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New versus Established Migrants in a Competitive  
Labor Market: A Focus on Central East Europeans  
in the Netherlands

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### Abstract

The Netherlands is a relatively new, attractive, but less researched destination for Central East European migrants, who compete on the Dutch labor market with more established migrant groups. Relying on data from the European Social Survey, the present article addresses the following questions: What is the employment status of CEE migrants in the Netherlands? How likely is it that CEE migrants will be satisfied with their income in the Netherlands? Does the region of origin influence the likelihood of having a comfortable income in the Netherlands? To this end, the article compares CEE migrants with the dominant migrant groups found in the Netherlands. Findings show that CEE migrants are likely to be satisfied with their income levels in their new host country. Education levels but also region of origin have an impact on the likelihood of living comfortably with the current income level.

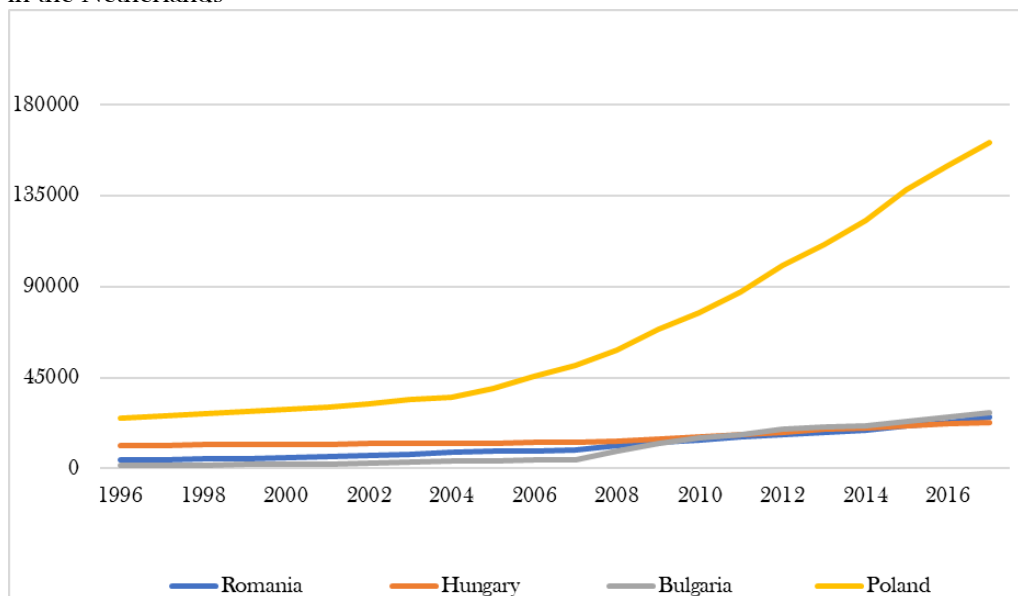
*Keywords:* labor, migrants, Central Eastern Europe, Netherlands.

## 1. Introduction

Labor migration in Europe has gradually increased after the progressive integration of more countries into the EU, with a strong East-to-West trend. The Netherlands became an attractive destination for CEE migrants thanks to high income levels, but a more discouraging destination (when compared to older destination countries such as Italy, Spain, the UK etc.) due also to the difficulty of learning the Dutch language. Speaking Dutch increases the chances of being hired (admittedly, there are certain sectors where this is not necessary, such as in agriculture), as competition on the labor market, both with natives and other emigrants, is strong.

As a distinct migration destination for CEE migrants, the Netherlands has been less researched due to several reasons: it is a relatively new destination for this migrant group; absolute numbers from each country of origin remain relatively small (in comparison with other destination countries and with the exception of Polish migrants), and many CEE migrants remain undocumented and therefore are not counted in official statistics. Available survey data is somewhat biased, as most of the time questionnaires from national representative samples are administered in the official language of the country, thus limiting the participation of migrants with poor language skills and leading to the possible overrepresentation of better integrated immigrants in such samples (Andre and Dronkers, 2017; Dronkers and Fleischmann, 2010). These elements should be taken into consideration when looking at the number of registered citizens of four CEE origin countries presented in Figure 1, which is based on data from the Dutch Bureau of Statistics (CBS). As Snel et al. (2015) also suggest, the actual number of CEE migrants could be greater.

Figure 1: Trend in number of migrants from Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Poland in the Netherlands



Data source: Dutch Bureau of Statistics (CBS)

According to Eurostat data, the largest group of migrants from the EU in the Netherlands were Polish citizens. The number of Poles has risen constantly and sharply after the accession of Poland to the EU in 2004 (Figure 1). However, as Engbersen et al. (2010) noted, a significant increase in the influx of Polish workers was also recorded in the years prior to the 2004 EU enlargement, especially of Poles holding German passports. Being a larger group who stayed longer in the Netherlands, the group of Polish migrants also received much more attention in scientific research.

For all four countries presented in Figure 1, the two age groups with most members are 30–40 and 20–30, in this order. In the case of Poland and Bulgaria, 15 per cent of registered individuals are children of up to 10 years old. In the case of Romania, this group represents 14 per cent of the total, and in the case of Hungary, 10 per cent. This shows that those who migrate are in the middle of their working careers and have young children who they either bring to the host country, or who are born there. In all four countries, first-generation foreigners (*eerstegeneratieallochtoon*) represent the largest group.

The Netherlands now constantly attracts a diverse range of labor migrants. In the period 1955–1973 it did so through systematic government programs. Considering also individuals with a background in the former Dutch colonies, a highly diverse and multicultural landscape has begun to form. Central East Europeans (CEE) began to migrate to the Netherlands on a regular basis a few years after the accession of their respective countries to the EU and the consequent obtaining of formal access to the labor market.

The elimination of work restrictions for Hungarians, Bulgarians and Romanians did lead to an increase in the number of migrants, but not as much as anticipated by Dutch mass media or by Dutch politicians, as Snel et al. (2019) report. As in the case of previous migrant groups, both the public and scientists wondered if CEE migrants would be settlers or temporary guests in their new country (i.e. *guest workers*). Trying to answer the question ‘Will they stay or go?’ social scientists now look at circular or liquid migration patterns – the transit of individuals who move from country to country in an attempt to optimize benefits thanks to an open market and border policies (Engbersen et al., 2013). The issue of the settlement or temporary stay of specific immigrant groups in specific host countries should therefore not be analyzed in a vacuum, but in relation to general satisfaction with life in the host country and with employment status and income satisfaction; elements which are in turn influenced by (perceived) competition (on the job market) with other migrant groups and with the natives, and according to each migrant group’s chances on another host countries’ labor market. If general life satisfaction in a specific destination country and income satisfaction are high for a certain migrant group, it can be expected that the migrants in question will quite likely settle.

Satisfaction is influenced by objective and subjective factors (Veenhoven, 1991; Arpino and de Valk, 2017; Verkuysten, 2016). Regarding the satisfaction levels of East European migrants, a recent study (Popa, 2018) showed that East European migrants

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<sup>1</sup> This expression was popular between 1955 and 1973 and indicates the assumed temporariness of labour migrants’ presence (Minnaard, 2008). It was used in the Netherlands to distinguish new labour migrants from ones originating from the former colonies (Minnaard, 2008).

(from Bulgaria, Poland and Romania) living in the cluster of Protestant countries (Inglehart, 2015) are happier than their counterparts living in countries from the English-speaking cluster or the Catholic cluster. The present article develops this finding and investigates the subjective wellbeing prospects of the larger group of Central East European migrants in one of the countries from the Protestant cluster, namely the Netherlands, in comparison with that of local, more established migrant groups. If East European migrants living in the Netherlands are happier than those living in Italy or Spain (Popa, 2018), how do they compare with the other migrant groups from the Netherlands in terms of prospects for life satisfaction? More specifically, the present article looks at the satisfaction of different migrant groups with their income and the factors influencing this satisfaction.

The research questions addressed by the present article are the following: What is the employment status of CEE migrants in the Netherlands? How likely is it that CEE migrants will be satisfied with their income in the Netherlands? Does the region of origin influence the likelihood of having a comfortable income in the Netherlands?

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the factors likely to influence satisfaction with income: education and employment status; Section 3 presents a comparative analysis of the main migrant groups in the Netherlands together with interpretations that connect the former results to other studies, and Section 4 presents the paper's conclusions.

## ***2. Level of education and job status of Central East European migrants in the Netherlands***

Level of education has been used as an indicator of the integration chances of migrants. Comparative studies about migration take into account the educational level of migrants in relation to their fit with the population of the host country, with highly educated migrants being seen as more likely to easily integrate and less educated migrants having a smaller chance of integrating, as human capital theory suggests. However, in relation to employment, research into the relationship between education level and job status still finds contradictory results, as the relation between the two variables is not always that straightforward.

In the Netherlands, Dutch politicians also consider education to be a key predictor of the successful integration of migrants into Dutch society, a low level of education being the often-mentioned characteristic of 'migrant[s] with poor prospects' (Bonjour and Duyvendak, 2017). A high level of education sometimes makes up for a 'poorer' cultural background in terms of the reference values of the host country (Bonjour and Duyvendak, 2017). However, Fleischmann and Dronkers (2010) found no linear relationship between level of education and employment rates as not all education is directly transferable, and sometimes migrants from less developed regions give up jobs in their country of origin in favor of a higher income from jobs with lower status (Lubbers and Gijssberts, 2016), resulting in a downgrading of job status. This also seems to be the case of East European migrants in the Netherlands, a highly skilled economy – previous research has shown that East Europeans found here often register a decline in job-related socio-economic status; a 'de-qualification after immigration' (Snel et al., 2019) and an increase in income satisfaction (Lubbers

and Gijsberts, 2016). In general, this decrease is sharper in the case of migrants with economic motives when compared to migrants with family-relative motives, and this happens due to a mismatch between the human capital migrants obtain in their origin country and the required skills in the host country (Chiswick et al., 2005). Moreover, Chiswick et al. (2005) suggest there is a U-shaped curve showing a downgrade in job status immediately after migration, and a rise after a certain number of years of residing in the host country, with the U-curve being most pronounced in the case of highly skilled migrants. However, a more recent study (Lubbers and Gijsberts, 2016) found a less sharp decline in the case of highly skilled East European migrants and for those who invested time into learning Dutch pre-departure. The authors also found no upward movement in the U-curve among the migrants they studied, perhaps due to the short period of time the respondents had spent in the Netherlands.

Comparing three groups of Central East European migrants - Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian - Snel et al. (2015) found that the Romanian group had the largest share of high-occupational-status individuals and the lowest share of low-occupational-status individuals. The Romanian group also had the largest share of individuals with a high educational level. As the authors conclude, 'in contrast to a previous generation of labor migrants ("guest workers") from the 1960s and 1970s - they are generally well educated' (Snel et al., 2015: 14). Another piece of research on East European migrants in the Netherlands showed that Bulgarians are on average less well educated and considerably less liable to speak English than Polish migrants (Lubbers and Gijsberts, 2016). There is also a gender difference, as the same study found that in the Netherlands, when compared to migrant men, considerably fewer migrant women were employed, and that Polish and Bulgarian women also had lower socioeconomic occupational status than men (Lubbers and Gijsberts, 2016). These results indicate that, given more data about CEE migrants, specific group-level analysis should be conducted, as there are significant differences between individuals from countries of different origin.

The migration of highly skilled individuals could go unnoticed in developed countries because it is not seen as a threat to the economic and social system of the receiving country (Findlay, 2003), but even if the human capital of better educated individuals is more internationally transferable, yielding lower transaction costs tied to migration (Dalen and Henkens, 2009) and the market for professions such as managers, IT specialists, scientists, etc. is global, there are still national regulations in place that in some cases become barriers to the recognition of foreign obtained diplomas and qualifications Faist (2009). Furthermore, the global work force does not develop at the same pace as the global economy, still being 'highly constrained [...] for the foreseeable future, by institutions, culture, borders, police and xenophobia' (Castells, 2000: 247).

As mentioned earlier, research results are still contradictory regarding the relationship between a high level of education and job market success in the case of migrants. Fleischmann and Dronkers (2010) showed that for both first and second-generation immigrants, a high level of education does not influence unemployment rates. Regarding the parent's level of education and unemployment, the two researchers found a connection between having only one native parent and a higher rate of unemployment in the case of men with low educational attainments (Fleischmann and Dronkers, 2010) due to the higher expectations of the latter (who

do not accept jobs that would be taken on by respondents with two migrant parents) (Fleischmann and Dronkers, 2010). Also, a higher educational level (obtained in the origin country) of parents has been shown to have no effect on the unemployment rates of children in the destination country (Fleischmann and Dronkers, 2010) due to the non-transferability of human capital. Another study found that better educated respondents perceive in-group discrimination more often, probably as a consequence of having more contact with natives and a clearer understanding of the disadvantages that their group face (André and Dronkers, 2017); findings which are in line with the integration paradox (Verkuyten, 2016).

### *3. An analysis of competing migrants in the Netherlands*

The discussion about people with a migration background in the Netherlands is especially complex. Having seen how there are now more generations of people with a migration background in the Netherlands from different migration waves, social scientists have begun to wonder who should be seen as a native, and who as a person with a migration background.<sup>2</sup> The four non-Western groups traditionally identified in the Netherlands are of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, and Antillean origin (Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2010) while according to the former authors, migrants from the Surinamese group are in the best position of all the non-Western groups, all having a good command of the Dutch language, with a high proportion of mixed couples. East European countries, Morocco and Turkey are considered countries of emigration (Dronkers and Fleischmann, 2010) which suggests that migrants from these countries come into competition on different local labor markets.

In order to answer the research questions presented above, I make use of data from the European Social Survey, a large-scale cross-national survey based on country representative samples that has been conducted since 2002 every two years in ESS member countries. In total, 37 countries have participated in at least one round of the ESS (according to the ESS website). The data thereby gathered is extremely valuable thanks to the core questions that are addressed in all countries about various topics which facilitate country comparisons. Data can be analyzed for research purposes either longitudinally at country level, cross-sectionally, or in aggregated form for several countries.

The sample described here was selected from the aggregated file of respondents from the Netherlands from the first seven waves of the ESS, conducted between 2002 and 2014. As the article looks at first-generation migrants, respondents who were born outside the Netherlands whose father and mother were also born outside the Netherlands were selected. Respondents born in Aruba, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, Curacao and the Netherlands Antilles were not included in the analysis. The resulting sample included 868 cases. Based on their country of birth, respondents were grouped into specific regions of origin: Western Europe; Eastern Europe; Indonesia and Suriname (former colonies); Africa; Asia; USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand; Turkey and Morocco; Other. The largest groups of respondents in the sample are: Former Colonies - 22.1 per cent, Western Europe -

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<sup>2</sup> In the following analysis I use a general classification of migrants, also considering the data that is available.

21 per cent, Turkey and Morocco - 19.4 per cent. These three migrant groups were compared with migrant respondents from Central Eastern Europe (10 per cent of respondents in the sample). The four main groups for comparison include 629 cases. The composition of the regions is as follows:

- Western Europe: Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden;
- Central- Eastern Europe: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Serbia and Montenegro;
- Turkey and Morocco;
- Indonesia and Suriname (Former colonies).

There are statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.01$ ) between the age averages of individuals in the four migrant groups, with the East European group having the lowest age average of 40.2 years and members of the Former Colonies group having the highest average age, at 53.9 years.<sup>3</sup> Previous research (Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2010) about migrant groups in the Netherlands also confirmed that East European migrants are on average younger than other migrant groups and than the natives. The gender distribution is similar for the Western Europe, Former Colonies and CEE groups, with female respondents being in the majority (62.1 per cent, 58.9 per cent and 52.9 per cent, respectively) while in the group of migrants from Turkey and Morocco 58.9 per cent of respondents were male.

### *3.1 Duration of stay*

At the time of questioning, 48.9 per cent of migrants from Western Europe, 81.7 per cent of migrants from the former colonies, 64.7 per cent migrants from Turkey and Morocco and 27.6 per cent of CEE migrants had been living in the country for more than 20 years. As time passes, this amount of time will increase for all migrants who remain in the Netherlands. However, looking at the specific times that these migrant groups first came to the Netherlands in large numbers, we claim that CEE migrants are the newest arrivals as a distinct group.

As mentioned earlier, research has often focused on the settling intentions of different migrant groups. From an analysis of studies published so far about migrants from the East European region, a complex picture begins to form regarding the settling intentions and trends of this migrant group, with more between-group similarities based on level of education than in-group similarities. In the data of Karpinska, Fokkema, Conkova and Dykstra (2016), 60.8 per cent of Polish migrant respondents claimed that they intended to remain in the Netherlands. Other studies show that CEE settlers tend to be young(er) and highly educated (Engbersen et al., 2013; Snel et al., 2011). This trend could also be explained by selectivity, in the sense

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<sup>3</sup> It must be noted that the results presented here are based on aggregated data and mirror answers that emerged at certain time points. The grammatical present tense is used in the text to mirror a data set aggregated over great period of time. This specific aspect of the present research is also discussed in the conclusion.

that ‘those who really want to live in the country of destination will probably get citizenship faster, might marry a native, speak the national language more often and ignore or not encounter in-group discrimination’ (Andre and Dronkers, 2017: 124). This selectivity issue also applies to the pre-departure moment, as previous research about Romanian migrants (Sandu, 2017) showed that highly educated Romanian migrants tend to migrate to the North and West of Europe, while less educated ones migrate to Southern Europe.

These studies indicate that the level of education can have an influence on settlement intention, but this relation, as we will see in the following section, is not that straightforward.

### *3.2 Education levels and employment status*

From the group under analysis, the largest share of respondents with a higher-level education (some form of BA, MA or higher) were from Western Europe. Comparison of level of education between the migrant groups, expressed as the number of years of completed full-time education, shows that there are statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) between migrants from Turkey and Morocco and the other three groups, with a difference of -2.9/-2.8 years when compared with migrants from Central Eastern and Western Europe, respectively.

The answer to the first research question – *What is the employment status of CEE migrants in the Netherlands?* – is indicated by the data presented in Table 1. Half of the CEE migrants had a paying job at the time of questioning, and out of the four migrant groups they had the largest share of unemployed-but-actively-looking-for-work respondents (Table 1). The group with the largest share of respondents involved in paid work was that from Western Europe, confirming earlier studies that have also shown that immigrants from Western Europe are less likely to be unemployed (Fleischmann and Dronkers, 2010). Regarding the employment rates of immigrants in different destination countries, researchers found that immigrants from wealthy, more politically free and stable countries, and immigrants from neighboring countries have lower unemployment rates than immigrants from poorer countries or from prevalently Islamic countries (Fleischmann and Dronkers, 2010). The data in Table 1 is in line with these results, as migrants from Western Europe and the Former Colonies were found to have lower unemployment rates than migrants from Eastern Europe, Turkey and Morocco.

Table 1: Main activity, last seven days. All respondents. Post coded \* Region Crosstabulation

	Western Europe	Former Colonies	Eastern Europe	Turkey and Morocco
Paid work	55.8%	44.3%	50.0%	47.0%
Education	3.9%	0.0%	2.3%	3.0%
Unemployed, looking for job	3.9%	4.2%	11.5%	4.8%
Unemployed, not looking for job	2.2%	2.1%	2.3%	4.8%
Permanently sick or disabled	4.4%	5.8%	4.6%	13.1%
Retired	12.7%	22.0%	4.6%	4.2%
Housework, looking after children, others	15.5%	19.9%	20.7%	22.6%
Other	1.7%	2.1%	3.4%	0.6%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Data Source: ESS. Aggregated file for the Netherlands. Waves 1–7

The unemployment rate has been seen as an indicator of economic competition, as reported by Savelkoul et al. (2011). The unemployment rate in the Netherlands in 2018 was 3.7 per cent (OECD, 2018). Following this line of reasoning, the higher unemployment rate observed in Table 1 in the case of CEE migrants (13.7 per cent) could be explained by the fact that they entered a labor market in which labor competition from other groups was strong. Questions remain about with whom they compete, and in which occupational segment. More data with a focus on the occupational segment is needed in this respect. Based on other data from 2009, of all the four large non-Western groups in the Netherlands, those of Moroccan origin were most often unemployed (Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2010). This finding is not supported by the data in Table 1, but there is an observable difference in the proportion of migrant groups engaged in the fifth category of main activity, which could be linked to this difference between this and more recent data.

Researchers who previously looked at the employment and job status of migrants in Europe talk about the ‘deviant selectivity’ of ‘guest workers’ in the case of migrants from Morocco, Algeria and Turkey:

The selection of these ‘guest workers’ deviated from that of other immigrants from different countries of origin: they came from the poorest and most underdeveloped regions of these countries and were specifically selected [due to their] low [level of] skills in order to avoid competition [with] native skilled

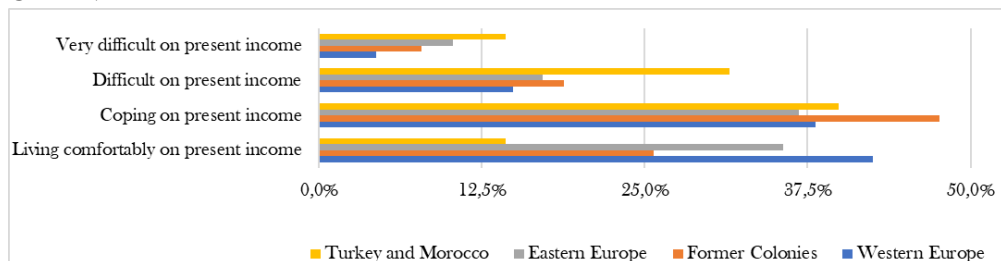
workers in a number of European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden). (Dronkers and Fleischmann, 2010: 200–201)

The researchers also suggest that the higher unemployment rate of migrants who come from a Muslim majority country could also partially be explained by direct or indirect discrimination against Muslims on labor markets (Fleischmann and Dronkers, 2010). Returning to Table 1, a large share (22 per cent) of migrants from the former colonies were retired at the time of questioning, in accordance with the higher age average of this group. The proportions of Central East European and Turkish and Moroccan migrants who had household work or looking after children as main activity were similar.

CEE migrants were the group with the largest share of respondents (37.7 per cent) working according to temporary contracts (often through temporary employment agencies - *uitzendingbureaus*) at the time of questioning, or without a contract (9.8 per cent), while migrants from the former colonies had the largest share of respondents (83.4 per cent) working with a permanent contract (n=446). This observation is in line with findings from other studies: from the 654 East European migrants investigated by Engbersen et al. (2013), 41 per cent of Bulgarians had a verbal contract while 35 per cent of Romanians and 65 per cent of Bulgarians were residing in the Netherlands without a work permit. Having a temporary work contract can be seen as very stressful for migrants from the two East European countries, as the former come from a culture which is highly risk adverse and rather values safety, as Hofstede (2001) shows. In the Netherlands, more and more employment contracts are of a temporary nature (*bepaalde tijd*) for both native and migrant groups, and the same is true in the UK (Mcdowell et al, 2009) but this situation might not be seen as being that stressful by natives who come from a culture more in favor of taking risks (Hofstede, 2001), while the latter also have other advantages on the job market compared with migrants, such as their native language and acknowledgment of their education in the Netherlands. However, we must consider the fact that the decision to migrate suggests taking on a certain level of uncertainty and therefore may be associated with less risk-adverse people.

The main activity of respondents (Table 1) is often reflected in the income level of their household. Figure 2 presents the perceptions of respondents about their household income at the time of questioning compared between the four migrant groups.

Figure. 2: Feeling about managing on household income nowadays \* Region Crosstabulation



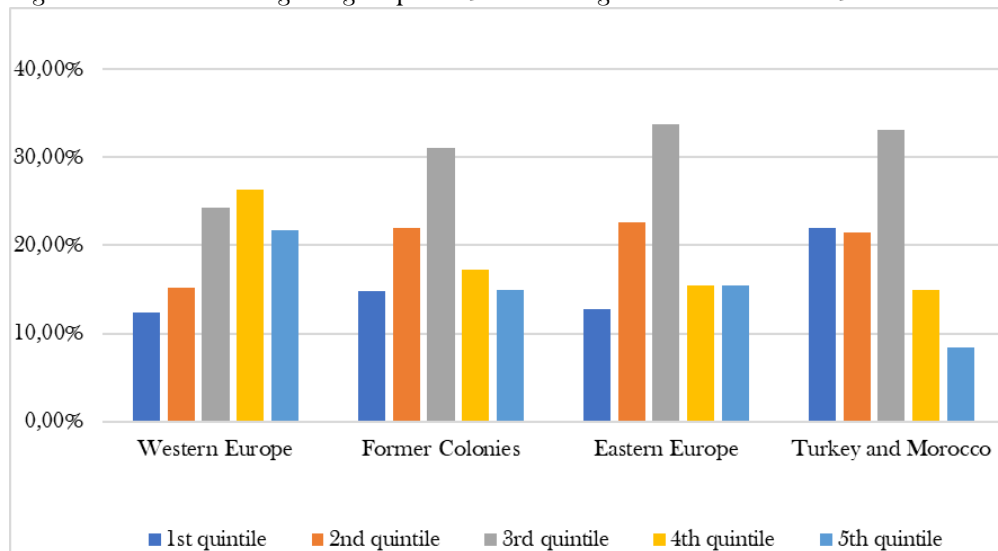
Data Source: ESS. Aggregated file for the Netherlands. Waves 1–7

Migrants from Western Europe were most satisfied with the income of their household at the time of questioning, and migrants from Turkey and Morocco were least satisfied with their present net income, saying that it was very difficult or difficult for them to live on their present income.

Regarding the second research question *How likely is it that CEE migrants will be satisfied with their income in the Netherlands?*<sup>2</sup> we first need to know the general satisfaction level. Based on data from Figure 2, CEE migrants were rather satisfied with their income, with three-quarters of respondents from the CEE group saying they were living comfortably or coping on their present income. The fact that some migrants were living in a family with a Dutch partner could have influenced the net income of the household. The language most often spoken at home can be used as proxy for this: 74.7 per cent of respondents from Western Europe, 90.6 per cent from the former colonies, 59.8 per cent of CEE migrants and 48.2 per cent of migrants from Turkey and Morocco mentioned that Dutch is the language most often spoken at home at the time of questioning.

Looking at respondents' household income level of the four migrant groups shown in Figure 3, we can see again that migrants from Western Europe had the highest share (as a group) of the top two quintiles of income category, meaning that they contained the largest share of members with the highest income. In accordance with the level of dissatisfaction with their income, migrants from Turkey and Morocco were the group with the smallest share of members in the two top quintiles of income. Of the four migrant groups, the one from Western Europe on average had the highest share of high-income members, while the group of migrants from Turkish and Morocco had the highest share of low-income members.

Figure 3: Income of migrant groups of different origin in the Netherlands



N=547 valid cases<sup>4</sup>

Data Source: ESS. Aggregated file for the Netherlands. Waves 1-7

<sup>4</sup> The smaller number of responses is due to the fact that many respondents refuse to answer questions regarding income.

Migrants from Central Eastern Europe had a similar income level to migrants from the former colonies (Figure 3), but they were slightly more satisfied with this income than the latter (Figure 2) at the time of questioning. This situation may be related to the expectation levels of the two migrant groups in relation to the time spent by the two categories in the Netherlands. Migrants belonging to more established (older) migrant groups presumably expect a smaller gap between the incomes of natives and their own. This conclusion is also in line with the results of Lubbers and Gijsberts (2016) that confirms the satisfaction of CEE migrants in the Netherlands with their present income level, despite possible job-status downgrading (which it is not possible to investigate here). However, as CEE migrants will become an established migrant group in the Netherlands, their expectations about a comfortable living style could change.

The third research question *Does the region of origin influence the likelihood of having a comfortable income in the Netherlands?* is addressed by a regression model that was run to predict income satisfaction for the four migrant groups, taking the time spent in the country and the education level into account. In Table 2 we see that both education and region of origin had a significant impact on the probability of living comfortably on the present income: respondents with a higher-level education were more likely to be satisfied with their income, with respondents from Western Europe most liable to declare that they were living comfortably on their present income (Table 2). The length of stay in the Netherlands had no significant impact on the chance of being satisfied with income.

Table 2: Factors influencing chances of living comfortably on present income

Parameter Estimates		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Feeling about household incomes	Intercept	0.11	0.304	0.132	1	0.717			
	[Came to country = Last 5 years]	0.444	0.359	1.526	1	0.217	1.559	0.771	3.151
	[Came to country = Between 6-10 years ago]	0.009	0.352	0.001	1	0.98	1.009	0.506	2.013
	[Came to country = Between 11 and 20 years ago]	0.195	0.275	0.503	1	0.478	1.215	0.709	2.082

<b>Parameter Estimates</b>									
Feeling about household incomes	B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)		
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
[Came to country = More than 20 years ago]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.	
[Region = Western Europe]	-0.92	0.305	9.028	1	0.003	0.4	0.22	0.727	
[Region = Former colonies]	-0.28	0.309	0.845	1	0.358	0.753	0.411	1.379	
[Region = Central Eastern Europe]	-0.86	0.367	5.538	1	0.019	0.422	0.205	0.866	
[Region=Turkey and Morocco]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.	
[Education=ISCED 0-1]	1.739	0.457	14.48	1	0	5.694	2.324	13.95	
[Education ISCED 2]	= 1.185	0.276	18.4	1	0	3.271	1.903	5.622	
[Education ISCED 3]	= 0.865	0.256	11.44	1	0.001	2.375	1.439	3.92	
[Education ISCED 4]	= 0.769	0.521	2.176	1	0.14	2.157	0.777	5.987	
[Education ISCED 5-6]	= 0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.	
Difficult or very difficult on present income	Intercept	-0.59	0.359	2.663	1	0.103			
	[Came to country = Last 5 years]	0.344	0.433	0.632	1	0.427	1.411	0.604	3.294
	[Came to country = Between 6-10 years ago]	-0.08	0.407	0.042	1	0.838	0.92	0.414	2.045
	[Came to country =	0.167	0.31	0.289	1	0.591	1.182	0.643	2.171

<b>Parameter Estimates</b>									
Feeling about household incomes	B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)		
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Between 11 and 20 years ago]									
[Came to country = More than 20 years ago]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.	
[Region = Western Europe]	-1.46	0.337	18.63	1	0	0.233	0.121	0.452	
[Region = Former colonies]	-0.91	0.331	7.454	1	0.006	0.405	0.211	0.775	
[Region = Central Eastern Europe]	-1.03	0.398	6.745	1	0.009	0.356	0.163	0.776	
[Region=Turkey and Morocco]	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.	
[Education=ISCED 0-1]	3.135	0.485	41.71	1	0	22.993	8.879	59.54	
[Education ISCED 2]	= 2.045	0.34	36.19	1	0	7.727	3.969	15.04	
[Education ISCED 3]	= 1.431	0.331	18.67	1	0	4.183	2.186	8.006	
[Education ISCED 4]	= 1.021	0.65	2.464	1	0.116	2.776	0.776	9.932	
[Education ISCED 5-6]	= 0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.	

a. The reference category is: Living comfortably on present income.

b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

Confirming circular migration patterns, 35.1 per cent of Central East Europeans in the sample claimed to have had paid work in another country for more than six months in the previous ten years, making them the group with the largest share of respondents

having given a positive answer to this question. Even if Central East Europeans were newcomers on the Dutch job market, they had other international work experience, being part of transnational migration flows (McDowell et al., 2009) in constant search of better job opportunities. However, in a survey conducted by Karpinska et al. (2016), only 24.2 per cent of Polish respondents stated that they had ever lived in another country before moving to the Netherlands, while Snel et al. (2019) report that CEE migrants who started as circular migrants eventually settled there. Again, this indicates that Central East European migrants should not be investigated as a homogenous group (an observation also made by Engbersen et al. 2013 and Snel et al. 2019) and that, given the necessary data, comparison of the situation according to different countries of origin would prove valuable.

Related to job opportunities for East European migrants in the Netherlands, a previous study showed that Romanian work migrants had found their jobs in the Netherlands via the internet or via ‘an explicit work-campaign conducted in Romania by Dutch companies’ (Snel et al., 2011: 22). The Romanian community in the Netherlands also has both offline and online opportunities for interaction such as the forum ‘Romanians.nl’ which also serves as a contact/information point for potential newcomers. Dutch job websites periodically advertise job openings for Romanian- and/or Polish-speaking recruiters or HR specialists who wish to work in technical, construction, or agricultural businesses in the Netherlands. Candidates are required to be able to speak Dutch and English and another language such as Romanian, Polish or Hungarian. The job advertisements are in Dutch, thus indirectly selecting from the get-go those candidates who are able to understand the job advertisements and deterring candidates who do not possess at least a conversational level of Dutch. These jobs include the task of selecting and recruiting Polish- or Romanian-speaking personnel and the administrative and legal work of facilitating the hiring of such personnel by contractors. Many of these advertisements explicitly refer to work migrants (*arbeidsmigranten*). Despite statistics showing that East European migrants are mostly concentrated in the Randstad area (Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht), the jobs that are advertised are in companies located outside this area, either in the north or the south of the country. What these advertisements show is the dynamic and liquid/circular migration (Snel et al., 2015; Engbersen et al., 2010) of East European migrants.

### *3.3 Overall levels of satisfaction*

When compared to Western migrants, those from the former colonies and from Turkey and Morocco were less satisfied with the state of the economy in the country at the time of questioning, while Central East Europeans were more satisfied than migrants from Turkey and Morocco when compared with them (one-way ANOVA,  $p < 0.05$ ). Regarding satisfaction with life as a whole, there was a statistically significant difference (one-way ANOVA,  $p < 0.05$ ) of 0.615 between migrants from Western Europe and migrants from Turkey and Morocco. Another factor that should be considered here is that satisfaction is also influenced by subjective factors, and scholars classify countries as happy or unhappy, or as cultures of dissatisfaction (Bartram, 2013; Polgreen and Simpson, 2011). Satisfaction can be the result of comparison with the first reference group from the host country, but in time this can change because

the reference group changes, and satisfaction may also be influenced by a culture of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Asked whether they feel part of a group that is discriminated against in the country in which they are living, migrants from Turkey and Morocco more often gave a positive answer (40 per cent) than did migrants from the former colonies of Central Eastern Europe (about 20 per cent each). This trend was also noted by Gijsberts and Dagevos: 'relatively few [people of Turkish or Moroccan origin] think that the Netherlands is a hospitable country for migrants and a country in which people are given every opportunity' (Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2010: 16). Andre and Dronkers (2017) also found that immigrants from poorer countries perceive in-group discrimination more often than immigrants from wealthier countries.

The findings presented above have limitations that should also be considered in connection with the characteristics of the data. As the analysis is based on aggregated data from seven waves of ESS, it means that some respondents interviewed more than 10 years apart were brought together in the sample. Different historical moments could have had different impacts on respondents' answers regarding satisfaction, income levels, etc. Also, the length of time spent by respondents in a certain country at the time of the interview could also have influenced the results. There is also the question of delimiting natives from non-natives, seeing that Dutch nationality law is based on *jus sanguinis*, not on *jus soli*, a discussion I have elaborated upon elsewhere (Popa, 2019). This detail is of particular importance in the case of respondents from the group of former colonies described in this article.

#### **4. Conclusions**

This article looked at previous studies about CEE migrants in the Netherlands and at data about this same group found in the ESS. As studies and first-hand targeted data still remain scarce, conclusions are still contradictory. Further research about specific Central East European migrant groups in less studied destinations, as in the case of the Netherlands, would be of substantial value to the field of migration studies.

Based on data from the ESS, (registered) CEE migrants were younger than migrants from other groups. Slightly more women than men had migrated from Central Eastern Europe to the Netherlands. Migrants from East Europe did not feel as discriminated against as migrants from Turkey and Morocco at the time of questioning.

CEE migrants were on average better educated than the guest migrants from the 1960s and 1970s although they still made up the largest share of respondents who were unemployed and looking for a job. Many CEE migrants were working according to limited contracts or were used to working without a contract. They were relatively satisfied with their income level.

Many CEE migrants have so far been a part of the circular migration phenomenon, having worked in other host countries before arriving in the Netherlands (the Polish group may be an exception, as previous studies have shown). However, because it was very likely that they had an income on which they could live comfortably, as the analysis above has shown, it is also probable that they were likely to settle in the Netherlands. Another reason why settling is likely is that the reasons for the migration of Central East Europeans are beginning to change. While in the early

days of the emigration phenomenon being a migrant was often a means of obtaining higher social status back home (due to higher living standards when returning to the origin country after time working abroad and saving money), people have now started to emigrate for reasons other than financial ones, often related to social values and political and economic predictability. As a previous study (Popa, 2018) has shown, for East European migrants satisfaction with how democracy works in the host country has a significant positive impact on declared subjective wellbeing.

Satisfaction with income could also change over time for this new migrant group in the Netherlands, as their perspective about what represents a comfortable lifestyle could change. While in the first stages of migration migrants compare their new situation with the one back home, in time the reference comparison will become other migrant groups or the native population, thus expectations will change.

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