On the one hand – as we already pointed it out – losses in human capital at the social level were the major preoccupation of participants. Brain drain was not excluded as a central threat even within the framework of the positive scenario. The second threat was that of deepening social inequalities, educational segregation, and regional disparities. These appeared in both scenarios, as participants found it unlikely that the Hungarian economic and political elite would be able to develop adequate social policies that would distribute economic growth across social classes.

There emerged two additional threats from the positive scenario in spite of the economic growth it envisaged: the enduring massive out-migration of the low skilled labour force (including members of the Roma minority) and Hungarian companies' search for cheaper labour force abroad. While the first threat was considered to be the outcome of inadequate integration policies, the second was the unintended consequence of increasing Hungarian wages.

The negative scenario impacted almost all social groups in a negative way. First, prospective or potential migrants faced either difficulties or the impossibility to embark upon labour migration due to the legal limitations of entry to countries of destination. This contributes to – at least partly – the informalisation of migration, increasing the vulnerability of migrants. Second, in the particular case of Germany, the primary migrant group affected by the discouragement of migration is that of the low-skilled. Third, as part of the international context limiting migration, increasing transport and communication costs affected former or aspiring migrants in a negative way.

The threats arising at the crossroads of domestic economic crisis and rather hostile international context are translatable into terms of human capital as well. The Hungarian society faces losses not only due to the continuing attempts of the highly skilled to leave the country, but at the same time return migrants are discouraged to settle in Hungary, too. Furthermore, third country nationals and refugees continue to regard Hungary as a transit country. Beyond the lack of economic incentives, their migration towards third countries is motivated by a general social climate hostile towards migrants.

Lastly, although 12–13 years is hardly a period long enough for new demographic phenomena to occur, in the context of unfavourable domestic and international development all negative processes are likely to continue: low fertility, high old age dependency ratio, and the increase of the share of the Roma population within the total population. It is important to note, however, that the last remark was not made in an intolerant way, but upon acknowledging the demographic tension it may cause.

Policy recommendations

The scopes and stakes of the policies to be developed and implemented by the Hungarian state need, foremost, to tackle with Hungary's semi-peripheral position in the global system, as well as its internal path-dependency. In terms of policy recommendations, we can translate the issues identified by participants as most striking into several steps to be taken. First, Hungary should address its position in the global division of labour by putting in place a set of active economic initiatives to increase its economy's reliance on export, on innovation, high added value and on higher work productivity. Second, it needs to reconsider its social, educational and economic policies that have led to widening social gaps, segregated education and dissolving channels of upward social mobility. Third, it should reconsider its foreign policies aiming at isolating the country within the EU context. For all these, a strong consensus of political elites and a relatively stable political environment are indispensable. If and when all these targets are met, and if and when they are coupled with the advantages stemming from a prosperous, open international environment valuing

human dignity, brain drain will slow down, the young and the highly skilled will consider circular migration instead of settling down, immigrants (including asylum seekers), entrepreneurs, foreign students will rate Hungary higher and internal migration will stop reflecting regional disparities. In other words, consequences upon demographic processes and upon migration will lead to increasing gains in human (and material) capital. Otherwise, just as in the case of the negative scenario, economic and social losses will be reinforced by human capital losses caused by migration.

Table 6: A synthesis of threats, opportunities and policy implications of the positive and the negative scenario (SEEMIG project-HU, 2013)

	Opportunities	Threats	Policy implications
Positive scenario: <i>"Migration as an opportunity"</i>	The general openness of EU countries towards migrants: the encouragement of (formal) migration strengthens the protection of migrants' human rights.		
	Lower transport and communication costs.		
		Hungarian companies leaving the country in search for lower wages	Addressing the needs of Hungarian companies as an attempt to prevent them from leaving the country.
	The increasing general welfare of the population attenuates emigration, especially brain drain.		
	The highly skilled choose circular migration instead of settling down in countries of destination. Migration is interpreted in terms of enriching one's personal skills.		
		Sustained Roma emigration	Integrative system of education Preventing the escalation of social conflicts
		Sustained migration of the low qualified labour force	Increasing the level of integration of the Hungarian labour market
	Increasing immigration of (aspiring) entrepreneurs		
	Increasing incidence of circular migration among the young and the highly skilled		
	Increased internationalisation of the Hungarian higher education as a result of the inflow of Asian students (from Vietnam, China, India)		
Negative scenario: "Sad reality"		EU and other destination countries discouraging migration through legal and/or social policy means.	

		This leads to increasing vulnerability of migrants and the lack of opportunities to migrate.	
		Germany in particular limits the entry of low skilled labour force.	The integration of the low skilled labour force into the Hungarian labour market.
		Transport and communication costs rising	
		Demographic consequences: fertility levels not rising, active age population shrinking, growing old-age dependency rate, the share of the Roma population increasing	
		Accentuating hostile attitudes towards migrants and the marginal social groups.	
		Potential return migrants are discouraged.	
		Immigrants (refugees) are not likely to settle in Hungary.	
		Brain drain: Increasing emigration of the highly-skilled labour force.	The need to elaborate policies to pull young professionals with foreign university degrees back to Hungary.

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ANNEX 1

Significant drivers of present and future migration processes in Hungary. The results of the brainstorming workshops conducted with experts, decision makers and NGO representatives (SEEMIG–HU, 2013)*

Drivers	Experts	Public Officials/Decision makers	Civil society representatives
PRESENT			
1	Demographic drivers (ageing, fertility, family ties as motivation for return migration)	Relative high quality of Hungarian public and higher education	Economic motivations of migration, quality of life
2	Globalisation (e.g. Hungary's position, Schengen)	Economic drivers – unemployment and niches	Discomfort caused by non-financial aspects of an unpredictable future – political conditions
3	Lack of perspectives, economic situation (activity and employment rates, unemployment, no incentives for entrepreneurs)	Hungarian legal context encouraging or discouraging migration	The role of the state and that of civil society: lack of integration and migration policies and the shift of the costs from the capital towards individual migrants and employees. The state's inability to address the needs of aspiring 'self-made men'
4	Political climate, corruption	Regional political crises or stability	'Hard' economic drivers: lack of jobs, stagnation of real estate market
5	Cultural drivers, public attitudes towards migration	Natural catastrophes	Migration networks as fostering drivers of migration decisions
6	Social inequalities, discrimination of the Roma	Cultural milieu – welcoming or hostile attitudes	Demographic drivers, esp. the dissolution of family ties as pushing factors
7	Migration as a means of social mobility	Demographic drivers	Hungary's semi-peripheral position within the globalised world
8	Social transfers in the receiving countries	The role of local and central	

		administration and civil society	
9	Integration of immigrants (esp. in education)	Neighbouring countries' attitudes towards ethnic Hungarian minority	
10	The migration policy of the state (today: schizophrenic attitude and social policies towards immigrants)	Individual characteristics and motivations	
11	Technology, communication		
12	International legal context		
FUTURE			
1	Economic development relative to the international context	Demographic processes (esp. ageing)	Culture, identity
2	Cultural factors, population's attitudes towards migration	Neighbouring countries' minority politics	Demographic processes
3	Hungarian political climate, internal division of the Hungarian society along lines of political values	The role of the state ('as a puller or a pusher') or as attracting return migrants	Global processes, the international context
4	The role of the state: as service provider or prescriber	Regional conflict and the Hungarian state's response to that	Economic development
5	Supra-national regulation of migration	New or enduring international financial crisis	The role of the state (among others, in levelling social inequalities)
6	Demographic drivers, population decrease	The evolution of the quality of education and higher education	The evolution of technology and communication
7	Regional and international conflicts	The evolution of the Hungarian labour market, incl. demand for labour force, the flexibility of the labour market	Immigration policy of (potential) receiving countries
8	Globalisation, incl. the advancement of communication technology	Population's attitudes to both immigrants and emigrants	
9	The evolution of higher education	Individual motivations (e.g. family)	

		reunification)	
10		Economic drivers, quality of life, differences between Hungary and other (receiving) countries	
11		Regional development of Hungary, tackling regional disparities	
12		Social transfers	
13		The state of the real estate market	

* The drivers considered most significant were included in the table, not necessarily in order of their mentioning.