Central European Ideas and Policies about International Circular Migration from Hungarian Angle[1]

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Abstract: *The author tries to investigate the thoughts and politics in literature about international circular migration in the lights of European Union (EU) initiatives related to Visegrad Four Countries (V4) with special attention to Hungary. The cross-border circular flows have become relatively frequent during life stages of people differentiated by previous migratory experiences, and next aspirations. The popularity of international circular migration erected from the hypothesis of 'triple win solution' without any empirical verifications. Basically, two sorts of circular migration system exist: homogenous and heterogenous. The homogenous human circular migration system consists of the same kind of moves with similar time rhythm from statistical angles. It seems to us that the practice of life-long international circular migration characterises few long-term circulators. However, the heterogenous circular migration systems combine with other spatial mobility forms function during whole individual life cycle due to one of the symptoms of human beings. The main aim of the contribution is to explore some elements of similar ideas and politics on international circulatory flows interfered between Western and Eastern Europe. Moreover, we propose some old-new innovative solutions for V4 to reform the rigid EU migration policies.*

Keywords: ***international circular migration, circular mobility policies, EU criticism, EU reformism, Visegrad Group, Hungary***

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Introduction

The spatial patterns of the multiple and repeating migration have been emerging in the arena of international migration due partly to the rapid development of transportation technology and telecommunication. The rigid distinctive function of the state borders has been eroding as a long-term trend (Lévai 2011). The relatively free movement of individuals between countries has become a reality the within supranational integrations like the European Union (EU) so the probability of inner circulation of the EU citizens has been growing (Gellérné-Lukács 2018; Gyeney 2020). The principle of free movement of people with some legal and practical barriers have worked within the EU. Naturally, this basic right of the EU citizens was not extended to the third-country nationals staying with the community. However, the emergence of circular schemes needs to be the development of the quasi-free movement across outer borders. The moving freely means, for example, the possibility of return not only to the country of origin (basic right of citizens) but also to the receiving country without usual administrative restrictions. In the other side of the coin, the emigration from a country of departure is a general human right, however, the right of immigration to another than home country is not. This reflects the dialectic nature of immigration-emigration relationship because every emigrant is an immigrant, as well (Waldinger 2017). The inner European circular schemes are functioning spontaneously within the community. Pilot projects on the temporary and circular migrations tried to introduce the multiple crossing of borders for the third-country nationals who were out of the principle of free movement. However, the requirements of first return to sending country was overemphasised and the legal promise of return to receiving country which was necessary for the development of circular system was forgotten (EU 2008). This contradiction was one of main initial faults led to the unsustainable pilot projects on international circular migration at EU level. The discovery of possibilities of international circular migration policies within Visegrad Four Group (V4) context is one of the main tasks for the author from the angle of a future oriented applied research.

The circulation is not a brand-new concept in literature (Standing 1984; Chapman and Prothero 1985; Prothero and Chapman 1985; IOM 2008; Constant et al. 2013; UNECE 2016). The bureaucrats of the European Union (EU) have introduced the notion of 'temporary and circular migration' as a 'wonder drug' for the common international migration policy making at community level for one and half decades. Based on the 'triple-win mantra' the concept dispersed to different stakeholders in and outside Europe. Without rigorous definitions and detailed statistics what served for the evidence-based policy creation, several pilot projects started on the theme of 'temporary and circular migration' for the financialization of the EU (EC 2011). In parallel with this process embedded in the externalisation of migration politics, several pro-

jects started for the clarification of the ideas and their next implementations to community laws (Çağlar 2013). The emphasis on temporary character fettered stakeholders in a very narrow topical arena (EU 2002). They included the international commuting as pendular migration in legislative actions and ignored the permanent international migration, which were further relevant aspects of circulation/circularity (EU 2007). As a side effect, the international circular migration with temporary character had close relation to the negative connotations of past temporary workers schemes with the exploitation of guest workers and the phenomenon of precarity (Doomernik 2013; Standing 2014).

The argumentation above stresses that part-whole relation does not reflect the relationship between international migration policy and international circular migration one (McLoughlin et al. 2011; Triandafyllidou 2013). According to formal logic the migration policy could be the parcel of circulation policies due to the migration policy has part-character whereas the circulation policy consists of wholes. However, the migration politics dominate over the new-born circular migration politics. We may state that formal and informal migration politics have principal effects to circulation politics because of the linear time order. In general, any impacts work each direction could be conceptualised as an interaction than one-way effect in the complex reality.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. First, we depict the international migration policies with special attention to the possible innovations related to the circular migration within the EU context. Later, we turn to the arena of territorial mobility approaches and policies in V4 countries for comparability reasons. The country case studies reflect the heterogenous migratory situations and policy practices and the highly changeable national opinions on the initiation of the Commission of EU. Diminishing the degree of abstraction, we provide some empirical findings coming from Hungary mirroring the necessary dimensions of the official national statistics of the long-term international circular migration. In the concluding chapters we made discussions and conclusions, in which we stress the utilisation of the mirror-statistics at different international levels as an age-old requirement of the UN and the EU. Moreover, we propose a new general legal status for mobile people, namely circulator as a scientific innovation ahead not only for V4 but also for worldwide scope.

Migratory and circulatory policies in EU

The principle of free movement of people with some legal and practical barriers have worked within the European Union. Naturally, this basic right of union citizens was not extended to the third-country nationals staying within the community. However, the emergence and development of circular schemes needs to be a quasi-free movement across outer borders. In analogy to the distinction stated by the European Commission (2011: 21), we identify two different perspectives

on non-nationals as viewed from the destination country. They differentiate between non-national circulators residing in the country of destination (*'inwards circulation'*) and non-national circulators settled in the origin or third country (*'outwards circulation'*). From a methodological point of view, the analytical value of these two perspectives is equivalent. For practical reasons, due to the data accessibility we decided to utilise the so-called 'spatially inward' perspective in the Hungarian research series.[2] The European Union restricted the concept of international circular migration to third-country nationals and the compulsory phase of their return to country of origin. However, the well-founded critic of this unsustainable conceptualisation and the false externalisation of EU migration policies (Glouftsios 2018) are beyond the scope of this paper.

According to the mass portion of recent literature on human circular migration, the temporary migrations were strongly interconnected with circular migrations as a whole in the new century. This meant that the short-term duration of stay was overestimated over long-term stay. The inherently multiple return character of circulation was pushed into the temporary arena by EU context. This diffuse conceptualisation put enormous effect on European Union experts, officials and it emerged in soft laws (EU 2002, 2007). The popularity of circular migration erected from the hypothesis of 'triple win solution'. It meant that international circular migration was good for all bodies involved at the same time: the sending country, the receiving country and the migrant himself/herself. Unfortunately, the popular term circular migration has developed a buzzword in European and global scientific, political, and administrative circles since the new century due to the mantra surrounding it. The transnational promise of 'triple win solution' has been failing to deliver (King and Lulle, 2016).

The problem was that the international circular migration with 'triple win mantra' and the international temporary migrations with negative guest--worker's heritage were twinned in phrases, namely 'temporary and circular migration' (EC 2011). So, the structural-conceptional and the functional conflicts were hidden. All in all, the unsustainable thinking and practice on international circular migration emerged in EU circles. It was indisputable that the phenomenon of international circular migration with temporary periods (from three months to twelve months, one by one) were more numerous than permanent ones (more than one year, one after the other). Continuing the search for further relations in a linear way, international circular migrations with temporary periods were less numerous than international pendular migration or commuting (from one day to three months stay period each). We can see that the volumes of phenomena were close connections with the length of defining

2 'Spatially outward' perspective would be more useful in the investigation of the international circulation of Hungarian nationals, for example. It is true in all individual V4 countries, too. The statistical bodies of V4 group collect data on emigration of own nationals. However, it is not necessary to register the return of citizens due to the basic right of own citizens.

periods. The bigger rhythm of time meant the less mass.[3] The undividable conceptualization and practice of circular migration and temporary migration has emerged in the European Union (EC 2011) caused some confusions due to circular migration. If temporary migration is a first-rank type of migration and it has an inseparable hierarchic correlation between 'temporary and circular migration', it would be logical at first sight that circular migration would be a new first-rank type of migration similar to its so-called antecedent (pair), namely temporary migration.

In this paper we argue against this sort of conceptualisation of circular migration. The oversimplification of circular migration as a type or form of migration bears inevitable conceptional, analytical, and practical problems in migration studies and practices. The proponents of type (Weber and Saarela 2019; Monti 2020) forgot that circular migrations were encompassed into a completely new entity, namely a system. They often muddled different types in a general one or the type of latest element of recurring migration series, which was observed. Later they generalised the last observed part on the whole system. They did not consider the systematic nature of elements and the necessity of *hierarchical classification* in circular migration studies. Labelling a general type without deep analysis may attract false ideas and practices. Minor faults come from the shortcomings of conceptualisation in which final type of migration measured was generalised on the whole system. They may overestimate one of the characteristics of circular migration, namely self-resemblance (Weber and Saarela 2019). The self-resemblance comes from the special combination of previous multiple selection mechanisms. On one side self-selection happens on the other side the migrant is selected by others (Illés and Kincses 2018). It is possible to analyse circular migration by its any last phases and to try to influence over next elements. However, we are aware of the necessity of the introduction of exact serial numbers, the core distinguishing tools of circularity.

In this article, we launched into a fierce polemic against the narrow EU conceptualisation on the circular migration. In this section we try to synthetize the characteristic differences between the recognition of circular migration as a system compared to an event (a type). From analytical and practical reasons, firstly, we argue for the conceptualization of system nature of multiple return migration, namely the circular migration as a whole entity. Secondly, the last phase of any circular migration system can be recognised as a simple event of migratory process which could be typified as a part of the system. In other words, the individualised migrations by serial numbers could be classified by usual migration types. The last individual migration with serial number could

3 From the point of view of circularity, we may put once more possibility of comparison that was out of the scope of this article. What are the quantitative relations between international commuting with intrinsic circularity and repetitive international touristic moves from three months to one day within different territorial frames?

be classified lots of migration types. But this is not valid for a whole circular migration system due to their potentially mixed motivational elements. Only the classification of the last sequence of system has the most recent importance from practical purpose. For instance, the migrants' actual legal status would be a dimension of classification in the receiving country.

The circular migration is nothing else than a multiple return migration where the 'type-system dilemma' could be multiplied mechanically with the increase of the serial number of last migration, based on linear thinking. At first, it seems us that the picture of circular migration may become more blurred compared to the return migration from this lens. However, the system nature fortifies at the expense of type side with the multiplication of returns (moves). In our opinion, according to the latest separate move of circular migration can be conceptualised as type with three restrictions. First, we may guess that all the previous moves have the same character by the interest of last receiving country.[4] Second, the perspective of last sending country could be very variegated landscape in the question of judging the type. This aspect may often be precluded. Third, the circulators on their own may classify their moves as different types due to inherently multiple motivational patterns of the migratory phenomena. This possibility might often be ruled out. The three restrictions mentioned above remain in force if we connect serial numbers to all individual moves within the circulatory systems. The last serial number on its own echoes the force of system character. The bigger is the serial number the more robust is the system nature of circular migration. If the serial number becomes lesser and lesser the type-nature would fortify (system nature could weaken) till moves the third as minimum requirements of circular migration.

We argue that international temporary immigrations[5] is not inherent pattern international circular immigrations. The serial numbers of any systems identify them more precisely than the temporariness. It may end within sending, receiving or third countries. The final areas vary different territorial units or transform one another in any spatial mobilities of individuals. In this article we provide empirical evidence on international permanent (long-term) circular migration as a homogenous system from inward perspective. So temporary and changeable criterions of circular migration is not universal. The *stability* is a fundamental feature of international circular migration opposite of the temporary change, besides the aspirations of movers interconnected with the effects of international migration policies. The circular migration is more than the simple series of ephemeral migration in the era of globalization when international statisti-

4 Yes, if it relates to the homogenous system. No, if it relates to the heterogenous system.

5 Maximo Livi-Bacci (2012: 104–107) proposed a philosophical change (from prosthesis to transplant) in the view of immigration. He introduced the notion of 'temporary fix' which meant that the circulators split their lives among at least two countries. The temporary fix resonates quasi stability (inclusion) during immigrant status without the final end, citizenship.

cal consensus exists on the rhythms of temporary migration and permanent migration crossing national borders inspired by the United Nations (1998).

Our knowledge is scarce about the mechanisms underlying (economic--societal-political context surrounding) international circular migration. We stress on that the leading mechanism for the development of circularity pattern is the possibility of relatively free movement of people, one of the principles of the EU (Gellér-Lukács et al. 2016). The other general mechanisms fuelling circular migration has not been discovered yet. In this contribution we concentrated only on a scientific-political challenge: the event-system dilemma of human circulation. All in all, international circular migration on one side must be conceptualised as a system. On the other side, the parts of international circular migration with serial numbers could be recognized as an event (a type) which could by typifies usual frames and manners in migration studies and migration policy practices. Double nature echoes the common part and parcel between the system and event conceptualisations. In other words, it means a kind of the dialectic nature of circulatory moves.

Territorial mobility policies in V4 countries – case studies

We are aware that the short-term international immigrants, international commuters, and international tourists are further parts of internationally mobile people with multiple return character **(**Williams, Hall 2002; Hall 2005) beyond long-term immigrants. Typical form of international temporary migration is the seasonal work abroad. The usual type of international repetitive tourism is the life in second home situated in seaside, mountain or elsewhere (Bódis and Michalkó 2017). In both examples, the change of seasons provides the rhythm or cycle of activities. The intrinsic characteristic of international commuting is the pure circulation between home and workplace in foreign country. The non-daily commuting as a form of circulation mirrors the multiple movement feature of circulation (see Prothero and Chapman' s model /1985: 2/). The rhythms of long-distance commuting give classic examples of multiplicity and return. The concept of international long-distance commuting is not a part of the international tourism. However, if we accept the confused term of 'international tourist for professional motivation' where a tourist is accommodated at least one night in the receiving country, we must accept that international long--distance commuters may be labelled as 'international tourist for professional motivation'. These natural persons utilise transport facilities, travel routes and touristic accommodation between the home and host countries – if we accept Gábor Michalkó' s disputable idea on 'tourism supra-structure' (Michalkó 2012) which is more than tourism infrastructure (Tóth et al. 2014). All in all, some tourism scholars try to jeopardise the inherent topical part of travel studies, employment studies and migration studies, too. From the multidisciplinary

point of view the concept of tourism supra-structure could be refused than accepted in the absence of wide scientific debates.[6]

The V4 countries were partially encompassed by their similar historical developments after feudalism (Szűcs 1983), plus geographical neighbourhood and cultural proximity with large variety of individual peculiarities (Everett and Redzic 2020). After the change of regime around 1990 they have become receiving and transit country beyond the long tradition of sending areas during the socialist epoch from the point of view of international migration flows. They were getting closer and closer due to the emigration of highly skilled citizens (brain drain) and the immigration of skilled and unskilled foreigners at the same time period. Common outer forces were experienced from 2004 till 2011 when free movement of persons were restricted by the postponement mechanism to the direction of some old European Union countries except for Ireland, United Kingdom, and Sweden (Gellér-Lukács et al. 2016). The starting points of new emigration flows and their volumes were very diverse amongst V4 countries (Waterbury 2018). The quasi refugee-migrant-tourist flows provided the third common migratory phenomenon in 2015–2016. Opposite of the extremely different level of transit flows, the rising populism combined with xenophobia, the direct linking of mixed flows and terrorism, and lastly the fears of Islam both on state policy and social security levels developed as the common denominator of Visegrad Four Regional Group (Bauerová 2018). The COVID-19 pandemic has been serving the fourth common experience from 2020 with widespread spatial mobility consequences within and beyond the borders of V4 countries.

The EU fear from large scale international moves and the EU promises

After the collapse of former Soviet regimes, the well-founded fears developed in Western countries against the mass inflows of Eastern Europeans labelled as modern time exodus or peaceful invasion (Cabada 2020). The migratory pressures were diminished with the help of the promise of Euro-Atlantic integration and the introduction of pro-immigration policies for some selected Western European countries.

The general deal is as follow. V4 countries uncritically accepted and supported the idea and practice of Europeanization provided by the more powerful body, the old EU member states according to their own interest. The unequal general deal contained an undirect promise of external Europeanization for V4 countries in the Western Balkan and Eastern Europe during the next rounds

6 The actualised joke below highlights the predator like behaviour as the fundamental problem.
What is tourism? – asks the Jester.
Tourism is everything. – answers the King.
You are right, Lord.

of extension (Ágh 2019). Migratory deal meant that V4 countries accepted the emigration of their talent and skilled workforce to old member states. Based on the original promise, the citizens of V4 countries were replaced by immigrants originated from foreign policy partner countries (Prague Process 2019, 2020).

Budapest Process initiated a regional dialogue to the East neighbours of the EU-15 member states in 1991. This non-binding consultative process tried to gate the mass East-to-West international migration flows. Moreover, this partnership--like mechanism provided a chance for first-round candidate countries to fulfil their interest after their accession. This was a promise for a quasi-empowerment of accession countries under the umbrella of the idea of Europeanization. In fact, the dialogue processes were characterized by non-symmetrical interdependence, where the EU side was the more powerful player at any stage of so-called dialogues. The Istambul Declaration on a Silk Routes Partnership for migration, as a special partisan action (Turkey became the Chair and Hungary was the Co-chair), finalised the Budapest Process in 2013. It meant a geographic re-orientation initiated by Hungary and in parallel, an empowerment of Turkey, a candidate country from the second part of last century (Prague Process 2019). The EU administration utilised an 'old Machiavellian trick' with the starting of Prague Process and they indirectly contributed to the development of mixed flows to the core of Europe in 2015–2016. From the angle of the subject matter of this paper, international circular migration, we must mention that the actions of Budapest Process did not use the EU innovation of 'triple win solution' what were strong correlation with of the facilitation of 'temporary and circular migration' to third countries emerged in the EU circles from 2005.

Prague Process such as a new regional dialogue, that has been functioning since 2014, was a manifesto for own projects based on good practices in the topic of East-to-West international migration. Prague Process made the migratory themes into the general development policies in the direction of Eastern partner third countries. As an innovative initiation a handbook prepared on managing labour and circular migration in September 2014. This was a partial compendium of the state of art of circular migration concentrated mainly on policy documents at the expense of well-founded scientific contributions. It stressed the definitional problems of circular migration and the necessity of reliable data gathering with longitudinal methods. For instance, it mentioned a general misunderstanding, namely 'circular' has often become synonymous with 'return'. This was a critique towards the rigid EU positions for return of third country nationals without the utilization of the effective mechanisms promoting circularity (multiple-entry document, the portability of social rights.). The authors of the handbook recognised the spontaneous or unregulated form of circular migration patterns have always had a long tradition in Scandinavian countries as a well-functioning system. However, the handbook also argued for organising Circular Migration Schemes (CMS) in the light of the former

official EU position. CMS „can either take place within concrete programmes or schemes regulated by the states involved or through enhanced mobility and the facilitation of spontaneous migration (eg Sweden)" (Prague Process 2014: 41). On one side, the authors did not consider the importance of long-term international circular migration more than one year duration), on the other side they criticized several countries what considered the circular migration as an advanced form of seasonal migration (duration to range from three to six months).

It was interesting that international circular migration within the EU member states remained out of the scope of interest of the handbook in parallel with inner brain drain from the point of view of the peripheral and semi-peripheral EU countries. The non-managed East-to-West international migration in combination with brain gain for core countries lost in the heterogenous flows of 'free movement of people' principle. Attila Ágh (2019) analysed the uncritically accepted and supported Europeanisation processes. He mentioned that the utilisation of so-called 'neoclassical hybrid' served as a 'self-colonization' mechanism for Central European countries. After approximately three decades, a historical correction was needed in order to overload the 'old taboo' precisely the 'neoliberal hybrid' as a necessary price for bright future in Eastern and Central Europe. In our opinion, several old taboos have been existing in economic-social-political-cultural spheres. From the point of view of this paper, the promise of 'free movement of people' within community was the so-called 'anti-taboo' what overlapped the unequal power relations between centrum and periphery countries. The dominant East-to-West migration flow was one of the symptoms of unequal relations at the expanse of periphery (see for example the emigration of skilled workers, medical personnel encompassed the notion of brain drain). The new generations of twenty-first century needs to reconceptualise the 'anti-taboo' of free movement of people which mainly is unidirectional and contributes to the distortions in democracy in sending countries. 'Free circulation of people' conceptualising as a migratory system may replace the old unidirectional term. In other words, the brain-drain and brain-gain dichotomy will be overload 'brain circulation' as the interconnecting back and forth moves of individuals. This sort of paradigmatic change may fulfil the interest of peripheral countries of EU, too. Moreover, it will result a new sort of Europeanisation based on the general European values crystallising.

Poland

The Poland was a traditional emigration country till 2008–2009. At about 2 million Poles left the country after 2004 accession to the EU. The share of foreign-born population, as a crude indicator of international migration stock, was only 2 % at the first of January 2019. It meant the smallest proportion in the

context of V4 countries. Approximately 76 thousand relatively new long-term third-country immigrants arrived in Poland in 2018 opposite of 313 thousand short-term third-country immigrants. The permanency ratio of third-country immigrants (76 000/313 000) was extremely low in Poland 0.24 among the V4 countries (OECD 2020). It echoed that the international migration policy of Poland preferred the short-term migration to long-term ones. So, the short-term and seasonal circularity overlapped the long-term circularity in hidden circular migration policies related to third country nationals. In order to counterbalance this old-fashioned guest-worker system what replaced Polish emigrants they introduced so-called 'Card of Pole' worldwide for return of nationals. Moreower, for instance 13.3 % positive decision took place in first-asylum applicants in 2018.

The large majority of Ukrainian citizens arrived with the help of „the declaration of the intention to entrust work to a foreigner" system introduced in Poland allowed entrepreneurs to employ migrants without the need to apply for a work permit". This was a simplified procedure of spatial mobility for third--country nationals. The quasi-liberal demand-driven system had a temporary pro-migrant character, allowing internationally mobile peoples to enter the Polish labour market rather easily (Górny and Sleszynnski 2020). However, the number of 1824 thousand one-time, seasonal and circular movers were starting to transform into long-term migrants in an spontaneous way (Mateusz and Aivaliotou 2020). The striker border control has been temporarily established at Schengen-border, however, 30-day permit and declaration extensions immediately happened due to Covid-19 pandemic. Opposite of the world economic crisis of 1973, the guest workers were guarded in Poland in order to pay 3-month extra solidarity allowance from the state budget and invited to newcomers and returnees.

Czech Republic

The highest proportion of foreign-born population with 8% was measured in V4 context mainly due to the Slovak citizens (more than one-third of aliens). In 2018 56 thousand new immigrants arrived on a long-term or permanent basis including status changes and EU citizens from free movement space. Opposite of Poland very few short-term immigrants arrived in Czech Republic with 6.1 thousand people in which the majority were international students the remaining 2.6 thousand were temporary and/or seasonal workers. The absolute numbers reflected that the estimated third-country migrant permanency ratio at least ten times higher than in Poland. The Czech economy did not depend on third-country workers due to the numerous intra-EU posted workers (31 thousand in 2018) and its successful integration to European space. We must mention that Czechia the only country within Visegrad Group without external

Schengen borders. Few first-time asylum applicants were registered in which 9.6 % positive decision happened (OECD 2020).

Similarity to other V4 members, the country has no specific policy instruments promoting either circular migration of foreign citizens, or of Czech nationals. However, it did not mean that Czech Republic did not utilise indirect measures for the highly qualified workers, key personnel of factories, foreign students and research staff of universities. Moreover, it extended the geographical scope of potential source countries. The pole of potential Slovak workforce has been exhausted and Ukrainian's quota has been introducing since 2016. The employers looked for their future workers directly in Ukraine and based on their proposals the state provide employee cards (Frank 2020). The main idea of international migration policy was the flexibility to respond to the inner labour market needs. Due to the geographical location of country, the outward circularity mainly functioned on the local levels in border areas, especially to Germany, in an attempt to facilitate the cross-border commuting of Czech citizens (Prague Process 2014).

In the times of Covid-19 pandemic the permit of seasonal workers was extended. The state searched for new one thousand qualified foreign workers in the construction industry and machinery manufacturing. The nation state also compensated the foreign employees of companies that face economic downturn due to Covid-19 (OECD 2020). Similarity to Poland, the legality of residence was ensured for overstayers via online and telephone services.

Slovakia

The country had the average share of foreign-born population (4 %) at the start of 2019. Seventeen thousand new long-term third-country citizen immigrants arrived in Slovakia in 2018. At the same time 400 international students and 3100 temporary and seasonal labourers were received. The exact third-country migrant permanency ratio was 4.9 (17 000 / 3 500). It was a twenty times higher ratio than Poland. We can suppose that Slovakian immigration policy advantage the long-term international migration and indirectly circulation to short-term ones from the direction of the third countries. Similarity to Czech level, 14 thousand intra-EU posted workers were employed mainly in temporary basis. The level of positive decisions of first asylum applicants was extremely high (38,9 %) in 2019 (OECD 2020). We may add that just as Czechia, the Slovak Republic is not a target country of refugees. Plus, the transit routes of the asylum seekers to the heart of Europe avoid these countries.

Slovakia suffered from internal brain drain of V4 countries at the advantage of Czech Republic (Bleha and Sprocha 2020; Frank 2020). Beyond the emigration of highly skilled workers, large number of young people leaved the country to study abroad. More than half of the foreign students were Slovak citizens in

Czech Republic. Labour market test is needed for all work permit applications. More restrictive immigration policies combined with the high level of xenophobic attitude of inhabitants resulted the 'Municipality Consent' document for all resident permit applications. On one side it could be recognised as the empowerment of municipalities, on the other hand it is a sort of protestation of local inhabitants against the newly created hostels for guest workers in the areas of foreign investments.

Slovakia followed the practice of neighbouring countries. In March 2019, the police control including medical check-up was introduced at the borders. The international airports were closed, and international rail and bus transport was suspended at the first stage of Covid-19. Some liberalisation measures took place, namely the introduction of online system for the application of residence permit and the Antibureaucratic Act of January 2020.

Hungary

The share of foreign-born population was 6 % in 1st of January 2019. The absolute number of new long-term third-country nationals was 40 thousand during 2018. The mass of short-term migrants consisted of 5.2 thousand international students, 7.4 thousand temporary and labour migrants. The third-country permanency ratio located somewhere between the Czech and Slovak levels with 3.17 (40 000 / 12 600). The number of 17 thousand intra-EU posted workers meant a relative level what oscillated between the high Czech, Slovakian and the low Polish indicators (OECD 2020).

The largest discrepancy existed between the anti-immigrant rhetoric and pro-immigrant reality into the political circles in Hungary. The growing number of immigrants arrived from third countries in order to replace the emigration flows of nationals to the core EU countries. 'Migration Strategy 2014–2020' was adopted by Orbán government in 2013 which is still formally in effect (Tálas 2020). It declares that for national economic and demographic reasons it is important to encourage a wider range and number of migrants legal from the EU and the ethnic Hungarians from the neighbouring countries. A so-called 'regulated openness' functions for third-country nationals who can contribute to the economy as investors, highly qualified professionals and those who fulfil skill shortages. Beyond using the EU instruments (for example Blue Card) for attracting the highly skilled third-country workers and investors, the government introduced a special scheme, a so-called 'Settlement Bond' provided by the Hungarian state which was extremely advantageous for the third-country long-term immigrants for circulatory purposes to and from home and EU countries.

Janus-face processes were induced in the question of asylum seekers and refugees. On official verbal level of governance, the harsh refusal of asylum seekers took place. In the real world, the right-wing governments accepted al-

most exactly as many as refugees between 2010–2017 as did the former left-wing governments between 2002–2009 (Tálas 2020). Moreover, more recently, the share of positive decisions was 8.5 % amongst the first-time asylum applicants in Hungary which was a relatively high transit country level compared to other non-transit V4 countries (OECD 2020). The effects of the mass quasi-migrant--refugee-tourist flow started in 2015 and developed a furious common platform in V4 countries beyond reciprocal Brexit-like regulations. The V4 countries rejected the mandatory migration quotas introduced in 2015. However, all decisions presented by the V4 group were not legally binding. The four states implemented individual state level migration policy. Significant differences appeared in the practices (Bauerova 2018; Panke et al. 2020). Slovakia was the only one that did not face a complaint of European Commission as it had accepted some below-quota refugees (Blecha and Sprocha 2020). Czech Republic supported the Slovak proposal for the concept of 'flexible solidarity'. During 2015–2016 at about 2.8 thousand Afghan, Syrian and Iraqi international transit migrants were measured in Czech Republic. Nearly all of them continued their route to Germany and few of them were accepted as refugees (Frank 2020). Poland accepted some Christian refugees from Syria (Bauerova 2018). Finally, in September 2017 the European Court of Justice refused the complaints of Poland and Hungary.

The 175 km-long border fence was built and the closure of refugee camps in parallel with special transit zones were created. These resulted an extremely rigid Hungarian asylum policy (Pap and Reményi 2017). In May 2020, the European Court of Justice ruled the practice of retaining asylum seekers for excessively long periods in 'transit zones' to be deprivation of liberty in Hungary. As a response, the Hungarian government closed the transit zones on its borders to Serbia. The remaining asylum seekers were moved to the reception centres. Future asylum applicants must generally be submitted to the Hungarian foreign missions in neighbouring countries (OECD 2020) excluded illegal corporeal presence in the country before application. As an epilogue, the body of FRONTEX moved out from a Schengen country, Hungary in 2021.

Empirical crumbles on long-term circularity – Hungarian implementation

The following analytical part serves as an empirical example for the usefulness of *reconceptualization* of the term, international circular migration. It means the division of immigrants by serial numbers. So we provide the direct passage through traditional international migration data in Hungary. In so doing lots of countries would produce international circular migration data utilising the connection of individual migrants.

It is highly disputable, that the same person's first, second, third and so forth immigrations could be classified the same migration type (or subtypes structures at multiple classification) in their life course. Return migration is a migration type and a complete migration unit with two moves in the case of one principal centre of life. If the type's conceptualisation relates only the second migration element of return migration it is not so problematic. However, the first element of return migration, the emigration is eliminated and remained a little unknown. The return is a kind of denial of previous aims of emigration from the point of view of first sending later receiving country (dialectic of failure–success motivations). All in all, the type-like conceptualisation of return migration overestimates the role of the second receiving country (home country). In the same time the home country's viewers underestimate the importance of the first receiving country. They may demonstrate falsely the unsuccessful story of the first emigration combining with the success of return. They suggest that the first voting by feet is an individual fault and the return is the correction of previous bad decision of own nationals. The success-success, the success-fault and the fault-fault versions are forgotten, and the balanced valuation are missing. We can see that the return migration may be one of the antecedents of outward circular migration of own citizens. On the one side previous move existed, on the other side next move of migrants will be more probable to happen back than forward. So, the system conceptualisation seems more valuable for researchers than the assumptions of type or completed cycle from analytical, methodological, and relatively independent measurement angle. But the conceptualisation of return migration as a type or completed cycle would be very useful for the first sending entity (home), often for countries from practical or often direct political point of view. The argumentations above can illustrate the quasi-double nature of return migration, in other words both its type (completed cycle) and system characteristics.[7]

Naturally, lots of cross-border repetitive moves with peculiar time periods develop into the systems of international circular mobilities. For instance, the subject matter of this paper, international permanent circular migration provides an example. We may consider the circulatory system with homogenous migratory components. Similar homogenous circulatory systems develop from multiple commuting, touristic move, and temporary migration, as well. These notes are valid in internal or international context, as well. In all cases the separate spatial processes were encompassed into the migratory units.

In this section, we *analyse* a portion of Hungarian research over the observation period 2006 to 2016 in order to illustrate the distinction of migrants and

7 We must mention that the simplest circular migration system with three moves can be interpreted as a double return (White 2014). The conceptual challenge emerges the individual's first, second and so on return migrations if one centre of life exists. Double return signs the possibility of two centres of life if the individual migrates three times between two countries.

circulators by ranking via serial numbers of individual moves. The inevitable utilization of ranking was our second motivator beyond the quasi-battle against the official EU conceptualisation. Thirdly, we proved the quantitative interchangeability between traditional international migration statistics and newly made international circular migration data. As the researchers of a member state, we have provided empirical evidence since data of 2006 to broaden the originally and officially narrow EU scope for the international implementation and comparison. Based on the researchers' geographic-demographic-statistical knowledge and experience in migration studies we created a serial of macro--statistics on international circular immigrants. The one-year data and time series originated from national data bases (harmonized by UN /1998/ recommendations) with the help of unique statistical data processing techniques (Illés and Kincses 2018). "A circular migrant is a person who has crosses the national borders of the reporting country at least 3 times over a 10-year period, each time with duration of stay (abroad or in the country) of at least 12 months" (UNECE 2016: 19). Moreover, we proved that macro-statistics on the topic of international circular migration could be developed in a country (Hungary) with less than 25 years recent international immigration history and where personal identification number (PIN) has not existed (Weber and Saarela, 2019). One of the main advantages of our own research is to explore the direct passage from the usual international migration data to the circular migration ones. In so doing lots of countries would produce international circular migration data utilising the connection of individual migrants. To tell the truth, I had a quasi-founded illusion about the potential comparability in the next future: "International comparisons are also necessary to develop conceptual frameworks and models to explain this particular human mobility behaviour. The method used in this study to analyse international circular mobility can be used in other country cases and thus enable comparative studies. Nevertheless, for such studies, comparable and reliable data sources are needed to be developed at national and international levels. Academic and policy debates on international circular mobility and movers will underline the importance of this particular movement pattern and eventually may lead to suitable datasets to be produce" (Illés 2015: 159).

Statistical practice

To illustrate one of the statistical-demographic solutions of the problem of event--system dualism, the core of this paper, we provide empirical facts stemmed from our implementation of the highly theoretical concept, circular migration. The Hungarian research flood on international circular migration has been starting since 2007 motivated by the protestation against the narrow conceptualisation on EU preferred term 'temporary and circular migration' (EC 2011). We proved

that permanent circular migration data have been extracted from available international migration datasets, harmonised by United Nations (1998).

Table 1. Number of all immigrant and circular immigrant, and share of circulator, by gender from 2006 to 2016 in Hungary

Year	All immigrant	Circular immigrant	Share of circulator (%)
		Male	
2006	10 684	1 820	17.0
2007	12 753	1 904	14.9
2008	20 972	2 321	11.1
2009	14 589	2 150	14.7
2010	13 446	2 433	18.1
2011	12 576	1 901	15.1
2012	11 550	1 665	14.4
2013	12 029	2 561	21.3
2014	14 923	3 820	25.6
2015	14 733	4 200	28.5
2016	13 515	4 115	30.4
Together	151 770	28 890	19.0
		Female	
2006	8 683	1 536	17.7
2007	9 854	1 560	15.8
2008	14 575	1 766	12.1
2009	10 993	1 686	15.3
2010	10 438	1 799	17.2
2011	9 938	1 453	14.6
2012	8 790	1 274	14.5
2013	9 221	1 831	19.9
2014	11 081	2 723	24.6
2015	11 054	2 894	26.2
2016	10 288	2 956	28.7
Together	114 915	21 478	18.7

Year	All immigrant	Circular immigrant	Share of circulator (%)
		Together	
2006	19 367	3 356	17.3
2007	22 607	3 464	15.3
2008	35 547	4 087	11.5
2009	25 582	3 836	15.0
2010	23 884	4 232	17.7
2011	22 514	3 354	14.9
2012	20 340	2 939	14.4
2013	21 250	4 392	20.7
2014	26 004	6 543	25.2
2015	25 787	7 094	27.5
2016	23 803	7 071	29.7
Total	266 685	50 368	18.9

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the authors' own calculation

The number of 266.685 immigrants arrived in Hungary, in which 50.368 natural persons were circulators during the eleven years investigated. So, the degree of circularity was 18.9 per cent among all immigrants. According to the literature signals we found more male (56.9 %) immigrants than female counterpart. The gender composition of circulators was approximately the same level (57.5 %) with male surplus. In other words, the force of gender selectivity of circulators did not differ from each other between 2006–2016. This general picture was modified a little bit by time periods. The gap between two sexes diminished slightly from pre-crisis period to post-crisis amongst all immigrants. However, the gender gap increased the same interval among circulators at the expense of women. It meant that the male circulator dominance grew between 2006–2016 came mainly for the more significant male's crisis resistance from 2009 to 2012 (Illés and Kincses 2018).

We extended the database on 'international circular migration'. We cross--tabulated the items by possible dimensions (age, sex, family status, country of citizenship, place of residence in Hungary) and made the indicators in eleven year-period till 2016. The share of international permanent circular migrants within all immigrants in Hungary was one of the main indicators reflecting the degree of foreigner's circularity. All in all, it was 18.9 per cent within all immigrants in the period of 2006–2016. A quasi-equivalent indicator can be found

related to Germany. In 2010 10.7 % of resident third-country nationals had crossed the border at least three times during their lifetime. We hypothesized with great probability that the force of circularity was even higher within temporary circular schemes than 10–20 %. Based on German panel data, former guestworkers' circularity was about 60 per cent (Constant et al. 2013, p. 65). Moreover, we were sure that the degree of circularity was the highest, exactly 100 per cent in international commuting systems due to its intrinsic recurring moves of the same person. However, we may guess that the international repetitive tourism constitutes the lowest portion within international tourism flows compared to other forms of international circular mobilities. The following analytical part serves as an empirical example for the usefulness of reconceptualization of the term, circular migration. It means the division of immigrants by serial numbers. The main advantage of our own research is to provide the direct passage through traditional international migration data in Hungary and beyond. In so doing lots of countries would produce international circular migration data utilising the connection of individual migrants. Below, we examine the spatial distribution of the first-time immigrants and circulators by serial numbers between 2006–2016 based on the freshest data available. The cross-tabulation of all immigrants divided by serial numbers combined with the gender and country of citizenship variables inspire us to create several findings. We would like to stress in advance, that the structures and dynamics will reflect more stable patterns of circulators compared to all immigrants and the first-time immigrants, as well.

Irrespective of the gender difference (see table 1), we finalize our empirical investigation with the time related changes, the dynamics of the *degree of circularity*. The pre-crisis period may be labelled as 'the epoch of newcomers' with the fall of share of circulators within immigration flows. The economic prosperity gives the first-time immigrant more advantage than the circulators. The crisis effect was a linear diminish for newcomers, but hectic changes for circulators. In the first two-year period the circularity increased opposite of next two-year. The post-crisis interval became 'the golden age of veteran immigrants' with the continuous growth of circularity. In absolute terms the first half of the prosperous time also favoured first-time immigrants but with the saturation of labour market their number started to fall. All in all, we found two controversial economically prosperous intervals before crises and after crisis from the point of view of the degree of circularity.

We provided a sort of information on sending countries investigating on their own international circular emigrants above. Further insight into the processes of long-term international circular migration might also be gained from the sending countries' lens. However, it is difficult to measure international circular migration from outward perspectives and performing cross-country comparison (Engbersen et al. 2013; Krisjane et al. 2016; Mikó 2019; Strockmeijer et al.

2019) is even more complicated due to the lesser quality of emigration data than immigration ones on national level. A possible solution remains for international organizations continues to collect country specific data on international circular immigration. Later they create so called *'mirror statistics'* developing the innovative practice of United Nations (2016) on the simple bipolar flows of international circular migration by serial numbers.

Conclusions and discussions

Multiple displacements from one home to another have become increasingly frequent during the epoch of globalisation. However, migratory movements have become more fluid and dispersed nowadays with the increase of intensity rates in different areas and societal strata (Górny 2017; Parreño-Castellano 2021). Circular migration is only a fraction of territorial mobility systems (Kincses 2020a). The closure of circular migration in temporary migration arena was a conceptual fault because its proponents overlooked permanent circular migration. The permanent migration had longer tempo than temporary one from the point of view of time intervals. The terms temporary and temporariness were blurred. Moreover, the practical disadvantages have developed from the simplified concept of circular migration. The rigid temporary frame of circulation attracted the shortcomings of guest worker schemes as the representation of international temporary migration (Doomernik 2013). So, the proponents were caught in one's own trap. Scholars argued against the antihumanitarian rotation system of labour based on temporary migration scheme (Standing 1984). In fact, the circular and rotational systems are completely different from each other. The final unit of these two systems were the same: the individual. However, the individuals are changed in the rotation cycle/system, but the same person moves within circular cycle/system. In the long term, it is possible that a rotated individual may return to the receiving country, but she/he is treated as new immigrants before substitution with someone else, a human being, who must be exploited from the economic aim of productivity/efficiency. With the utilisation of the rotation scheme new and newer workers could be employed and could be exploited without considering the interest of workers in order to maximize the employer's financial profit (Standing 2014).[8] In order to avoid the shortcomings of guest worker and rotation systems a *new legal status* must be created and implemented at global, regional, national and local levels, namely *circulator*.[9] The previous concepts of 'denizens' or 'local

8 Similar to the development of capital concept with originally economic nature (Kaufmann et al. 2018), it would extend the concept of profit.

9 We hope that the potential new status will be not a simple extension of the European lexicon of circular migration in the context of growing xenofobic attitude and rhetoric in receiving countries (King and Lulle 2016), amongst V4 states. Our original proposal, the creation of circulator status is a classical multidisciplinary and multisectoral challenge (Montanari and Staniscia 2016). The potential responses will be articulated among broad variety of researchers investigating spatial mobilities and any stakeholders

citizens' and so forth have not fulfilled the requirements of natural persons from below nor politicians elected from above.

Circular migration is nothing else than a multiple return migration where 'type-system dilemma' could be multiplied mechanically with the increase of serial numbers of last migration, based on linear thinking. At first sight, it seems to us that the picture of circular migration may become more blurred compared to return migration from this lens. However, the system nature fortifies at the expense of type side with the multiplication of returns (moves). In our opinion, according to the latest separate move of circular migration can be conceptualised as type with three restrictions. First, we may guess that all the previous moves have the same character by the interest of the last receiving country. Second, the perspective of the last sending country could be very variegated landscapes in the question of judging the type. This aspect may often be precluded. Third, the circulators on their own may classify their moves as different types due to inherently multiple motivational patterns. This possibility might often be ruled out. The three restrictions mentioned above remain in force if we connect serial numbers to any individual moves within circulatory systems. The last serial number on its own echoes the force of system character. The bigger is the serial number the more robust is the system nature of circular migration. If the serial number becomes lesser and lesser the type-nature would fortify (system nature could weaken) till moves the third as a minimum requirement of circular migration.

The conventional EU conceptualisations of circular migration were *too narrow and too rigid.* It emphasised one side of circularity at the expense of another. It has been causing lots of false doctrine in science on circulatory characteristics. Circular migration would be a form or type or process or system. The blurred concept has been leading policymakers astray since 2012 mainly in European Union. All in all, the international circular migration in one side must be serial numbers could be recognized as an event (a type) which could by typifies usual frames and manners in migration studies and migration policy practices. Double nature echoes the common part and parcel between the system and event conceptualisations. In other words, it means a dialectic nature of circular migration.

Two interconnecting moves performed by the same people between two territorial units are interpreted as return spatial mobility If we discover these two moves separately from one another we would classify them the same mobility types or not. The conceptualisation of *return migration* as a new migration type is highly disputable due to its dual/dialectic nature.[10] More generally, this kind of dilemma may extend to all multiple mobilities. For instance, the type of previ-

making socio-spatial policies. So, the clear distinction between repeat tourist, long-distance commuter, second-home owner, seasonal circulator, short-term circulator, and long-term circulator would be an inevitable task ahead of scholars and practicians, too.

10 Roger Waldinger (2017) devoted a section for dialogue about the dialectic relation between emigration and immigration stemming mainly from the at least dual perspectives of the same process of migration

ous emigration and forthcoming migration back to home may completely differ from one another. At the same time, the type-approach is not refused entirely because this reflects one side of the reality. But we are aware of the previous side of the coin, too. More precisely, the former emigration was neutralized by term 'return' from the point of view of home country. So, this is, why the return migration has become the initial point of the recognition of 'event-system or type-system dilemma' during the investigation of repetitive migrations.

Opposite of return spatial mobilities the onward-type of multiple moves need at least three regions. As a special case, the *serial migration* consisted of three interconnecting moves made by the same people onward direction. It must be conceptualized as a part of multiple migration systems without return (Ossman 2013). The international *circular migration* should be viewed as interlinked processes just as the return and serial migration. In general, the circulation is a system of spatial moves of individuals with multiple return characters. In this article the international circular migrants are nothing else than the returnees to Hungary. The pioneer immigrants are not circular immigrants. However, they serve as a useful reference group for the in-depth analysis besides the heterogenous mass of all immigrants. People who receive the legal immigrant status from central governmental body twice, three-times and more become only circulators according to the author's concept.

In general, two sorts of human circulation systems exist: *homogenous and heterogenous***.** The periodicity of individual's moves differs from each other in the heterogenous system. This leads us to the complex systems of mobilities where from tourism via commuting to migration a lot of kinds of human spatial mobilities connect one another or work in parallel within an individual' s mobility history during his/her lifetime.[11] The homogenous human circulation system consists of the one kind of moves made by the same persons with similar time rhythm from statistical angles within the stages of individual's life course. Based on the Hungarian and other research on homogenous system (White 2014; Weber and Saarela 2019; Monti 2020), it seems to us that the practice of *life-long international circular migration* characterises few circulators. We may hypothesize with great probability that there are limits of sustainability of homogenous circular migrations (Lévai 2011). The emergence of circular migration is more frequent some life stages differentiated by age, previous migratory experience and next aspiration. We may hypothesise with high probability, that the same conclusion could be valid in homogenous circular system of tourists, commuters and temporary migrants. However, the heterogenous circular mobility system

in his article. Besides the event-system dilemma, the failure and/or success continuum was stressed about the recognition of return migration.

11 The concept of 'enfolded mobility' (Williams et al. 2011) allows us to interconnect several moves produced by several movers forming a multiple human network (Kincses 2020b) without non-people network (Fawcett 1989).

may function during whole individual life cycle due to one of the symptoms of human beings on move.

According to some crumbs of our research results discussed in the light of relevant literature and practice we state that the *three possible perspectives (inward, outward, hybrid)* of the exploration of international circular migration are equivalent to each other from general methodological point of views. However, under the effects of the research subject, aim, scope, area and time, privileged perspective might exist from practical angles, in social reality. Homogenous circular migration data was provided by the Hungarian example of this paper where some long-term international migrants became circulators with the help of longitudinal methodology. We utilized inward spatial perspective and concentrated on foreign citizens staying immigrant status in Hungary from 2006 till 2016 from practical approach. The linkage of individual data resulted first-time immigrants and circulators by serial number of last immigrations. The cross-tabulation by available dimensions (age, sex, family status and so forth) will provide a large variety of empirical analysis from quasi-national interest. However, the cross-tabulation of the first-time and the circular immigrant data by country of citizenship might also have the matter of real international statistical interest. Based on the recent practice of UN and other international organizations about long-term international data gathering, new data collection system could develop if individual countries produce non-circular and circular immigrant data by serial numbers (Martin 2011).

What is interesting here as a wide spectrum of challenges may be foreseen (Pap et al. 2018). The circulator as a natural person and the circulation as an event-system like process could be recognized within lots of spatial mobility forms and large variety of defining areas, as well.[12] The legal formalisation is the task of representants of law. However, it would be useful to cooperate with other migration experts come from the social sciences. For instance, the creation of the circular migrant status engages with the issue of multilevel governance of migration, one of the local-regional-global migration research agendas (Zsótér and Tóth 2014; King and Lulle 2016; Zorko 2018; Triandafyllidou and Richard-Guay, 2019; Durnik, 2020; Panke 2020).

12 If we do not identify the circulator with his/her last serial number (serial number would be an event or cycle in round figures) we ignore his/her previous migration history with multiple selection processes and/or we may project his/her next migrations with the help of his/her complete migration practices. If we conceptualise international circular migration without serial numbers as recent event-like process the past is blanketed in fog, the present becomes clear, and we may guess further migrations with a little chance. In other words, the conceptualisation of international circular migration as types of migration, for example, child, pupil, student, worker, pensioner sorts of moves might generate false starting point of scientific thinking, social-territorial planning, and policy making. We may state with great probability that utilising unfound and highly disputable ideas (for example the narrow EU concept of 'temporary and circular migration') to modify any spheres of reality may generate next problems beyond social sciences and real lives (unsuccessful, contra-productive actions; social imbalances; individual tensions/cataclysms).

Short conclusion

We would like to stress two old-new proposals for V4 to contribute to the reform of the rigid EU migration policies. The old solution embeds into official statistics. The reliable data of country of citizenship allows the production of so-called *'complete and/or partial mirror immigration statistics'* in bilateral and/or multilateral relations (Poulain et al. 2006; Hansen et al. 2011; UNECE 2016: 20). The added value will be the indirect information of emigration from countries, regions, continents. Meanwhile, with the use of inward perspective of immigration, the requirements of outward perspective will be fulfilled by mirror statistics. Our second and original suggestion is the creation of *'the new legal circulator statuses between citizens and immigrants/commuters/tourists'* on different spatial levels.

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