SEEMIG National Strategy for enhancing migration data production and utilization for Hungary

(Proposal for a national strategy on data enhancement and utilization on migration, labour market and human capital)

2014

The national strategy was developed in the framework of SEEMIG – Managing Migration and its Effects in SEE – Transnational Actions towards Evidence-based Strategies. SEEMIG is a strategic project funded by the European Union's South-East Europe Programme.
Project code: SEEMIG - SEE/C/0006/4.1/X

The national strategy was prepared within the SEEMIG activity *Strategies, capacity building and transnational dialogue* coordinated by the University of Trento.

Authors: Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Hungarian Demographic Research Institute, Municipality of Pécs.

Suggested citation*:* Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Hungarian Demographic Research Institute, Municipality of Pécs (2014): SEEMIG National Strategy for enhancing migration data production and utilization for Hungary (Proposal for a national strategy on data enhancement and utilization on migration, labour market and human capital)

http://www.seemig.eu/downloads/outputs/SEEMIGNationalStrategyHungary.pdf

1. INTRODUCTION

This document contains a proposal for the national data strategy of Hungary on migration, labour market and human capital, utilizes the following outputs, and related documents of the SEEMIG project[1]. It summarises and reformulates the main findings in a complex strategy emphasizing the development plans with regards to statistics of international migration such as the Migration Strategy of Hungary (2013), the Malta Declaration on Mainstreaming of Migration in Official Statistics (2009) and relevant recommendations of Eurostat. It is based on several reports produced in the framework of the SEEMIG project, most importantly the long term "Dynamic Historical Analysis of Migratory, Demographic, Labour Market and Human Capital Processes in Hungary" on national and regional levels[2], and the complete " Analysis of existing migratory data production systems and major data sources in Hungary", also on national and regional levels [3], which was translated into a detailed "Action Plan to improve and enhance the migratory data production system and data sources in Hungary" [4]. The "Action Plan" has been validated and discussed by key stakeholders of the public administration during a SEEMIG Master Class. Furthermore, this document has undergone various checks by internal and external experts and has drawn upon other strategic documents as listed in the Annex 1 of this document.

2. BACKGROUND

Migration to and emigration from Hungary has always been an existing social process, although its intensity varied according to the country's absolute and relative economic prosperity and political circumstances. In terms of economic income Hungary was a relatively rich country in the South-East European region in the 1950s and it increased its well-being with regard to the world average till the 1980s, when it started a period of stagnation. This loss of developmental dynamics is especially visible when compared to the trajectory of other, previously migrant-sending countries as Austria and Italy, which improved their relative positions dramatically after the 1970s and became predominantly migrant-receiving countries. Concerning migration in the 1950s Hungary was an emigration country like most of the other countries in the region. The political crisis of 1956 served as an opportunity for people likely to migrate: skilled workers of young age and from previous emigration regions of Hungary to leave the country, which exodus had huge demographic, economic

[1] "SEEMIG – Managing Migration and its Effects in South East Europe" has been a strategic project funded by the European Union's South-East Europe Programme, running between June 2012 and November 2014. The project has aimed to better understand and address longer term migratory, human capital and demographic processes of South-East Europe, as well as their effects on labour markets, national and regional economies. The main goal of the project has been to empower public administrations to develop and implement policies and strategies by using enhanced datasets and empirical evidence. SEEMIG has been managed by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (Lead Partner of the project) and the partnership has included research institutes, statistical offices and local governments from eight countries, and observers from further three countries. SEEMIG has been a Danube project contibuting to Priority Area 09 of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region "To invest in people and skills".

[2] Dynamic Historical Analysis of Longer Term Migratory, Labour Market and Human Capital Processes in Hungary (2013), written by Irén Gödri, Béla Soltész and Boróka Bodacz-Nagy, containing a local case study written by Katalin Füzér and Melinda Marton. Available at http://www.seemig.eu/downloads/outputs/SEEMIGHistoricalAnalysisHungary.pdf.

[3] Analysis of existing migratory data production systems and major data sources in Hungary (2013), written by Éva Gárdos and Irén Gödri, with the contribution of Boróka Bodacz-Nagy, László Kajdi and Annamária Sárosi, containing a local case study written by Katalin Füzér and Melinda Marton. Available at http://www.seemig.eu/downloads/outputs/SEEMIGDataSystemsCountryReportHungary.pdf.

[4] Action Plan to improve and enhance the migratory data production system and data sources in Hungary (2014), written by Zsuzsa Blaskó, Ádám Dickmann, Katalin Füzér, Éva Gárdos, Irén Gödri, László Kajdi, Marcell Kovács, Erzsébet Eperjesi Lindnerné, Attila Melegh, Annamária Sárosi, Endre Sik, Béla Soltész and Rita Váradi, soon to be available at http://www.seemig.eu/index.php/downloads-project-outputs.

and political consequences. After the exodus of 1956 Hungary remained a country of rather low intensity emigration till the early 1980s, partly as a result of the improving living conditions and partly due to the restrictions on traveling and working abroad.
The period of state socialism was characterized by relatively high level of industrialization, full employment, high rates of economic growth in the 1960s and modest economic growth and stagnation after the 1970s. This acceptable living standard also secured political stability. As opposed to prior expectations on behalf of the political leadership, the rise of living standard led to a drop in fertility and it fell below replacement level in the very early 1960s, and the natural decrease of the population began in the early 1980s

Around 1980, a new cycle of globalization of the world economy began, which resulted in the worsening of foreign indebtedness of the country and the stagnation which also characterized most socialist planned economies in the region in the 1980s. The economic restructuring was also seen as an urgent need during this period and the transition to democracy brought the preponderance of neoliberal economic policies and the consequent decline of productive capacities and jobs.

Hungary's accumulated relative richness increased the country's attractiveness for prospective migrants from poorer state socialist countries facing internal crises like Romania or the Soviet Union, leading to the increase of immigration from these countries from the early 1980s. In this context due to the especially strong ethnic-historical links Transylvania in Romania became a key source of origin concerning migrants to Hungary during the collapse of state socialisms in the region which was followed by neighbouring areas inhabited by people of Hungarian origin (Ukraine and Serbia). At the same time the country gradually loosened control over travel and consequently over emigration. Hungarian citizens utilized also previously established historical links like the ones to Germany and Austria.

The introduction of the transition reforms to market economy led to the collapse of major industries and sectors of the agriculture and the increase of FDI in parallel to democratic transition could have acted as major drivers for outmigration. The increasing relative attractiveness of the country, however, turned the negative migration balance into positive. This happened mainly due to the immigration of Hungarian nationals, and it has to be noted that emigration statistics were surely of low quality. Nonetheless, despite some waves of emigration in the early 1990s (to Germany, for instance), Hungary remained on a developmental track pointing to becoming an immigration country, until the end of the first decade of the 2000s (when out-migration started to increase). Meanwhile, the complete reintegration of the country into the competitive, unequally developing global capitalist system launched a number of economic, social and demographic changes, such as the quick loss of around 1.5 million jobs and the relative decline of the economic well-being. Regarding the demographic situation, fertility declined to very low levels even when compared to most of the European countries, while mortality improvement was delayed as compared to other countries in the region.

Starting from an early high level, immigration stabilized in the 1990s at a lower rate with an inflow of 20-30 thousand people per year. On the other hand, the EU accession in 2004 opened up the European space of labour mobility for Hungarian nationals in various steps (ending with all restrictions by 2011), and it led to a gradual increase of emigration of Hungarians, including students and seekers of short- and longer-term jobs. Countries with long term historical links to Hungary (Germany and Austria) became the most attractive countries for Hungarian emigrants, while the United Kingdom and some smaller Western European countries also increased their importance in this respect. On the other hand, the rate of Hungarians working abroad remained low compared to the one of citizens from the Czech Republic and Slovenia and remained below the level of most of other new EU member states whose relative economic position was well below that of Hungary. Beyond the relative well-being of the Hungarian society (GDP/capita level as related to global

average), this could be partly due to relatively high level of welfare partially compensating for job losses and labour insecurity.

During and after the financial crisis in Germany and Austria, there was an increase on demand for labour coming from Central and Eastern Europe. The declining welfare benefits, changes in the higher educational system, and longer term labour market problems locally, led to a dramatic increase in outmigration. This was also reflected in migration potential surveys, which measured that the potential of leaving the country is becoming more realistic due to the overall improvement of language skills of the population residing in Hungary. It is to be noted that the number of registered Hungarian citizens also grew because the change of citizenship law, which provided citizenship to those people, who legitimately claimed to have ancestors on the historical territory of Hungary (more than 500 thousand people between 2011-14). These new citizens mainly live in high emigration countries and in the statistics they cannot be differentiated from Hungarian citizens emigrating from Hungary.

Based on mirror statistics, since the early 2000s a growing emigration trend is visible while immigration seems to be decreasing since 2007. According to SEEMIG estimates utilizing the UN migration matrices based on censuses and the stock data on country of birth, Hungary had an increasingly negative balance of migration since 2010. This makes the country's negative demographic outlook even more problematic. This rise of emigration and the parallel economic restructuring also led to a greater dependency on remittances which could also be observed in other former socialist countries.

Meanwhile, Hungary has lost its attractiveness for many of the prospective immigrants from neighbouring countries which, together with the worsening relative economic position of Hungary and the intensification of cumulative intra-European network migration resulted in a change in trends which might be interpreted as gradually becoming an overall migrant-sending, rather than a migrant-receiving country on the long run, if the causes of this change in trends remain unaltered.

Changes in the migration balances have worsened the dependency rate in terms of age composition (a rather dramatic decrease in the economically active age groups). The growing outmigration concerns mainly the young adult population in Hungary. As the SEEMIG pilot study has shown, the majority (67%) of the recent emigrants from Hungary belong to the 16-35 age-group, contributing to the ageing process to a significant extent directly as well as indirectly, by potentially further reducing the number of births in the country. At the same time the educational composition of the emigrants is pointing towards labour market challenges in the long run. Higher education- and also secondary education graduates are overrepresented in the emigrant population, (the former group representing 28% of the recent migrants while the last one 38%). Moreover, we also find an above-average number of skilled workers among those migrants who still maintain a strong relationship with their (former) Hungarian household members – thus the tendency of brain and skills drain is also evident.

Altogether we can say that Hungary has changed its developmental course regarding migration in the sense of not following the developmental pattern of countries like Italy, Slovenia and Austria as it was till the early 2000s. Since then, the country is gradually moving toward the path of emigration countries due to various factors including the relative loss of its economic positions as related to global averages. It is still not an emigrant country but it has the potential to become one. This trend might become reinforced by the increasing need for East European labour force which is also clearly present in Germany, a traditional migratory partner of Hungary.

The consequence of this possible change in developmental patterns toward various forms dependencies can be rather serious especially because it is not only a Hungarian phenomenon.

According to the SEEMIG projections and forecasts the extra loss of population due to a shift to an emigration pattern can be as high as one million people till 2060.

This scenario would pose very serious challenges in the relationship between migration and development. There is a great need to monitor the composition of migrants to and from Hungary in a longer term developmental framework and the linkages of migration toward international (legal) frameworks and global positions.

Altogether the SEEMIG project utilizing a longer term historical analysis, its foresight exercise and its focus group all point toward the careful longer term consideration of the situation of Hungary in terms of global inequalities and the links toward migration to and from the country in the context of migratory systems. The relevant data system and the future reform of the data system should allow the assessment of the root causes and consequences of migration. This will allow global actors to see longer term migratory processes and their developmental context in Hungary, and will also help national and local decision makers to improve their capacity to integrate the evidences on longer term migratory tendencies and developmental contexts into their decisions.

3. MAIN ISSUES/CHALLENGES RELATED TO MIGRATION IN YOUR AREA

Due to the competition in the world economy, EU integration, changes in the international environment and the shifts in demographic and labour market processes, the role of migration as a source of labour force and human capital is increasing. More and more regions and people become involved in the global systems of migration especially within the European Union. Thus it is of crucial importance for every national government and system of governance to get a relatively precise and reliable picture (despite the methodological difficulties of measuring migration) on how their country and groups of inhabitants integrate into global networks, and how negative consequences thereof could be reduced, and positive consequences strengthened.
Hungary is no exception to these trends. The problems described above, together with the lack of reliable data, add up as an urgent issue which needs actions to be taken – otherwise our country cannot proceed neither with policymaking on human capital, labour market and population, nor with building national level strategies. There is a real danger that later on we cannot cope with the above described relations of dependency that have evolved in the region and in Europe, and which are already causing significant social tensions both on the migrant-sending and on the migrant-receiving side.

The following major societal challenges are to be taken into account:

- Parts of the European Union, Russia and Turkey are more and more utilizing and attracting the labour force from South Eastern European countries of emigration. There is a need to have a continuous analysis of the complex migratory system for this region and understand how Hungary is integrated into them. There is a need to see overall balances in developmental terms which require the linkage between social, economic and migratory processes and to identify forms of equal and unequal, dependency type relationships on macro regional, national and local levels. There is a need to develop relevant policies and strategies to promote positive and to counterbalance negative consequences of migration.

- There is a need to monitor the increased loss of active age groups due to emigration, increase of demographic dependency ratios, further intensification of population ageing and the territorial and economic consequences thereof, together with the negative effects of local inequalities with regard to the intensification of migration.

- Constant work needs to be done on measuring the increasing loss of contributions to the social security funds due to the increasing loss of working age population in Hungary. We need to know how do the social security systems of the EU countries with stronger economy benefit from these migratory processes.

- There is a need to monitor further selective loss of human capital, active and able labour force from the Hungarian educational systems and labour markets toward the core economies of Western Europe and North America (including skilled workers, high technology personals, and talented university students).

- The loss of attractiveness of Hungary for prospective immigrants needs to be investigated. This is especially important because the country needs to counterbalance some of the above negative challenges arising from the change in the integration of the Hungarian economy into the European and the global economic space. Hungary could lose the interest of those labour migrants from neighbouring Hungarian communities who find Hungary less and less attractive as compared to other destination countries. We would also lose those foreign citizens who do not settle down in the country permanently. This may pose challenges in the integration policies and practices.

- There is a need to measure the positive effects of larger scale emigration on economic growth (remittances, productivity etc.) and the conditions which enhance positive effects. Processes and patterns of circular and return migration should also be better understood.

- Understanding return migration is essential. Evidence-based policies should be conceived in order to help the reintegration of returning migrants and the active use of their skills obtained abroad. This needs to be underpinned by reliable data on their social composition, migratory experiences and motivations. For the time being, no systematic data collection in the topic has been implemented in Hungary, despite the fact that with the increase of emigration, understanding return migration and its root causes is also becoming more and more important. If we wish to reduce the losses in human capital caused by international migration, then bridging such data gaps is an urgent task. The most appropriate tool for collecting relevant data could be the insertion of questions on returnees' migratory history into representative, large sample size questionnaires.

These challenges require a complex strategy which reveals the opportunities for data collection, data use and strategy building at local and national level. The SEEMIG expert group believes that the development of statistical systems linking migration data and related demographic, human capital and labor mobility data can happen only as an outcome of a coordinated set of actions on different levels, namely: the transnational, the national and the local levels. Without this complex set of actions, migration statistics will remain deficient and it will not provide a satisfactory base of evidence for decision makers.

4. KEY PROBLEMS IN THE DATA SYSTEM

Based on the policy areas listed in the previous section, the SEEMIG expert group, together with the stakeholders involved in its work, found the following problems as the most acute in the case of the Hungarian data system:

1. Lack of coordination among different actors and the need for relevant policy documents.

The greatest problem of the Hungarian data system is that migration and related development data (demographic, labour market, human capital data on migrants as related to non-migrant population, providing bases for comparisons for developmental balances as described above) are scattered all

around the major subsystems of the data system. These include administrative registers, censuses and other surveys, and their comprehensive and systematic reform and harmonization would be an essential task. However, it cannot be performed due to the lack of an overall political will, the complexity of administrative interests and the various conflicts between them. The Hungarian data system is not and will not be able to produce relevant and comprehensive data for the national and local governments, global institutions if an independent and overall governmental committee is not set up for coordinating efforts based on the positive experience of such work within the SEEMIG project. This committee should be set up by a governmental decree and it should be linked to the Migration Strategy of Hungary, thus it should include, besides the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, the Ministry of Interior, the Office of Immigration and Nationality and a wide coalition of institutions, experts and practitioners of the migration-related fields.

1.1. Also it is of great importance that the Hungarian public should be provided with reliable and timely information on the progress of the country and the nation concerning migration and social and economic development. Publishing relevant data series and analyses should be an additional task of the proposed committee. Thus the committee could supervise the harmonization and reform of the data systems and can also publish a biannual report on migration and social/economic development based on longer-term data series put together into a databank. The publication itself will be the motive for overviewing the whole data system and would give impetus for further reforms.

1.2. Furthermore the Hungarian national migration strategy should also include a strategy for reforming the data system, which as a policy document would then prescribe the necessary changes for the whole governmental apparatus. This data strategy part should always be in harmony with the overall strategic goals. The more reliable disposable data as a result of the strategy for reforming the data-system, can serve as a basis for further developments and review of the national migration strategy.

Altogether, a permanent governmental committee should coordinate the constant supervision of the diverse administrative and other registers, statistical surveys and other data sets, can publish datasets and biannually a report on migration in a societal and developmental context. The committee could also help in training public administration so that the migration related data they produce could be more systematic and coherent, thus being suitable for national and global data systems.

2. Lack of integration. The Hungarian data system needs to be integrated on various levels.

2.1. The statistical office has no access to individual level data of the relevant registries. It should be authorized for this access.

2.2. The Hungarian data system is unable to produce relevant data due to the fact that in the census and a number of registers and surveys relevant basic questions on migration history like citizenship, date of acquiring citizenship and country of birth are not asked. (See the SEEMIG Action Plan for a detailed description)

2.3. There is a lack of the harmonization of definitions in different migration data sets (including migration itself, household etc.)

2.4. Various statistically important pieces of information, which are not relevant for decision-making at the given unit of public administration, are not recorded by administrative organizations, regardless of the fact that such information is asked by the relevant questionnaires.

2.5. The most important registers (population, alien's register, health insurance, taxation, educational register etc.) of the Hungarian data system are not linked to each other by a

statistical PIN number which is a major obstacle to exclude duplications and enhance coverage of registers in order to provide more reliable data, and it excludes the possibility to identify various migrant groups and to see what characteristics and social background they have. This inhibits the analysis of what particular emigrant or immigrant groups might be significant from the point of view of social and economic development. This also excludes the possibility of following migration careers, which would be very important to understand social integration. With regard to emigration this also excludes the possibility to see how many people being inactive in various registers can be regarded emigrant, the measurement of which is highly problematic with regard to the whole Hungarian data system.

2.6. Without integrating the data system there is no possibility to have an integrated statistical database at the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, which would be very important for the work of the above proposed governmental committee

2.7. As the methods of integrating the administrative data systems are lacking, the statistical services are unable to provide reliable and timely data for feeding into relevant policy questions. Therefore, the introduction of a unique statistical identifier (PIN) is especially urgent, as it would – under a technical framework which ensures data protection – connect data from different registers. Also, it would ensure quicker and easier public administration services for citizens. In order to achieve this, the public administration system should be prepared for introducing and using such a complex system. This would help the exclusion of inconsistencies, and would also allow conducting register based censuses which would decrease costs and would allow the review of various social developments in a smaller time span then 10 years. As a major drawback, it has to be kept in mind that in Hungary, with the currently existing registers, register based censuses could not provide any information on vital demographic data such as fertility, family structure and its change, and lack basic human capital data on education (and its individual trajectory), knowledge of languages, as well as data on areas such as ethnic and national identity, religion, health and disability. All these features make this point an extremely urging one.

2.8. Registry data of other countries on immigrant Hungarian citizens, or people born in Hungary would be very important sources of the Hungarian official migration statistics, but due to the lack of harmonization of definitions and methods they are not comparable and cannot be used for controlling official statistical data on the above groups. Thus integration cannot stop at national borders and steps should also be taken on the European and global level in order to systematically follow emigration through deregistration from data systems.

To sum up, without the integration of the data system on the national level, there is no step ahead in providing reliable, quick, not too costly data on some characteristics of migrants so much needed for the analysis of migration from the point of view of social and economic policymaking.

3. Problems of large scale surveys and censuses.

3.1. Large scale surveys and questionnaire based census are very important sources of information for EU bodies, Eurostat, national governments and also local governments, in Hungary just as much as elsewhere. These surveys and censuses are extremely valuable due to the fact they contain vary important social information on immigrants and emigrants including labour market participation, language use and education – in other words, those pieces of information which would allow an assessment of their social and economic role. The use of such surveys is hindered by the fact that the subsamples on emigrants and immigrants (whatever way they are observed) are too small to provide statistically reliable data. Generally this is also coupled with language problems, namely interviewers cannot discuss with potential respondents or actually avoid such groups. This also requires the

review and further in-depth analysis of non-response codes in the surveys as well as improving public trust towards official statistics. Furthermore, the language skills should be incorporated into the selection, evaluation and further education of interviewers.

3.2. The surveys like the Labour Force Survey cannot provide reliable data on some social and economic characteristics of migrant versus non-migrant groups, because of the small sample size, the sampling methods and because questionnaires do not include such information. Thus, there is a need to introduce recurrent modules which can focus on strategically important areas of migration and development (integration, loss of human capital etc.)

3.3. The surveys and the censuses cannot adequately follow emigration processes in Hungary due to several serious obstacles. This is especially true for the social and demographic composition of migrants which is vital information for evaluating the effects of increasing emigration. One way of handling this, the use of an extra module on the large scale labour force survey has been tested by the SEEMIG project and it has been able to produce statistically reliable data on the composition of emigrants. Nonetheless it has also faced several methodological problems which require further innovation with regard to modules asking about household members about emigrant household members and relatives.

Altogether the development of different surveys (Labour Force Survey, other surveys) in terms of enhancing the sample size and resolving language problems) is an indispensable step. It is necessary to design and implement innovative transnational, national and local surveys, partly developed already by the SEEMIG project, because without such surveys the composition of migrant groups, their strategies and the attitudes of the local population cannot be revealed. It is also of crucial importance that population projections on the national, regional or local level take into account SEEMIG's migration-related hypotheses which are based on historical trends.

For the improvement of a standard migration-measurement tool linked to LFS, together with the SEEMIG pilot study, similar LFS-based methods developed in Poland and Lithuania[5] should also be reviewed and built upon.

4. Lack of publicly available transnational databanks.

The Hungarian data system is not able to provide easily available, comparative migration database based on developmental perspectives (by linking labour market, demographic and human capital processes). In this way, neither the Hungarian public administration, decision makers, researchers and the interested public, nor the international organizations and public bodies can get reliable and comparative data series, which would allow to see the Hungarian experience in a regional perspective. This transnational perspective is also important as public discourses misleadingly focus on only national level changes thus reducing and distorting the interpretation of processes which develop not only nationally, but also transnationally. SEEMIG has developed an initial version of such databank (often cited by the press), which need further coordinated efforts and financing in order to maintain it and make it useable for understanding and managing longer term processes.

[5] The Polish questionnaire can be downloaded from here: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey_-_methodology#Labour_force_status_definition.
For the Lithuanian attempts see eg. Lapeniene, V. (2009): New Approach to International Migration Statistics from Lithuania. Combination of data from Labour Force Survey and population registers. Paper presented at the 95th DGINS Conference "Migration - Statistical Mainstreaming"1st October 2009, Malta.
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/conferences/documents/95th_dgins_conference/LT_migration_95th_DGINS_Malta_09.pdf)

5. Not proper utilization of estimates.

As opposed to global tendencies the Hungarian data system does not utilize properly estimates. The Hungarian data system needs to be better integrated in using and contributing to attempts based on global migration matrices and other forms of making estimates based on several data sources. It seems that migration statistics is facing inherent problems due to its nature of taking note only of the registered facts. For this reason, we need to identify and develop various forms of estimates which overcome the major pitfalls of data collection based on registries or large scale survey. The United Nations, the World Bank and various research institutes are at the forefront of developing such methods. We have to be, however, aware that these methods focus on the main streams which can be only limitedly used for a country of the size of Hungary; consequently, there is a need to develop new methods that fit to the local conditions. Also there are repeated attempts to use “Big Data” (e.g. social media information) in order to have quick and easily and quickly available information on migration, stocks, flows and very importantly networks. This can also be a very promising area to be developed. Research projects, evaluation work is to be financed even on a national level and expert committees should be set up in order to give the fullest support possible for these endeavours.

Overview table:

Key Issue/Challenge	Lack of coordination of data system reforms	Lack of integration	Problems of large scale surveys and censuses	Lack of publicly available transnational databanks	Not utilized estim
Key proposed activities to handle the challenge	Setting up a governmental committee. New type of policy document and databank is needed	Legislative and administrative authorization for the Central Statistical Office. Harmonization of definitions, introduction of statistical PIN, introduction of some basic questions in all registers, reform on EU level	Boosting of subsamples. Overcoming language barriers. Development of new modules Emigration modules based on SEEMIG pilot Introduction of some new questions into regular large scale surveys and also the census	Maintenance and development of SEEMIG transnational databank	Monitoring of estimates Development of n estimates
Level of intervention	Government, public administration, legislation	Government, public administration, legislation, European Union	Eurostat, Hungarian Central Statistical Office	Hungarian Central Statistical Office,	Hungarian Central Statistical Office
Relevant stakeholders	Government, all public administration databank owners (COAEPS, Aliens registry, Taxation, Health, Education etc.), Statistical Office, Ministry of Interior in charge of migration strategy	Government, all public administration databank owners (COAEPS, Aliens registry, Taxation, Health, Education etc.), Statistical Office, Ministry of Interior in charge of migration strategy	Research Institutes, HCSO	Regional partner Statistical Offices	Statistical Office, Academic institut

Relevant political level endorsers	Statistical Office, national authorities working on migration issues, migration related policies; ministry of interior,	Statistical Office, Ministry of Interior, Eurostat	Government, political parties	Transnational programs and organization, academia, media	Academic institutio
Previous policy attempts to tackle the issue (if any)	Inter-governmental committee 2003-2006	Various projects on migration statistics (EIA, EKOP etc.), some legislative changes concerning the law on data protection and entry to Hungary	Module in 2008. SEEMIG pilot, projects on improving LFS. ESS module	SEEMIG pilot version	
Short term (2/3 years) outcomes/achievements of the proposed activities	Identification of key issues of the data system reform The creation of a developmental databank in harmony with the goal of transnational databanks, first reforms implemented, first publication, expert work sustaining previous attempts including SEEMIG	The mechanic integration of the data system (definitions, common questions can be completed, access to COAEPS and Aliens registration on behalf of HCSO	The successful development of one new module on emigration and also immigration. Comparable data on the composition of migrant groups, the possibility to see some trends	Better comparative databank on regional development, better understanding of Hungarian long term processes in a transnational context.	the possibility of having comparativ dataset covering more details of the international migration which allows better understanding of Hungarian longer term processes
Long-term (6/8 years or longer) outcomes/achievements of the activity	Better understanding of longer processes, existence of longer term strategies to reform data system, repeated publications	Completely integrated system (use of Statistical pin). Possibility to see migration careers and the social characteristics of migrant groups	Ability to follow major trends in the size and composition of migrant groups, with reliable information on key demographic human capital and social characteristics	Longer term cooperation between regional partner offices and the possibility of further data exchanges.	The possibility of providing transnational evidence for decis making
Potential risks and suggested	The main risks are	Myriads of technical and	Lack of funding, lack of interest	Lack of incentives on a	The inherent data

solution to overcome risks	administrative conflict of interests to be handled by a general political authorization.	administrative problems and conflicts which can be handled via using international patterns from SEEMIG countries (Slovenia, Austria) and overall governmental will to provide better basis for governmental work	and overburden on those in charge of such surveys. It can be handled via personal financial motivation, development of personnel and the cooperation with research institutes.	transnational level and lack of transnational financing	problems do not allow the development of reliable estimates. can be handled wi further research a expert consultatio and evaluations
The development of relations **Links to national/EU level policies // transnational character**	The committee works on better coordinating efforts to provide reliable data for global databanks and data producers	EU is promoting the integration of data systems and there is need to implement changes of address registration in the EU. The Malta Declaration also supports this initiative.	Eurostat is also promoting the better use and development of such surveys for migration. Wiesbaden memorandum on Social Statistics and the Malta Declaration also point into this direction.	This is transnational in itself	This is a transnatio effort in itself
Financial feasibility and sustainability	The government should allocate some funding for expert fees, publication and implementing the necessary development and modifications in the data sources.	There is a need for substantial funding on behalf of the government, which money can be save via the reduction of costs of using such a system	It needs relatively small amount of extra financing, but it should be stable.	There are major concerns concerning financing. Projects can submitted to transnational funds and Eurostat	Relatively small amount of funding enough
Proposed monitoring of implementation	Follow up with statistical office	Hungarian Central Statistical Office	Hungarian central Statistical Office	Migration statistics group of HCSO	Hungarian Central Statistical Office
Pipeline interventions	No	No	No	No	No

4.2. Key challenges related to data improvement that have been already handled by SEEMIG

1. **Lack of coordination among relevant data system's stakeholders at local, national and transnational level**. The SEEMIG project has been able to set up a useful and efficient partnership among the different actors involved in the project. The combination of research institutes, statistical offices, local governments and other public administration organizations has proved to be a creative and mutually supportive partnership.
   During the several SEEMIG events the most relevant stakeholders at national and local level were brought together, and the Master Class event was able to set up a working group made out of almost all relevant public administration organizations, which group supervised the action plan of the SEEMIG project. This working atmosphere was very promising with regard to future cooperation and could be an archetype of the committee being proposed.
   The national developmental databank proposed for this challenge has also been experimented by SEEMIG. It contains a relatively large number of indicators concerning migration, labour market, human capital and demographic processes
2. **Lack of integration.** The SEEMIG project has provided a complete review of the data system, highlighting the inconsistencies, definition problems and the ways how the data system can be integrated. It offers various alternatives of such processes and it also contains those minimum questions which should be introduced into all registers. The Master Class of the SEEMIG project considered the various alternatives on how to improve the data system, and a report has been prepared on the consensus view of the various interested parties in the public administration. The SEEMIG project also shows that the collaboration of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office with other parties is essential to build up coalitions, working groups and to exchange professional knowledge.
3. **Large scale surveys and censuses.** SEEMIG developed a pilot module which was tested at the Hungarian and Serbian Labour Force Surveys. Utilizing this large sample it set a module and a methodology for asking non migrant household members about migrant members and certain types of migrant relatives. With this methodology it provided reliable pieces of information: although the size of the emigrant population was underestimated, the data on the composition of recent migrant groups are reliable. It was tested in Hungary and in Serbia using online surveys, but they proved to be a failure. This is also an important outcome because online surveys are often used by scholars and the media in a rather uncontrolled manner. The method developed proved to be a good step ahead and after further modifications it might be used to improve large scale surveys and even the census. Two reports have been published which are available on the website of SEEMIG. It also provided technical information on how emigrant surveys should be organized.
4. **Lack of transnational databanks.** After the careful selection of variables based on theoretical considerations, the SEEMIG project has developed a transnational database prototype and proposed a list, a time frame and some key methodological considerations related to transnational databanks (with regard to missing data, conflicting definitions, the use of global data etc.) This prototype is available on the website of SEEMIG and it has been used rather extensively. SEEMIG has also established a network which reviews this databank in order to make it more user-friendly and more fruitful.
5. **Underuse of estimates in migration statistics.** SEEMIG has been able to review migration estimates based on previous projects, like the Mimosa project. It has also watched closely the most recent methodology attempts developed by the United Nations and the

Wittgenstein Centre including the newest attempt to estimate migration flows out of stock data (based on census) provided by the United Nations. The SEEMIG team was the first to actually utilize this data and analyse the outcomes of these new methodologies in academic publications. The Hungarian Central Statistical Office has organized various debates on the value of using estimates in migration statistics and it believes that this is a way to be further developed. The SEEMIG team also developed a methodology for improving population forecasts based on census data and related estimates, this methodology provides longer term trends and allows to formulate more realistic hypotheses on migration.

5. SUGGESTIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the evaluation of the current situation, listed in the previous section, the SEEMIG expert group, together with the stakeholders involved in its work, found the following suggestions and policy recommendations to be followed in order to improve the Hungarian data system on migration:

1. **A permanent governmental committee** should be set up, which coordinates the constant supervision of the diverse administrative and non-administrative registers, statistical surveys and other, migration-related datasets. The committee can also publish a basic national level analysis of migration and social/economic development, based on longer-term processes. The committee would work according to on a regularly updated work plan which coordinates the statistical data requirements and the development steps of the integrated data system. The activities of this governmental committee, however complex and diversified they might be, can only be successful if they fit and build into Hungary's international relations. In other words, they must observe the direction of global actions of international organizations such as the UN, OECD, Eurostat and the World Bank, which are increasing their efforts in order to create and develop better global data systems and methods of estimation. The better use of these data systems and their incorporation into Hungarian data systems is our country's basic interest.

   This strategic goal is the most essential one as without this there is no hope to solve the integration of the data system, to carry out the development of large scale surveys, to finance the development of national and transnational databanks. The major risk here is not being able to gain major and affirmative political will to counterbalance partial interests of the various administrative organizations. The approach of the United Nations, which stresses the developmental perspective with regard to migration, is a great international support and Hungary has been active in these UN activities. In the short run this solves some of the key issues of coordination, the databank will guide the review of the data system and the publication will inform the public and the academia why these reform steps are necessary. This will lead better based decision making and the negative consequences of intensifying migratory processes can be partially counterbalanced and the positive ones can be further utilized.

2. **Integration of the administrative data systems** will allow the statistical system to provide data quickly enough for feeding into relevant policy questions. The introduction of a unique statistical identifier (PIN) is especially urgent, as it would – under a technical framework which ensures data protection – connect data from different registers. In order to achieve this, the public administration system should be prepared for introducing and using such a complex system. At the European level, steps need to be taken in order to systematically follow emigration through deregistration from the data systems.

   In the short run integrating the administrative data systems will provide a more complete picture of the composition of migrant groups and will show the links to demographic and social characteristics. In the long run it would be possible to follow complete migration careers and to provide decision makers with a quick and reliable picture about the social,

demographic and human capital composition of immigrant and potential emigrant groups, which is not possible now. This process is full of risks and it is important to proceed following comparable existing international examples. The governmental committee described in point 1 should have the political mandate to coordinate the process of integrating the administrative data systems. At the European level Eurostat fully supports the integration of the data systems. The issue related to data protection can be solved via the use of a statistical PIN. This is a long process and it should be done step by step in parallel to the other reforms.

3. **The development of different surveys (Labour Force Survey other surveys)** and census in terms of enhancing the sample size and resolving language problems) is an indispensable step to overcome the existing problems of data production. It is necessary to design and implement innovative modules, partly developed already by the SEEMIG project, because without such surveys the composition of migrant groups, their migration strategies and the attitudes of the local population cannot be revealed.

   This is a strategic goal which can be flexibly planned and may lead to results step by step. Some of the mechanic parts can be solved in the short run, while others need longer preparation. Very importantly, such surveys can be used and should be used before the integration of the data system is completed, while afterwards the integration might solve some of the fundamental issues. This goal contains a huge financial and sustainability risk, which can only be counterbalanced if additional funds are provided, or with the active involvement of the Hungarian government.

4. **The development of the transnational databank** is crucial to set an example for national and local migration and development databanks. Having a transnational database helps to avoid the pitfall to look at only national processes concerning transnational phenomena. It provides better understanding of long term processes in a transnational framework and it allows formulating transnational policies and transnational cooperation programs most importantly among relevant statistical offices.

   The transnational database has the short term effect of helping research and policy making in gaining transnational character. In the longer run Hungary can gain a leading role in developing some of the regional policies.

   One of the risks associated to developing a transnational database is the lack of interest from the national level institutions in maintaining transnational cooperation. However, taking an active role in looking for further funding could overcome such a risk.

5. **The development of estimates is** another way of gaining better information on migration, demographic and labour market processes. The Hungarian SEEMIG expert team and the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, together with its longer term partners, can take a leading role to implement this goal. This is a low budget solution to solve some of the problems related to migration statistics, which can provide results even in the shorter run. Therefore this goal can be pursued in parallel to other strategic goals.

   The main risk is that estimates are hardly accepted by national statistical offices. Still, as the major global actors like United Nations, World Bank and OECD are all promoting this process, it is time to start changing perspectives even within the statistical offices and start implementing this strategic goal also at the national level.

ANNEX 1: Stakeholder events, scholarly analyses and policy documents used to develop the strategy proposal.

The SEEMIG strategy proposal has been developed using/referring to the following stakeholder events, scholarly analyses and policy documents, detailed SEEMIG analyses:

SEEMIG STAKEHOLDER EVENTS

- Training – *14 January 2014, Municipality of Pécs*
- Foresight Exercise – *23 November – 6 December 2013, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Budapest*
- Master Class – *8 April 2014, Municipality of Pécs*
- Focus Group – *26 March 2014, Demographic Research Institute, Budapest*
- Local Roundtable – *2 June 2014, Municipality of Pécs*

Besides the three Hungarian project members (Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Demographic Research Institute, Municipality of Pécs) and its observer members (Ministry of Interior, European Migration Network – Hungarian contact point, Visegrad Statistical Association), representatives of many other institutions and organizations took part at SEEMIG's stakeholder events. These include, without being exhaustive, the following:

- Ministry of Human Resources
- Ministry for National Economy
- Office of Immigration and Nationality
- National Health Insurance Fund Administration
- National Labour Office
- Central Administration of National Pension Insurance
- Central Office for Administrative and Electronic Public Services
- Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Labour Office, Baranya county
- Municipality of Budapest
- University of Pécs
- Corvinus University of Budapest
- Eötvös Loránd University
- University of Szeged
- Central European University
- Menedék – Hungarian Association for Migrants
- Gyere Haza Foundation
- Hungarian Maltese Charity Service
- Association of Transylvanian Hungarians
- Milestone Institute
- Artemisszió Foundation
- ID Research Ltd.
- Liga Trade Unions
- and many more as participants at SEEMIG's events.

REFERENCED SCHOLARLY ANALYSES AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

- National Migration Strategy of Hungary (as of Governmental Decree 1698/2013 (4 October 2013).
- Melegh, Attila: Net Migration and Historical Development in Southeastern Europe since 1950. Hungarian Historical Review 1, no. 3–4 (2012): 415–453
- Böröcz, József: (2012): Regimes of Remittance Dependency: Global Structures and Trajectories of the Former Soviet 'Bloc', Manuscript prepared for SEEMIG.

DETAILED SEEMIG ANALYSES

SEEMIG project outputs are available under http://www.seemig.eu/index.php/downloads-project-outputs

- Conceptual framework for modeling longer term migratory, labour market and human capital processes in 8 South East European countries
- Dynamic historical analysis of migratory, labour market and human capital processes – country report for Hungary, local chapter on Pécs
- Dynamic historical analysis of migratory, labour market and human capital processes - synthesis report for 8 South East European countries
- Analysis of existing migratory data production systems and data sources – country report for Hungary, local chapter on Pécs
- Action Plan to improve and enhance the migratory data production system and data sources in Hungary
- Analysis of existing migratory data production systems and data sources – synthesis report for 8 South East European countries
- Surveying emigration - report on the first stage of the pilot study in Hungary and Serbia
- Comparative analysis of existing major population projections in 8 South East European countries
- Population projections and forecasts in Hungary and Slovakia
- Foresight report on Hungary
- Foresight synthesis report for 8 South East European countries