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## Migration of Hungarians in Europe (2010–2019)

### Abstract

**The purpose of the study.** In my study, I examine the level of emigration from Hungary to the EU/EFTA member states in the period between 2010 and 2019, the demographic characteristics of emigrating Hungarian citizens, and their motivations for migration.

**Applied methods.** The rate of emigration and the examination of demographic characteristics were analyzed by statistical analysis, the motivation of migration was analyzed by a literature review, and by presenting the results of my own online questionnaire research.

**Results.** In 2019 about 490,000 Hungarian citizens lived in other EU/EFTA member states. Most of the emigrants are men in their 20s with secondary education. The most popular European destination for Hungarians is Germany. The emigration of Hungarians from our country has been continuously decreasing since the mid-2010s, as a result of which we can expect a positive migration balance from 2019. Hungarians were primarily motivated by economic and political reasons to emigrate in the 2010s.

**Keywords:** emigration, Hungary, migration, motivation, international migration

### Introduction

Looking at the emigration history of Hungary over the past 150 years, we can talk about several major periods of emigration, the reasons behind which are not very colorful: they occurred for economic and/or political reasons. The first major wave started towards North America at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and there were economic reasons behind it.<sup>736</sup> The next larger emigration waves took place for political reasons in 1944/45, 1947, and then in 1956. The economic downturn following the regime change also brought an increase in emigration in the 1990s.<sup>737</sup>

Hungary joined the European Union in 2004, which created opportunities for free movement towards other EU countries. After that, the economic crisis that started in 2008 produced such conditions that at the beginning of the 2010s it was clear that the rate of emigration increased. The recession-induced exodus of Hungarians reached its peak in 2013, when more than 100,000 people left our country. Since 2014, Hungarians' desire to emigrate has been decreasing. The importance of the question is given by the fact that the majority of emigrants come from the social groups that mostly determine Hungary's demographic/educational/labor market in the future: young people, singles/singles, men and skilled/schooled people.<sup>738</sup>

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<sup>736</sup> Gulyás, A. (2020)

<sup>737</sup> Juhász, J. (1993): 49.

<sup>738</sup> Sík, E. – Szeitl, B. (2016): 555.

The emigration that contributed to Hungary's labor shortage was the most significant in the construction industry, the manufacturing industry, the catering industry, and the health sector.<sup>739</sup>

As far as the literature on the issue is concerned - although research into the phenomenon of migration began at the end of the 1800s - for social scientists migration became a prominent subject of investigation after the Second World War. Researches made at that time were mostly concerned with the cultural differences between immigrants and natives, the paths of assimilation, chain migration networks supporting immigrants, and the role of social and cultural capital in limiting and controlling the process.<sup>740</sup> International migration research, which has been increasing since the beginning of the 2000s, has primarily dealt with the magnitude of emigration, the demographic characteristics of emigrants, and the economic and labor market effects of emigration. After joining the EU, migration policy and the question of the integration of immigrants became more and more popular. In addition, some studies have been published in recent years on the migration potential of young people and medical students. On the other hand, little research has been done on the nature and explanation of return migration, on the model of domestic emigration, and empirical knowledge based on international comparisons is negligible.<sup>741</sup> We also lack the knowledge regarding the brain drain and brain waste phenomenon affecting Hungarians.

In my study, I am looking for answers to the following questions. What was the rate of emigration and remigration of Hungarians in the 2010s? How did the number of Hungarians living in individual European countries change? What are the demographic characteristics of international migrants? To which European country did most Hungarians emigrate? What factors motivated the Hungarians to emigrate? What is the reason for remigration? Can the phenomenon of brain drain be observed in Hungary?

To answer my research questions, I primarily used data from online statistical databases. Eurostat was used as a source of statistical data to examine the demographic characteristics of emigrants. The rate of emigration was determined on the basis of data from the KSH, mirror statistics, individual national statistical offices (DESTATIS, Office for National Statistics, STATCUBE) and the HMRC. The motivation for migration was based on domestic research for the given period, my own questionnaire research conducted in 2022, and the results of the micro census conducted by the Central Statistical Office in 2016. I used SPSS statistical software to examine the relationship between income differences and emigration between Hungary and the main destination countries.

## **Emigration and return migration trends, destination countries**

### **Number of Hungarians living abroad**

According to data from the United Nations, the number of people born in Hungary<sup>742</sup> and living abroad (in Europe and beyond) was 513,000 in 2010 and 632,000 in 2019. In 2010, this

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<sup>739</sup> Hárs, Á. (2020)

<sup>740</sup> Sík, E. (2011): 4.

<sup>741</sup> Hárs, Á. (2020): 116.

<sup>742</sup> Those born in Hungary include Hungarian and foreign citizens born here.

represented 5.1% of the entire domestic population, and in 2019, 6.5%. Based on mirror statistics, at the beginning of 2019 the number of Hungarian citizens living in the EU/EFTA member states was around 490,000, which represents an increase of 80,000 since 2015 and 280,000 since 2010.

### The rate of migration

The measurement of emigration in Hungary faces difficulties, the reason for which is, among other things, that there is currently no strict registration system for emigrants in our country. Compared to domestic emigration data, we can get a more accurate - but still not precise - insight into the level of emigration based on mirror statistics. Below, the emigration data obtained from two different sources for the three main destination countries (Austria, United Kingdom, and Germany) are compared. As can be seen, the emigration data measured on the basis of mirror statistics show multiple values of the data of the Central Statistical Office. (Table 1) The two data series both correspond that they indicate a continuous decrease in emigration from the second half of the examined period. A striking difference is that, while the mirror statistics place the peak of the emigration wave in 2013, the domestic statistics place it in 2015.

Table 1 Comparison of the number of Hungarian citizens who immigrated to the three main destination countries based on emigration and immigration statistics 2010-2019

Hungarian citizens who immigrated to the three main destination countries (thousand)										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>KSH</b>	5.1	9.5	10.3	17.5	25.3	26.3	23.2	20.8	17.9	16.4
<b>Mirror statistics</b>	49.9	68.3	89.7	100.7	94.1	93.0	82.3	72.9	64.3	56.7

*Source: KSH, Mirror statistics: German Federal Statistical Office-residential address register, United Kingdom: HMRC-registration of social insurance number, Austria: Federal Statistical Office.residential address registration*

According to the data of the Central Statistical Office<sup>743</sup>, the number of emigrants increased drastically in 2011, the increase - albeit at a variable rate - lasted until 2013, and then the number of emigrants decreased continuously from 2014.

Due to the continuous decrease in the willingness of Hungarians to emigrate from 2014, the migration balance of Hungarian citizens born in Hungary turned positive in 2019. In this year, the number of Hungarians returned exceeded the number of those who left our country by 1,272. Accordingly, as of 2019, the net migration ratio is also positive (0.13%).

Due to the continuous decrease in emigration from 2014, as well as the large-scale return migration, the growth rate of the number of Hungarian citizens living in the member states of the European Union and EFTA is continuously decreasing. In the United Kingdom, the rate of growth moderated to such an extent while the number of returnees increased that by 2019 the

<sup>743</sup> The KSH data do not reflect the true extent of emigration and return, as Hungarian citizens do not necessarily comply with their obligation to report health insurance policies established in other EU member states. In addition, emigrating Hungarians typically do not deregister from their residential address in Hungary.

number of Hungarians living there decreased by around 22 thousand people, from nearly 100 thousand people in 2018 to 78 thousand people. In Austria and Germany, although the number of Hungarian citizens continued to rise, the rate of growth also slowed down. The number of Hungarians living there has also increased in Switzerland and the Netherlands, which can be considered a popular destination for Hungarians, and Slovenia, Iceland, Norway, Romania and Denmark are the countries where the number of Hungarians increased greatly in the 2010s.

In the examined period, the number of Hungarian citizens living in the EU/EFTA member states increased continuously, albeit at an alternating pace, but - with the exception of a decrease of about 5,000 people from 2018 to 2019. "In the examined period, the number of Hungarian citizens living in the three main destination countries (Austria, Germany and the UK) (376,000 people) compared to the region is considered low. The largest number of Polish and Romanian citizens of working age (15-64) live in other EU/EFTA countries. In 2019, 1.9 million Polish and 2.8 million Romanian citizens lived in different European states.

If we compare the number of these international migrants to the domestic population of the given nation, Hungary (5%) ranks towards the end of the ranking of EU/EFTA member states, in the third tertiary of it, while countries with the most intensive emigration rate (Lichtenstein, Croatia, Luxembourg, Cyprus and Lithuania) this ratio is 21-28%.

### **Return migration**

The continuous upward trend of the immigration of Hungarian citizens born in Hungary and the so-called returnees during the examined period was broken in 2018, when it stabilized at around 23,000 people per year.

The annual number of returning Hungarian citizens gradually increased between 2010 and 2018, from 1,575 to 23,401, and since 2018 has stagnated at around 23,000.

In the first half of the examined period, among the three most popular European destination countries, the largest proportion of Hungarians returned to Hungary from Austria. (23-65%) from 2014, the proportion of Hungarians returning home from all three destination countries shows a rising trend, to such an extent that from 2018, from the United Kingdom (by 52%), and from 2019, from Germany (by 4.4%) more people returned home than emigrated there in the given year. Part of the reason for this can be found in the drastic decrease in Hungarians' desire to emigrate.

The migration balance was negative in the examined period. The emigration loss was the highest in 2014, the number of Hungarians emigrating this year exceeded the number of returnees by 20,029. In 2019, the migration balance turned positive, this year we counted on a migration gain of 1,272 people.

In addition to the previously mentioned reasons, Hungary's improving economic situation and everyday livelihood opportunities can also be behind the increasing return migration to Hungary. The change in the average net income in Hungary, the change in purchasing power parity, and the change of utility costs (the consumer price index for water, heating and electricity

also decreased in Hungary, while the average prices in the European Union increased) in the examined period, it closely correlates with the number of returnees.<sup>744</sup>

### **„Old-new Hungarian citizens”**

As for the immigration of Hungarian citizens born abroad, this population rose continuously in the first half of the examined period, thereby contributing to the reduction of the domestic population decline. The peak was in 2015, when 17,747 people arrived in our country.

From the year 2016, their number decreased continuously, until at the end of the period it reached the level of 10,000 people per year.

Regarding the repatriation of Hungarian citizens born abroad, 2011 was the year when we witnessed a drastic increase. At that time, their number rose from 60 in 2010 to 3,061 in 2011. Some of them were foreign-born immigrant Hungarian citizens who acquired Hungarian citizenship abroad (they were naturalized) and then moved to Hungary. The drastic increase in the number of immigrants in 2011 and the continuous increase in the following years, thus the improvement of the migration balance, were partially explained by the 1993 LV (Ápt.) on Hungarian citizenship resulted from the 2010 amendment of the Act<sup>745</sup>. Within this framework, the simplified naturalization procedure was introduced which facilitated the acquisition of Hungarian citizenship for Hungarians across the border. Pursuant to the law, "...a non-Hungarian citizen whose ancestor was a Hungarian citizen or whose ancestry in Hungary is probable, and who proves his knowledge of the Hungarian language, is eligible for preferential naturalization." Between 2011 and 2015, a total of 54,000 people established a residential address in Hungary after receiving Hungarian citizenship while living abroad.<sup>746</sup> From 2017, the immigration of Hungarian citizens born abroad decreased and stabilized at around 10,000 people per year.

### **The most popular European destination countries for Hungarian citizens**

According to UN data, Hungarians lived in 65 countries in 2019, 30 of which had a population of 1,000. From the beginning of the examined period, the distribution of the Hungarian population by destination country has changed somewhat. While 68% of them lived in a European country<sup>747</sup> in 2010, in 2019 nearly three quarters (73%) of them lived in North America, while the proportion of people living in North America dropped from 24 to 20%.

<sup>744</sup> Uhljár, P. (2022): 8.

<sup>745</sup> As a result of the amendment to the law, in contrast to the previous provisions, in order to obtain Hungarian citizenship, it is not necessary to settle in Hungary, it is not necessary to take a citizenship test, or to prove residence and livelihood in Hungary.

<sup>746</sup> Új magyar (2017)

<sup>747</sup> According to UN data, the most popular European destination countries in order of Hungarian-born people living there in 2019 are: Germany, Austria, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Sweden. Most popular destination countries outside Europe: United States, Canada, Australia and Israel.

The most popular European destinations for Hungarian citizens were Austria, the United Kingdom and Germany in the 2010s. (Table 2) During the examined period, 70-81% of Hungarian citizens migrating within Europe chose these three countries.

In addition to geographic proximity, the existence of migration networks may have played a role in this. At the beginning of the examined period, most Hungarians lived in the three main destination countries, so these networks were obviously the most extensive there. According to network theory, the existence and growth of migration networks reduces the cost and risk associated with migration, while simultaneously increasing the net benefit. And reducing cost and risk increases migration.<sup>748</sup>

Table 2 Flow and stock data based on data from mirror statistics of Hungarian citizens immigrating to the main destination countries

The number of Hungarian citizens who immigrated to the main destination countries (thousand)											
Data type	Host country	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Flow	Germany	29.3	41.1	54.8	59.0	57.3	56.4	49.8	46.1	41.9	35.0
	United Kingdom	14.2	17.9	21.8	26.8	22.3	22.2	19.2	13.7	9.8	9.7
	Austria	6.4	9.3	13.1	14.9	14.5	14.4	13.3	13.1	12.6	12.1
Stock	Germany	65.4	:	80.0	106.3	132.3	150.7	171.2	180.2	190.6	196.1
	United Kingdom	37.0	48.0	50.0	73.0	74.5	86.5	83.7	96.4	99.6	77.8
	Austria	23.3	25.6	29.8	37.0	46.3	54.9	63.6	70.6	77.1	82.7

Source:

Flow line data: German Federal Statistical Office residential address register, United Kingdom: HMRC social security number claimants, Austria: Austrian Statistical Office residential address register. (:) data not available.

Stock line data: Germany: Eurostat population, United Kingdom: Eurostat population; 2012, 2013: British Statistical Office annual population estimate, Austria: Austrian Statistical Office population

Judging by the mirror statistics, Germany was the main destination country for emigrating Hungarians throughout the period under review. The United Kingdom was in second place until 2017, when Austria took over its place in 2018. This is because the number of people migrating to the UK fell by 28% from 2017 to 2018.

In 2019, almost three quarters (74%) of Hungarians living in European countries lived in the three main destination countries - Germany (41%), United Kingdom (17%) and Austria (16%). Although the number of Hungarians living in the EEA member states increased to varying degrees, their number decreased by around 5,000 people from 2018 to 2019.

The majority of Hungarians immigrating to the United Kingdom, around 90% of them live in England. Within the main destination countries, most Hungarians settled in the capital of the respective state (Berlin, Vienna and London). In addition, a large number of Hungarians live in England in the south-eastern (East-Sussex, Kent, Dartford and Surrey) and eastern counties (Essex, Basildon and Hertfordshire). Compared to other international immigrants, most Hungarians lived in Dartford and Tandridge in the south-eastern part of England, around 3.5% of all immigrants living here were Hungarian citizens in 2020. In Austria, the majority of Hungarians live in the provinces of Lower Austria, Upper Austria and Styria, including in the districts and cities of Baden, Linz and Graz. The province of Burgenland, where the majority of immigrants from the EU/EFTA member states are should be highlighted (in 2019, 31% of them, 6,039 people were Hungarian citizens). The majority of Hungarians living in Germany

<sup>748</sup> Massey, D. S. (1993)

(36% in 2019, about 76,000 people) live in the province of Bayern (Bavaria). In addition, the provinces of Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hessen are also popular among emigrating Hungarians.

### Motivations for emigration and return migration

Behind the primary motivations of the emigration of Hungarians in the 2010s - as in the past 150 years - were economic and political reasons.

The research was conducted by Hárs (2020) in 2018-2019 among persons over the age of 18 who were born in Hungary and who had been living or working abroad for at least three months prior to the survey examined the emigration from Hungary. After researching the reason for the emigration, they came to the result presented below. The most important factor behind the emigration decision was economic and labor market effects, but factors related to quality of life also played a role. The vast majority of emigrants (65%) left our country because of the hope of a higher income. This reflects the neoclassical macroeconomic theory of international migration, according to which the cause of migration is to be found in wage differences.<sup>749</sup> There is also a large number of those who decided to emigrate due to desperation, the lack and hopelessness of job opportunities in Hungary (40%), and the political atmosphere in Hungary (37%). Better opportunities for children's education and future (1/5), the experience of living abroad, sheer desire for adventure (20%), and finally, to a lesser extent, family reasons and fear of the future also played a role in the decision to migrate. Differences emerge according to educational level regarding the factors that motivate emigration. The hope of a higher income was important for all education groups. Those with basic education were mostly motivated to emigrate by the lack of job opportunities in Hungary, lack of prospects and family problems. Those with a secondary education were motivated by financial concerns, while graduates were typically motivated by non-financial considerations, such as the domestic political atmosphere, gaining experience abroad, and the hope of a better future for their children to make the decision to emigrate.

I reached a similar conclusion through the online questionnaire research I conducted in April 2022.<sup>750</sup>

The majority of respondents unanimously indicated the high level of domestic corruption, the political situation, and low salaries as the most motivating factors for their emigration. This may be related to the fact that the majority of those filling out the questionnaire have a higher education, among whom the political environment typically plays a significant role in the emigration decision process, according to other research results.

Siskáné Szilasi – Halász, in the framework of the 2016-2017 OTKA research in 2008, examined the process related to emigration. According to their results, the primary reason for emigration is economic. This is followed by decent working conditions and pay, the lack of jobs that provide opportunities for advancement, and insufficient working conditions. *"Politics that have deepened unbridgeable social fault lines over the decades, worsening corruption, susceptibility*

<sup>749</sup> Massey, D.S. (1993): 433.

<sup>750</sup> The questionnaire was filled out by 101 person, most of whom live in the United Kingdom, have a higher education, are over 18 years old and have lived in the island country for more than three years.

*to compromise, a society of complaints, and the lack of civic self-awareness are all increasingly significant reasons for emigration."* <sup>751</sup>

If the income differences between Hungary and the three main target countries are measured on the basis of the existing differences in GDP per capita measured at purchasing power parity, it can be concluded that Hungary falls behind the income level of the main target countries in the period under review. If we examine to what extent GDP per capita at purchasing power parity explains the migration rate relative to the population, it can be concluded that the correlation coefficient is significant, and its value indicates a close relationship.<sup>752</sup> This means that as the purchasing power parity GDP per capita increases, emigration decreases, while emigration increases as the economy turns down. In the case of the United Kingdom, the p value (-0.764) indicates a stronger-than-average negative relationship between the two variables. It should be noted that correlation does not mean that there is a causal relationship between the two variables. But it indicates that one affects the other, or that both are affected by a common causal factor. The results must of course be further tested.

The answer to the motivation of the return migration is provided by the results of the micro census<sup>753</sup> conducted by KSH in the fall of 2016. According to that, Hungarians' remigration is mostly motivated by family reasons. There was a difference in the reason for returning home along the length of the stay abroad. The majority (almost half) of those who lived abroad for at least one year moved home for family reasons. An equal proportion of those living abroad for a short term (31% respectively) migrated back for family reasons, or because they believed that their goals had been fulfilled.

It is also characteristic that in the case of those with higher education, the return migration due to the fulfilment of the emigration goal is the highest, and that the members of groups with increasingly older and lower educational levels return home for family reasons in greater proportion.

### **Social composition of Hungarians living abroad**

In 2019, 6% of the Hungarian working-age population lived in other EU/EFTA member states.

In the 2010s, the proportion of men among Hungarian migrants of working age (15-64 years) living in other EU/EFTA member states fluctuated between 47% and 52%. By 2018, the gender ratio had equalized. The gender distribution of emigrants differs from country to country. While Austria was characterized by a slight female surplus (52-53%), Germany was marked by a pronounced male surplus. Here, the proportion of Hungarian men fluctuated between 57-61%. As of 2015, the proportion of women is constantly increasing. In the United Kingdom, as in Germany, there is a male surplus. In the 2010s, the proportion of men requiring a social security number on the British Islands was 53%. The exception to this is the age group under 25 and over 44, where women represented a larger proportion.

<sup>751</sup> Siskáné Szilasi, B. – Halász, L. (2018): 75.

<sup>752</sup> The results should be treated with caution, given the small number of cases, there may be a possibility that the results presented above were due to accidental scattering of the data.

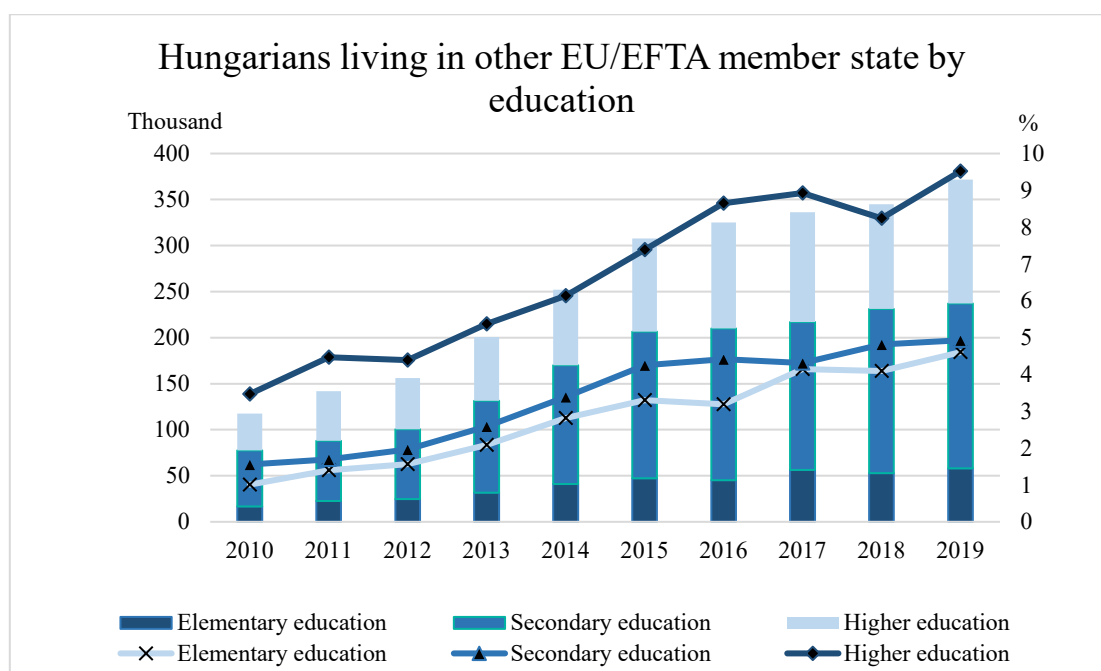
<sup>753</sup> The sample consisted of 10% of Hungarian households. During the microcensus, around 440,000 households in 2,148 settlements in Hungary were included in the survey.



In the 2010s, the majority (43-54%) of Hungarian citizens of working age (15-64 years of age) who emigrated from Hungary were under 30 years of age. Overall, 68-75% of them were in their 20s and 30s, while 38-43% of the Hungarian population belonged to this category. The majority of people living in the main target countries Austria (55-62%) and Germany (52-58%) also belonged to the young (20-39) age group. In the United Kingdom, the proportion of the young age group is higher than the average, in the 2010s, 73% of those applying for a social security number (NINo) in the island country were between the ages of 18 and 34.

Regarding the education<sup>754</sup> of Hungarian citizens of working age (15-64 years) living in other EU/EFTA countries, the majority of them (46-52%) had a secondary education in the examined period. (Figure1.) The proportion of graduates varied between 32-38%, while 14-17% had a basic education. In the same age group of the domestic population, these proportions differ somewhat, the proportion of those with primary education (20-25%) and secondary education (57-59%) is higher, while the proportion of graduates is lower (17-22%). This means that in terms of the educational level of the migrant population, a higher proportion of them have a diploma than those who stayed at home. In other words, those with a higher education are more mobile than those with a lower education.

Figure 6 Hungarians living in other EU/EFTA member states by education per thousand people and in proportion to groups with the same education in the domestic population



Source: EUROSTAT data [MIGR\_POP1CTZ], [EDAT\_LFS\_9911], [EDAT\_LFS\_9912], [EDAT\_LFS\_9913] and own calculation

<sup>754</sup> Based on the ISCED 2011 classification system. I used designations of 0-2: elementary, 3-4: secondary, and 5-8: higher education.

In 2019, 16% of people living in other EU/EFTA member states had basic education, 48% had secondary education, and 36% had higher education. In 2019, 4.6% of Hungarians of working age with primary education, 4.9% of those with secondary education, and 9.5% of those with higher education lived in other European countries.

This is also an outstanding value because in the 2010s, the number of Hungarian primary and secondary students continuously decreased, while the number of graduates increased. While only 1,140,000 people had a diploma in 2010, in 2019 there were already 1,423,000 people. In the case of Hungarian emigrants, the education ratio (the ratio of highly educated emigrants compared to all emigrants) is also exceptionally high compared to other countries in the region (0.34). Based on this, it can be concluded that the brain drain phenomenon can be observed in Hungary. According to the results of my research I conducted in the spring of 2022 among Hungarians living abroad, 46% of emigrants with a higher education who filled out the questionnaire did not work in a job corresponding to their education. Based on this, it is likely that, in addition to brain drain, the phenomenon of brain waste can be observed among emigrants as well as among those who stayed in the country.

Among graduate emigrants, the emigration of healthcare workers causes the largest problems for our country. Although the migration of healthcare professionals is a global phenomenon, the lack and nature of healthcare human resources varies from country to country. According to World Bank data, the number of physicians per 1,000 people in Hungary is below the European Union average. During the examined period, the number of jobs in health care industry remained below the number of jobs required for operation. In 2019, 8,124 positions necessary for operation remained unfilled. According to ENKK data in the early 2010s, the number of Hungarian physicians immigrating from our country increased, from 2012 to 2013 it decreased by 25% (from 940 to 705 people), and then from 2016, the proportion of physicians requiring an official certificate has been continuously decreasing. (The majority of them are women between the ages of 25 and 29.) The reason for this is presumably the introduction of the scholarship system of the Resident Support Program in 2011, as well as the wage adjustment for physicians, which began on September 1, 2016 and was implemented in four steps. It should be noted, however, that in the field of health care, leaving the workforce - caused by the wage structure, working environment and treatment - plays a greater role in the increase in the labor shortage than emigration. Considering that from 2010 to the end of the examined period, the number of Hungarian doctors requiring an official certificate decreased by about 50%, we can conclude that the motivation behind medical emigration to Hungary were primarily financial reasons.

### **Summary**

Emigration is a global phenomenon, its beginning coincides with the beginning of human history. In 2019, about half a million Hungarians lived in other EU/EFTA member states. Based on domestic statistical data, the emigration of Hungarians from our country has been continuously decreasing since 2014, as a result of which we can count on a positive emigration balance from 2019. The emigration trend of Hungarians during the 2010s was essentially the same as the global trend. Most of the emigrants are men in their 20s with secondary education.

The composition of international migrants changed in terms of age during the period under review. While the proportion of those in their 20s and 30s decreased, the proportion of those under 20 and over 40 increased. The proportion of those with primary or higher education living in other EU/EFTA member states also increased, while that of those with secondary education decreased. Looking at the demographic composition of the Hungarian population living in other EU/EFTA member states, emigrants are on average younger and more educated than the sending population, and there are more men than women among them. Differences can be observed according to destination countries. In Germany there is a clear male surplus, while in Austria there is a female surplus. The emigration of people with higher education is significant and constantly increasing, which is a serious problem for Hungary. The most popular European destination for Hungarians is Germany. Hungarians were primarily motivated by economic and political reasons to emigrate in the 2010s. Emigration and income differences between sending and receiving countries show a close relationship. The reason for the return migration is primarily the family that stayed in Hungary.

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