

BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES

Doctoral School of Economics and International Business



DOCTORAL THESIS

SUMMARY

Publicly presented and defended by the author:

AUREL-CRISTIAN I. MANOLACHI

Title of the doctoral thesis:

THEORIES AND DRIVERS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

PhD Supervisor: Professor Cristian PĂUN, PhD

Doctoral defense committee:

Professor _____, PhD (chair) –

Professor _____, PhD (reviewer) –

Professor _____, PhD (reviewer) –

Professor _____, PhD (reviewer) –

Professor Cristian PĂUN, PhD (PhD supervisor) – Bucharest University of Economic Studies

Bucharest

2025

Abstract

In the first chapter, we looked at how humanity's ability to innovate, as Austrian School of economics point out, invalidate Malthusian concerns about population growth, resource depletion, environmental pollution, and unrestricted migration. In the second chapter, we compared eleven migration models using a two-dimensional matrix that we designed and established the criteria for an ideal theory of mobility, which includes a microeconomic perspective and a balance between abstract and real representations. In the third section, we observed that Central and Eastern European countries that joined the European Union are gradually becoming hubs for non-EU migrants. Then, we created the Hofstede cultural profile of the optimal destination country for migrants: an individualistic society that rejects rigid hierarchies and has relatively high risk tolerance (partially confirmed). In the last chapter's quantitative analysis, we used 19 cultural and economic indicators and panel regression to confirm a positive correlation between migration volume and living standards, quality of life, quality of governance (partially confirmed), peace, and economic development.

Keywords: ideal theory of mobility, technological optimism, Malthusian pessimism, cultural factors of migration, panel regression, Austrian school of economic thought.

Table of contents

Table of contents – 3

Abstract – 6

Abstract (in Romanian) – 6

Abstract (in English) – 6

Introduction – 8

Relevance of the research topic – 8

General research objectives – 8

Main hypotheses of the PhD thesis – 9

Structure of the PhD thesis – 10

Methodological aspects – 11

1. Chapter 1: The demographic factor and international migration – 14

1.1. Interdisciplinary analysis of population theories – 16

1.1.1. Adam Smith and demographic optimism – 16

1.1.2. Thomas Malthus and demographic pessimism – 17

1.1.3. Pierre Chaunu and the methodological critique of the Malthusian theory – 18

1.1.4. Paul Samuelson and the vision of mainstream economic thought – 19

1.1.5. Simon Kuznets and the socialist reinterpretation of the Malthusian theory – 20

1.1.6. Konrad Lorenz and the genetic degradation of humanity – 21

1.1.7. Julian Simon and technological optimism – 23

1.2. The practical dimension: European population, environment, and migration policies – 27

1.2.1. Environment and agriculture – 28

1.2.2. Innovation – 29

1.2.3. Migration and asylum – 30

1.2.4. Population – 31

1.3. Discussion and conclusions – 33

2. Chapter 2. Leading theories of international migration – 38	
2.1. A critical inquiry into migration theories – 40	
2.1.1. Ravenstein's laws – 40	
2.1.2. Neoclassical paradigm – 42	
2.1.3. Gravitational model – 44	
2.1.4. Push-and-pull factors model – 45	
2.1.5. Harris–Todaro model – 53	
2.1.6. Human capital mobility theory – 57	
2.1.7. Mobility transition hypothesis – 61	
2.1.8. Dual labor market theory – 71	
2.1.9. New economics of labor migration – 72	
2.1.10. Axiom of decentralized voluntary migration – 73	
2.1.11. Global labor market theory – 74	
2.2. Comparative analysis of migration theories – 75	
2.2.1. Specific methodology – 75	
2.2.2. Two-dimensional migration theories matrix – 76	
2.3. Conclusions – 81	
3. Chapter 3. Empirical evidence on migration and the optimal cultural profile of destination countries – 82	
3.1. Global migration architecture – 84	
3.1.1. Evolution of the migrant stock across global regions – 84	
3.1.2. Gender balance in international migration – 87	
3.1.3. Immigration situation in Central and Eastern Europe – 90	
3.2. Cultural factors of international migration – 95	
3.2.1. Specific methodology – 95	
3.2.2. Data collection – 97	
3.2.3. Results – 100	
3.2.4. Cultural configurations of international migration – 102	
3.3. Conclusions – 107	



4. Chapter 4. Quantitative analysis of the socioeconomic causes of international migration – 109

4.1. Specific research methodology – 111

4.2. Results and discussion – 120

4.3. Conclusions – 134

Conclusions and recommendations – 136

References – 146

Scientific activity during the doctoral studies – 164

Published scientific articles – 164

Participation in academic conferences – 165

Participation in doctoral seminars – 166

List of graphs – 168

List of tables – 170