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The influence of pull factors in the migration process (case of Germany)

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Purpose. The purpose of this article is to examine the role and significance of pull factors as an influential tool in the migration process, to explore the theoretical basis of these factors, and to illustrate the various pull factors for different migration groups and their impact on migration flow to a specific country, using Germany as an example.

Method. While working on the article, the author made an effort to provide a comprehensive view of the subject using statistical data from official institutions. The article employs theoretical methods such as content analysis and deduction and research methods such as comparative analysis to offer a detailed explanation of the topic.

Scientific innovation. The article delves into the role and significance of pull factors in people's choice of destination during the migration process. It specifically investigates the impact of these factors in the context of Germany, backed by specific facts.

Practical Importance. This article holds both scientific and practical significance as it thoroughly examines all aspects of pull factors in the migration process. It extensively illustrates these factors, particularly in the case of Germany, making it a valuable resource for research papers, textbooks, and monographs in this field.

Conclusion. The article underlines the influence of pull factors on the migration process, emphasizing their importance in people's decision to migrate to Germany. It also highlights Germany's interest in attracting migrants to the country by creating favorable conditions, aligning with the country's migration policy goal of attracting foreign labor to support its workforce.

Key words: migration, attractive factors, Germany, German migration policy.

Introduction. The migration process is a pressing issue in today's world. It has been happening throughout history, but it has accelerated in modern times, partly due to the impact of science, technology, and globalization. According to the International Organization for Migration, there are currently more than 283 million international migrants and over 760 million internal migrants worldwide. [2, p. 4]. This means that approximately one out of every 7 people in the world is living outside their place of birth. These numbers continue to increase annually, highlighting the need to study the migration process and its triggers.

The migration process varies by region and country, with some experiencing faster migration than others. The differing conditions and factors in each country and region contribute to this.

In modern times, the European region is one of the areas with the highest immigration rates, with over 40 million migrants currently residing there [2, p. 78]. Factors such as higher standards of living, abundant job opportunities, and higher wages in Western European countries attract people to the region.

Notably, the Federal Republic of Germany stands out, with the largest number of migrants in Europe. Germany is a top destination for individuals seeking education, work, and asylum, with 13.9 million migrants currently living in the country [5]. Therefore, it is crucial to study the migration processes in Germany, the reasons that pull people to the country, and the factors that contribute to this influx.

The article aims to analyze the role of pull factors as influencers of the migration process, the theoretical

basis of these factors, and their impact on different migration groups. The example of Germany will be used to illustrate these pull factors and their influence on the flow of migration to the country.

Method. The article adopts a comprehensive approach, utilizing statistical data from official institutions and employing theoretical methods such as analysis and deduction, as well as research methods like comparative analysis, to provide a detailed explanation of the topic.

Main text. When discussing the migration process, it is important to first investigate the factors that lead to its occurrence. Migration itself is a complex process, and the factors contributing to it are varied. Factors such as wars, political instability, economic problems, unemployment, poverty, lack of social services, natural disasters, and more are the main causes and driving forces behind migration. In recent years, the emergence of war and conflict has resulted in the migration process becoming more massive and intense.

Various theories have been proposed to explain the reasons for the migration process. It is important to note that no single theory fully explains the complexity of the migration process, as each theory approaches it from a specific perspective.

However, some theories remain relevant as they explain the migration process from the perspectives of both the destination country and the country of origin. One such theory is the push and pull factors theory, proposed by Professor Everett Lee of Georgia State University in 1966. According to this theory, there are factors in the country of origin that push

people to leave, and factors in the destination country that pull them there [3, p. 379].

According to this theory, there are four basic factors underlying migration:

- 1) factors related to the migrant's place of residence,
- 2) factors related to the intended destination,
- 3) obstacles to this process,
- 4) personal factors [4, p. 30].

Push factors are problems related to the migrant's place of residence, which compel people to migrate. Pull factors are the favorable conditions in the destination country that attract people to migrate there. Examples of push factors include issues such as wars, political conflicts, unemployment, poverty, low wages, floods, and droughts in the country of origin. Pull factors include higher wages, better living standards, more job opportunities, and access to quality education, healthcare, and other social services in the destination country.

According to this theory, there are both push and pull factors in the place of residence and the destination, and they should be considered together [1, p. 73]. In any given location, there are not only push or pull factors but a combination of both. The dominant factor determines the direction of migration. If there are more push factors, migration tends to occur in that area. Conversely, if there are more pull factors, the migration process accelerates.

Additionally, according to Lee, the migration process is complex, and some obstacles influence a person's decision to migrate. Therefore, it is important to consider not only the push and pull factors but also the macro- and micro-level obstacles that hinder the migration process. Personal factors, such as family circumstances and individual preferences, can act as micro-level obstacles. For example, for a family with children, educational opportunities in the destination act as a pull factor, but for a person without children or migrating alone, this factor is irrelevant. Additionally, macro-level obstacles encompass migration policies of the destination country, integration challenges, and the physical and psychological preparation of the individuals [1, p. 73].

When examining modern migration processes, it becomes evident that both internal and external migration are influenced by various motivating and attractive factors. The presence of numerous pull factors in certain countries has significantly impacted the migration flow to those regions. Specifically, the European region, particularly the Federal Republic of Germany, stands out in this regard.

Currently, Germany has a population of 83 million, making it the most populous country in Europe. Additionally, it is one of the countries with the highest number of migrants globally, ranking second only to the United States. As of 2023, there are 21.1 million people with a migrant background living in Germany, indicating that one in four individuals in the country

has a migrant background [6]. The term «migrant background» refers to individuals who or at least one of their parents migrated to the country. While some of these migrants are German citizens, a significant portion, approximately 13.6 million, hold citizenship of foreign countries [7].

In Germany, 30.4% of migrants are from European Union countries, 31.3% are from European nations that are not EU members, and the remaining percentage comprises individuals from non-European countries. The primary countries of origin for migrants in Germany are Turkey, Ukraine, Syria, Romania, and Poland [6].

Similar to other immigrant-receiving countries, Germany's immigration flow is influenced by pull factors such as favorable job opportunities, high salaries, a clean environment, low crime rates, well-developed public transportation, quality and accessible health and social services, good educational opportunities, and free education [8]. Furthermore, Germany boasts a robust social security system, assisting individuals who are unable to support themselves. This support includes monthly allowances based on the individual's previous work history and salary.

Children below the age of 18 receive a monthly allowance of 250 euros per child, increasing to 255 euros in 2025. This benefit is not exclusive to German citizens and is also available to foreigners [9].

Moreover, individuals in Germany who are capable of working but are either unemployed or work less than 3 hours a day, have not yet reached retirement age, or reside in families requiring support are eligible for a citizenship allowance [10].

Additionally, the state provides adequate pensions for individuals upon reaching retirement age, with the average monthly pension amounting to 1309 euros, which is higher than the average in most European countries.

These factors underscore the state's commitment to enhancing the well-being of its citizens and ensuring a decent standard of living.

It's worth noting that Germany has consistently maintained positive net migration since the 1980s, except for a few years. This trend indicates that the number of arrivals in the country exceeds the number of departures. In 2023, the migration balance was 663 thousand, with the highest migration balances recorded in 2022 and 2015, reaching 1.1 million and 1.5 million, respectively. These were the highest indicators observed since 1950. The significant increase in migration flow in 2015 was a result of the civil war in Syria, prompting millions of people to seek refuge in Europe. Furthermore, Russia's intervention in Ukraine and the subsequent arrival of over 1 million Ukrainians in Germany led to a substantial migration flow in 2022 [11].

It's important to highlight that Germany's population growth is primarily driven by migration, as the country

experiences weak natural growth and a declining population, making migration crucial for Germany's demographic stability. Germany itself has a vested interest in attracting migrants to the country.

If we examine the migrant flows to Germany, they primarily come for employment, to seek asylum, and to pursue education. Each group has its compelling reasons for choosing Germany.

As of 2023, there are 5.3 million foreign workers in Germany. The primary countries of origin for labor migrants are Poland, Turkey, and Romania [12]. Workers are drawn to Germany due to numerous job opportunities, high wages, and a high standard of living. It's important to note that Germany actively seeks to attract migrant workers to address labor shortages. In 2022, the country will need 1.7 million workers, a number that is projected to increase to 7 million by 2035 [13].

The demand for labor in Germany is increasing primarily due to demographic changes and an aging population. As more people retire than enter the labor market, there is a decrease in the number of young people, exacerbating the situation. Additionally, gaps in the education system lead to a mismatch between the skills of job seekers and the demands of employers, particularly in the industrial and high-tech sectors. Rapid economic growth in sectors such as manufacturing, engineering, and IT is also driving up demand for skilled workers, often surpassing the available supply [14].

At the same time, Germany boasts a robust economy, ranking first in Europe and third in the world in terms of GDP. The rapid economic development has also caused an increase in the demand for workers.

In 2023, Germany implemented a new migration law to address issues in the area. The law aims to make it easier for skilled labor to enter the country and to enhance its appeal to migrants. One key feature of the law is the introduction of the Opportunity Card, which operates on a point system. Under this system, foreign citizens with at least a university or professional education who score a minimum of 6 points will be eligible for a one-year residence permit to seek employment in the country.

Furthermore, many foreigners, especially young people, come to Germany to pursue their education. The number of foreign students studying in Germany exceeds 469,000, and this figure continues to increase annually [15]. There are several reasons why foreign students choose to study in Germany. These reasons can be outlined as follows:

Firstly, education is free in Germany. Since 2014, all public universities in Germany have been tuition-free. Students only pay 150-250 euros in administrative fees [16].

Additionally, the cost of living in Germany is not high and there are job opportunities available for students. They can comfortably live with 992 euros

per month, and can also work part-time during their studies. After completing their studies, students have the option to stay in Germany for 18 months to look for a job. [16]

Furthermore, Germany's higher education system is highly regarded worldwide, with its diplomas being recognized around the globe. At the same time, Germany offers numerous scholarship programs for foreign students, providing additional opportunities. The diverse student population from all over the world fosters cultural diversity, making it easier for foreign students to adapt and creating a positive educational environment. The countries with the highest number of foreign students in Germany include India, China, Syria, Austria, and Turkey [16]. The most popular majors among students are engineering, law, economics, and social sciences.

Germany is among the countries with the highest number of refugees and asylum seekers. The right to asylum holds special significance in Germany due to the country's Constitution. Unlike many other countries, the right to asylum in Germany is not only established by the 1951 Geneva Convention which is related to the status of refugees, but is also enshrined in the German Constitution as a fundamental right. This demonstrates Germany's willingness to fulfill its historical and humanitarian obligation to accept refugees.

Germany is ranked among the top five countries in the world in terms of the number of refugees with 2.6 million refugees, which places the country fourth in the world after Iran, Colombia, and Turkey [17]. In recent years, the outbreak of wars in the Middle East and Eastern Europe has led to millions of people seeking asylum in Germany.

The primary reason refugees choose Germany is the opportunities the country provides for them. If a person is granted refugee status, they receive a residence permit in Germany and are entitled to the same benefits as German citizens in the social insurance system. This includes access to social benefits, allowances for raising children, language courses for integration into society, and more. The top three countries of origin for refugees in Germany are Ukraine, Syria, and Afghanistan [17].

Germany places high importance on integrating refugees and migrants into society, and this also influences the selection of those coming to Germany. Integration courses have been offered in Germany since 2005, and both refugees and migrants are eligible to participate in these courses. These courses include language classes and orientation programs. Proficiency in the German language is particularly crucial for daily life, work, and social interactions in Germany. The language part of the courses teaches participants German up to the B1 level, as well as practical language use, such as writing letters, filling out forms, and answering the phone. The orientation

courses provide refugees with knowledge about the German legal system, history, and culture, as well as rights and responsibilities in Germany, coexistence in society, and essential values in Germany. While there is typically a fee for these courses, government assistance is available for those unable to afford it [18].

Conclusion. As it can be seen pull factors play a significant role in influencing the migration process. The presence of these factors is a key driver of people's decision to migrate to a particular place. Germany, being a major destination for immigration, attracts migrants for various reasons owing to its many appealing aspects. Due to demographic shifts, Germany is actively seeking to accelerate the immigration process and draw in migrants to the country. The recent adoption of the Migration Law in 2023 serves as a clear indicator of this intent. It can be observed that Germany's migration policy is primarily focused on two main directions. Firstly, Germany aims to address its need for skilled labor, leading to the establishment of rules that expedite and simplify this process. Consequently, there has been an influx of labor migrants to Germany, both from European Union countries and other nations.

One of another main priorities is to ensure the protection of asylum seekers who require international protection and facilitate their integration into society. This also aligns with the obligations outlined in the German Constitution. Germany's refugee programs provide opportunities for individuals from different conflict zones worldwide, as well as those facing persecution in their own countries for political reasons, to seek asylum in Germany.

Also, it's worth noting that individuals seeking asylum in the country can also become part of the labor force. Once they are granted refugee status, they are entitled to the same rights and privileges as citizens, including the right to work. This contributes to the country's economy.

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Мета. Мета цієї статті полягає в тому, щоб вивчити роль і значення факторів притягування як впливового інструменту в міграційному процесі, дослідити теоретичні основи цих факторів і проілюструвати різні фактори притягання для різних міграційних груп та їх вплив на міграційний потік в конкретну країну, на прикладі Німеччини.

Метод. Працюючи над статтею, автор намагався дати комплексне уявлення про тему, використовуючи статистичні дані офіційних установ. У статті використовуються теоретичні методи, такі як контент-аналіз і дедукція, і методи дослідження, такі як порівняльний аналіз, щоб запропонувати детальне пояснення теми.

Наукова інновація. У статті розглядається роль і значення факторів притягання у виборі людьми місця призначення під час міграційного процесу. Автор досліджує вплив цих факторів у контексті Німеччини, підкріплюючись конкретними фактами.

Практична значимість. Ця стаття має як наукове, так і практичне значення, оскільки ретельно досліджує всі аспекти факторів притягання в процесі міграції. Він широко ілюструє ці фактори, особливо у випадку Німеччини, що робить його цінним ресурсом для наукових робіт, підручників і монографій у цій галузі.

Висновок. У статті підкреслюється вплив факторів притягування на міграційний процес, наголошується на їх важливості у прийнятті людьми рішення мігрувати до Німеччини. Це також підкреслює зацікавленість Німеччини в залученні мігрантів до країни шляхом створення сприятливих умов, що узгоджується з метою міграційної політики країни щодо залучення іноземної робочої сили для підтримки робочої сили.

Ключові слова: міграція, чинники привабливості, Німеччина, міграційна політика Німеччини.