

IAB-Colloquium

zur Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung

Life (dis)satisfaction and the intention to migrate: Evidence from Central and Eastern Europe

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The paper provides empirical evidence of the impact of life satisfaction on the individual intention to migrate. The impacts of individual characteristics and of country macroeconomic variables on the intention to migrate are analyzed jointly. Using the Eurobarometer Survey for 27 Central and Eastern European (CEE) and Western European (non-CEE) countries, we find that people have a greater intention to migrate when dissatisfied with life. The socioeconomic variables and macroeconomic conditions affect the intention to migrate indirectly through life satisfaction. At all levels of life satisfaction, individuals with similar characteristics have greater intentions to migrate from CEE countries than from non-CEE countries. These findings underscore the importance of individual life satisfaction not only as a strong predictor of the individual migration intention, but also as a mediator between individual socioeconomic variables and macroeconomic conditions and that intention.

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