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YOUMIG

Improving institutional capacities and fostering cooperation
to tackle the impacts of transnational youth migration

**Local strategy for
improving governance
capacities and services
linked to youth migration**

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MUNICIPALITY OF BURGAS, BULGARIA

Local strategy for improving governance capacities and services linked to youth migration

BURGAS MUNICIPALITY, BULGARIA

This Local strategy was developed in the framework of the project ‘YOUMIG – Improving institutional capacities and fostering cooperation to tackle the impacts of transnational youth migration’.

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INTRODUCTION¹

The present document is a Local strategy for Burgas Municipality, Bulgaria, on youth migration. Its objective is to provide a strategic outlook on possibilities for improving local governance capacities, as well as local services linked to the emigration, immigration and return migration of young people.

The Local strategy was developed within the transnational project '*YOUMIG – Improving institutional capacities and fostering cooperation to tackle the impacts of transnational youth migration*', co-financed by the European Union.

The document was written by members of the YOUMIG consortium, including research institutions, statistical offices and local authorities from eight countries. Authors of each subchapter are referenced in footnotes.

The Local strategy is structured as follows. A short executive summary of the main recommendations and an overview of the YOUMIG project are presented at the beginning of the document, followed by four chapters.

Chapter 1 presents the conceptual and empirical starting points of the YOUMIG project in general, and the main findings for Burgas Municipality in particular. This chapter explains why the migration of young people is of crucial importance for local level policymaking, how the first phase of the local research was designed, and what the most important trends are for Burgas Municipality.

Chapter 2 presents the project's statistical achievements. Based on the data available at statistical or administrative institutions and a local survey conducted in Burgas Municipality, researchers produced statistical indicators that can provide complex quantitative information on youth migration and its local context. Local decision makers can use these

¹ Author of the Introduction and editor of the YOUMIG Local strategies series: Béla SOLTÉSZ (Hungarian Central Statistical Office)

indicators for monitoring local development, and for carrying out evidence-based planning in policy areas affected by the immigration, emigration or return migration of young people.

Chapter 3 presents the project's achievements related to local policy design. YOUMIG's researchers collected several existing good practices from other European countries, with the objective of applying them to the context of the Danube Region. Based on these examples and on the findings of the local research, Burgas Municipality implemented two project activities: the testing of a targeted policy intervention on a migration-related local social issue (Pilot activity), and the introduction of an information sharing mechanism for young immigrants, emigrants and/or returning migrants (One-stop-shop).

Chapter 4 presents the project's findings concerning building transnational and multi-level partnerships. Municipalities cannot tackle all migration-related problems on their own. However, they can cooperate with EU level institutions, national level institutions and with municipalities from other countries. YOUMIG's policy recommendations formulated for Bulgaria's national authorities are summarised in this chapter.

An Annex presents the Data Toolkit. This software contains all the locally relevant data collected by the YOUMIG project, as well as expert studies and analyses. Local stakeholders can use the Data Toolkit to access all of YOUMIG's results, and to continue monitoring and evaluating the trends on youth migration beyond the end of the project.

All project documents referenced in the Local strategy, as well as the documents created by other project partner municipalities, are available at YOUMIG's website: <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/youmig/outputs>.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY²

The present executive summary contains the most important findings of the local activities, and proposes means to improve policymaking in the area of youth migration, with a focus on human capital.

Within the YOUMIG project, Burgas Municipality developed a local status-quo analysis (LSQA) focused on **programmes that support entrepreneurship and business** to make the city more attractive for young migrants. In the course of the pilot action, a self-education module was created – a virtual library containing books on entrepreneurship, and videos with inspiring talks given by successful entrepreneurs.

Through cooperation with the National Statistical Institute, **new and improved indicators for measuring youth migration** were developed. Based on these, a representative small-scale survey was conducted in Burgas, whose results clearly indicate that 23% of the city's youth have intentions to emigrate.

The peer-review study visits represented an important element of the project, allowing an exchange of knowledge and experience – in both the migrant-receiving and sending municipalities – that provided municipal staff with new insights in the field of administrative services for migrants.

Based on the research conducted – and experience gained – within the project, **the following recommendations on local policymaking can be made:**

- 1) Conduct a regular survey (every five years) concerning the migration intentions of young people** in order to provide evidence for adequate policy planning, especially in relation to measures aimed at attracting and keeping human capital in the municipality.
- 2) Develop communication and cooperation strategies with other small municipalities** to facilitate the exchange of good practices and successful policies that attract human capital – especially youth – to the city.
- 3) Plan and implement specific measures that support and encourage entrepreneurship and start-ups** to boost the local economy and attract human capital, for example, through the introduction of entrepreneur programmes in the education system.

²Author of the executive summary: Veselina DIMITROVA (Burgas Municipality)

4) Improve and synchronise administrative services, creating a more effective and user-friendly unified system.

5) Proposal for national-level actors: embark on a process of decentralising and contextualising decision-making and policymaking to delegate the responsibilities of the decision-making authority to local actors. The process of delegation from the centre to the periphery should be accompanied by investment that is commensurate to the increased capacities of the local authorities.

6) Proposal for the central government: prioritise youth migration. The central government needs to develop a national strategy, inviting the regional and municipal authorities to integrate it into their local development strategies.

Map of the Danube Region and location of the YOUMIG partners



- Danube Region (defined by the Interreg Danube Programme)
- YOUMIG countries/regions
- YOUMIG, cities of academic and statistical partners
- YOUMIG, local municipalities

Cartography: **Ádám Németh**

YOUMIG – Improving institutional capacities and fostering cooperation to tackle the impacts of transnational youth migration

A project of the Danube Transnational Programme

- Start date: 01-01-2017
- End date: 30-06-2019
- Budget: 2,718,853 EUR (ERDF Contribution: 2,055,179 EUR, IPA Contribution: 255,846 EUR)
- Call number: Call 1
- Priority: 4 (Well-governed Danube Region)
- Specific objective: 4.1. (Improve institutional capacities to tackle major societal challenges)

Project partners:

- Lead partner: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HU)
- Work package leaders: University of Vienna (AT), Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (DE), Maribor Development Agency (SI), INFOSTAT - Institute of Informatics and Statistics (SK)
- ERDF partners: Municipality of Szeged (HU), City of Graz (AT), Institute for Economic Research (SI), Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (RO), Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe (RO), National Statistical Institute of the Republic of Bulgaria (BG), Burgas Municipality (BG), Municipality of the City district of Bratislava-Rača (SK)
- IPA partners: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (RS), Institute of Social Sciences (RS), Municipality of Kanjiža (RS)
- Associated Strategic Partners: Statistics Austria (AT), City of Karlsruhe (DE), Federal Institute for Population Research (DE)

YOUMIG, in which 19 partners from 8 countries work together, wishes to support local governments in capitalising on the developmental potential of youth migration, leading to a better governed and more competitive Danube Region. The project aims to boost their institutional capacities through enhancing the scarce local evidence on youth migration, contributing to improved policymaking with a focus on human capital. Statistical offices and academic organisations are teaming up with local governments in a complex, customised multi-level, and transnational cooperation to create local developmental strategies based on improved youth-migration impact indicators, and introduce transnationally tested tools for managing local challenges. As a result, institutions and stakeholders can obtain increased capacities through intensified cooperation.

YOUMIG's work is structured in six work packages (WPs). Aside from management (WP1) and communication (WP2) issues, the thematic work is distributed as follows. In line with the Conceptual Framework, all partners contribute to the development of improved

evidence on youth migration and its developmental impacts at the EU, national and local level by elaborating Local Status Quo Analyses for the local partners (WP3). Through a comprehensive evaluation of the locally available indicators on youth migration, the project identifies the shortcomings related to measuring local challenges, and elaborates and tests new or improved indicators on youth migration (WP4). At the local level, the project improves capacities for managing related processes by jointly testing and introducing good practices and institutional units, tailored to local needs (WP5). The project concludes with transnationally tested tools for all governance levels contributing to better strategies, policies and services related to the issue of youth migration (WP6).

YOUMIG's outputs are being uploaded to

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/youmig/outputs>.

CHAPTER 1

YOUTH MIGRATION IN BURGAS: CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND³

1.1. A conceptual framework for studying youth migration in the Danube Region: main concepts⁴

Focusing on youth is central to understanding the dynamics of migration. Over the course of life, the likelihood of migration is greatest between childhood and adulthood. Important life events play a role in migration: the start of tertiary education, the end of compulsory schooling, the transition to working life or living in a partnership, or independently. Reasons for migration are related to the desire to improve one's living standard and are influenced by socio-economic and personal factors (capital, migration biography or lifestyle).

Migration has important effects on the countries and cities of the Danube Region. In countries or regions of emigration, the share of young and educated people leaving is very high. The loss of young people not only leads to a change in population size, but also a decline in the potential labour force, innovation and know-how. Moreover, in arrival countries, newcomers need to be integrated.

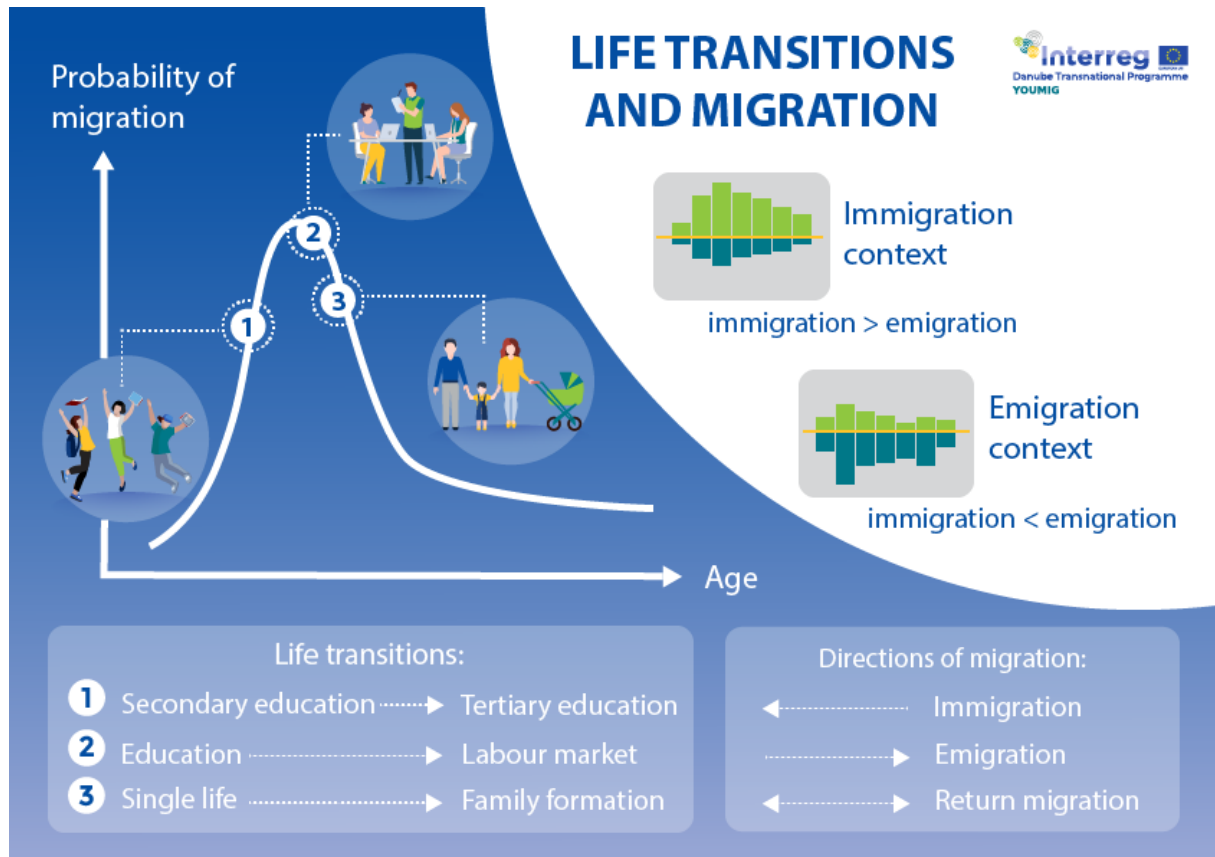
Migration is also a challenge for the individual. While young people often leave with high expectations of improving their standards of living, there is no guarantee that labour markets in the country of destination can supply jobs that match their particular skills. Owing to language barriers and discrimination, the phenomenon of overqualified workers in low-skilled jobs can be observed. This brain waste carries substantial economic costs, lowering educational incentives and undermining the possibility of 'genuine' brain gain.⁵

³Chapter 1 is connected to the Data Toolkit through the following expert studies. The 'Conceptual framework for the study of youth migration in the Danube Region' and 'Local status quo analyses: methodology and main findings of the comparative analysis of the 7 municipalities' are accessible in the Data Toolkit in the 'YOUMIG - Main outputs' part, through the buttons *Conceptual framework* and *Status quo analyses*. The Local status quo analysis for the given municipality is accessible in the 'Municipality' part through the button *Local status quo analysis*. In addition, basic information and basic data for the given municipality are accessible in the Data Toolkit in the 'Municipality' part through the buttons *Basic information* and *Basic data*.

⁴Author of the subchapter: Elisabeth GRUBER (University of Vienna)

⁵GARCIA PIRES, A. J. (2015) 'Brain Drain and Brain Waste', *Journal of Economic Development*, 40(1): 1-34.

Figure 1. Idealised model of life transitions and migration events



Three important determiners of youth migration: labour, education and family.

Labour has a strong influence on migration and can be categorised into groups including manual labour, work requiring particular qualifications or experience, or high-skilled employment. Migration for labour is often motivated by a desire for better opportunities abroad, improved job security and income. Youth unemployment, job insecurity and wage levels are important factors for migration. Wage differentials might also attract ‘target earners’ who tolerate over employment for a specific period to buy property on returning.⁶Owing to higher salaries and languages barriers, migrants often accept jobs that require levels of skill below their own.

⁶KING, R., LULLE, A., MOROSANU, L. and WILLIAMS, A. (2016) ‘International Youth Mobility and Life Transitions in Europe: Questions, Definitions, Typologies and Theoretical Approaches’. Working Paper No. 86. University of Sussex. Sussex Centre for Migration Research.

Education induced youth migration occurs mostly in relation to tertiary educational attainment.⁷ Crossing local or regional borders might be necessary in order to attend secondary school or college. Despite the fact that education-orientated migrants are not easy to identify and follow due to different subtypes and insufficient statistical data sources, the number of international university students is observed to be rising⁸. Moreover, most students do not consider themselves migrants and neglect to register. University student mobility can be distinguished between 'credit mobility' (students that take single courses or study for only a few semesters abroad) or 'degree or diploma mobility' (students that go abroad for a whole study programme, such as a master's degree).⁹ Student mobility in the Danube Region is strongly influenced by aspirations to improve earnings and career prospects.

Family migration is also an important factor. Partnership formation, marriage and childbearing usually happen in the transition phase from youth to adulthood and have a strong influence on choosing a place of residence. While family migration statistics have been concerned mostly with describing internal migration patterns, in periods of globalisation, the relevance of international family migration in terms of emerging travel and study abroad has been increasing. Love migration or the 'transnationalisation of intimacy', plays an increasingly important role in migration decision-making.¹⁰ Migration can further affect families indirectly; when single members of a union change their residency, families and partnerships become separated. Further, when partners or young families move to a new country, their children or future grandchildren are affected in terms of life opportunities. The YOUMIG project not only observes and categorises the **challenges** related to youth migration, but also aims to find possible strategies to deal with these challenges by developing new perspectives. Often, migration and immigration are perceived as threats to the societies of origin and destination respectively. The project endeavours to widen perspectives in order to find **positive aspects** in all developments observed in the region.

One of the foremost positive aspects is **return migration**. For a long time migration has been evaluated negatively by the country of origin. It was seen as a one-directional process, ending with the final decision to emigrate; but in recent years, a number of studies have

⁷WATERS, J., BROOKS, R. and PIMLOTT-WILSON, H. (2011) Youthful Escapes? British Students, Overseas Education and the Pursuit of Happiness. *Social and Cultural Geography* 12(5): 455–469.

⁸ GMG (=GLOBAL MIGRATION GROUP) (2014): Migration and Youth <http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/migrationandyouth> (retrieved: April 5th 2017)

⁹KING, R. AND FINDLAY, A. M. (2012) 'Student migration'. In: Martiniello, M. and Rath, J. (eds) 'An Introduction to Migration Studies: European Perspectives'. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 257–278.

¹⁰KING, R. (2002) 'Towards a new map of European migration'. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF POPULATION GEOGRAPHY*, 8: 89-106.

started to broach the issue of return migration.¹¹ In general, four types of return can be distinguished: the return of failure, conservatism, innovation, and retirement.¹² 'The return of failure' is characterised by the returnee neither succeeding in integration in the new society nor having enough ties to go back easily to the country of destination. In contrast, the 'return of innovation' describes the returnee who has successfully integrated into the foreign labour market. The person characterised by this type of return subsequently goes back to their country of origin with the financial resources and know-how to effect considerable changes in their social status and that of others in the sending country. Recent studies have focused on the beneficial role of return migrants for economic development.¹³ Today, therefore, return migration is seen as a means of bringing back financial, social and cultural capital, as well as importing knowledge. In reality, however, return migration – even if initially intended – does not always occur. Often new personal relationships or employment hinder attempts to return. It is often difficult for high-skilled migrants in the Danube Region to return to their region or country of origin due to the mismatch of labour supply and demand in relation to their specialised knowledge. Nonetheless, it is also important to see the full potential in return migrants and provide more incentives for their return.

Diaspora networks offer a potential strategic means to gain from emigration. Expatriate communities play an increasingly important role as 'support actors' in the sending location, but also act as networks for receiving migrants and help in their integration. Nowadays, more than half of UN member states have their own diaspora department.¹⁴ Diaspora policies have very diverse priorities. They may try to reach bilateral tax exemptions, e.g. for money transfers or visas, which play a more important role in countries outside the EU. Nowadays, networks try to develop and maintain contacts with emigrants to ease any future return, and for the purpose of investment or business cooperation. In addition, maintenance of national identity and the need for continued political engagement (participation in elections) in the country of origin provide a further role for diaspora networks.¹⁵ In the modern sense, diaspora networks can lead to improved cooperation between new and old

¹¹See KING, R. (1986) 'Return Migration and Regional Economic Problems'. Routledge. London.

¹²CERASE, F. P. (1974) 'Expectations and Reality: A Case Study of Return Migration from the United States to Southern Italy'. *The International Migration Review*, 8(2): 245-262.

¹³DE HAAS, H. (2005) 'International migration, remittances and development: Myths and facts'. *Third World Quarterly*, 26: 1269–1284.

¹⁴COLLYER, M. (ed.) (2013) 'Emigration Nations. Policies and Ideologies of Emigrant Engagement.' Palgrave Macmillan. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

¹⁵HERNER-KOVÁCS, E. (2017) 'Nation Building Extended: Hungarian Diaspora Politics', *Minority Studies*, 17: 55-67.

countries of residence and the realisation of transnational lifestyles. Former migrants may become ‘development agents’, responsible for improvements in their home communities.¹⁶

In the countries and cities of immigration, **the integration of newcomers** is certainly a challenge, but also a major potential benefit, if decision makers can help to lower barriers. Language barriers are just one of the challenges for successful integration into new societies. Integration measures – in the light of increasing diversity – need to cover a broader range of topics such as language skills and education, labour market integration, habituation to cultural norms, and so on. Integration is a topic that warrants attention on the part of hosting societies in order to learn more about accepting and welcoming newcomers.

Adapting a new perspective on migration is essential. Migration can provide new opportunities for youth that may be unavailable in their countries of origin. The potential outcome is one of economic gains for destination countries, and benefits for origin countries in terms of skills brought home and networks developed, i.e., a **triple-win**:

- A win for the country of origin
- A win for the receiving country
- A win for the individual migrant¹⁷

Shifting the focus onto the benefits of integration for the individual is important for future policy development¹⁸.

1.2. Methodology and main findings of the comparative analysis of seven municipalities in the Danube Region¹⁹

Within the framework of YOUMIG, seven **Local Status Quo Analyses (LSQAs)** were carried out by thematic experts employed by local partners. The LSQAs rely on a common methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative methods; through them, researchers aimed to obtain an integrated analysis of migratory, demographic and developmental processes. Figure 2 synthesises the methods and phases of the local-level empirical research and analysis.

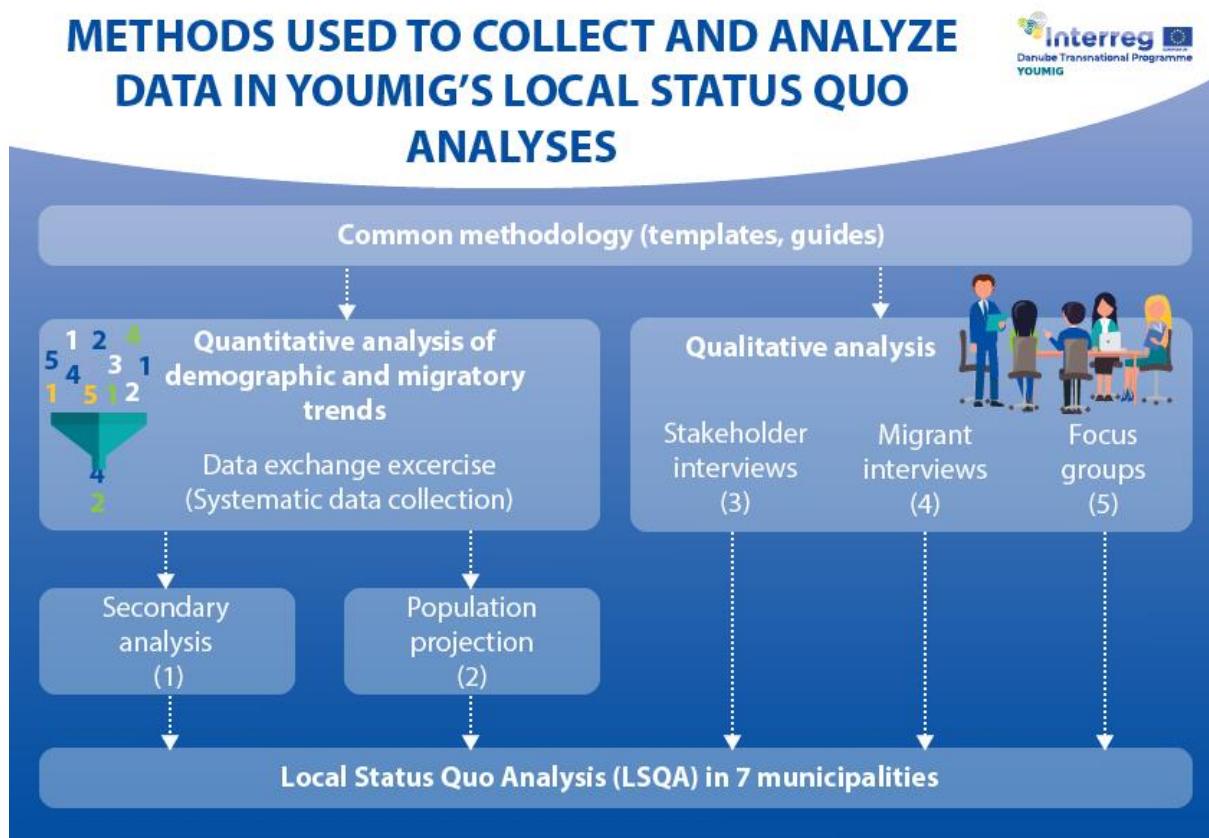
¹⁶CASTLES, S. (2008) Development and Migration – Migration and Development: What comes first? SSRN Migration & Development Conference Paper No.2. New York: Social Science Research Center.

¹⁷SVR (=Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration) (2016): Viele Götter, ein Staat: Religiöse Vielfalt und Teilhabe im Einwanderungsland. Jahresgutachten 2016 mit Integrationsbarometer.

¹⁸See FASSMANN, H., GRUBER, E., NÉMETH Á. (2018). ‘Conceptual overview of youth migration in the Danube Region’. YOUMIG Working Papers, No.1.

¹⁹Author of the subchapter: Tamás KISS (Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities)

Figure 2. Methods used to collect and analyse data in YOUMIG’s Local Status Quo Analyses



(1) The main aim of the **quantitative analysis** was to describe the migratory processes and demographic trends in the municipalities. In the comparative analysis, researchers constructed a typology of the municipalities according to their developmental positions and with regard to the demographic and migratory processes they face.

There are important **developmental differences** between the project partner municipalities related to the regional developmental position of the country (in the Danube Region), and the internal developmental position of the municipality (in the country):

- Concerning the **developmental positions of the respective countries**, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia have a semi-peripheral position in Europe, with an emphasis on low value-added industries and subsistence agriculture. These are emigration

countries²⁰, where no major immigration is expected. Slovenia, Hungary and Slovakia have the characteristics of semi-core economies and some parts of these countries are integrated in the industrial production of the western core. They also send emigrants to Western Europe; however, in far lower numbers than countries belonging to the first category. As these countries face labour shortages, they might theoretically become countries of immigration at some point, though probably only for a short period. Finally, Austria might be considered part of the Western European core. It has a positive net migration rate and receives an important number of immigrants. Contrary to other countries observed in this project, Austria turned from an emigration to an immigration country well before the fall of the Iron Curtain.²¹

- Concerning the **developmental position of the municipalities within the respective countries**, researchers have classified Bratislava-Rača, Maribor, Graz, Burgas and Szeged as main regional poles, while Kanjiža and Sfântu Gheorghe can be defined as 'zonal' urban centres.

Demographic developments in the project partner cities have certain common characteristics. All of them are facing low fertility rates and rapidly ageing populations; and for all of them, migration trends make a difference in terms of demographic processes and prospects. At the national level, four types of demographic change can be distinguished. Bulgaria and Romania, both witnesses to drastic population decline, fall into the first category. Serbia would also fit into this category, but the wars of Yugoslav succession resulted in forced migration – and an increase in population, therefore it can be placed in the second category, experiencing a modest decline in population, along with Hungary. In the third category, we find Slovenia and Slovakia whose populations are slowly growing. Finally, Austria fits into the fourth category, characterised by dynamic population growth. At the municipality level as well, demographic processes are shaped by internal developmental positions. Burgas, for instance, as a major regional pole in Bulgaria has faced relatively balanced migratory trends. Situated next to high-level outflows, the municipality has been the target of both internal and international immigrants. In contrast, in the cases of Kanjiža and Sfântu Gheorghe, outflows have far exceeded inflows.

(2) As part of LSQAs, local level **population projections** were also carried out based on the cohort-component method, which began modelling the evolution of mortality, fertility and

²⁰ See FASSMANN, H. et al. (2014): Longer-Term Demographic Dynamics in South–East Europe: Convergent, Divergent and Delayed Development. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 3(2), pp.150-173.

²¹ See FASSMANN, H. and REEGER, U. (2012) Old Immigration Countries in Europe. The Concept and Empirical Examples. In: OKÓLSKI, M. (ed.)(2012) *European Immigrations. Trends, Structures and Policy Implications* (65-90) Amsterdam: Imiscoe Research/Amsterdam University Press.

migration in the seven municipalities in 2017 (continuing until 2035). These are not forecasts, but rather ‘what-if’ type statements on possible pathways of population change. Hypotheses took into account both the existing trends and the anticipations of local experts and stakeholders. An important result was that in several municipalities, such as Szeged, Sfântu Gheorghe, Kanjiža and Maribor, neither experts nor stakeholders could imagine that their municipalities might become the target of large-scale immigration.

(3) The **interviews with institutional actors** (stakeholders and decision makers representing important city institutions) were based on a common interview guide. This research phase was aimed at mapping the existing policies focusing on migration and youth, as well as identifying discourses concerning migration and understanding how decision makers connect local development and migration – whether they perceive migration as a threat or an opportunity. Both immigration and emigration were taken into account, even in localities where immigration was barely relevant statistically. Researchers took into account the differences in perception of highly skilled and low-status migrants, as well as those of persons belonging to the majority society and ethno-cultural minorities.

(4) In the case of the **interviews with young migrants**, researchers conducted narrative-biographical interviews with 8-10 young migrants per locality, based on a previously fixed technique of conducting and interpreting interviews. Researchers did not subordinate the stories (i.e. self-representation) of migrants to scientifically or politically motivated narratives. The interviewees had the opportunity to present their stories freely. Persons aged 18-35, distinct in terms of educational attainment, gender, family status and type of migratory experience (emigrants, immigrants, returning migrants, daily commuters between different countries) were interviewed. Well-educated and middle class background young interviewees were overrepresented, perhaps due to their deliberations over emigrating (‘brain drain’), which is a crucial issue to be tackled.

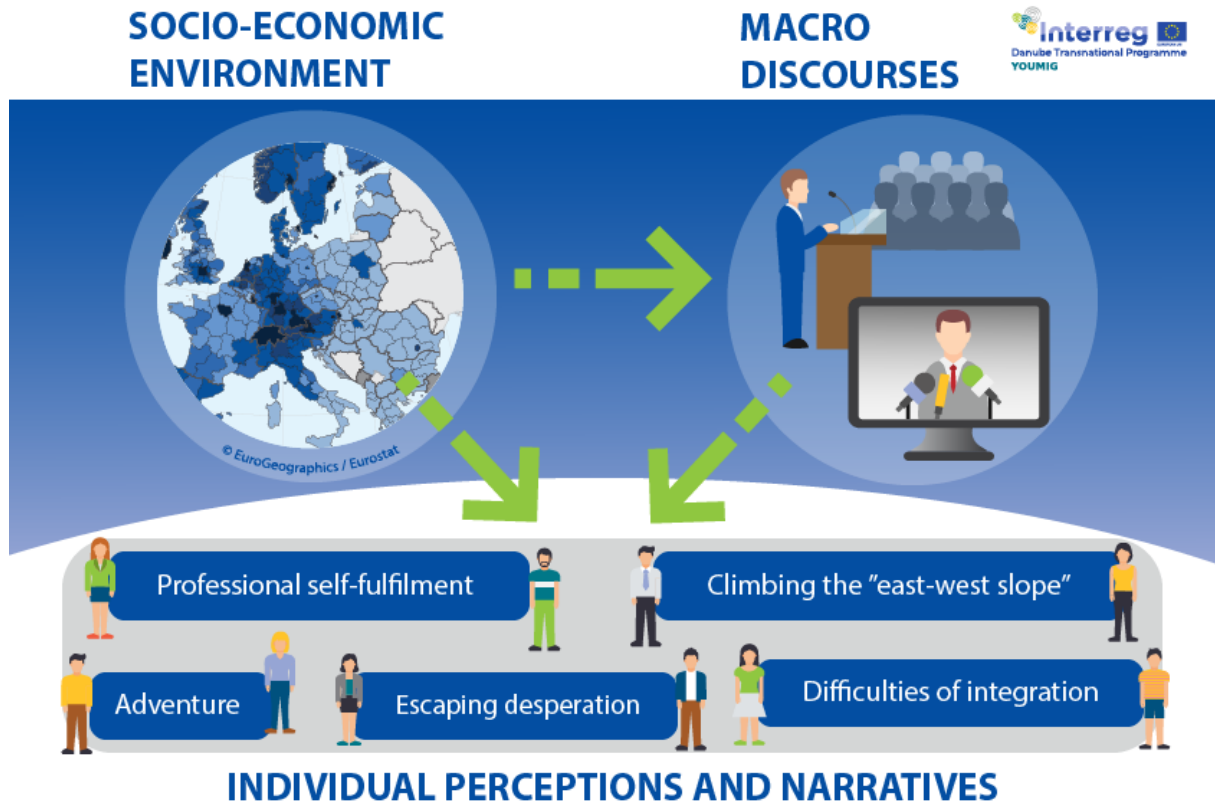
(5) **Focus group interviews** with young migrants followed the individual in-depth interviews. The topic of the talks focused primarily on the participants’ experiences, paying special attention to the administrative aspects of the migration process. They were asked about their contacts with the local (and other level) administration, the problems they encountered, and their opinions on the policies employed by the relevant authorities etc. One discussion per locality was conducted, with 6-10 participants in each group. All participants were aged 18-34 with migration experience. In sending localities these were mostly return migrants, while in the case of receiving municipalities, immigrants were selected. In municipalities with a mixed pattern of migration, both immigrants and return migrants could participate in the focus group. An audio recording and report on the focus

group was made according to a previously fixed template. Participants were asked about personal experiences with the authorities relevant to migratory issues (work permits, residence permits, recognition of diplomas, etc.), and to provide suggestions concerning migration policies.

The first main thesis of the **comparative analysis** was that massive regional inequalities and socio-economic developmental hierarchies are a conduit for different **macro-level discourses concerning migration management**. Populationist views (or demographic nationalism) were dominant in municipalities with a lower position on the developmental scale. According to this discourse, migration management relates mostly to the reproduction of the ethno-nation. In contrast, a utilitarian framework that perceives migrants as a labour force was dominant among municipality stakeholders with a higher position on the developmental ladder.

The second main thesis was that **strategies of self-representation of young migrants** (as shown by the biographic narratives) are affected by both 'objective' developmental differences and macro discourses concerning development and migration management. In this respect, biographic narratives, as such, can be perceived as strategies of status reproduction or status improvement.

Figure 3. The effects of the socio-economic environment and macro discourses on the individual perceptions and narratives of young migrants



The following **quotes** illustrate the main discursive patterns identified in the interviews.

Macro discourses:

- Populationist views (or demographic nationalism): *'They're arrogant and behave like colonisers, not immigrants.'*
- Utilitarian framework: *'I hear the managers of large manufacturers want to import foreign, non-EU workers; there is a lot of pressure on us.'*

Narratives of young migrants:

- Professional self-fulfilment: *'If I remained in Serbia, my professional career would be over, and I would end up like my parents.'*
- The 'adventurer': *'I've always hated settled life; I prefer freedom to routine.'*
- Climbing the 'East-West slope': *'Germany has always attracted me; not just its wealth; somehow, I share its mentality.'*
- Escaping desperation: *'I felt I just couldn't have a normal life here.'*
- Difficult integration: *'When I go out to a nightclub, I feel like the odd one out.'*

1.3 Local Status Quo Analysis for Burgas Municipality: main findings, proposals for future policy actions²²

The local status quo analysis (LSQA) presents a case study on youth migration in Burgas Municipality, Bulgaria, based on policy-orientated research, using multiple methods of data collection and analysis.

Burgas is a significant **regional centre** with growing importance for the national economy. After a period of decline, Burgas made considerable progress in the last decade and is currently one of the fastest developing cities in Bulgaria, especially in terms of public infrastructure. EU funds play an important role in this development. There is a constant **demand for both qualified and unqualified workers**, however, **incomes** remain **relatively low**, which can be a demotivating factor for young people – leading to **emigration**.

From a quantitative perspective, migratory processes in the municipality are reflected in the analysis (for the period 1990-2016) that is based on the available statistical and survey data. As elsewhere in Bulgaria, **the population of Burgas Municipality is aging due to declining birth rates and emigration to the capital city and abroad**. That said, mechanical growth in the population is apparent – fed both by **international immigrants mostly from Russia and Ukraine** but more significantly by **internal migration from the hinterland**, since the Russian and Ukrainian communities in Burgas make up only ca. 1% of the municipal population.

Within the analysis, the results of the qualitative research based on interviews with institutional actors and young migrants are presented, as well as those of the focus groups and migration forums conducted within the project's implementation. The personal interviews present typical biographies of both young return migrants and emigrants who live abroad, which are representative of the emerging worldview of **a highly mobile generation that accepts migration as a means of 'getting on' in life**.

A popular take on **youth migration in Burgas** is that young and educated Bulgarians are leaving the country in a **massive exodus** en route to developed European countries, affecting unfavourably the development of the municipality and the country as a whole by exhausting its demographic and economic potential. In contrast, **return migration** – a source of hope and policy ideas – **is perceived as possible and highly desirable**. However, **neither of these viewpoints corresponds entirely with reality**. In fact, the statistical data and municipality-level population projections reveal a more balanced trend on migration. According to recent (2016) statistics, there was a constant increase in return migration at the municipal level (from 74 return migrants in 2013 to 134 in 2016). However, from 2013 (when a positive

²²Authors of the subchapter: Veselina DIMITROVA, Haralan ALEXANDROV (Burgas Municipality)

change was reported: +229 due to internal and international immigration) to 2016 there was a constant trend of population decline (-731 in 2014; -1420 in 2015; and -282 in 2016). General attitudes in the community are informed by popular perceptions, and the **municipality's strategy on migration** is often a response to such attitudes.

The local authorities face major **policy challenges** with respect to youth migration and its effects on local development. **Municipal leaders intend to launch a broad youth-orientated policy, aimed at keeping young people in/attracting youth back to the community** by improving employment opportunities and fostering entrepreneurship in the city. These intentions, however, face **serious challenges**, due to a **lack of relevant information** and experience at the local level, as well as the **disempowering institutional culture of the centralised state bureaucracy**. Moreover, institutional actors often speak of migration in **generic terms**, emphasising universal rather than contextual solutions.

In terms of policy recommendations, the LSQA proposes that Burgas Municipality take a **comprehensive policy approach** in order to bring youth migration under control and **incentivise skilled young emigrants to return home**. In the project, young interviewees stated that they place more faith in the economy than the local government – **only accelerated economic growth** and correspondingly higher incomes, might turn the tide **and bring emigrants back**.

The LSQA produced enough evidence to recommend a course of action for Burgas Municipality directed at controlling the emigration of educated young people while attracting those who have already left. Several interrelated policies relevant to this challenge are proposed.

Recommendations

Developing preventative policies

The analysis identified **elite language schools** in Burgas as a major conduit for youth migration – graduates of these schools are known to migrate to countries corresponding to their language studies (typically Germany, the UK, France and Spain), initially as students and later as economic immigrants.

The study indicates that many of these potential emigrants have **inflated expectations** with regard to the host country, and experience frustration and disappointment when faced with the reality of their situation, sometimes resulting in return migration. In this respect, the municipality could organise some sort of **information campaign** about the challenges of migrant life abroad, targeted at the graduates of these schools.

Return migrants should be invited to contribute, sharing their experiences with potential young emigrants and answering their questions. This would allow potential emigrants to make **informed choices** on what is, after all, a very important decision in their lives.

Building communication infrastructure

Unsurprisingly, the study discovered that the **public authorities have limited knowledge on the situation of young emigrants from Burgas**. Suffice to say, emigrants maintain close ties with their families, but so far, communication with emigrants has not entered the domain of public policy, being limited to the private sphere. When young people want to find out what is going on in their hometown, they rely on their parents and their friends' networks as sources of information and advice, rather than official sources. **This severely restricts the municipality's ability to directly address emigrants and their issues, and influence their choices.**

In order to launch relevant policies, the municipal administration has to establish some sort of **communication infrastructure** that reaches as many young people living abroad as possible. Such an ambitious project could build upon existing communication structures, including those facilitated by **cultural centres** in large European cities, **Bulgarian diasporas**, **networks for educational exchange and cooperation** and **social networks**.

The municipality has developed a **web site** <https://www.gotoburgas.com/> providing information for visitors. This could be developed further by means of **integrating an information-exchange platform for people visiting and living in the town.**

CHAPTER 2

BETTER INDICATORS ON YOUTH MIGRATION AND ITS LOCAL CONTEXT²³

2.1. Developing youth migration indicators: priority areas and methodology²⁴

In general, the management of migration is directed by national objectives. Related challenges and opportunities are measured and evaluated at the country level. Nonetheless, migration processes can look different at the local level. The emerging literature ‘points to how regional and municipal outcomes differ significantly from national ones’.²⁵ Therefore, **building capacities that measure and evaluate the effects and context of migration at the local level is crucial.**

While the European Union and nation states provide general guidelines for the integration of migrants, the ability to undertake practical action usually depends on municipalities. Newcomers have to rely on services – just as locals do – provided by local governments looking to find solutions for their integration. Similarly, emigration calls for action at the local level, for instance, when dealing with the lack of labour in areas of outward migration.

Thus, in order to plan for the provision of services or to predict changes in production structures, local governments should monitor the trends of all the components of demographic population movements, namely fertility, mortality, as well as immigration, emigration and return migration.

Besides the basic figures on demographic development, however, the socio-economic context of migration needs to be taken into account. Indicators can help local decision makers to quantify the relevant tendencies in different dimensions of local development. The OECD – based on the recommendations of the United Nations Economic Commission for

²³Chapter 2 is connected to the Data Toolkit through one expert study. The ‘Evaluation report of youth migration indicators including the identification of shortfalls’, is accessible in the Data Toolkit in the ‘YOUMIG-Main outputs’ part through the button *Indicators*. In addition, all indicators (core and extra) for the given municipality are accessible in the Data Toolkit in the ‘Municipality’ part, through the button *Indicators*.

²⁴ Authors of the subchapter: Ekaterina SKOGLUND (Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies - IOS Regensburg), Zoltán CSÁNYI (Hungarian Central Statistical Office)

²⁵SCHMIDTKE, O. (2014). Beyond National Models? Governing migration and integration at the regional and local levels in Canada and Germany. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 2(1), 77-99., p. 79.

See among others: BENDEL, P. (2014). Coordinating immigrant integration in Germany. Mainstreaming at the federal and local levels. *Migration Policy Institute Europe*, Brussels, 1-32.

CAPONIO, T., and BORKERT, M. (Eds.). (2010). *The local dimension of migration policymaking*. Amsterdam University Press.

SCHOLTEN, P., and PENNING, R. (2016). The multilevel governance of migration and integration. In *Integration processes and policies in Europe* (pp. 91-108). Springer, Cham.

Europe²⁶ – defines **statistical indicators** as ‘data elements that represent statistical data for a specified time, place, and other characteristics’.²⁷ In practice, indicators are simply ‘statistics, or a combination of statistics, that are populated by data [...]. Indicators suggest, or indicate, a characteristic of a system’.²⁸

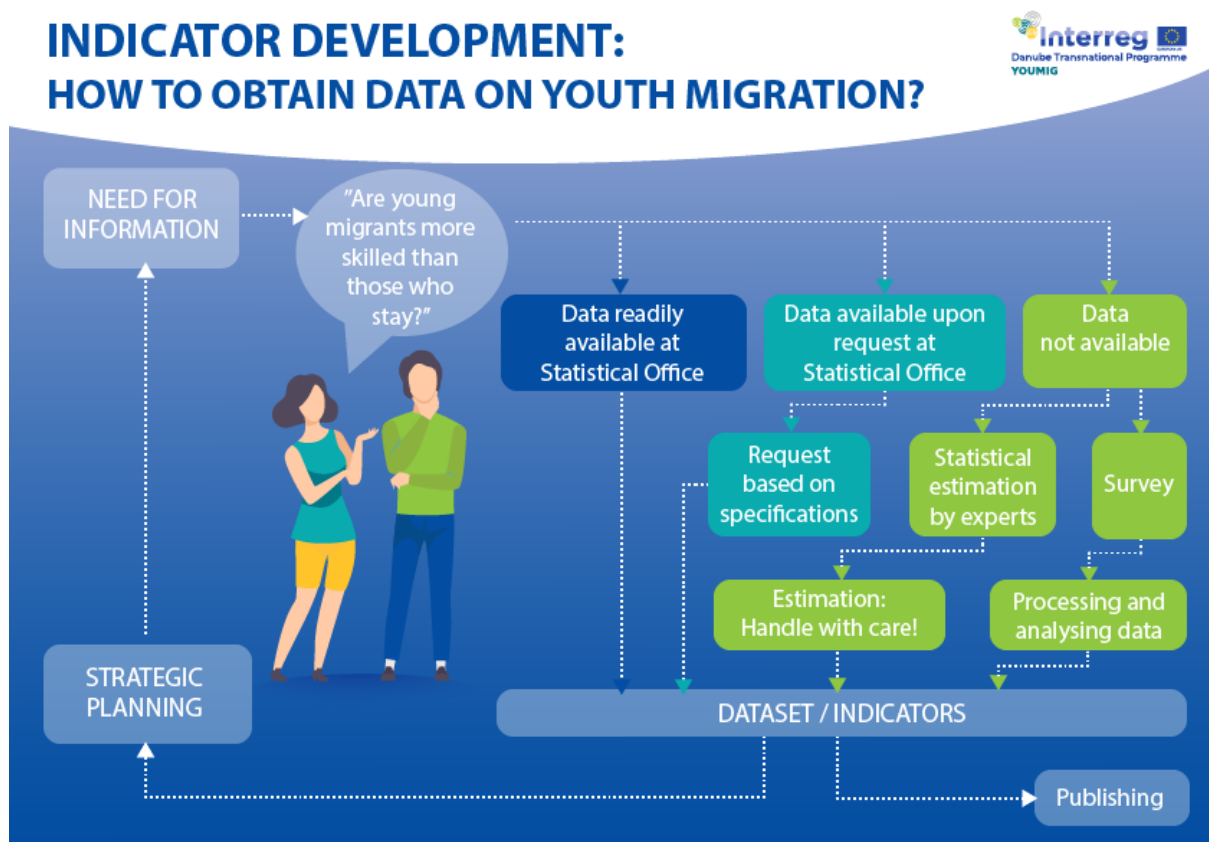
The data for producing indicators can be obtained in various ways. There are datasets readily available and accessible to the public at national (or international) statistical institutions or administrative bodies, while others are available upon request or for a fee. Further, in the case of nationally and regionally representative surveys, statistical methods may be used to produce local (municipality) level values. When no data source is available, necessary data might be produced using local surveys. During the YOUMIG project, all of the above methods were tested to obtain the data necessary for designing local level statistical indicators on youth.

²⁶ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), "Terminology on Statistical Metadata", Conference of European Statisticians Statistical Standards and Studies, No. 53, Geneva, 2000

²⁷ See also the Eurostat definition at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Statistical_indicator

²⁸ GAULT, F. (2011). Social impacts of the development of science, technology and innovation indicators. MERIT Working Papers 008, United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (MERIT).

Figure 4. The process of obtaining data on youth migration and its social context



International organisations and national statistical services use many indicators that might in terms of relevance, differ from the purposes of local-level migration management across the Danube Region. Therefore, the **YOUMIG project followed a step-by-step selection process**, including consultations with the project partners and relevant stakeholders.

Step 1. A list of 214 possible indicators in seven areas related to migration and development at different geographical levels was compiled. These seven areas were the following: Demographics and population, Health, Education, Social development and social capital, Economic development, Income and living conditions, Urban and Regional development.

Step 2. The relevance of each indicator was discussed by experts from the participating statistical and research institutions, representatives of the partner-municipalities, and relevant stakeholders (see the Local Status Quo Analyses). The indicators classified as ‘Not relevant’²⁹ were removed from further consideration.

²⁹ See the 'Evaluation report on youth migration indicators including the identification of shortfalls', Table 2, column 2, available on the YOUMIG website and in the Data Toolkit.

Step 3. The remaining 120 indicators were assessed concerning (a) their availability at the national, regional, and municipality levels and (b) their effectiveness in helping evidence-based decision making in the spheres of youth, migration, and local development policies.

Step 4. Based on this evaluation, a TOP-16 list of ‘Core indicators’ was drawn up and each measure specification was refined by partners from the statistical offices.

Step 5. Partner institutions within each participating country gathered information on the 16 Core indicators. In view of the differences in data availability, up to five ‘Extra’ indicators were added to the national indicator lists. This measure was taken to balance the amount of work across partner countries, and to allow municipality partners to add locally relevant topics not covered by the Core indicators. As mentioned above, the data were retrieved from open access sources, provided by statistical or administrative bodies on request, or collected in the local YOUMIG surveys. All seven project-partner municipalities carried out a local survey in the second half of 2018.³⁰

Step 6. The resulting sets of indicators were evaluated using a framework for assessing the quality of secondary sources recommended by the international statistical community³¹, adapted to the needs of YOUMIG. For the evaluation, we used the ‘six usual dimensions of quality’: a) relevance; b) accuracy; c) timeliness; d) accessibility; e) interpretability and f) coherence. To provide an option to add information or comments outside these six quality dimensions, a seventh field was added: ‘further critical comments’.

The 16 core **YOUMIG indicators** are as follows:

- Population by sex, age, urban/rural, country of citizenship, country of birth
- In-migration, internal/international
- Out-migration, internal/international
- Top 5 sending countries (of migrants)
- Number of returnees registered, by sex and education level
- Completed education of persons aged 15-34 by sex, age groups, native/foreign (country of citizenship)

³⁰It should be added that beyond the aims of indicator development, the local surveys also served the purpose of getting relevant information on other migration-related issues (a common questionnaire was used in the YOUMIG partner municipalities – except for Graz – that could be optionally broadened with municipality-specific questions).

³¹See recommendations of the Statistical Network Responsible for Developing Methodologies for an Integrated Use of Administrative Data in the Statistical Process (SN-MIAD). Available online at:https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cros/content/miad-methodologies-integrated-use-administrative-data-statistical-process_en

- Student outbound mobility ratio at tertiary level, by sex
- Skill level of return migrants
- Subjective well-being in the population
- Tolerance towards foreigners (foreign workers)
- Intentions to migrate within the next 5 years, [if possible] intended destination, duration of absence
- Regional product (Regional GDP) per capita
- Business demography: number of active enterprises, by size, ownership (national/foreign)
- Disposable household income per capita
- Population by activity status, by sex, 5 year age intervals, native/foreign
- Healthcare sector outlook: work force in health care; shortage of work in healthcare; healthcare workforce gap

During the indicator development process, the following key **data gaps and statistical challenges** were identified:

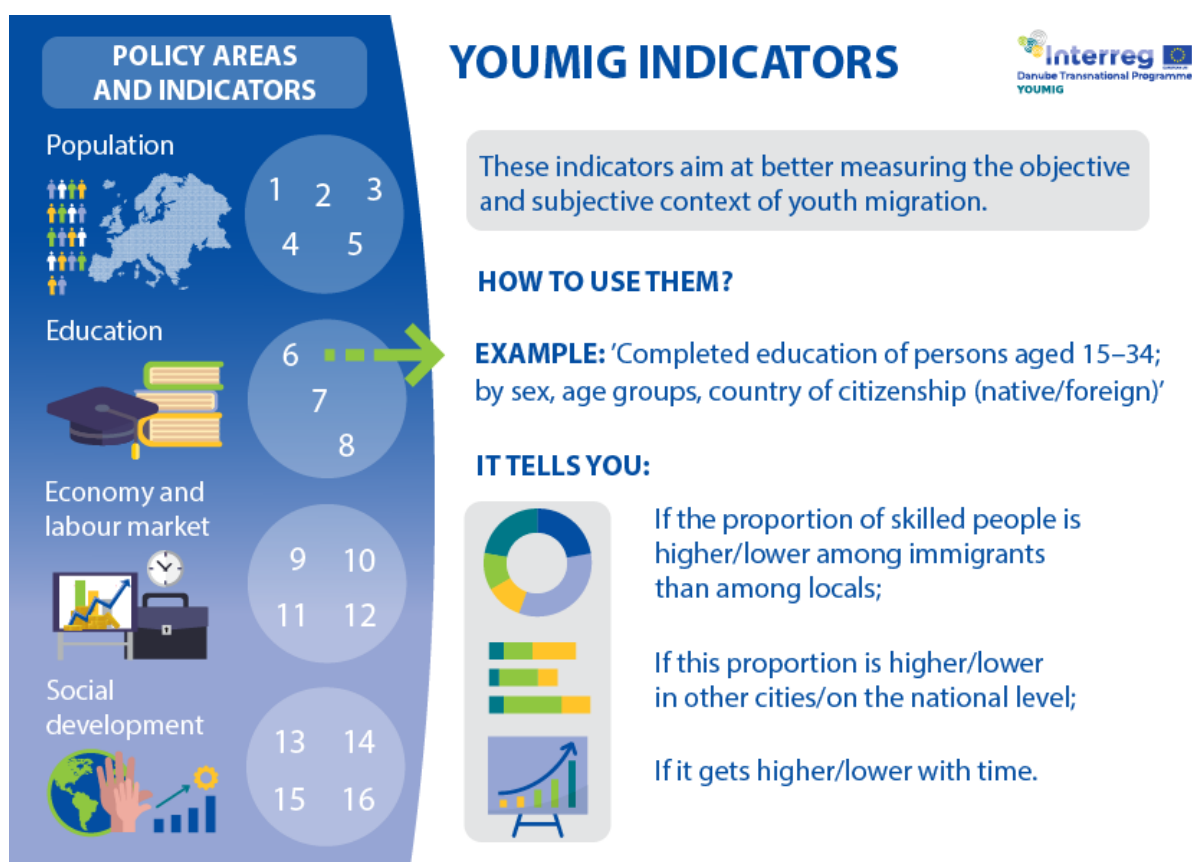
- First, while information on the resident population and immigrants is widely accessible (from a level as low as LAU2), there are major **difficulties in the identification of** such groups as **emigrants** (still registered at the sending municipality), **returning migrants and second-generation migrants**. Similarly, a description of the mentioned groups with the help of socio-economic characteristics (e.g., age, length of immigration experience, education level, and country of return) is rarely possible or can be evaluated only with the help of proxies. Identification of transnational and reunified families and their characteristics is also seldom made; and the information on local programmes of temporary out-migration is rarely collected and systematised.
- Second, the **main demographic and labour market indicators may be unavailable concerning the division of natives and foreigners** and with respect to different age groups, and education levels. Moreover, differences in the definitions of native and foreign categories can be expected, as in some cases only a disaggregation based on the country of birth or the country of citizenship might be available.
- Third, a range of **subjective indicators** such as 'Subjective well-being', 'Intentions to migrate', 'Aspirations of youth', 'Trust levels' is not collected by statistical institutions of partner countries; and some information can be gathered on less than a yearly basis from representative household surveys. LAU2 level indicators of this kind should be collected separately within small-scale surveys.

- Fourth, while 'Economic development (as GDP per capita)' is a widely accessible indicator, **information on business dynamics** (e.g. operating and closed enterprises) may be missing, especially in cases where a grouping is required by the number of employees, or the ownership status. Similarly, data on wages across industries and occupations is often collected, while information on family incomes can be evaluated from representative surveys only. Poverty indicators may be unavailable at lower sub-national levels. Information on the indebtedness of households is rarely collected.

During the data collection stage, local partners encountered a range of other, **procedural challenges**, including the long response time of statistical bodies to data requests, the availability of data requiring a fee, and data use restriction requirements.

YOUMIG's indicator collection process was finalised in December 2018, and **the obtained datasets – where no data use restriction is applied – are available for consultation and analysis on the YOUMIG website and in the Data Toolkit.**

Figure 5. YOUMIG indicators on youth migration and its social context



2.2. Accessing data and using the new indicators in Bulgaria³²

In the policy area ‘Population’, YOUMIG identified the following indicators necessary for monitoring migration trends more closely:

a) Population by sex, age, urban/rural, country of citizenship, country of birth

For every system of governance, basic population data are of crucial importance to obtain a relatively precise and reliable picture of the demographic situation in a country. In addition, the data (resident population by age, sex and citizenship) provide a perspective on education, the sustainability of social security systems and the planning of projects etc. Population data are available at the National Statistical Institute (NSI) from 2011 onwards at national, NUTS3 (Burgas district) and LAU2 (Burgas) levels. Stock data, disaggregated by sex and age groups (0-14, 15-24, 25-34, 35-64, 65+) for top-5 migrant groups residing in Bulgaria are available at all three levels. This category includes people who (usually) live permanently in the country and have not left it officially as of 31 December of the respective year for a period of more than one year. As of 31 December 2017 the population of Burgas city was 202,694, which represents 3.9% of the urban population of the Republic of Bulgaria. Compared to 2016, the population of Burgas city decreased by 72 people. Burgas is the fourth biggest Bulgarian city by population. There are 96,488 (47.6%) men and 106,206 women (52.4%) in the city. Relative to the country average, the female/male ratio in Burgas city is less favourable in terms of the future reproduction process. Regarding the age structure, the population of Burgas city follows the national trends – its population is aging. However, the share of the population under 15 (15.4% - 2017, 15.1% - 2016) is higher than the country average. Consequently, the demographic outlook for Burgas may be cause for guarded optimism.

b) In-migration, internal/international

Migration results in a change of a person’s usual residence. In the context of internal migration, in-migration means an action by which a person changes their residence in one settlement for residence in another settlement in the territory of Bulgaria for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months. International in-migration or immigration is an action by which a person changes their usual residence abroad for a new one in Bulgaria. Both types of data are available at the National Statistical Institute, Information System ‘Demography’, from 2007 onwards at the national, NUTS3 and LAU2 levels for international and internal immigration. Immigration data indicates the attractiveness of a particular

³²Authors of the subchapter: Magdalena KOSTOVA, Elka IAKIMOVA (National Statistical Institute)

region, country or city. An increasing number of immigrants may indicate that a region is perceived by potential immigrants as a relatively developed and prosperous destination characterised by higher wages and better living conditions. With regard to migration, Bulgaria is an emigration country. In spite of this, Burgas and the region have become increasingly attractive for migrants in the last (two) years, including those from the former Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan.

c) Out-migration, internal/international

Out-migration data – both internal and international – are mainly relevant in countries, municipalities and cities characterised by emigration. Emigration means the action by which a person, having previously been (usually) resident in the territory of Bulgaria, ceases to have their usual residence in Bulgaria for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months. Internal immigration is the movement of people from one defined area to another within a country. These data are available at the National Statistical Institute at the national, NUTS3 and LAU2 levels, also in relation to international and internal migration. In addition to natality and mortality, migration is an important factor determining the size of the population. Therefore, changes in these demographic events over time constitute a crucial element in planning population-related policies, including economic and labour market policies, education, healthcare and social provisions. In emigration areas, youth migration may be one of several challenges, including an aging society, a struggling social welfare system and a rising demand for labour. Interestingly, in the last few years the migratory process in Burgas city and municipality has followed a pattern of oscillation between successive waves of predominant inflows and outflows.

d) Top-5 migrant-sending countries

The indicator ‘Top-5 migrant-sending countries’, is based on the number of arrivals per year. In Bulgaria, the concept of ‘country of previous usual residence’ is used for flow data while that of ‘country of birth’ is used for stock data. Data are available at the National Statistical Institute, Information System ‘Demography’ at the national and regional level (NUTS and LAU). Knowledge on the origin of migrants is necessary to create well-targeted cultural and integration policies. It is apparent that Burgas has become increasingly attractive for immigrants, mostly from non-EU countries (indicated by the data on the foreign-born population). Immigration from countries of the former Soviet Union is particularly noticeable.

e) Number of returnees registered, by sex and education level

This indicator reveals the number of residents born in the reporting country, immigrated from abroad per year after a short or long-term stay in another country, by sex and educational attainment. Data are partially available at the National Statistical Institute from 2011 onwards. Disaggregation by sex is available, but disaggregation by educational level is not available. Return migration can reduce population losses due to emigration, mortality and low natality. Return migration, especially that of the skilled and highly educated, is seen as one of the most beneficial forms of migration.

In the policy area ‘Education’ the following indicators are of key importance:

a) Completed education of persons aged 15-34 by sex, age groups, native/foreign (country of citizenship)

The indicator ‘Completed education of persons aged 15-34’ presents data concerning the highest level of education successfully completed by persons in the given population.

This indicator shows the education level of the population and its dynamic indicates the change of this level. A positive dynamic in relation to the education level of the population is an ambition of all countries. The comparison of the indicator by sex shows whether a difference in male and female education levels exists, and to what extent. Bulgaria provides data on this indicator at level LAU 2 through the 2011 census. Eurostat provides yearly data on this indicator at the national level. This data is calculated as annual averages of the quarterly EU Labour Force Survey data (EU-LFS).

b) Students outbound mobility ratio at tertiary level, by sex

The term ‘internationally mobile students’ (diploma/degree mobility) refers to ‘students who have physically crossed an international border between two countries with the objective of participating in educational activities in the country of destination, where the country of destination of a given student is different from their country of origin’ (UNESCO).

Mobile student status is dependent on a student’s crossing of a border for educational purposes and not on the student’s formal resident status in the reporting country of destination. The status ‘mobile student’ is maintained for as long as the student’s education (at an academic level equal to that of their home university) continues.

Eurostat provides this data at the national level. Aggregation by sex is not available for the period 2010-2012. Data is available by sex at the national level from 2013 onwards.

Temporal stays abroad for the purpose of study (e.g. 1-2 semesters, or full educational programmes) are beneficial for sending communities, however students might decide to stay abroad, using their newly obtained skills and knowledge to obtain employment, instead of returning home.

c) Skill level of return migrants

Return migrants are migrants who have returned to their country of origin. Their skills are approximated by education level (primary, secondary, tertiary). This indicator is not available. Data from the YOUMIG small-scale survey are available for 2018 at LAU2 level. Data are available by sex.

In the policy area ‘Economy and the labour market’ the following indicators were observed:

a) Regional product (regional GDP) per capita

GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity (PPP). PPP GDP is gross domestic product converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates. An international dollar has the same purchasing power in terms of GDP as the U.S. dollar has in the United States. GDP at purchaser's prices is the sum of the gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus product taxes and minus subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for the depreciation on fabricated assets or for the depletion and degradation of natural resources. The National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria provides data on GDP per capita at NUTS3 level. Data are available from 2000 onwards. Data are available at national level on the World Bank database.

b) Business demography: number of active enterprises, by size, ownership (national/foreign)

Business demography describes the life cycles of enterprises in terms of launch, growth, maturity and decline/closure. More specifically, business demography supplies data on the number of launched and active enterprises, the proportion of operating enterprises, in addition to data on changes in employment figures. Data are available at the National level from 2010 onwards. Well-developed counties and regions have plenty of active enterprises.

c) Population by activity status, by sex, 5 years age intervals, native/foreign

In the labour market, the working-age population (usually 15-64 y.o.) is divided into the (economically) active and inactive. The former group includes the employed (civilian

employment plus the armed forces) and the latter, the unemployed. The current (economically) active population is called the labour force. The indicator is calculated in terms of the number of (economically) active people divided by the total population (aged 15-64).

Data are available at NUTS 3 level and based on LFS estimates. Data are available from 2003 onwards. Population by activity status is distributed by sex and age groups. Data refer to the total population. Breakdown by national/foreign is not available.

Developed countries and regions are characterised by high employment rates.

d) Health sector outlook: work force in healthcare; shortage of work in healthcare; healthcare workforce gap

Health workers are all people engaged in actions whose primary intent is to enhance health. The NSI provides data on the following indicators: 1) Population per general practitioner (physician) and 2) Population per dentist.

Data on the workforce in healthcare are available at LAU 1 level. The data owner is the NSI and data are available from 2003 onwards. Data on medical specialists working outside the country are not available. Data on medical specialists leaving the country, their characteristics and countries of destination are not available. Data on vacancies are available quarterly and based on a sample survey; available at the national level at NACE level one.

In the policy area ‘Social development’, the following indicators were gathered:

a) Subjective well-being of the population

Subjective well-being encompasses three distinct but complementary sub-dimensions: life satisfaction – based on an overall cognitive assessment – affects the presence of positive feelings (and the absence of negative ones) and *eudaemonia* – the feeling that one’s life has purpose.

Data are available from SSS as of the end of 2018. Data from EU-SILC are available at the national level. The data owner is the NSI and information is available for 2013. The subsequent round of data collection was in 2018. Frequency: based on the implementation frequency of the module on life satisfaction in EU-SILC. Life satisfaction involves an overall cognitive assessment of a person.

Subjective well-being indicators are closely related to the domains of social capital and quality of life. Even a generic measure such as ‘satisfaction with life as a whole’ can be a predictor of potential migration behaviour since people who are dissatisfied, on average,

migrate more frequently. When making migration decisions, people's perceptions and opinions may trump objective considerations. Subjective well-being indicators are usually collected at the national and regional level, in household surveys and specialised polls.

b) Tolerance towards foreigners (foreign workers)

This indicator measures attitudes towards foreigners. Higher levels of this indicator (higher tolerance levels) may indicate higher numbers of foreign migrants in a region, in addition to higher levels of immigration. Data from Eurobarometer are available only for the years 2014-2018 at the national level. Data from the ESS are available only for the years 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, at the national level. Data from the YOUMIG small-scale survey are available for 2018 at LAU2 level.

c) Intentions to migrate within the next 5 years, (if possible) intended destination, duration of absence

This indicator measures migration intention, which can be dependent on many factors. It could be used to assess the likelihood of future emigration.

A national sample survey on migration behaviour is available for 2011 for Bulgaria.

Data from the YOUMIG small-scale survey are available for 2018 only, and only at LAU2 level.

d) Disposable household income per capita

Disposable income is the amount of money that households have available for spending and saving after income taxes are accounted for. Per capita refers to the disposable household income per person/inhabitant of an area.

Data are available at NUTS 3 level from EU SILC. The data owner is the NSI and data are available for 2008 onwards. Data from the YOUMIG small-scale survey are available for 2018 only, and only at LAU2 level.

2.3. Small-scale survey: main findings for Burgas Municipality³³

A **representative small-scale survey** was conducted in Burgas, followed by an analysis of the results needed for the pilot action's implementation and the elaboration of evidence-based policies.

The main **objective** of the study was to **obtain information on the living conditions of young people aged 15-34, and their future plans and life prospects in Burgas.**

³³Authors of the subchapter: Veselina DIMITROVA (Burgas Municipality), Magdalena KOSTOVA (National Statistical Institute)

The results will help the municipal government analyse the current situation and plan better policies and measures on the living conditions and migration plans of young people.

The following **tasks** were planned and executed for this purpose:

- Preparation and dissemination of a **questionnaire** – for this, directions of the Lead partner, NSI and Burgas Municipality were taken into account. The dissemination was organised and carried out with the participation of four interviewers.
- Processing and **analysis of the results** was performed using specialised software, enabling an analysis of the correlation between the different questions in the questionnaire.

The analysis below is based on **correlations (cross-sections)** among the issues that are of greatest benefit for the purposes of the study.

The number of respondents: 198 people consisting of young people aged 15-34, living permanently in the territory of Burgas.

57 (40%) of the respondents are men and 10% are women; the other respondents (up to 100%) have not indicated their gender. In terms of age, 25 (20%) of the respondents are aged 15-18, while another 21 (20%) are in the age group 19-23. These are mainly students who together represent 46 (40%) of the questionnaire's respondents.

Concerning **emigration**, the results show **that only 6% of the young interviewees had lived abroad for at least 1 year. 39%** of the people who had lived abroad indicated employment as their reason for emigrating, **26%** mentioned **education** and **22%** cited **family reasons**. These data back up those obtained in the qualitative survey conducted in 2017, which indicated that many young people study and work during their time abroad. It is noteworthy that 22% of respondents emigrate for family reasons, an issue that requires further investigation.

The completion of a period of work and/or study abroad is the most important reason emigrants choose to return home. The second and third most important factors relate to a migrant's **social circle** and **family**, which confirms the results of the quantitative survey. Moreover, it is clear that **isolation and loneliness abroad** are important motivating factors for returning. Other significant reasons in this regard are **economic difficulties** and a **hostile environment**. A surprising **number of respondents mentioned that Bulgaria offers a better environment for work and education**. Such responses may suggest a shift in attitudes towards emigration and perhaps a change in the one-dimensional perception of Bulgaria as a 'failed country' when compared to the 'promised land' of Europe.

Around **22%** of the young people interviewed **declared their intention to move to another country**, and **15% to another municipality in the country**. However, 63% said they would prefer to live and work in Burgas. **The top-five emigration countries for young people in Burgas are the UK, Germany, France, Spain and Canada/USA**. It will be interesting to see if the United Kingdom maintains its first place after leaving the EU.

The results show that **6%** of the respondents had **already made steps to leave the municipality and the country**. However, in terms of life-satisfaction, the results indicate an inverse relationship between the quality of life and intentions to leave. In other words – and counter-intuitively –, it turns out that **people who are generally happy with their lives in Burgas, may have a greater intention to leave**. This relationship was also evident in answers to other questions, which belies the commonly held belief that the causes of emigration are poverty and inertia.

In general, **a positive assessment of Burgas** in terms of quality of life prevails. It is noteworthy that **people who have lived abroad often make a favourable comparison** between the experience they gained abroad and the environment that they find in Burgas, and Bulgaria. On the other hand, **people who have strong intentions to emigrate** but lack experience living abroad **give Bulgaria a lower ranking on the socio-economic scale**. An explanation for this may be that a person's negative perception of their local environment can be grounds for their intention to emigrate. By comparing the last two findings, it can be said that **a decision to emigrate appears to depend on a young person's assessment of the general state of the country and municipality rather than one based on subjective well-being or other related 'happiness' indicators**.

The responses to the questions on the priority areas in the following two years indicate that the **most important reason for emigration** is the pursuit of **a good education**, with **job and career development** taking second place.

The results suggest that **people who have completed tertiary education abroad may wish to return and find employment in Burgas**. Young people who have been abroad for more than a year consider the **family** their number one priority, which may be a reflection of social isolation abroad.

A prevailing opinion among **nearly two thirds of young people is that immigrants pose a potential threat to the social security system, labour market and 'cultural norms'**. It appears that immigrants, at least in the abstract, are perceived as a threat in this regard, whereas **attitudes towards immigrants (mostly Russians) 'in person' in Burgas are more moderate and balanced**. Negative attitudes towards Russians are shared by less than the

half of the respondents. Attitudes towards Russians do appear to be less favourable, however, in relation to what is perceived as their disregard for local culture.

Recommendations

Attitudes towards emigration are changing: the simplistic picture of Bulgaria as a developing country versus Western Europe as the ‘promised land’ (from the perspective of young people and potential migrants) is being challenged. **To exploit this shift in perception, a spirit of entrepreneurship (including the launching of new businesses, the implementation of employment schemes and the development of a municipality-emigrant communication network) that helps to keep young people in Burgas while incentivising emigrants to return should be fostered.**

The popular **belief that the causes of emigration are poverty and inertia is being refuted.** A decision to emigrate **depends on the potential migrant’s evaluation of the general conditions of the country and municipality** rather than one based on an assessment of their quality of life or other subjective measures. Therefore, local authorities must work towards not only improving living standards but also improving administrative services and local policies.

On completion of tertiary education abroad, young people tend to return and find employment in Burgas; therefore, a good business climate should be developed to improve the city’s economic and social conditions, making it a more attractive place to live and work.

Perceptions of immigrants in the abstract may provoke unease and fear, while attitudes towards immigrants (Russians) ‘in person’ in Burgas tend to be more moderate and balanced. Therefore, initiatives that encourage better relations between local and foreign communities should be supported.

CHAPTER 3

BETTER MANAGEMENT OF YOUTH MIGRATION THROUGH LOCAL POLICIES³⁴

3.1. Existing good practices and pilot activities for the improved management of youth migration at the local level³⁵

Local governments are facing increasing challenges from the inward, outward, and return migration of youth, but they often lack the capacities and tools to cope with such challenges. In view of this, a collection of good policy practices and actions linked to youth migration was prepared by the YOUMIG project³⁶, keeping in mind the different local contexts – namely that some cities are predominantly migrant-sending communities, while others receive more migrants than the number of emigrants they send.

A 'good practice' is a solution to a particular issue that has been tested in practice and positively evaluated. According to the UNESCO model³⁷ developed for **best practices in immigration planning**, the four main characteristics of best practices are that:

1. They are innovative,
2. They have a positive and tangible impact on the living conditions, quality of life or environment of the individuals, groups or communities concerned,
3. They have a sustainable effect,
4. They are replicable.

The objective of the 'European and global good practice collection of relevant services and actions linked to youth migration' was to provide YOUMIG local partners with a pool of already existing and tested solutions from which they could select one good practice for their local pilot activity. The good practice collection is based on the accumulated knowledge

³⁴Chapter 3 is connected to the Data Toolkit through two expert studies. The 'European and global good practice collection of relevant services and actions linked to youth migration' is accessible in the Data Toolkit in the 'YOUMIG – Main outputs' part through the button *Good practices*, and the 'Evaluation reports of the local pilots' is accessible through the button *Pilot activities*.

³⁵ Authors of the subchapter: Nada STROPNIK and Nataša KUMP (Institute for Economic Research, Slovenia), Amna POTOČNIK and Borut JURISIĆ (Maribor Development Agency)

³⁶YOUMIG Good Practice Collection is available at: <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/youmig/outputs>

³⁷Cited by: PORTUGAL, R., PADILLA, B., INGLEBY, D., DE FREITAS, C., LEBAS, J., and PEREIRA MIGUEL, J. (eds.) (2007) *Good Practices on Health and Migration in the EU*, Final draft, Conference on "Health and Migration in the EU: Better health for all in an inclusive society", Lisbon, September 2007. Original publication by UNESCO - Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST): *Best Practices on Indigenous Knowledge*. UNESCO, 1999.

and experience made available on the European Website on Integration ‘Migrant Integration Information and good practices’³⁸, the Cities of Migration website ‘Good Ideas from Successful Cities’³⁹ and the website of CARIM-East – Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration.⁴⁰ Where a lack of good practices for solving important problems related to migration and migrants was apparent, authors of the collection exceptionally included non-tested potentially good practices that were agreed on by focus groups or in the Delphi surveys, or recommended by professionals in the field.

The Good Practice Collection underscores the **utmost importance of local governments and local stakeholders in supporting the social inclusion of migrants** with effective policy measures. Considering the project’s purpose and aims, YOUMIG’s Good Practice Collection focused on the young population (aged 15-34), and on local level stakeholders (local authorities, groups of citizens, associations, NGOs, etc.). Only those policy areas were targeted where local authorities have grounds to implement changes – i.e., for which they are responsible. The beneficiaries of these practices might be immigrants, return migrants, emigrants, diasporas, sending or receiving communities etc.

In the YOUMIG framework, good practices were grouped in relation to the major target groups (immigrants, emigrants, and returnees), and also the issues they were expected to solve. It was found that **the majority of existing good practices focus on immigrants**. There appears to be a reason for this bias: the practices tend to address people who are present in the country rather than those who are away and most good practices are designed and implemented in richer countries where immigration rather than emigration, is the main issue.

An important group of good practices deals with **information services** that help young people with a migration background to improve their chances of (re-)integration (linguistic, social, educational and professional) and that encourage their participation in all areas of the social, economic, cultural and political life of the host local community. These services can be provided through information centres, as individual support, through the provision of professional advice, group and educational courses, etc.

In the area of **education**, there are good practices for providing immigrants with the language skills necessary for them to become literate enough to participate in social and political life, get a better job, be able to help their children with homework, be able to deal

³⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/home>

³⁹ <http://citiesofmigration.ca/good-ideas-in-integration/municipal/>

⁴⁰ <http://www.carim-east.eu/publications/research-reports/integration-and-reintegration-of-migrants/>

with administrative matters, etc. The employment of learning mentors in schools is a good practice that promotes educational achievement among migrant children.

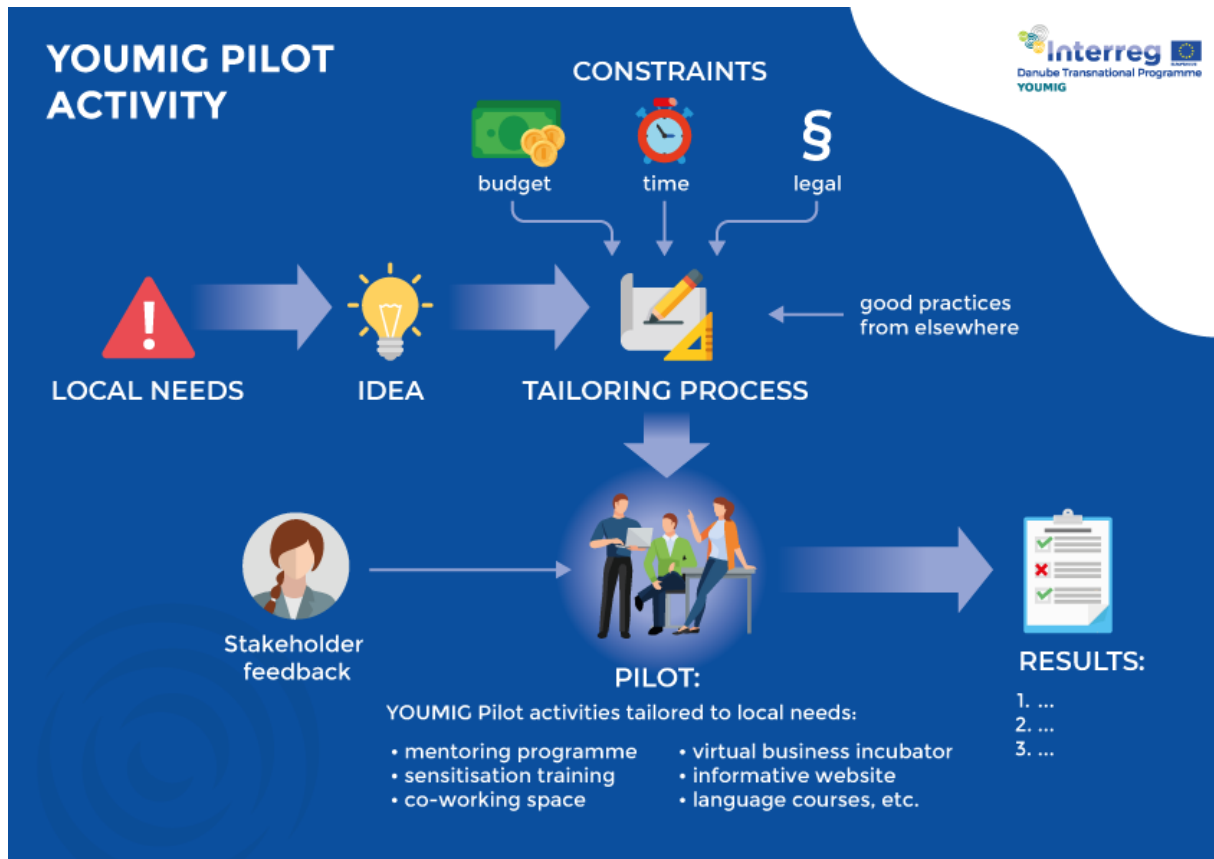
Labour market inclusion of immigrants is also of crucial importance. Good practices deal with guidance, support and training services for immigrants, improving their employment outcomes, challenging stereotypes, counselling immigrant entrepreneurs, setting up centres for the support of migrant initiatives (such as business incubators), etc.

There are some good practices in the area of **health care**, such as health promotion, migrant friendly health centres, and cultural mediators in health care. Providing support in the search for rental housing is an example of good practice in the area of **housing**.

Good practices focused on **emigrants**, including those engaging diaspora students, promoting labour market opportunities, leveraging remittances for economic development, supporting emigrants' children, linking diaspora health professionals with medical institutions in sending countries, and engaging diasporas in the local development of sending countries. Selected practices targeting return migrants mainly cover the labour market reintegration of qualified returnees and investments by returnees in their countries of origin.

Local YOUMIG partners were encouraged to skim through the collection of existing and tested good practices and actions linked to youth migration and choose ideas to guide them when designing their own interventions. All **pilot actions** were adapted to local contexts. Their implementation was supported by feedback from stakeholders sought at local Migration Forums.

Figure 6. YOUMIG pilot actions to tackle identified local challenges



To address the challenges, obstacles and benefits of youth migration in sending or receiving communities, YOUMIG's Local Status Quo Analyses (LSQA)⁴¹ provided an overview of trends on youth migration and of related social phenomena. Through applied research, a screening of responses provided by local authorities to challenges related to the in- and out-migration of young people was performed. A related goal was to identify management and capacity gaps in the institutional mechanisms of local authorities in order to address youth migration and related phenomena.

Based on the challenges and needs revealed in the Local Status Quo Analyses and on collected good practices, **local partners tailored existing practices to their own needs**, in order to provide better services for immigrants, emigrants or returning youth migrants. Each YOUMIG local partner elaborated a Roadmap adapting existing practices and/or designing new ones. These documents described pilot interventions that offered new services to immigrants, emigrants or returning youth. Local partners discussed their plans with

⁴¹Local Status Quo Analysis can be obtained at: <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/youmig/outputs>

stakeholders, and implemented the pilot activities in order to address one or several challenges identified in the Local Status Quo Analysis, and based on a common methodology.

YOUMIG partners opted to design and implement the following pilot activities:

Burgas (Bulgaria): Creating a virtual business incubator for supporting entrepreneurship among young returning migrants and immigrants

Graz (Austria): Designing a mentoring programme for girls with a migration background, focusing on natural science and technology, with a view to applying for vocational training

Kanjiza (Serbia): Creating a co-working space as a hub for young entrepreneurs and the self-employed, as an alternative to emigration

Maribor (Slovenia): Rearranging an existing co-working centre to assist young locals and migrants in creating self-employment

Rača (Slovakia): Mapping the capacities of local primary schools to become spaces of integration for young migrant parents, through language courses and social events

Sfântu Gheorghe (Romania): Revitalising an informative website about the municipality, targeting young emigrants who are considering returning to the city

Szeged (Hungary): Sensitisation and multicultural training for the municipality's front office workers and preschool teachers that regularly meet young migrants

An evaluative description of all seven pilot activities can be found on the YOUMIG website.

3.2. Local challenges and solutions in connection with youth migration: the pilot activity in Burgas⁴²

According to the Local Status Quo Analysis, the predominant **perception** of youth migration in Burgas is construed somewhat dramatically as a '**massive exodus**' of the young and educated from Bulgaria towards the developed European countries, impacting both the development of the municipality and the country as a whole in terms of their loss of demographic and economic potential. On the other hand, **the local administration appears to have little data** on the actual number of young people leaving and arriving in Burgas, in addition to a lack of knowledge regarding the motives behind this behaviour.

⁴²Author: Veselina DIMITROVA (Burgas Municipality)

Burgas is often portrayed as **an expensive city whose citizens feel poor**. Some of the interviewees said that stagnation in the local economy was owing to a **lack of entrepreneurial passion** and an **underdeveloped business culture** in the community.

The following list was created with regard to some of the major challenges that Burgas is currently facing:

- An ageing population
- ‘Brain drain’
- A chronic lack of high-skilled workers in the local economy
- A lack of entrepreneurship
- Insufficient opportunities for tertiary education in the city

In Burgas, the huge disparity between price and wage levels has led to the closing down of shops and emigration of the city’s youth to the capital and abroad. With this in mind, **the creation of a favourable environment for entrepreneurship, along with support for family businesses and self-employment represents the best way forward for the city.**

In response to these challenges, the municipality in cooperation with **Business Incubator – Burgas**, developed several measures with the intention of **attracting young migrants to the city**. This led to the concept of the **virtual business incubator**, which provides support in setting up the prerequisites needed for the personal and professional development of members of the following target groups: **young families, young people with a secondary education, the unemployed, immigrants, return migrants and potential emigrants.**

From the insights gained from the business incubator, a **virtual library** was created, consisting of **32 e-books** that serve as an aid for self-education in the domain of entrepreneurship. A **video** with an inspiring discussion on the opportunities available both in Burgas and abroad can be found in this section.

A key element of the pilot action consisted of **mentors—successful entrepreneurs** who agreed to hold consultations with young people looking to start their own businesses. However, the success of this component of the pilot action depended on the readiness of the young entrepreneurs to share their experiences voluntarily (no fees). An additional complication arose from a (typically Bulgarian) anxiety that one’s ideas and ‘know-how’ might be appropriated; leading to a potential loss for the entrepreneur. Those who accepted the challenge to act as **mentors either had a migratory background or had worked previously in an international environment.**

Since the pilot action's implementation in December, there have been 258 hits on the virtual business incubator site. However, as of yet, there have been no requests to meet the mentors. Consequently, we realised that young entrepreneurs-to-be might prefer to visit a pre-organised thematic event specific to their own interests, rather than initiate one. Therefore, a change of tack was in order, and **a meeting and discussion with two of the mentors was arranged.**

At the time of the discussion, it became clear that **young people often lack the confidence to make their way in business life.** On the other hand, studying and working abroad is perceived as an attractive alternative to living in a municipality with economic and structural problems. The results of the small-scale survey analysis confirmed the commonly held view that the situation in the home country needs to change so that young people can build productive lives and emigrants have good reasons to return home. There is a **general lack of faith, even mistrust** in local and national-level administration, the business environment and the quality of medical care – not to mention the education system. Young people would sooner turn their attention to personal development and well-being, which are not restricted by geographic and economic boundaries.

In the context of providing **free support for young people looking to start their own businesses,** the pilot project can be considered a success. The **strategy** underlying the pilot action was to set up as an ongoing activity to **be updated by the staff of the Business Incubator – Burgas.** With the assistance of the volunteer mentors, this sustainability was ensured. Moreover, the pilot is a novel resource with the potential for further development.

Recommendations

The success of such initiatives depends not only on the local situation and context, but also on the overall political and economic situation at the country level. Sometimes, this cannot be assessed at the time of planning of the action – consultations with stakeholders showed a **clear demand for entrepreneurship support programmes** at the local level. Therefore common initiatives with the government have to be discussed, planned and implemented (with the engagement of citizens in the policy planning process) to establish evidence-based policies that foster entrepreneurship and a 'can do' attitude to business.

In the process of implementation, it became clear that young people choose to emigrate owing to their **negative perception of the countrywide situation,** and not necessarily for economic reasons. In effect, they would sooner try their luck abroad than stay in their home

country. Therefore, further research on the perceptions and attitudes of young people has to be conducted; in addition, the public authorities have to work towards reducing bureaucracy and simplifying administrative procedures.

The pilot action is a novel tool and as such, it holds much promise in terms of developmental potential. Further steps will be taken to organise promotional events with the participation of the mentors. These will take the form of thematic meetings every three months, with a focus on starting a business in Burgas.

3.3. One-stop-shop approach to managing youth migration⁴³

Over the past few decades, national governments have often received criticism for **poor coordination between different sectors of governance**. The problem is systemic – most governments are organised as 'silos', or separate vertical structures, dividing responsibilities among ministries and governmental agencies with poor coordination of activities between them. In order to achieve greater efficiency, the Committee of the Regions of the European Union, among several other institutions, has promoted a multi-actor approach in policy fields such as migration.

In YOUMIG, local partners identified key policy actors, and set up a plan involving several institutions in the provision of better services for youth migrants. Its objective was to reach an agreement on the key values, principles and processes underpinning the provision of services, and to achieve better coordination, commitment and transparency in offering high quality services easily accessible to young immigrants, emigrants or returnees.

Local partners introduced and tested a **'One-stop-shop' pilot unit (OSS) within the local authority**, which was conceived as a **hub for providing information about all local services linked to youth migration** (e.g., the integration of immigrants, keeping in contact with emigrants, re-inserting returning migrants). One-stop-shops in customer services usually gather all the necessary administrative parts of a process under one roof so that the customer does not have to move between buildings located in different parts of the city. A well-known example of the one-stop-shop approach was the headquarters of the High

⁴³ Authors of the subchapter: Amna POTOČNIK and Borut JURIŠIĆ (Maribor Development Agency)

Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI) in Lisbon, Portugal, where over 30 different services were made available for immigrants in one location.⁴⁴

For YOUMIG, however, resources were insufficient to open a unified customer service space. Instead, **the objective of local partners was to involve the whole range of national, regional and local institutions in providing migration services (including those for youth groups), in a strengthened cooperation.** The One-stop-shop approach, especially the platform for stakeholder involvement, helped to facilitate accessibility to the public administration offices, and improve the quality of those services. The activity aimed to empower young migrants by providing relevant and location-specific information concerning their rights, obligations and opportunities, along with any administrative procedures to be undertaken in the city.

Figure 7. YOUMIG One-stop-shop approach to customer services for young migrants



⁴⁴http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/one-stop-shop-mainstreaming-integration/

The YOUMIG One-stop-shop approach is based on two pillars:

- First, **the improvement in quality of available information** (the collection, monitoring and evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data on youth migration in the Danube Region, and in particular in the selected local community)
- Second, the **provision of new or improved services for young migrants** (in addition to recording the identified problems and accomplishments of the provided services) (Note: the monitoring and evaluation of the OSS implementation within each local partner was based on joint methodology)

The YOUMIG OSS services were set up to overcome a whole range of **challenges** faced by local communities, in both receiving and sending communities, including:

- The wide range of institutions involved in migrant integration processes
- The lack of cooperation between governmental services and their dispersed locations
- The diversity of procedures within a complex bureaucracy
- Communication difficulties owing to cultural and linguistic diversity
- The difficulties of young migrants participating in local decision-making

The YOUMIG OSS services involved both governmental and non-governmental actors, and brought together relevant institutions that young migrants needed to contact in the sending or receiving community (place-based approach). The **target group was very heterogeneous** having: different age groups between the ages 15-34; immigration, emigration or return migration backgrounds; different reasons for migration (education, work, family reunification, personal reasons, involuntary migration, etc.), distinct legal statuses (EU- or non-EU citizens, double citizenship holders) and various expectations and demands in relation to stakeholders and the service users.

The YOUMIG OSS model was designed to provide services for both migrants (immigrants, emigrants and returning migrants) and stakeholders dealing with migration. The latter, as an integral part of the local environment, are the most important group in the integration process. Some examples of relevant issues for **local stakeholders** in relation to migrants are:

- A local company that would employ foreign workers, but is put off by the bureaucracy involved in hiring non-citizens
- A local medical facility, not familiar with international health insurance
- A local school or nursery, not having the linguistic or cultural disposition to accept foreign speaking children

- Local incubators supporting self-employment, not realising the needs or potential of migrants

The basic principle of the YOUMIG OSS network is that **a person who needs support should contact one point only**, where they receive the help (or relevant contact information) from the person responsible for resolving the issue. Therefore, it was conceived as an upgraded information point, covering several stakeholders. The advantage of this is that a person is not left alone to find the information needed to resolve a migration-related issue. Instead, by contacting the network, they are already seeking a solution. Further, the YOUMIG OSS network facilitates the collection of documented information on typical administrative issues pertinent to young migrants, (e.g. deregistration in the event of emigration).

3.4. One-stop-shop in Burgas: integrating information provision for young migrants⁴⁵

Some of the YOUMIG partners (i.e. local authorities) come from **countries with centralised governments** such as Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Serbia. However, municipalities in other partner countries enjoy greater autonomy – this decentralised system of government is found in Austria, Germany, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Since in the latter case local authority budgets are bigger and receive funding from more diverse sources, their responsibilities and functions are wider. These systemic differences determine both the functions and levels of authority of municipalities and the administrative services they provide.

In a decentralised system, local authorities are responsible for the provision of services such as population registration, health insurance, and social assistance; whereas in countries with centralised governments these functions are the remit of various ministries – usually based in the capital with administrative branches in each district. This is why **centralised government municipalities cannot directly influence administrative** processes. A strict division exists in terms of the powers of executive and individual government bodies, with regulations setting out in detail the terms of their powers with regard to the services they provide.

In **Bulgaria**, the registration of **foreign citizens is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior**, and information collected for this purpose is confidential in compliance with the Ministry of the Interior Act, and the **Personal Data Protection Act**. An exception is made in

⁴⁵Author: Veselina DIMITROVA (BurgasMunicipality)

the case of information provided for statistical purposes where municipalities lack the capability to collect and process data. **Statistical data is submitted only to the National Statistical Institute** (National Statistical Institute Act).

The initial registration of newcomers from non-EU countries is the responsibility of municipal authorities. By law, EU citizens are not considered foreign citizens and they are under no obligation to register in a municipality. This initial registration enables subsequent administrative actions. A possible means of adding value in this regard was to prepare **leaflets containing information** on the importance of registration and the consequences of not registering.

The powers of an administrative body in Bulgaria are delegated by law. An administration's sole function is to provide public services and information, and direct people to the relevant authority/office.

Administrative procedures are specific and often complex, not only for foreign citizens/migrants, but also locals – if a local person wants to set up a company, buy a property, or change the legal status of a plot of land, it is impossible to do so without hiring a solicitor.

Table 1 summarises the usual administrative issues for a young immigrant/returning migrant, and provides the name of the authority responsible for each procedure.

Table 1. List of usual administrative issues for a young immigrant/returning migrant

| Main categories | Concrete administrative issues | Municipality competencies | Central government competencies |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Official personal documents | Obtaining or renewing an ID card, residence permit, registration certificate | N/A | Ministry of the Interior – local branches |
| | Obtaining or renewing a driving license | N/A | Ministry of the Interior – road police |
| | Registration of a change of residence | Civil registration | N/A |
| | Registration of a change of marital status | Civil registration | N/A |
| | Registration of the birth of a child | Civil registration | N/A |
| | Registration of property or vehicle purchase | Local taxes | National Agency of Revenues |
| Work | Receiving a work permit | N/A | Labour Agency |
| | Founding a business | Depends – local taxes Dept. issues categories | Commercial Register |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | for local cafes and restaurants for already registered businesses | |
| | Receiving support in finding a job | N/A | Labour Agency |
| Taxes | Obtaining a tax identification number | N/A | National Agency of Revenues |
| | Paying income taxes, receiving a tax refund | N/A | National Agency of Revenues for any other taxes |
| | Paying local taxes (please specify what taxes) | Local taxes – property taxes, and waste disposal taxes | N/A |
| Healthcare and social transfers | Obtaining health insurance (or access to public healthcare services) | N/A | National Health Insurance |
| | Receiving financial social assistance (of any kind) | Budget and Finances with a delegated budget from the state | National Social Security Institute |
| Education | Enrolment to preschool (ages 3-6) | Department of Education | N/A |
| | Enrolment to primary school | Department of Education | N/A |
| | Enrolment to secondary school | Department of Education | Ministry of Education – for public high schools |
| | Enrolment to vocational training | N/A | Labour Agency, Universities |
| | Enrolment to university | N/A | Universities |
| | Nostrification (recognition of an education certificate issued in another country) | N/A | Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| | Language learning (subsidised) | N/A | N/A (eventually some NGOs) |
| Other | <i>Please add other issues if relevant</i> | | |

Burgas has no profile as a migrant-receiving community, on the contrary – it is a **migrant-sending community**. All the same, the relevant information for foreign immigrants is available in advance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of the Interior. In this respect, **Vienna’s good practice** of establishing a **separate unit for assisting immigrants** finding their way in Vienna, is relevant. However, a **similar practice would serve little purpose in Burgas** since the total number of immigrants from non-EU countries who have residence permits represents 1.85% of the municipality’s population, of which the largest share is Russian citizens (around 1%). The total number of immigrants from EU countries represents 0.6% of the city’s population. **Russian and Ukrainian citizens tend to integrate**

well into the community and city life – linguistic similarities (e.g. the same alphabet) may provide an explanation in this regard.

Based on the findings of the LSQA it was decided that a **One-stop-shop (OSS) in Burgas would serve as part of the administrative section**, taking into consideration the section's limited municipal function concerning migration. A **leaflet containing basic information** for newcomers was elaborated in **English and Russian**. It is available on the municipal website at the following link: <https://www.burgas.bg/en/info/index/1378>

In the **Municipal Centre for Administrative Services**, an immigrant can find **information on** registering their address and accessing education services. A leaflet with key administrative information is also available. **For inquiries in English, the phone number of the Directorate of European Policies and Programmes is provided**. Further, all inquiries in English via the Municipal Phone Centre are directed to this number. In the front office, there is a stand with the project logo and OSS information, showing foreign citizens where to go with regard to address registration and related topics.

The following **challenges** are worth outlining:

Despite the **Ministry of the Interior's** initial gesture of cooperation, it later **turned down the leaflets for immigrants** stating that all foreign citizens visiting the Migration Office were already familiar with the information concerning their administrative obligations. Likewise, the **Russian Centre had already paid for similar services and assistance** and was not interested in taking the leaflet. Currently the leaflet is available as an online brochure and in the Municipal Centre for Administrative Services.

The brochure has received 469 hits since its online publication. However, in the front office, there have been no requests for further information or phone calls making such requests.

On average, three foreign citizens per day visited the front office in the summer season. No requests in relation to the OSS service were made. During the winter, the number of foreign citizens visiting the front office was, on average, less than one person per day. These statistics bear out the initial concern that in view of the small number of foreign citizens in the city and the limited municipal services provided for migrants, the demand for an OSS service would hardly be overwhelming.

However, the process of implementing a good practice served to prepare the municipality in the event of **a rise in immigration levels**. Following the OSS's implementation, the local government is convinced that it needs to plan ahead even though there is currently no immigration issue at the local level. Meanwhile, officials working in local administration

have gained a lot of experience through discussions and workshops related to the pilot's implementation.

Recommendations

Despite the current lack of demand on the part of foreign citizens for these and related administrative services, a great deal was learnt from the implementation of the pilot. It is hoped that municipality officials will now be better placed to help immigrants in the event of an increasing demand for such services.

CHAPTER 4

BETTER COOPERATION BETWEEN POLICY ACTORS⁴⁶

4.1. Transnational cooperation schemes between municipalities⁴⁷

Youth migration is a transnational phenomenon by nature; every migrant leaves a particular local context and arrives in another one. **Better coordination and cooperation among migrant-sending and migrant-receiving communities is crucial** for managing its causes, processes and impacts efficiently.

YOUMIG's transnational cooperation schemes were aimed at **testing options for interaction between municipalities affected by youth migration**. A common methodology for testing such schemes was developed and implemented, with the following main objectives:

- To understand each other's local context: the places young migrants arrive in, or depart from
- To begin cooperation in relevant fields (e.g. social services, education, labour market)
- To investigate and test win-win solutions

Another practical objective in terms of fostering cooperation between municipalities was to observe good practices for tackling the challenges of youth migration, and create a practical guide for other local communities in Europe with similar migratory profiles and challenges. At a local level, the acquired knowledge was intended as the basis of a local strategy to manage the impacts of youth migration.

In the second period of 2017, each local YOUMIG partner visited a city within the Danube Programme area, from/to where local young people migrate. Alternatively, twin cities or cities in which special ties exist could be selected.

In the second period of 2018, a further round of study visits was undertaken within the YOUMIG partnership. The objective of the visits was to assess the pilot actions performed among partners with similar profiles, and add to the range of transnational cooperation possibilities, providing opportunities for improving local services based on the evaluation report.

⁴⁶Chapter 4 is connected to the Data Toolkit through one expert study. The National Policy Recommendations (based on the main findings of the Ambition setting workshops and Vision development workshops) are accessible in the Data Toolkit in the 'YOUMIG – Main outputs part' through the button *Policies*.

⁴⁷ Author of the subchapter: Vesselina DIMITROVA, Burgas Municipality

A common methodology for the preparation and carrying out of the study visits was prepared in both cases. Its main purpose was to equip local partners with a practical tool for their respective study visits, and provide general guidelines for reaching conclusions with regard to their projects.

The preparatory phase of the **first study visit** included identifying the city to be visited according to its profile, establishing contacts with the relevant authorities and units, engaging with the local diaspora, and arranging the visit. During the visits, **local partners discussed migration-related topics** that would provide possibilities for improvement. These were summarised in the infield experience reports used to formulate recommendations for YOUMIG's Pilot activities and One-stop-shops, and other local activities engaged in improving local services in the area of youth migration and the integration of migrants.

The experience of the **second round of study visits** among partners with similar profiles – and based on the type of pilot action – opened up the possibility of an external **in-depth assessment of the pilot services**, and thus opportunities for their improvement. In the evaluation reports drawn up by partners, proposals for transferable best practices were provided.

YOUMIG's study visits served as important inputs for local partners, and strengthened the transnational ties of the municipality, leading on to the discussion of several **local governance issues related to youth migration**, such as:

- Local strategies for collecting useful data on migrant groups coming to or going away from the municipalities, and data sources for local access and use (registers of local/national authorities or institutions, local or national surveys, research)
- The most useful data sources for migration- and youth-related policymaking: recommendations
- Migration-related data in policy decision-making and their importance for the improved management of these processes
- The identification of governance weaknesses, and how these should be addressed
- New practices or projects related to the management of migration impact, implemented in the recent years, and their results
- Innovative migration management measures yet to be implemented
- Information available about young migrants' attitudes and needs in relation to local administration, (e.g. concerning their administrative obligations, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with migration-related institutional bodies, and main trends and issues related to youth migration, migrants' future plans and motivations etc.).

- Proposals to improve the process of managing the impacts of migration, or the registration process
- Proposals to develop cooperation opportunities with a local authority or migration office from a sending/receiving country

4.2. Transnational cooperation schemes between local governments: the experience of Burgas⁴⁸

For the purposes of the study visit, Burgas Municipality opted to visit Vienna – a large city in the Danube Region with a large Bulgarian diaspora – to learn about a good policy practice in the area of immigration management.

Vienna was selected because according to recent data, there are an estimated **50,000 Bulgarian immigrants living in Austria**. The Bulgarian diaspora has a long history in Vienna – there is evidence that Bulgarians moved to Vienna as early as the fourteenth century. Later, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – the period of the Bulgarian Renaissance – many young Bulgarians moved to Vienna to receive an education. Presently, there are ca. 16,000 Bulgarian citizens registered in Vienna.

The programme included visits to the Municipal Division for Diversity, the Municipal Division for Foreigner Registration, the Bulgarian Cultural Institute – Wittgenstein House, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, the Alliance Bulgarian School, the Bulgarian media and a Bulgarian restaurant in Vienna. A meeting with Bulgarian students at the University of Vienna was also organised.

An official request to visit was sent out to the respective institutions and entities prior to our study visit; of these, only one – an online Bulgarian media outlet – declined our request. Contact with the Municipal Division for Diversity was made possible with the valuable help of Elisabeth Gruber from Vienna University. No difficulties were encountered during the planning and realising of the study visit.

At the time of the study visit, young people were **positive in their assessment of Viennese administration**, stating that their interactions with the local authorities were generally good. Concerning their motives for emigrating, they pointed out the broader range of opportunities on offer in the city, and the multicultural environment – young people experience diversity as an asset.

⁴⁸Author of the subchapter: Veselina Dimitrova (Burgas Municipality)

Between migrant-sending and migrant-receiving municipalities, two possible fields of cooperation exist: an **exchange of information** and an **exchange of staff**. In Bulgaria's case, where migrants/potential migrants are under **no obligation to deregister**, the former field could fill an **information gap**, while the latter could provide **transferable good practices** in the domain of migrant services. Bulgarian municipalities could borrow good practices concerning registration and efficient data collection, and integrate such practices to aid planning.

Although the Bulgarian diaspora in Vienna is large and well established, a characteristic of Bulgarians is that they do not put an emphasis on **building communities abroad**; rather they prefer to become part of other communities – local or foreign. Bulgarians strive for integration in foreign countries, often resulting in a loss of communication with other Bulgarians in the receiving country.

An agreement to exchange information provides a formal means of strengthening cooperation between municipalities. Staff exchange is possible but not on a regular basis, whereas the sharing of information and knowledge in relation to, for example, a project's planning and implementation is a mutually beneficial process, further expanding the boundaries of cooperation.

Some examples of good practice in Vienna's municipality: all functions of the administration are very well distributed and coordinated, and there are no gaps in terms of the availability of information or the collection process/type of data collected. Unfortunately, this is not the case in Bulgaria, and until a change in legislation is made, giving municipalities more independence, little change can be expected.

Another example of good practice is **Municipal Department 17 – Integration and Diversity (Magistratabteilung 17 für Diversität)**, which is a unique municipal structure providing **practical help and advice** to immigrants in Vienna. What struck us most about the MA 17 department was that it is friendly and people-orientated, qualities that are not necessarily expected of an administrative body, but should serve as a good example.

A good practice like this one could be implemented into the provision of municipality services, bearing in mind the administration's limited functions in the area of migration.

Inspired by this good practice, we decided to integrate it into the **OSS** activity, providing newcomers with **practical information and advice**, in addition to developing a leaflet containing basic directions and important points.

A staff member of Vienna municipality (MA 17) visited Burgas Municipality where a workshop with the staff of the administrative services centre was organised. The Vienna municipality representative duly explained the functions of their department. He pointed out the importance of **thinking ahead when planning a service, rather than waiting until a problem arises**. This experience was of value for the Municipality's Civil Registration Department. Shared personal experiences are of great importance for the improvement of administrative services.

In October 2018, a **study visit to a municipality with a similar profile – Sfântu Gheorghe in Romania** – was organized and experiences regarding the pilot actions and the One-stop-shop were exchanged. During the visit and while presenting and discussing the pilot action, the following conclusions were reached:

Small towns have similar difficulties everywhere – shrinking and ageing populations, and economic stagnation, both of which are interdependent factors.

The pilot action takes the form of a web platform for administrative services (an online helpdesk) based on user demand for improved **digitised services** – rather than paper-based ones. The local analysis pointed to the need for a local pilot (focused on emigrants and return migrants) that provides practical information and services.

The One-stop-shop is a physical location where information and assistance for return migrants is offered. So far, there has been no demand for such a service, since return migrants already know where to go – depending on the type of administrative service needed.

Recommendations

Suffice to say, cities and capitals are a big draw for young people, so **small towns have to devise specific measures and actions that contribute to revitalising their respective cultural and social environments**. In itself, the provision of job and career possibilities cannot be the only solution for attracting migrants. **Inter-city cooperation** in the domain of exchanging successful practices to attract young migrants could offer a step in the right direction.

Shared cooperation experiences and **exploiting user feedback** can help in the development and improvement of municipal services.

4.3. Multi-level governance cooperation schemes and policy recommendations⁴⁹

Multi-level governance (MLG), as defined by the European Union's Committee of the Regions⁵⁰, denotes **coordinated action by the EU, its member states and local and sub-national governments** based on partnership, and entails operational and institutional cooperation in all phases of the policy cycle, from drafting to implementing policies. These actions require the coordination and distribution of competencies from national to sub-national levels, with high importance given to the EU transnational level, especially in view of the growing importance of MLG in migration and integration policy. Therefore, MLG refers to the dispersion of central government authority, both vertically to actors located at different territorial and administrative levels, and horizontally, to actors and domains at the same level of government.

Regional and local competencies on migration policies are not broad ranging. Nevertheless, **it is incumbent on local governments to provide certain public services for migrants**. Therefore, MLG cooperation is a basic necessity of local governance, and municipalities should be considered partners in national-level policy dialogues on migration and integration objectives and indicators.

It is a challenge to develop and implement coherent and coordinated policies in the different policy areas and at multiple governance levels in the migration field. Policies are often implemented in an uncoordinated manner, resulting in inconsistencies in the policies pursued at different levels of government. Therefore, it is important to develop strategies and policies that foster cooperation between different stakeholders and levels of administration, as well as effective coordination between national and sub-national administrations, local authorities, civil society sectors and other relevant stakeholders.

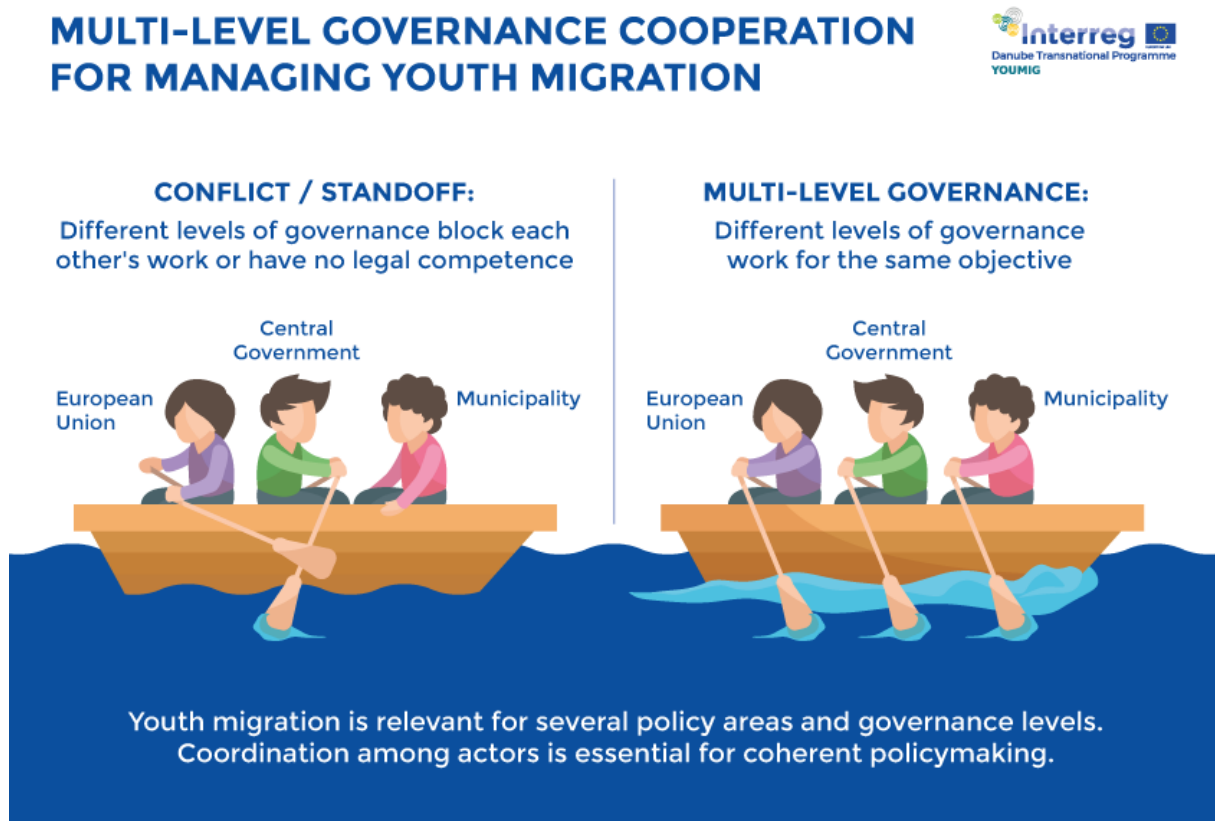
Through building multi-level governance cooperation schemes, **the YOUMIG project aimed to facilitate cooperation between different levels of governance** while providing a testing ground for knowledge exchange mechanisms. The activity outputs presented the modalities of cooperation between national administrative bodies, statistical offices, research institutions and local municipalities. The project sought to better measure, evaluate and

⁴⁹ Author of the subchapter: Jelena PREDOJEVIĆ-DESPIĆ (Institute of Social Sciences, Serbia)

⁵⁰ In 2009, the Committee of the Regions launched the white paper on multi-level governance, followed by the Charter on Multilevel Governance in 2012, stipulating the fact of shared competencies and responsibilities between various levels of governance in the European Union that can result in greater economic, social and territorial cohesion in Europe if working in partnership. An overview of the beginning of the scientific debate is given, i.e. by BACHE, I.: Multilevel Governance and European Union Regional Policy, in: BACHE, I., FLINDERS, M. (2004) Multi-level governance. Oxford University Press, New York, USA. pp. 165-178.

manage youth migration in terms of its causes, processes and impacts, leading to improved MLG cooperation.

Figure 8. Multi-level governance cooperation for managing youth migration



The project sought to overcome specific challenges (identified via the work on the ‘WP 4.2 Set of new or improved indicators’ and the ‘WP 5.2 One-stop-shop’) by means of establishing channels of institutional cooperation at different levels of government.

The YOUMIG MLG scheme defined **coordination and governance processes** by means of the following steps:

- Identifying the most feasible solution for the indicator/policy issue
- Developing a stakeholder engagement strategy
- Identifying the key stakeholders
- Defining responsibilities and the decision-making process

The national-level policy recommendations sought to improve institutional capacities for all actors involved, as well as foster transnational cooperation.

To provide a framework for the project's implementation, two types of workshops at the national level were organised in every participating country, attended by YOUMIG-partners from the same country as well as the relevant national stakeholders who – in view of their knowledge and experience – contributed to the elaboration of the issues reviewed. First, the **Ambition Setting Workshop (ASW)** served to map existing knowledge and competencies, evaluate the current cooperation practices and define the need for and possibility of improved multi-level governance cooperation for selected indicators (core and local) and identified policy cases. The ASW exemplified how to establish channels of cooperation between the institutions concerned. Next, **The Vision Development Workshop (VDW)** facilitated the discussion and finalisation of the national-level policy recommendations, drawing upon the ASW results in addition to the experience of cooperation throughout the project's implementation. Two areas of intervention were included: actions geared towards improvements in the availability and quality of indicators, as well as those intended to tackle policy challenges on youth migration at different governance levels.

Regarding the benefits of this project activity, it is important to emphasise that engagement in constructive dialogue between professionals and national, regional and local stakeholders at the YOUMIG ASW and VDW workshops represents a significant step forward in the development of a constructive political response to the challenges of youth migration.

The proposed examples of MLG cooperation developed through the YOUMIG project's thematic activities (and found in the national recommendations) contain several benefits that can be divided into groups:

Greater efficiency in relation to improvements in the institutional framework and more precise identification of roles and relationships in the decision-making process – Generally, all YOUMIG partner countries within the MLG cooperation schemes provided useful proposals for possible cooperation. These include the formulation of recommendations to improve the institutional framework in order to facilitate the management of youth migration at different levels of government. The improvement of transnational cooperation through bilateral or multilateral cooperation between the countries in relation to data collection is also emphasised. As stated in the Austrian report, cooperation needs to be implemented on a long-term basis and with a political mandate to work effectively. The Bulgarian case recommends the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group that would review the legislation and available regulatory documents. In addition, it would propose appropriate changes to the legislation to enable the production of relevant information on youth migration.

Improved consistency among the national, regional, and local plans – For example, the Slovenian report proposes that different levels of government – each making a significant contribution to regional development agencies – share responsibilities in providing services related to migrants, arguing that such a provision is of strategic importance beyond municipal borders. Romania’s report puts forward two parallel policy strategies related to the development of a multilingual local administration, which could represent a step forward in relation to the return migration option. Serbia’s recommendations include the institutionalisation of the YOUMIG small-scale survey at the municipality level. This measure would provide essential data that strategically addresses youth migration issues and their management. Moreover, it would create opportunities to develop local strategic documents in line with adopted national strategies.

Establishing a clear and consistent vision of development, strategic needs and objectives, as well as developing more favourable financial models – Slovenia’s report suggests the establishment of reliable return migration statistics as the basis of developmental strategies from the national to local level, through the establishment of a complex but functional, top-down governance structure to detect non-registered emigrants. The Bulgarian report contrasts the differing migration policies of centralised state administrations, which often have limited capacity to respond flexibly to local issues, and those of municipal governments, which have the authority to create and launch their own policies but often lack financial resources. The resulting situation can be one in which issues of youth migration become mired in bureaucracy and disowned by mainstream institutions. Therefore, it is recommended that central governments prioritise youth migration on their policy agendas by producing national strategies in this field and inviting regional and municipal authorities to integrate such policies into their local development strategies.

More efficient communication and coordination among competent services; cooperation and knowledge exchange among professionals at different levels of government, with an emphasis on building local governments’ capacities – Slovakia’s proposal ‘Communicating OSS Services to Citizens and Institutions’ shows that only well-established MLG cooperation and long-term coordinated efforts can achieve the concentration of resources necessary to build a strategically well-designed branding concept. Austria’s recommendations indicate that MLG cooperation can improve inter-institutional cooperation and exchange, which is essential for enhancement in current data. Although Austria has well-organised statistical offices at both regional and local levels, other city departments are not always well informed about available data. An emphasis is placed on the promotion of professional and thematic

cooperation as a means of increasing levels of cooperation in statistical offices and research institutions, as well as among political stakeholders to improve the quality of data collection.

Establishing tools that enable a better understanding of migration issues, and continuous monitoring and subsequent evaluation of results achieved – As one of several suggestions related to improving statistical accuracy, Hungary proposes the creation of an integrated statistical database that is able to use both primary and secondary sources, where determinants of the population will be available in a longitudinal approach. To achieve this goal, the long-term cooperation of different institutions is necessary, especially at the national level. For the improvement of data collection on migratory flows, especially return migration, Romania recommends that various national level institutions conduct micro-censuses at regular intervals. Smooth collaboration between national institutions would contribute significantly to the provision of decentralised data for municipalities interested in quality data. The Serbian report proposes improvements in the quality of existing databases and the establishment of new ones, such as the YOUMIG Data Toolkit, specifically, in relation to the coordinative role it has played in the statistical system of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

4.4. Policy recommendations for multi-level governance cooperation in Bulgaria⁵¹

The national level policy recommendations include guidelines on how to deepen cooperation and foster learning and data exchange between statistical offices, academic institutions and local governments, as well as national institutions at the local level. We focus on two areas of national policy intervention: new or improved indicators and policy issues on youth migration.

4.4.1. Area of intervention No 1. Key recommendations and key actions: further actions needed to improve the availability and quality of indicators on youth migration in Bulgaria.

YOUMIG's indicators have a bearing on migration management in that they are intended to stimulate improved governance and competitiveness, in addition to increasing the incidence of evidence-based policy-making in local municipalities. The work got underway with a short overview of the priority areas, migration policies, and local development policies. Based on this, the list of indicators was elaborated and discussed together with the importance of each indicator. In the second stage, a reduced list of the indicators was prepared, along with

⁵¹Authors of the subchapter: Veselina DIMITROVA (Burgas Municipality), Magdalena KOSTOVA (National Statistical Institute)

relevant definitions, clarifications, links to sources (including their evaluation) and the relevance and availability of the indicators.

Table 2. YOUMIG priority areas and groups of indicators covered

| Population and society | Economy, living conditions, environment |
|---|---|
| <p>Demography and population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - characteristics of population - historical involvement into migratory process (1997) - population reproduction <p>Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - health status - health risks <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accessibility - quality <p>Social development and social capital:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social cohesion, tolerance, trust - Integration/Incorporation - Spatial segregation - Civil society | <p>Economic development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - macroeconomic performance - trade and external financing - sustainable public finances <p>Income and living conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic activity and inactivity - Flexibility - Employment - Unemployment - Precariousness - Entrepreneurship <p>Urban and regional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information and communication - cultural, sports, health etc facilities - housing market - health threats - safety |

The indicators cover different areas of social-economic and demographic development since the management of migration cannot be examined independently.

Poverty, inequality, high unemployment rates and the division of economic wealth are important factors that increase or decrease migration flows especially at the regional level.

On 30 October 2018, the **Bulgarian Ambition Setting Workshop** took place, organised by the National Statistical Office in compliance with the plan envisaged under WP 6.2 of the YOUMIG project. The workshop was dedicated to several interconnected goals: mapping the existing knowledge and competencies in the domains of measuring and managing youth migration; evaluating current cooperation practices, and defining the needs and possibilities of improved multi-level governance cooperation.

In respect of the indicators, the discussion focused mostly on the possibility of **providing reliable information on the selected indicators through coordinated actions at different levels of governance**. The participants were provided with indicator-related information

concerning their availability and contribution to the status quo analysis and policy development in the area of youth migration, in addition to definitions of the indicators. The participants agreed that Bulgaria is primarily a sending country and the indicators should be considered carefully on this basis. The participants contributed to the discussion by sharing information on laws, regulations, procedures and possibilities in relation to data collection.

In the workshop, the importance of **establishing multilevel cooperation** to provide information on the indicators under discussion (e.g. identification of sources, documents and necessary changes in legislation) was expressed. The National Statistical Institute was identified as the main coordinator of data collection and aggregation.

Main challenges: despite the identification of potential multi-level information-provision schemes on selected indicators, a number of issues were reported relating to the (slow) process of creating legislative changes, changes in regulative documents, as well as changes to central administration procedures that comprise future proposals for the national authorities:

Based on the workshop's findings, the following recommendations directed at national level institutions in the area of managing local-level youth migration were formulated:

Policy recommendation 1. Strengthen cooperation between national authorities responsible for collecting and providing information. In Bulgaria, national registers and databases containing information on migration processes are by nature, centralised. Therefore, making greater efforts to connect databases used in the production of indicators (that show emigration and immigration levels among young people) and increasing levels of cooperation in general, is of great importance. This will contribute to the provision of improved data for local authorities concerning regions with migration issues. Moreover, it will provide data on the social-economic and demographic traits of young people leaving or returning to the country.

The establishment of an inter-ministerial working group to review the legislation and available regulatory documents and to prepare proposals for appropriate changes in legislation is recommended. This would ensure the production of information relevant to youth migration (e.g. the introduction of a field in the document *Restoration of health insurance rights*).

The key policy action should focus on supporting those institutions whose legislative agenda includes the introduction of amendments into the national legislation aimed at enhancing the registration of Bulgarian citizens residing abroad. Aside from the fact that any tax reduction policy is difficult to implement, the (above) policy action is worth considering in

terms of the improved coverage of migrants and the production of improved and more accurate labour force numbers it can facilitate.

Policy recommendation 2. Strengthen cooperation between the national institutions responsible for data collection and the regional divisions of central government.

This involves the development of specific initiatives and surveys that can be implemented through the regional divisions of central administrations.

For example, establishing a mechanism that provides preliminary and secondary information on secondary school education – specifically, conducting research on final year students concerning their intentions to attend university abroad; in addition, monitoring persons who have completed secondary education in the country with regard to their employment status and intentions to continue studies at home or abroad. The data users could be education institutes, regional inspectorates, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Statistical Institute, etc.

Policy recommendation 3. Elaborate a national strategy with regard to solving the problem of youth migration.

The strategy should serve to create a political framework for tackling youth migration. To monitor the strategy's goals and priorities, it would be necessary to develop a system of indicators whose selection should be carried out by a team of experts. This team should include statisticians, scientists familiar with migratory issues, in addition to other interested parties. The indicators should cover the main objectives of the strategy. Concerning the indicator-selection process, the following criteria are important:

- There should be no change in the regular and uniform collection and processing of the data – necessary for the maintenance of accurate indicators
- The data on the indicators should be representative of the country
- The indicators should be easy to qualify as positive or negative, relative to change
- The indicators should be clear and statistically valid
- The indicators must be timely
- The production of the value of indicators should not be an additional burden on citizens, disproportionate to its benefit. Existing indicators should be used wherever possible
- The set of indicators must be open and accessible to citizens

- The public should be able to easily understand and interpret the indicators; the indicators and their metadata should be easily accessible

After developing an overall strategy for tackling youth migration, an action plan at the regional level is also necessary. In addition to Burgas and other municipalities developing action strategies in the field of youth migration, each municipality should prepare an annual report on this domain, on which the national strategy implementation report can be based.

4.4.2. Area of intervention No 2. Key recommendations and key actions: further actions needed to tackle policy challenges on youth migration at different governance levels in Bulgaria.

The analysis of institutional and inter-institutional functions with respect to the policy challenges of youth migration is based on the substantial exploratory and analytical work delivered by the YOUMIG project teams and presented in several policy papers. These analyses include: a 'Conceptual framework for the study of youth migration in the Danube Region'; a 'Local Status Quo Analysis for Burgas'; the 'European and global good practice collection of relevant services and actions linked to youth migration'; an 'Evaluation report on Burgas's local pilot' and the 'Ambition Setting Workshop' national report. The experience of the Burgas Municipality pilot and that of the subsequent pilot activities in the framework of the YOUMIG project underscore the **commonplace problems of inter-agency cooperation at the local level, including obstacles and setbacks**. These findings, presented at length in the Local Status Quo Analyses and the conclusions of the Ambition Setting Workshop, can serve as a point of departure for the formulation of policy recommendations in relation to the management of youth migration at the national and local level in Bulgaria.

Contradictory institutional policies at the local level

At the local level, a key issue is the lack of coordination and cooperation between the various agencies and institutions concerned with youth migration. This problem became apparent during the early stages of gathering information for the pilot: the local branches of the state agencies provided data that was incomplete, intermittent and often contradictory. For the time being, the only reliable source of information on local issues appears to be the National Statistical Institute. Another difficulty relates to discordance between the policies of educational establishments and those of municipal authorities. Elite language schools in Burgas are major conduits for youth migration – graduates of these schools are known to migrate to countries corresponding to their language studies (typically Germany, the UK,

France and Spain), initially as students and later as economic immigrants. The effect of this failed cooperation is a reflection of the general lack of ‘joined up’ migration-related policies at the local level.

The municipality has launched an ambitious youth-orientated policy intended to keep young people in the community by providing improved career prospects; moreover, the policy aimed to persuade young migrants to return to Burgas by providing business start-up opportunities.

Policy recommendation

In response to these chronic problems, it is **recommended that the local government take the lead in deliberating on the complex issues of youth migration, bringing together the divergent agendas of the different stakeholders** (educational establishments, public authorities, employers, community based NGOs, etc). It is strongly recommended that the representatives of young people and their families be involved in the deliberation process so that its wider publicity can be ensured. **A proposal for mid-level governance** is that horizontal communication and cooperation across institutional boundaries at the national, regional and local levels be encouraged. In view of the structure of Bulgarian governance, such a task should be assigned to the administration of the Regional Governor.

Assumption-based rather than evidence-based policy

The findings of the Burgas LSQA suggest that the public authorities have limited knowledge and often biased understanding of the complex phenomenon of youth migration. Hence, municipal policy is often driven by popular assumptions rather than systemic analysis based on reliable data. A popular take on youth migration in Burgas is that young and educated Bulgarians are leaving the country in a massive exodus en route to developed European countries, affecting unfavourably the development of the municipality and the country as a whole by exhausting its demographic and economic potential. In contrast, return migration – a source of hope and policy ideas – is perceived as possible and highly desirable. However, neither of these viewpoints corresponds entirely with reality. In fact, the statistical data and municipality-level population projections reveal a more balanced trend on migration. General attitudes in the community are informed by popular perceptions, and the municipality’s strategy on migration is often a response to such attitudes.

Policy recommendation

It is recommended that **local-level authorities** collect and process data from various sources concerning young people's general circumstances, and their migration prospects in particular. **At the national level**, it is recommended that the relevant central government institutions place youth migration at the centre of their policies on local development.

Economisation of the migration phenomenon

Another finding of the project is that youth migration is construed, at both the national and municipal level, predominantly in economic terms. The administration perceives young migrants as rational, opportunistic agents, who devise strategies to optimise their economic choices in pursuit of a better life. The research findings and experience gained from the various project activities, however, disprove these assumptions and reveal a more complex picture of multiple and often contradictory motives. It would appear that along with the desire to improve their economic circumstances, young migrants share a variety of other motives such as living independently, emancipation from their parents and culture of origin, learning about different cultures and enhancing their future choices etc. In the interviews, a common theme revolves around keeping the doors of opportunity open for as long as possible by avoiding what they perceive as 'depressive economic realities' channelling life in a predetermined direction. Apparently, in the value system of youth, the freedom to continue making choices, without committing to an ultimate one, takes priority over the security and predictability of a settled life.

Policy recommendation

In view of these findings, the authorities need to acknowledge that they lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of the values, motives, plans and life strategies of young migrants. These issues need to be explored in context – in terms of 'locality' and 'migration opportunities' – and addressed by relevant policies. **It is recommended that both the national and local authorities** initiate an ongoing process of participatory exploration with the active involvement of young people to arrive at adequate policy solutions.

The rigid structure and culture of Bulgarian governance

Both the LSQA and the workshops at the national level identified the rigid bureaucratic culture of Bulgarian administration as a major impediment to multi-level governance cooperation and efficient communication across institutional boundaries, in particular. Bulgaria's state administration is quite centralised and despite operating through its local offices, it has limited capacity to respond flexibly to local issues, including migration. The dispersed structures of the central government are subject to a rigid hierarchy in which the adherence to strict rules is expected. Local administrative offices operate within strictly allocated budgets; their officials often feel disempowered and avoid taking action at their own discretion. On the other hand, municipal governments have the authority to respond to local issues by designing and launching their own policies, but often lack the financial resources to do so. Consequently, policy actions on local-level migration are often bogged down in bureaucracy and disowned by the mainstream institutions.

Policy recommendation

This hierarchical structure and culture of Bulgarian administration favours the strict execution of routine tasks, but struggles to meet the complex challenges involved in managing context-dependent migration issues. Hence, **it is recommended that the central government embark on a process of decentralising and contextualising decision-making and policymaking** to delegate the responsibilities of decision-making authorities to local actors. The process of delegation from the centre to the periphery should be accompanied by investment commensurate to the increased capacity of local authorities, including the provision of resources necessary to exercise their enhanced functions.

The culture of disempowerment and the avoidance of responsibility

The central finding of this study is that there are neither public offices nor local NGOs in Burgas dedicated to working with migrant communities, and with young migrants in particular. Youth migration is not on the agenda of any local government institution, and officials appear unconcerned in this regard. Further, youth migration is not treated as a category in itself, and is not addressed by specific policies. Institutional actors at both the local and national level prefer to speak about migration in generic terms, seeking universal rather than contextual solutions. Typically, the authority whose responsibility is to provide solutions to migration challenges (and gather reliable data on such issues) is located

elsewhere or has its services outsourced to private sector agencies. At the local level, such issues arise from a lack of relevant information and experience at the local level; while at the national level, the disempowering nature of the centralised state bureaucracy represents a major hurdle in terms of providing effective migrant-related services.

Policy recommendation

It is recommended that the central government prioritise youth migration on its policy agenda – for instance, by producing a national strategy in this field and inviting the regional and municipal authorities to integrate it into their local development plans. To succeed, such an effort would require authentic engagement and committed participation on the part of various governmental and non-governmental actors at both the local and central level, including youth. Such a policy shift is therefore contingent on the ability of a closed bureaucratic governance culture to transition to an open, participatory and community-orientated one. However, it should be acknowledged that transforming an institutional culture is no easy undertaking, requiring long-term commitment and the allocation of considerable resources.

ANNEX

Technical guidelines for using the Data Toolkit⁵²

The Data Toolkit is user-friendly software that presents the results of the YOUMIG project in an ‘all-in-one’ approach. All data and analyses produced on the municipalities involved in the project are available digitally in the Data Toolkit, the main aim of which is to support local governments in creating local databases based on indicators developed by the project.

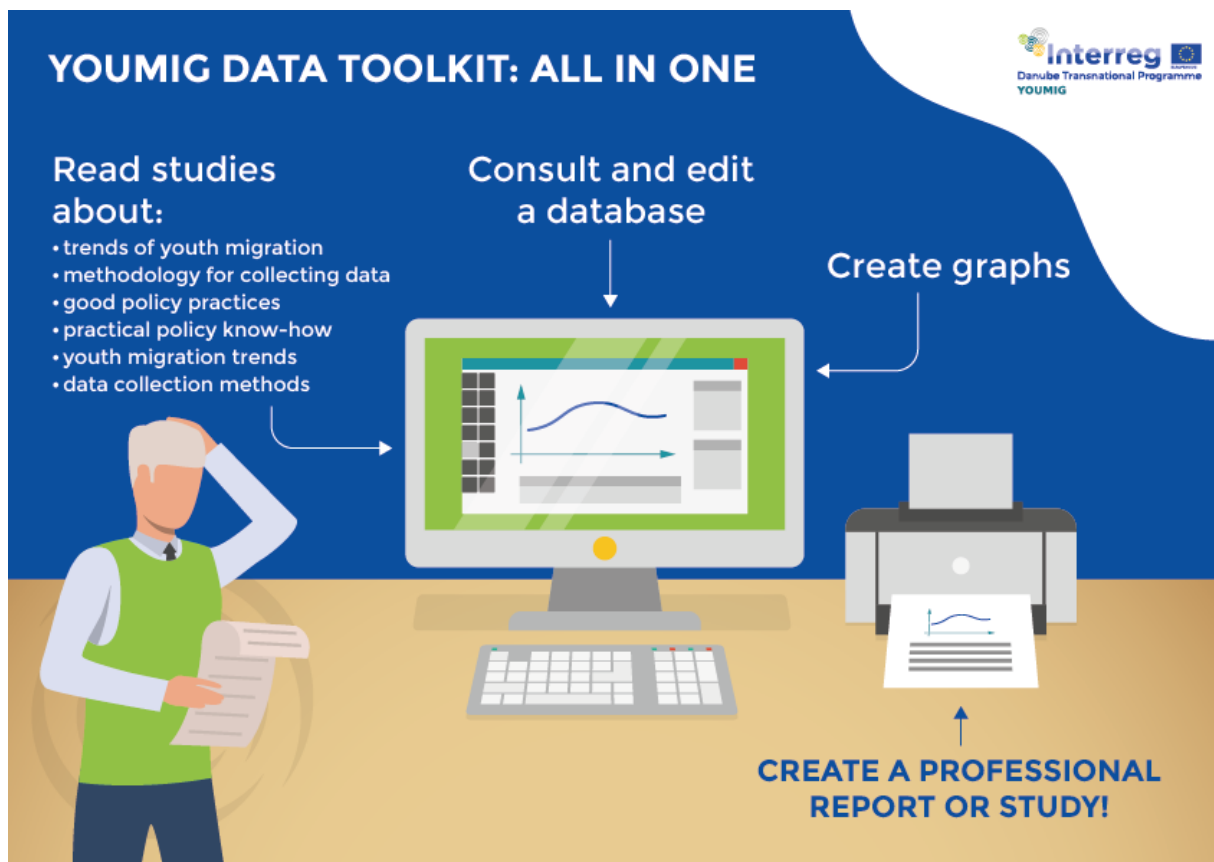
The Data Toolkit enables municipalities to measure and trace local processes independently, even beyond the end of the YOUMIG project. Better use of migration data in strategic planning and decision-making in related policy fields is of utmost importance. Therefore, measuring youth migration and its impacts on local development should be a priority for every municipality affected by it.

The main ideas for the design of the Data Toolkit were:

- Local municipalities' representatives should be able to trace local social processes on themselves, on a clear and easy to use platform
- A high quality, comprehensive and strategically useful dataset on (youth) migration, and its social and economic context should be provided
- The data should be available for visualisations, and help decision-making
- Local representatives and decision makers should have the opportunity to prolong the time series in future by adding their own data, in order to observe and analyse the data from a long-term perspective
- It should contain some basic bench mark values that facilitate the comparison of the levels and trends of the analysed indicators, and highlight when a trend starts to be ‘negative’
- It should be a complementary and functional digital annex for the Local strategies (and vice versa), in an ‘all-in-one’ format
- It should be tailored for each project partner municipality (country), but it should also contain cross-country comparative datasets available for all users

⁵² Authors of the subchapter: Branislav ŠPROCHA and Boris VAŇO (Institute of Informatics and Statistics, Slovakia)

Figure 9. YOUMIG Data Toolkit software



The **software** was created as a VBA (Visual Basic for Applications) application, running under Microsoft Excel as well as under Linux and Open Source software. The Data Toolkit is an extension to files in *.pdf and *.xlsx formats. All the files in the Data Toolkit are named analogically. They are stored in a folder structure. The content of the folders is editable by users; however, the names and the structure of the folders are not changeable.

Concerning its content, the Data Toolkit is divided in two major parts: information about the YOUMIG project, and information and data on the municipalities involved in the project.

The **project presentation** part starts with general information such as its background and goals; it then presents the structure of the project and the major outputs. These are the following:

- Conceptual framework for the study of youth migration in the Danube Region
- Local status quo analyses which provide an overview of the trends in youth migration and related social phenomena for each local partner

- European and global good practice collection of relevant services and actions linked to youth migration
- Evaluation report of youth migration indicators
- Pilot activities based on existing good practices, testing innovative solutions to manage the processes and impacts of youth migration
- Policies and strategies aimed at evidence-based local youth policy measures, multi-level governance and transnational cooperation schemes

All information and data on the municipalities presented in the Data Toolkit come from the project's outputs. Based on these data, a comprehensive picture of youth migration (including indicators, forecast and status quo analysis) is presented for each municipality. Geographical, social and economic data were incorporated to characterise the municipalities in a general way, including GDP per capita and inflation rates.

The **basic data** are mostly demographic in nature. The indicators tied to the area of population dynamics, such as natural increase, net migration and total increase are incorporated. Several datasets on internal and international migration – for instance the citizenship and country of birth of inhabitants, combined with their age and sex, are also presented.

The **indicators** designed and improved within the YOUMIG project are directed at the measurement and assessment of youth migration at the local level. There are two sets: core indicators and additional indicators. The core indicators are identical for all municipalities, whereas the additional ones are designed individually for the municipalities, based on the specificities of their migration situation.

The core indicators focus on four fields: population, education, labour market and other (locality-specific) topics. The Data Toolkit contains 16 core indicators per municipality and additional ones (1 to 5 indicators).

Indicators tied to the major **demographic structures** are:

- In- and out-migration
- Top sending countries regarding the annual stock and flow of immigrants
- Registered returnees in some basic structures (age, sex, education level)

Education related indicators are:

- The level of completed education
- The skill level of return migrants

- Student outbound mobility ratio

Labour market orientated indicators include:

- Population by activity status
- Workforce in healthcare
- Household income
- Regional GDP per capita

The **specific indicators** are drawn from the three domains, namely:

- Subjective well-being
- Tolerance towards foreigners
- Intentions to migrate

The **population forecast** (with 2035 as the time horizon) was produced for each municipality. Four basic scenarios were calculated: medium, high, low, and zero-migration scenarios. The main forecast results are shown in the 'Projection' part.

Last but not least, the Data Toolkit contains the **Local Status Quo Analysis (LSQA)** of the given municipality. The focus of this analysis is on the local processes of emigration, immigration and return migration. This detailed case study used multiple methods of data collection and analysis; it shows the position of the given municipality in the context of international migration and in the light of social-economic interdependencies. The data collection and analysis were based on jointly used concepts, a uniform methodology and conventional processing and utilisation of data.