

V4 Assessment of the Economic Benefits of National Immigration Efforts

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Abstract

This study examines the economic interests of migrant workers in V4 countries, the importance of proper management of migration flows (which can significantly affect a country by increasing labour productivity, developing demographics, and the sustainability of pension systems economic development). Based on statistical data and mathematical calculations, an evaluation system for the economic benefits of immigration in the V4 regional labour market and selected macroeconomic indicators are proposed. In addition, it shows the educational and professional preparation costs saved by these workers, as well as the income generated by immigrants from GDP or VAT. Finally, it assesses the current account and shows further benefits from savings in health and social care costs, childcare during career preparation, income tax and consumption tax receipts, , also includes payments to social and health insurance providers from immigrants' wages. A major advantage of labour migration is that it offers huge potential for economic and social development.

Keywords: *Immigration, labour migration, labour market, V4 countries.*

Introduction

The Economic Benefits of National Immigration Efforts refer to the positive impacts that well-managed immigration policies and initiatives can have on a country's economy. These benefits encompass a wide range of contributions made by immigrants across various sectors, including labour, entrepreneurship, innovation, and cultural diversity. When effectively implemented, immigration efforts can lead to enhanced economic growth, increased productivity, and a more dynamic and resilient workforce (Angrist and Kugler, 2003; Přívara, 2022a, 2022b). By attracting skilled and motivated individuals from abroad, countries can tap into a diverse talent pool that often fills gaps in specialized industries and professions. This infusion of skills and knowledge can lead to higher levels of innovation, technological advancement, and overall competitiveness in the global market. Moreover, immigrants often play a vital role in sustaining demographic balance, particularly in aging populations where the workforce is shrinking relative to the number of retirees (Baldwin-Edwards, 1997; Přívara, 2021). They can help alleviate demographic challenges by replenishing the labour force and contributing to social security systems. Additionally, immigrants can be instrumental in driving entrepreneurship and small business development. Many immigrants are highly entrepreneurial, establishing businesses that not only create jobs but also stimulate economic activity in their adopted countries. Culturally, immigration enriches societies by bringing in diverse perspectives, traditions, and ideas.

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This diversity can lead to a more vibrant cultural scene and foster a climate of creativity and cross-cultural understanding. (Markaki and Longhi, 2013) However, it's important to note that reaping these benefits hinges on thoughtful immigration policies that promote integration, provide opportunities for skills development, and ensure that immigrants have access to resources and services. When managed effectively, national immigration efforts can be a powerful tool for enhancing economic prosperity and societal well-being (Carey and Geddes, 2010; Durana et al., 2021; Přívara, 2019a).

Absolutely, you're correct. The fall of communism in the late 20th century brought about significant changes in the economic and social landscapes of the Visegrád Group (V4) countries - Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. One of the most notable transformations was the emergence of labour migration as a prominent economic and social phenomenon. After the collapse of the communist regimes, these countries transitioned towards market-oriented economies (Sides and Citrin, 2007; Přívara & Přívarová, 2019; Přívara, 2019b). This shift, accompanied by economic liberalization and globalization, created new opportunities and challenges. One consequence was the increased movement of people, both within the V4 region and towards Western European countries, in search of better economic prospects, higher wages, and improved living standards (Angrist and Kugler, 2003; Vrtana & Krizanová, 2023a). Labour migration from the V4 countries took various forms. Some individuals sought temporary work abroad, while others pursued long-term or permanent settlement. This migration wave was characterized by a diverse range of workers, from highly skilled professionals to manual laborers, each contributing to the economies of both sending and receiving countries (Dustmann and Frattini, 2011; Přívara et al., 2018; Vrtana et al., 2023). For the V4 countries, labour migration brought about several noteworthy effects. On one hand, it led to a "brain drain" in some sectors, as skilled professionals sought opportunities in wealthier Western European countries. On the other hand, it provided an important source of remittances, which bolstered the economies of the sending countries. Furthermore, labour migration contributed to the exchange of knowledge, skills, and cultural experiences, fostering a broader understanding of global markets and international cooperation. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition within the V4 of the need to balance the benefits of labour migration with efforts to retain skilled workers and stimulate economic growth domestically. This has led to the development of policies aimed at enhancing opportunities and quality of life for residents within the V4 region. Labour migration has played a pivotal role in shaping the economic and social dynamics of the V4 countries since the fall of communism, reflecting the broader trends of globalization and economic integration in the 21st century (Vink, 2002; Přívara et al., 2020; Vrtana & Krizanová, 2020). So, the main Questions about immigration raise previously unnoticed issues in the political, technological, and secular realms. It requires a thorough analysis and examination with the aim of identifying the advantages and disadvantages of labour migration from each EU member state, as well as from third world countries. Effective control of a country's migration flows can only be achieved by understanding its motivations and consequences. so The main purpose of this study is to find out the impact of migration on selected macroeconomic indicators through correlation and regression analysis and to assess the economic contribution of labour migration to the destination country (i.e., V4 country) (Van Houtum and Pijpers, 2007; Přívara et al., 2019; Vrtana et al., 2020).

Goal and Methodology

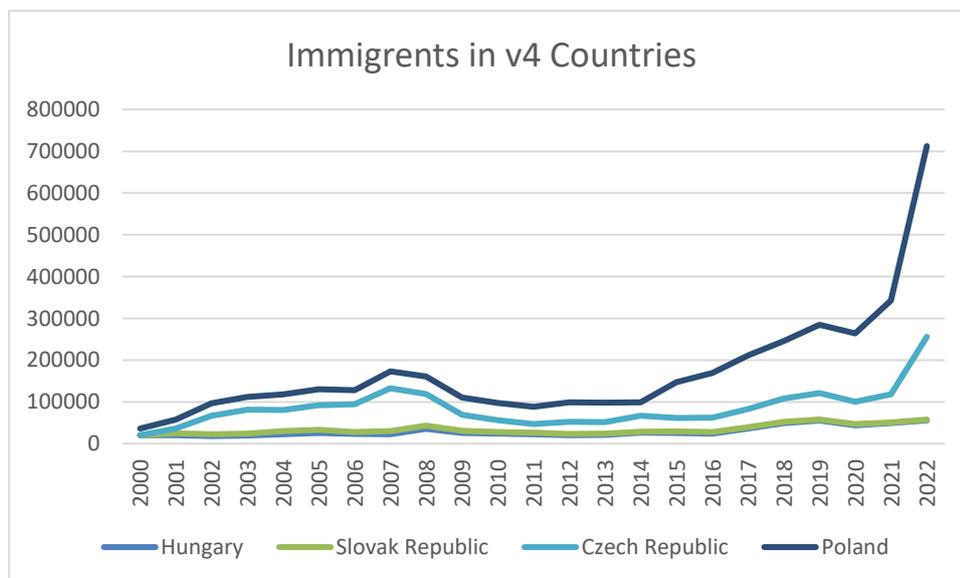
The calculations used in this study are based on the Eurostat dataset and national statistics published by V4 national statistical offices. This study uses scientific methods such as induction, deduction, abstraction, comparison, analysis, and synthesis to study the selected factors, phenomena, and processes. Data are recalculated using mathematical statistical methods (regression and correlation analysis) and other auxiliary calculations.

V4 National Immigration and GDP Assessment Benchmarks

Labour migration refers to the migration of workers from abroad to another country with the purpose of finding work based on mental or manual work. Job performance refers to the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills, and the acquisition of skills as part of training and career preparation. Through labour migration, a country receives a ready workforce of productive age, with foreigners willing to work for free at the wages offered. Considering the retirement age, assumed to be 65 years, immigrants will generate approximately 18 to 48 years of added value in the destination country (Van Houtum and Pijpers, 2007; Sirkeci et al., 2017; Vrtana & Krizanova, 2023b). Immigrants pay income taxes, health insurance and social security contributions, increase consumption and pay indirect taxes on commodity prices. Immigrants represent reproductive potential if they remain at home and start a family. These are the most significant economic benefits of immigration.

In the past, Slovakia, like other V4 countries, was originally a country of immigrants - that is, citizens left Slovakia for various reasons. Further significant changes occurred in 2004 with the admission of some countries to the EU through the admission of some countries to the Schengen area (Sides and Citrin, 2007; Vavrecka et al., 2021).

Figure 1. Changes in the effective residence status of foreigners in V4 countries from 2000 to 2022



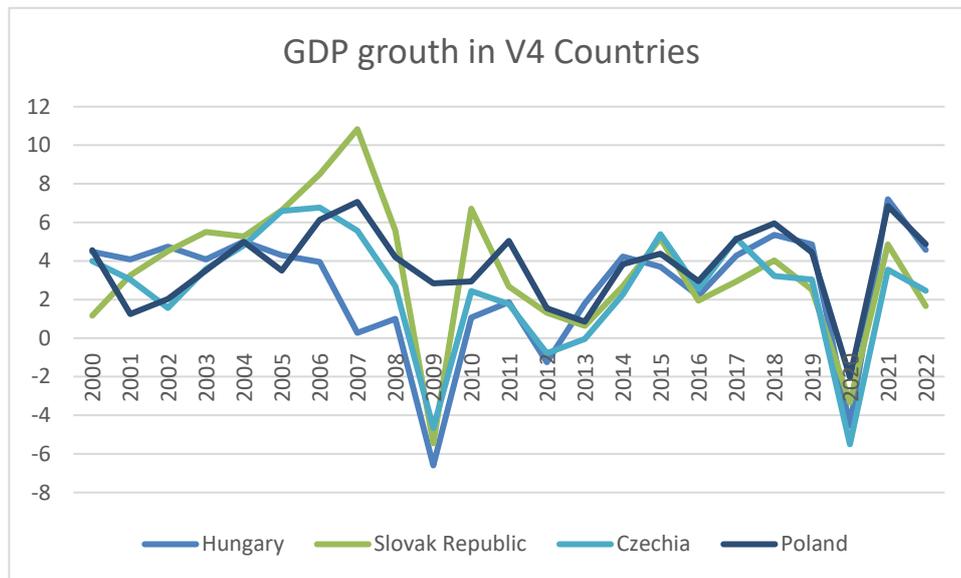
Source: Dataset of OECD

In 2015, the maximum number of foreigners with a residence permit in the Slovak Republic was 3,774, equivalent to 2.16% of the total population. Since the Slovak Republic joined the EU in 2004, the number of legal immigrants has increased almost fivefold. (Sides and Citrin, 2007) Despite this positive development, Slovakia ranks fifth among EU countries for the proportion of foreigners. Slovakia is followed by Romania and Croatia with a share of less than 1.5%. The Slovak Republic is a destination country for citizens of neighbouring countries, perhaps due to deeper professional, family and other social ties. Immigrants from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Austria account for 37% of the total number of immigrants in Slovakia. (Markaki and Longhi, 2013) Another important group is citizens from southern European countries, mainly Romania and Bulgaria. The main motivation for these citizens to immigrate is employment.

Judging from the nationality of immigrants from third world countries, most come from Ukraine, Serbia and the Middle East. Other countries include Vietnam, China, Iran, Macedonia and Turkey. The number of foreigners living in the Czech Republic continues to increase, but the number of foreigners living in Hungary is decreasing. The increase was most significant in Poland, as foreigners showed the greatest interest in this country. By monitoring the monthly increase in the number of migrant workers, we have seen a rapid increase in the number of immigrants in the Czech Republic in recent months. Meanwhile, employees from Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania also showed up at the front desk.(Christl et al., 2022)

Migrants in destination countries create added value – measured as a percentage of GDP (Figure 2), which measures the number of goods and services produced in a country in a year.

Figure 2. GDP development of V4 countries from 2009 to 2017



Source: Dataset of OECD

The economy of the Slovak Republic experienced the most significant GDP growth, followed by Slovakia. The GDP development of Poland and Hungary shows a slight upward trend.

Relationship between immigration and selected macroeconomic indicators

To find out the connection, we choose GDP as the main macroeconomic indicator, which shows the amount of goods and services produced by a country in a year. The development of this indicator over time reflects the economic conditions of individual countries. We consider employment, unemployment and job vacancies to assess the state of the labour market. According to economic theory, unemployment and lack of job openings in the country of origin are important pull factors in the decision-making process of potential immigrants. The supply and demand for jobs in the labour market determines wage levels. Empirical research shows that the most important incentive for labour to emigrate is wage levels. Perform relevant analysis on a given macroeconomic indicator.(De La Rica et al., 2013)

Table 1. Correlation matrix of Slovak immigration and selected macroeconomic indicators

	GDP	unemployment	immigrants
GDP	x		
unemployment	0,72941	x	
immigrants	0,98534	0,79106	x

Source: own processing, Stata * significance level $\alpha = 0,05$

The correlation matrix (Table 1) for dependencies and immigration among selected economic indicators of the Slovak Republic from 2000 to 2022 shows that the correlation with GDP is very strongly dependent on immigration. Immigrants participate in the production of GDP. The higher a country's GDP growth, the more attractive immigrants are to other potential immigrants, and the stronger the pull factor on GDP. The relationship between immigration and GDP is highly dependent. (Peers, 2016)

Table 2. Correlation matrix between immigration and selected macroeconomic indicators in the Czech Republic

	GDP	unemployment	immigrants
GDP	x		
unemployment	-0,43712	x	
immigrants	0,96510	-0,69731	x

Source: own processing, Stata * significance level $\alpha = 0,05$

The correlation matrix (Table 2) between immigration and selected macroeconomic indicators in the Czech Republic during the study period shows an almost complete dependence between immigration and GDP. A strong relationship between immigration and GDP has also been studied, meaning that the more immigrants come to the country, the higher the GDP growth rate. There is a strong negative relationship between immigration and unemployment, which contrasts with the relationship between immigration and GDP. (Sides and Citrin, 2007)

Table 3. Correlation matrix of Hungarian immigration and selected macroeconomic indicators.

	GDP	unemployment	immigrants
GDP	x		
unemployment	0,25197	x	
immigrants	0,86419	-0,54108	x

Source: own processing, Stata * significance level $\alpha = 0,05$

Examination of selected indicator dependencies in Hungary (table 3) reveals nearly an absolute dependence between the number of immigrants coming to the country and employment and a mean value of dependence with unemployment. There is a strong dependence between immigrants and GDP. (Sides and Citrin, 2007)

Table 4. Correlation matrix of Polish immigration and selected macroeconomic indicators.

	GDP	unemployment	immigrants
GDP	x		

unemployment	-0,85294	x	
immigrants	0,65390	-0,81942	x

Source: own processing, Stata * significance level $\alpha = 0,05$

In Poland (Table 4) we can observe an almost complete dependence between immigration and GDP, i.e., a very strong positive correlation between the number of immigrants and GDP. There is a strong negative relationship between immigration and unemployment.(Luedtke, 2011)

It is important to use regression analysis to study the dependence between immigration in V4 countries and the macroeconomic indicator GDP, because there is a very high degree of correlation in each country studied. The number of immigrants is an independent variable

The regression function for the Slovak Republic is $GDP = 0.453IMMI + 87.16$. This means that if the number of foreigners in Slovakia was 0, the GDP would be 87.16 billion euros (intercept value). If the number of foreigners increases by 1, GDP will increase by 45321 euros (value IMMI variable 1). The p-value for the position constant is $6.28^* < 0.05$, and the regression coefficient is $6.74^* < 0.05$. The regression coefficients and localization constants also express the statistical significance of the selected dependence. The correlation coefficient is 0.649 and the coefficient of determination is 0.941. Significance F is less than the significance level α ($6.53^* < 0.05$). The model is statistically significant and correctly selected based on the F test.

The regression function for the Czech Republic is $GDP = 0.443IMMI + 105.6$. This means that if the number of foreigners in the Czech Republic was 0, the GDP would represent a value of 105.6 billion euros (intercept value - IMMIO). If the number of foreigners increases by 1, GDP increases by €44310 (value X variable 1). The p-value of the localization constant is $3.61^* < 0.05$, and the regression coefficient is $3.11^* < 0.05$. The regression coefficients and localization constants also express the statistical significance of the selected dependence. The correlation coefficient is 0.471 and the coefficient of determination is 0.763. Significance F is less than the significance level α ($3.28^* < 0.05$). The model is statistically significant and correctly selected based on the F test.

The regression function for Poland is $GDP = 0.519IMMI + 187.5$. This means that if the number of foreigners in Poland was 0, GDP would represent a value of 187.5 billion euros (intercept value - IMMIO). If the number of foreigners increases by 1, GDP increases by €51941 (value X variable 1). The p-value for the position constant is $1.99^* < 0.05$, and the regression coefficient is $3.95^* < 0.05$. The regression coefficients and localization constants also express the statistical significance of the selected dependence. The correlation coefficient is 0.741 and the coefficient of determination is 0.629. Significance F is less than the significance level α ($4.32^* < 0.05$). The model is statistically significant and correctly selected based on the F test.

The regression function for Hungary is $GDP = 0.730x + 153.9$. This means that if the number of foreigners in Hungary was 0, GDP would represent 153.9 billion euros (intercept value – IMMIO). If the number of foreigners increases by 1, GDP increases by €73095 (value IMMI variable 1). The p-value for the position constant is $4.98^* < 0.05$, and the regression coefficient is 0.0421, < 0.05 . The regression coefficients and localization constants also express the statistical significance of the selected dependence. This correlation coefficient is 0.5194 and the coefficient of determination is 0.3819. Significance F is less than the significance level α ($0.0071 < 0.05$). The model is statistically significant and correctly selected based on the F test.

Discussion

The Visegrád Group, comprised of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, has emerged as a regional alliance with distinct stances on migration policy that have garnered attention on the global stage. (Van Houtum and Pijpers, 2007) In recent years, these V4 countries have often been characterized by an orientation that leans towards anti-migration policies, reflecting a set of shared concerns and priorities. This perspective has been shaped by a complex interplay of historical legacies, socio-cultural factors, and evolving political dynamics. This introductory exploration seeks to delve into the factors that underpin the V4 countries' anti-migration orientation. It is imperative to acknowledge that while each nation within this grouping maintains its unique socio-political landscape, certain commonalities have contributed to the formation of this collective stance. By examining historical contexts, economic transitions, cultural identities, and political narratives, this analysis aims to shed light on the motivations and consequences of the V4 countries' approach towards migration. Through an in-depth examination of these interrelated elements, this study seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of the V4 countries' anti-migration orientation, providing insight into the nuances and complexities that shape their migration policies and perspectives. Additionally, this inquiry will consider potential implications for regional cooperation, European integration, and the broader global discourse on migration management. Despite a comprehensive process that examines what countries have experienced over the past three decades, the treatment of immigrants has not changed. Macroeconomic indicators during the transition period highlighted the difficulties of the economic situation in various countries. High unemployment, low job vacancies, low job creation, low wages, etc. are all push factors for immigration rather than attractive factors. Thanks to the development of these countries, the economic situation of the V4 countries has improved, but compared to other EU countries, Slovakia still lags. (Sides and Citrin, 2007) This trend has left a clear mark on the development of immigration. In the past decade, the immigration situation has improved significantly, and the number of immigrant workers has increased significantly. Economic growth, job creation and labour shortages have put pressure on politicians to change immigration policies and simplify immigration employment rules. Today, it no longer makes sense to protect the labour market so much. If labour demand is not met, economic growth will slow and jeopardize its long-term sustainability. On the one hand, the significant benefits of immigration become apparent when the country benefits from a prepared labour force for free. Workers come to these countries where jobs are needed, thereby providing added value, which confirms the results of correlation and regression analyses. Due to immigration from Western European countries, qualified workers often come to V4 countries with foreign investment companies to fill positions that enable higher added value. (Van Houtum and Pijpers, 2007) Labour migration from Southern and Eastern European countries is an advantage for V4 countries as it saves resources for vocational training and preparation, as well as health and social insurance provided during vocational training and preparation. Although their positions are lower, their added value is less. Immigrants fill vacancies that native workers cannot fill due to lack of interest in the work, low wages, or insufficient qualifications. Countries should formulate immigration policies based on the needs of their own economies and manage immigration to stabilize domestic labour market conditions. The Visegrád Group (V4) countries - Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia - have, at times, displayed a more cautious or conservative approach towards certain aspects of immigration and migration policy. This stance has been influenced by a combination of historical, political, and socio-economic factors. (Angrist and Kugler, 2003)

Several factors contribute to this orientation:

First, **Historical Context:** These countries have experienced significant historical events, including periods of political upheaval, which have shaped their perspectives on migration. For instance, memories of emigration during and after World War II, as well as decades of restricted mobility during the Cold War, have influenced their attitudes towards migration. Second, **Cultural and Linguistic Homogeneity:** The V4 countries have relatively homogenous populations in terms of language, culture, and ethnicity. (Baldwin-Edwards, 1997) This can sometimes lead to a desire to preserve their cultural heritage and social cohesion, which may be perceived as potentially challenged by large-scale immigration. Third, **Economic Transition and Transformation:** The transition from centrally planned to market-based economies after the fall of communism brought about significant economic changes. These countries experienced shifts in labour markets, which at times led to concerns about competition for jobs and wages. (Lahav, 1998) Fourth, **Political Factors:** Political discourse around immigration in these countries has often been influenced by domestic politics. Leaders and parties may emphasize anti-migration policies to appeal to their voter base, particularly when immigration is a salient issue for the electorate. Fifth, **EU Membership and Schengen Zone Access:** Membership in the European Union and participation in the Schengen Agreement means that these countries are part of a larger system of immigration and border policies. They may at times advocate for stricter border controls within the EU. However, it's important to note that attitudes towards migration can vary within each V4 country, and political perspectives can change over time. Additionally, public opinion on immigration is diverse, and there are individuals and organizations within these countries advocating for more inclusive and open migration policies. It's also worth noting that while there may be scepticism towards certain aspects of migration, (Huntoon, 1998) these countries do engage in various forms of immigration, including accepting refugees, attracting skilled workers, and participating in EU-sponsored resettlement programs. The approach to immigration is dynamic and influenced by a variety of factors.

Conclusion

The study's conclusions indicate that there is a lack of accurate data and statistics on the scale and intensity of labour migration, the reasons and motivations for immigrant migration, and the social and demographic profile of migrants, not only in the V4 countries but also in other EU countries. . Missing data will facilitate deeper investigation. Based on a thorough analysis, it is possible to develop methods of managing migration that maximize benefits and minimize losses for each country's society. The consequences of labour migration from EU countries have a positive impact on welfare. In an era of maximizing value added in production, having a well-educated workforce for free in the country is a huge advantage, especially if the same immigrants will pay income tax, VAT and other indirect taxes, thus increasing consumption in the country and passing the multiplier effect stimulates the economy. If correct immigration policies and immigration coordination are adopted, the losses of labour immigration can be minimized to a certain extent and the benefits of labour immigration can be maximized. To keep the economy sustainable, it is necessary to fill the gaps that cannot be filled by domestic workers. Looking at consequences solely from an economic perspective is not enough, as it cannot fully describe all the consequences for a country and its society. The complexity of the problem requires an assessment of social goals and other social factors from a human, moral, psychological, cultural, or demographic perspective. (Peers, 2016)

the immigration policies of the Visegrád Group (V4) countries - Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia - reflect a shared emphasis on controlled immigration, prioritizing skilled migration, and placing a premium on national security concerns. These policies have been shaped by historical legacies, economic transitions, cultural identities, and evolving political dynamics. The V4 countries tend to lean towards selective entry based on specific criteria, with a strong focus on attracting skilled professionals who can contribute to their economies and address labour market needs. There is a common preference for temporary and seasonal labour migration programs to address specific industry shortages. These countries have also demonstrated a cautious approach to refugee acceptance, expressing reservations about mandatory EU quotas. They often advocate for stronger border controls and place a high premium on national security measures to ensure the safety of their citizens. (Sides and Citrin, 2007) Cultural and linguistic considerations are significant factors in shaping immigration policies, as these countries seek to balance the benefits of diversity with concerns about preserving national identity. Additionally, as EU member states, they accord preferential treatment to citizens of other EU nations regarding labour market access and residence rights. While the V4 countries share certain commonalities in their immigration policies, it is essential to recognize that each nation within this grouping maintains its unique socio-political context, leading to variations in approach. These policies are dynamic and subject to adjustments in response to changing circumstances and international developments. Overall, the immigration policies of the V4 countries reflect a complex interplay of factors, seeking to strike a balance between economic priorities, national security considerations, and the preservation of cultural identity in the context of a globalized world. (Vink, 2002)

The V4 Assessment of the Economic Benefits of National Immigration Efforts is a comprehensive evaluation conducted by the Visegrád Group (V4), an alliance of Central European countries, which includes Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. This assessment aims to analyse and quantify the economic impacts and benefits derived from national immigration policies and initiatives implemented by these member states. The Visegrád Group recognizes the significant role that immigration plays in shaping their respective economies and societies. By conducting this assessment, they seek to understand the tangible contributions that immigrants make to various sectors, such as labour, entrepreneurship, education, and innovation. Additionally, the assessment aims to shed light on the potential long-term effects of immigration on factors like economic growth, demographic trends, and social cohesion within the V4 countries. (Markaki and Longhi, 2013) Through rigorous data collection, analysis, and modelling techniques, the V4 Assessment of the Economic Benefits of National Immigration Efforts intends to provide policymakers, stakeholders, and the public with a robust understanding of how immigration positively influences the economic landscape of these Central European nations. This comprehensive evaluation is instrumental in guiding evidence-based immigration policies and fostering informed discussions about the role of immigration in the economic development of the V4 countries. (Van Houtum and Pijpers, 2007)

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