The term "old immigration country" means a country in which surplus of immigration over emigration happened somewhere in the past.

How useful is the comparison of "old" immigration countries? The results show how different the timing and pattern are within the selected "old" immigration countries: Germany, France, UK and Austria. It demonstrates the importance of demographic as well as economic factors. But, of course, it must be stressed that the demographic and economic trends are embedded into the history of a country.

What can we learn from the "old" immigration countries?

- Accept migration as a permanent element.
- Accept change.
- Accept diversity of migration patterns.
- Avoid the wrong expectations.
- A pro-active migration policy should take into account the interests of the receiving country.
- Offer clear perspectives to the newcomers.
- Combine migration policy with integration measures.
- Differentiate asylum seekers from the labour migrants.

Fassmann’s model of migration transition is relevant to analyse migration history in other "old" immigration countries, e.g. in the Netherlands. However, there appear some questions regarding this model.

The first question is related to the strong emphasis on historical framing and its effects on emigration and immigration: can we explain migration, unexpected flows, with reference to historical factors? For instance nowadays, many immigrants in the Netherlands come from countries to which the Netherlands had very few or no political or cultural ties.

The second question deals with the three dimensions of the model - demographic development, economic growth and the division of the labour markets: where should the fourth factor, namely migration control, be included? Migration control also creates specific social reality. State policies are formulated not only as an answer to economic or demographic needs.
Second Session
Patterns of immigration in the “new” immigration countries

João Peixoto, Centro de Investigacao em Sociologia Economica e das Organizacoes, Portugal

The presentation raised the question of the comparative analysis of immigration experiences in the Southern European countries: Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

Similarities among all four countries were emphasised, including: firstly, timing of inflow - countries went from net emigration to net immigration in the last decades and face similar problems with managing immigrant flows, secondly, age effect - immigrants are young adults and challenges for welfare institutions are still ahead, thirdly, type of labour demand - economies were built on labour intensive and low productive sectors where the role of informal economy cannot be underestimated, fourthly, socio-economic structural regimes (1. segmented labour market favours natives who work in the protected labour market, while immigrants in unprotected one, 2. strong labour unions protect natives and only recently started dealing with immigrants, 3. women who entered labour market and filled vacancies in the sector of domestic work, 4. higher level of education and social expectations caused the rejection of low-skilled jobs by natives).

Regularisation actions are the best known and most controversial measures adopted by the Southern European countries. Although each regularization process has been believed to be the last one, they are recurrently conducted due to the fact that they are believed to be a political choice and question of fairness as there are no other options of legalising immigrants. Regularization is a policy and not the policy.

There are premises to talk about Southern European immigration model. It is dynamic as countries are learning from their own and others mistakes. New challenges are ahead in the light of the economic crisis. Will it end some phase?

Joaquin Arango: I do not think that impact of the crisis is too much migration-specific. In 2008, when the crisis was already in full swing, immigrants kept coming to Spain and total employment remained stable. But new arrivals were transferred to unemployment.

Discussant: Ferrucio Pastore, Forum Internazionale ed Europeo di Ricerche sull’immigrazione (FIERI), Italy

The main focus of the presentation was the deliberation concerning differentiation between the Southern European countries. Privileging one over another brings up the question about transferability of the lessons to other countries, e.g. the Central and Eastern European countries.

Similarities were overemphasised while differences among countries were not sufficiently accentuated. Among the most important divergences are: structural aspects, different migratory and mobility systems, different demand structures, different degrees of exposure to irregular immigrants, diverse number of asylum applications and above all - different political climate around migration. The most important structural failure of all four countries was the employer driven admission system which has failed.

Third Session
Patterns of immigration in the “future” immigration countries

Dušan Drbohlav, Charles University in Prague, the Czech Republic

The presentation raised the question whether the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries follow the same migration cycle.

There are some similarities: economic - crucial role of economic transition for triggering immigration flows and considerable size of foreign labour force in the shadow economy, demographic - low fertility levels together with growing life expectancy leading to population ageing, and in migration policy - gaps in migration policies served as a pull factor flexibly used by migrants and a significant influence of the EU - Europeanization of migration policies, and low politicisation of the migration topic.

In all the CEE countries a clear migration policy doctrine together with stimulated migration debate among stakeholders should be created. The issues could be learnt from the older immigration countries.

Marek Okólski: The immigration to all three countries, except the inflow from the Far East (Vietnam, China), is based mainly on the principle that migrants organize their lives as “birds of passage”. They have developed a habit that makes us think of the future as something different from the experience of both “old” and “new” immigration countries. We have adopted a notion of “fluid migration”. Maybe we will never have a high level of second generation immigrants, although we may have a lot of immigrant labour in our countries?
Fourth Session
Patterns of immigration and immigration regimes in Europe: historical, regional, structural

Joaquin Arango, Instituto Universitario de Investigación Ortega y Gasset, Spain

Immigration receiving countries in Europe are bound to differ on account of their defining structural characteristics, above all the types of socio-economic structure and socio-economic systems. It results in different intensities and types of demand for migrant labour. For example, first substantial immigration flows in Northern and Western Europe (“old” immigration countries) started when international flows were limited, while in the Southern European countries (“intermediate”, rather than “new”, immigration countries) more open and pro-active labour migration policies were implemented and larger demand for immigrant labour was observed.

The effect of “age” as a differentiating factor is transitory. Contemporary global trends affect all countries and are likely to lead towards a certain degree of convergence.

Discussant: Jorge Malheiros, University of Lisbon, Portugal

The three groups of the countries examined could be seen as migration systems regarding the type and nature of migration that has developed in a specific international migration regime.

Nowadays, in a world of fragmented knowledge-based economy, virtual production and mobility and why inflows in countries are mostly circular.

Fifth Session
Immigration prospects/possible futures

Jakub Bijak, Marek Kupiszewski, Arkadiusz Wiśniowski, CEFMR, Poland

Who is a demographer? This is someone who understands Lexis diagram and forecasts population wrong, but at least quantifies his uncertainty. In the presented approach, contrary to commonly used both single- and multi-variant deterministic forecasts, the uncertainty plays a crucial role. We believe its assessment, in the case of such a highly unpredictable process as immigration flows, is even more important than the usual output of forecasting procedures, i.e. level of immigration expected in the future.

The Bayesian methodology that was applied to that fruitful exercise made it possible to combine quantitative information with qualitative analysis. However, both languages still need to be improved to elaborate a more common vocabulary.

Discussant: Leo van Wissen, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, Population Research Centre, University Groningen, the Netherlands

There is no doubt that applying Bayesian methodology is a significant step into an important direction of research. However, the arguments that the migration flows are highly unpredictable in the long run are not convincing and rather counterintuitive.

The obtained results may be determined and biased by the choice of the class of models, not considering interactions between explanatory variables as well as by the quality of the data, which in this case is relatively low.

The better the data, the better the forecasts

Anna Janicka-Żylicz: Do country specific definitions of migration flows influence the uncertainty of the forecasts?

Arkadiusz Wiśniowski: Actually, yes. We observe a wider uncertainty span in the case of Austria, Italy and the Czech Republic where some problems with data occurred. However, this issue requires more in-depth study.

I believe that we are able to predict migration flows more precisely and expert’s knowledge may significantly reduce the uncertainty.
Magdalena Lesińska, Centre of Migration Research (CMR), Poland

Migration policy is one of the main drivers influencing migration processes. Although patterns of immigration in the Western, Southern and Eastern Europe are hardly comparable in a direct way, all the countries experience similar challenges and face the same dilemmas related to controlling, managing and integration of immigrants. They all have to answer three main questions constituting the pillars of migration policy:

1. How to manage labour migration?
2. How to tackle irregular immigration?
3. How to solve the eternal problem of integration?

Discussant: Felicita Medved, Slovenia

One of the postulates is that migration policy should be based on and reflect national interests. The questions arise what is the national interest and is it unique interest of the state or rather interests of particular groups?

State’s interests should be elaborated in the process of consultation among various groups of interests within the framework of democratic political system. In the case of migration policy entities such as labour unions, employers’ organizations and immigrants’ associations should take part in it. This is a kind of a test for a state’s maturity if migration policy is based on common consensus, at the same time is legitimized by public and political actors representing society. Democratic state has to create a system of reconciliation of different particular interests in one. In the long run it seems impossible, or at least ineffective, to implement policy without the support of public opinion.

General lessons from the “old” and “new” European countries

1. Immigration is an unavoidable and indispensable phenomenon.
2. The economic imperative rules migration policy.
3. Growing importance of demography argument.
4. Priority for qualified immigrants and demand-oriented proactive migration policy.
5. Integration policy has to be treated as an issue of main concern.
6. Controlling quantity of immigrants.
7. The interdependence between more restrictive policy and less immigration is not truthful.
8. Immigration as well as migration policy need certain social acceptance of native population.
9. Irregular immigration and illegal employment require a complex approach and tackling root causes.

Conference Snapshots