

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA**

**STUDENT EMIGRATION FROM ARMENIA: NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to study the main phases of Armenian out-migration process, to elaborate the prominent ‘push-pull’ factors of Armenian student migration and to analyze the recent developments and changes in the issue of Armenia student migration. This research discusses the Armenian emigration with the help of neoclassical and historical-structural school of thoughts. The study examines the history of Armenian migration of the last two decades by dividing it into five phases. Furthermore, it elaborates the main ‘pushing’ and ‘pulling factors’ of Armenian student mobility. Finally the research finds that there is a rising intention among the younger generation to leave the country more than among the representatives of the middle age group based on the surveys conducted in 2010 and 2012 and this intention is gradually rising.

## Abbreviations

**ACA-** The American Councils Armenia

**AC-**The American Councils

**AGBU-** Armenian General Benevolent Union

**Armenian SSR** – Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia

**ASA-** Armenian Students' Association

**ASPU-** Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan

**ASUE-** Armenian State University of Economics

**AUA-** American University of Armenia

**BSE-** Bolognian System of Education

**CIS-** Commonwealth of Independent States

**CRDF-** Civilian Research and Development Foundation

**CRRC-** Caucasus Research Resource Centre

**DAAD-** The German Academic Exchange Service

**EU-** European Union

**ILO-** International Labor Organization

**IREX-**The international Research and Exchanges Board

**KIMEP-** The Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research

**NHDR-** National Human Development Report

**NK-** Nagorno Karabakh

**NKAO-** Autonomous Oblast of Nagorno Karabakh

**NSSRA-** National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia

**OECD-** Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

**RA-** Republic of Armenia

**RAME-** RA Ministry of Education

**RANSS-** National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

**RF-** Russian Federation

**SMSMTA-** State Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration of RA

**UNHCR-** United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees

**USA-** The United States of America

**USSR-** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

**YSU-** Yerevan State University

## Introduction

*"It's really tough because the whole family is just waiting and waiting for the men to come back. All we want is jobs in Armenia so that our families can stay together and so that fathers can see their children grow up. A family is more than just the mum. We need the dads here too."*

*An Armenian woman from Dzoragyugh<sup>1</sup>*

The rapidly increasing scope of Armenian migration is warning. Experts are worried about the extent of such out-migrations and consider it as a natural response to the country's economic policies.

International migration is the process of movement of people from one region or area in the world to another for taking up permanent or temporary residence, usually across a political boundary in a search for better living and working conditions.

Migration has been and continues to be one of the most prominent socio-economic and political phenomena affecting Armenia. The causes of the mass outflow of population are directly connected with the years of Soviet collapse and the momentum of independence, as well as with natural disaster and political conflict. National statistics on the scope of emigration from Armenia are rare. Very few studies provide estimations of migration rates in the country based on nationally representative data. According to different official and non official statistics the number of Armenian emigrants is from 600 thousand to 1.2 million.

At the same time the demographic of Armenian migrants varies from young to old, from highly educated to non-educated, from labor migrants to permanent migrants and asylum seekers. While in the last decade permanent migration has changed its leading place to labor migration, together with labor migration phenomenon of student migration comes to the stage.

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<sup>1</sup> The quote is from a BBC article by McGuinness D. (2011) "Armenia Migration: The Villages of Women Left Behind" available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14386472>

To understand the issue of migration and its developments the first chapter of this paper aims at looking through different international migration theories to see the causes of main factors that force people to leave their homes. Main attention will be paid to the neoclassical and historical-structural school of theories. We will more particularly try to find out how the Armenian case fits in the framework of different theories. Furthermore, Ravenstein's 'push-pull' theory and theories of migration perpetuation (institutional, social network and cumulative causation) will be examined and expanded under the frame of Armenian case.

The second chapter of this essay will look at the history of Armenian migration in the last two decades. According to different analysis the history of the independent Armenian migration is divided into certain phases. Hence, one of the research questions of the thesis asks what the main emigration phases in Armenia are. Furthermore, to answer the research question, this chapter will discuss the history of mass outflow of the population of independent Armenia by dividing it into five main phases.

The third chapter of this research will examine more specifically the root causes of Armenian student migration within the framework of 'push-pull' theory. With the globalizing world and development of new technologies the student mobility is an everyday developing trend in the international migration system and includes more and more factors that create this mobility. The case of Armenian student mobility is not new, but it is gaining more momentum in the last decade, which, however, lacks any kind of deep research and statistics. Very few studies and official data are can be found about the numbers, scope and causing factors of Armenian student migration. Hence the research question of this study more specifically wants to find the main 'pushing' and 'pulling' factors that force Armenian students to out-migration.

The last chapter of the study is more firsthand analysis of the issue of student migration. It is based on the self conducted student survey in May 2012 and the independent survey conducted by Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC) in 2010. The hypothesis of the study states that younger people with higher education are more prone to temporary or permanent emigration compared to middle-aged people with the same level of education. So as to prove the hypothesis comparative analysis of the two surveys will be done. At the same time the comparative analysis of two surveys will try to find the differences between migration and obtained education, as well as between migration and employment status.

Finally, we summarize our findings and give recommendations in the concluding part of the study.

## Chapter 1. International Migration: Theoretical Overview

According to World Bank Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011, there are more than 215 million international migrants around the world, which amounts to 3 percent of the world population who live outside their countries of birth. The “Top 10” emigration countries are as follows: Mexico, India, the Russian Federation, China, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, the Philippines and Turkey. At the same time the United States has seen the largest inflows of migrants between 2005 and 2010. (World Bank, 2011).

International migration is the process of movement of people from one region or area in the world to another for taking up permanent or temporary residence, usually across a political boundary in a search for better living and working conditions.

The issue of international migration, including temporary, as well as permanent migration, has been of significant attention of the social scientists for many years. In order to explain the international migration waves and flows, different socioeconomic theories were established. It has become an apparent feature of globalization and one of the defining issues of this century. Gradually, migration has entailed economic, social, demographic, cultural, security and environmental effects on both sending and receiving societies. The main reasons, which explain why it is so difficult to summarize the causes and consequences of migration, are the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon as well as the difficulty of separating migration from other socio-economic and political processes.

Empirical studies on migration demonstrate that the decision to move depends on a wide variety of factors. One of the earliest migration theories was suggested by Ernst Ravenstein (1885, 1889), a representative of neoclassical school, who formulated ‘laws of migration’. Later on these laws stood on the core of the analytical framework of Lee, which is commonly referred as ‘push –pull’ model or theory of migration. Lee (1966, p: 54-55) argued that within well-defined “streams” migration tends take place from specific places at the

origin to specific places at the destination, not only because opportunities tend to be highly localized but also because the flow of knowledge back from destination facilitates the passage for later migrants. In other words the core idea of this model is that people are pushed from places where there are some unfavorable conditions for them and are pulled to places where there are certain favorable factors for them. Within 'push' factors poor economic conditions, low salaries and a high unemployment rate of migrant's home country could be named, as well as political-situational factors like civil strife, war, political and religious persecution, environmental problems. On the other hand 'pull' factors are higher salaries, employment opportunities, safety and minimal risk of market failure elsewhere (Dorigo and Tobler, 1983).

According to school of historical-structuralism theories, international migration can be divided into theories of migration initiation and theories of migration perpetuation. They include macro and micro theories of neoclassical economics among the first group of theories and social theories of migration perpetuation among the second group (Massey et al., 1993).

Massey et al. (1993, 1994) includes institutional, social networks and cumulative causation theories in the second group of migration perpetuation theories. According to Sevoyan (2011, pp. 1-2) "institutional theory assumes that after international migration has started institutions and voluntary organizations arise to help balance between the large number of people who want to migrate and the limited opportunities for migration. Cumulative causation theory suggests that each act of migration alters the social context within which additional migration is more likely to occur. The core assumption in the social network theory is that networks make international migration more likely, as they lower the risks and costs related with the movement and increase the expected benefits from migration."

The literature related to the issues of migration is rich and geographically diverse. Moreover, a brief review of some part of the publications in the field prompts a prominent imbalance in the issues that are being analyzed by researchers across the world. As a result, preference is usually given to studying the effects of ‘permanent migration on a host country.’ As stated by Biao (2004) research projects are predominantly motivated by concerns of receiving societies, funded by agencies in destination countries, and based on data collected on the receiving side.

As a result these changes in terms of permanent or temporary migration could not stay apart from international world order. Nowadays scholars increasingly pay attention to the role of receiving country governments which shape the migration inflows (Dowty, 1987; Massey et al., 1998). Consequently, the transnationalism literature has opened a window into the study of sending country governments by examining policies toward citizens already abroad (Itzigsohn, 2000); and the role of sending states has been studied in the contexts of highly-skilled labor force (Iredale, 2000; Lowell and Findlay, 2001) and refugee emigration (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo, 1989). Nevertheless, still little sociological attention has been paid to sending countries’ broader attitude towards labor emigration (Schmitter Heisler, 1985).

By examining the role and policies of the sending countries Zolberg (2001, p.11) argues that “one of the major changes in the world at large is the liberalization of exit.” Biao continues the argument by noting that “it is often ignored that change in emigration patterns formed one of the most fundamental developments in international migration regime in the last decades, arguably more than the shift in immigration policies (Biao, 2004, p. 1).

However, according to some authoritative studies (Albuero and Abella, 2002), one could envision a situation under which both sending and receiving countries gain from a regulated temporary labor migration regime. Directly or indirectly, migration may serve as an

inspiration and motivation for individuals, who are left at home to improve their skills or gain additional education to find employment inside the home country and / or be eligible for foreign deployment. Thus consequences of the mass inflows can bring higher levels of human capital, and eventually positive impact on growth and income. The economy gains when the effects of the increased education and improved skills are spread beyond private gains. Gevorkyan notes, “often governments choose to regulate that process making it more beneficial and deriving extra economic and social benefits for the state.” (Gevorkyan, 2006, p. 3)

All in all these theories do not give a full understanding about the determinants, results and effects of migration processes. Although being carefully studied, the consequences of migration still remain vaguely understood, as with the everyday development of globalization, new trends come into being.

In general, globalization has so far affected migration in the following way: “the number of people willing and ready to emigrate has grown on account of the fact that the more liberal and rapid dissemination of information has made it obvious that there are disparities and inequalities between regions in terms of development, and that migration to another country augments the human development choices available to people in all material respects”(National Human Development Report (NHDR), 2009, p. 23).

Coming to the role and consequences of migration in the demographic transition in many countries Zachariah et al. (2001) in their study of migration found that migration directly affects the population structure, by changing the age and sex distribution of the local population. As a result of migration, the proportion of working population decreases, while the proportion of the elderly increases. Yet, as Zachariah et al state, this migration is also affecting the population dynamics in the sending countries decreasing the fertility rates in the country. On the one hand, the longtime separation of the spouses decreases the chances of

conception, on the other hand, among other innovative behaviors and knowledge, migrants gain and transfer new information and behaviors of contraception (Zachariah, Mathew and Rajan, 2001).

Emigration, as well as its characteristic scope and structure, always reflects the inner nature of society and the extent to which political, socioeconomic and national problems have been solved. The former Soviet Union's developments provide a demonstrative example of the case.

### **1.1. Overview of the Armenian Case**

Migration is the process of movement of people from one region or area in the world to another in a search for better living and working conditions. Migration can have certain positive and negative consequences for both sending and receiving countries. It has been and continues to be one of the most important social and economic phenomena affecting Armenia. According to International Organization for Migration (2008) emigration of Armenians, due to various reasons including conflict and natural disaster and economic motifs, has been and continues to be a phenomenon of massive scale. Outflows are both regular and irregular. Immigration, on the other hand, is not large, and responds mainly to asylum-seeking purposes.

The processes of international migration in Armenia cannot be explained from the perspective of one single theory. “The change in the volume and type of migration in Armenia over time has been determined by the various socio- political and economic processes in the country” (Sevoyan, 2011, p.7).

If we try to somehow tie large number of Armenian migrations to any migration theory, this paper proposes to use network oriented approach as a suitable theoretical

framework for analyzing Armenian migration, as it seems to be the one most fitted to Armenian reality.

Massey et al. (1993, p. 448) define migrant networks as "... sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin." Hence, Gevorkyan states that, "the presence of Diaspora has always been critical for the determination of migrants' destination.

Over time Armenian migrants have managed to assemble in communities on the territory of the Russian Federation (RF), thus, creating networks favorable to new compatriot migrants" (Gevorkyan, 2006, p. 9). Interestingly enough emigrants traditionally rely on the help of the Armenian Diaspora, and as International Organization for Migration (Chindea et al., 2008) states, in the majority of cases enter legally and then overstay their visas or enter on grounds of asylum seeking. Illegal entry is facilitated by smugglers and travel agencies operating on the territory of Armenia (cooperating with smugglers in transit countries and in countries of destination) who make arrangements for immigrants' jobs and documents. Additionally, as suggested by Krissman (2005), in the case of networking under 'migrant networks' not only the individual connections of migrants themselves should be considered, but also the economic and political ties between Armenia and the receiving countries, a bright example of which is the lack of visa requirements for Armenians in the former Soviet countries.

The National Human Development Report identifies two types of flows clearly prevailed in the external migration flows of Armenia's population during the pre-transition period: "permanent external migration or emigration and immigration aimed at conclusively changing the place of permanent residence; and seasonal external labour migration or cyclic

travel to and return from other Soviet republics from the spring to the fall” (NHDR, 2009, p.28).

The vast supply of potential emigrants leads to negative consequences for the “emigrant-exporting” countries, first of all, because “this situation creates a favorable environment for destination countries to conduct differentiated immigration policies to promote certain categories of immigrants (highly-qualified specialists, people in the active employment and reproduction age groups and the like) and to hinder the entry of “the undesirable” (low level of education and professional qualification, older persons and the like)” (NHDR, 2009, p.24). It becomes clear that this behavior, encouraging the “brain drain” aspect of emigration, promotes the development of destination countries by using the potential of sending countries.

Yeganyan notes that destination countries, especially the developed ones, give economic and social rights equal to those of citizens; that is they admit the majority of foreigners as immigrants with the right to permanent residence. As a result, after quite a few years of residence, if successful, this is usually continued by the adoption of citizenship (Yeganyan, 2009, p. 26).

While the large scale of economic emigration in the last decade has caused not only a significant brain and skill drain phenomenon, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reports, that “it has also brought a strong remittance benefit. Remittances constitute the largest source of foreign exchange surpassing both foreign direct investment and the value of exports. Unfavorable demographic trends caused by both emigration and declining birth rates are hampering economic recovery prospects” (Chindea et al., 2008, p. 13).

In the early stages of post-communist transition, it was by no means obvious what the profile of emigrants would look like, or how it would differ across post-soviet countries. One new question arising in the transition context was “whether emigration would be concentrated

among those most opposed to the change from a state-run economy to a market economy, or whether those in favor of the change would be more likely to move” (Papapanagos and Sanfey, 2001, p. 492).

In case of Armenia this was an issue of earning some money for living which was nearly impossible at home. Russia has been one of the major magnets for Armenian migrants due to a number of factors. According to Gevorkyan “the Krasnodar, Stavropol, and Rostov regions in Southern Russia, as well as major urban centers with Moscow and the Moscow region as their core have become a second home to several generations of Armenians” (Gevorkyan, 2006, p. 9). Henceforth, this trend is largely due to historical, family and cultural ties, common past, the lack of language barrier, comparable education systems, the lack of visa regime, and other factors.

Given the growing numbers of outflows from the country after independence, Armenia has established comparatively developed migration policy with a legal and institutional basis. Furthermore, the importance to regulate migration was also recognized as one of the priority areas of the National Security Strategy of the RA. The National Security Strategy has defined that: “Unregulated and illegal emigration is an internal threat to the national security of the RA.” From this viewpoint, “the state policy on migration regulation shall aim at improving the demographic situation in Armenia and impeding brain drain” (NSSRA, 2007).

Nevertheless, implementation and enforcement remain relatively weak as a result of both financial difficulties and partial ineffectiveness of the administration. While “various aspects of migration in Armenia are governed by separate laws and government decisions, often these laws tend to leave significant discretion to the implementing authorities, and thus in effect raise questions about the feasibility and efficacy of democratic oversight over migration issues” (Chindea et al., 2008, p. 40). Thus usually several actors often claim to

have implementing power over various migration issues, which can lead to ‘bureaucratic infighting and ineffectiveness’. Hence, the authority to oversee migration management issues in Armenia is “either poorly defined or confused by overlapping policy mandates between different bodies” (Kabelova et al., 2007, p.16).As a result, the migration regulating system continues to face a number of challenges and major problems requiring prompt and fundamental solutions.

## **Chapter 2. Emigration Phases in Armenia**

Armenia used to have quite significant pattern of mass immigration during the Soviet Era. The total figure of ethnic Armenian immigrants to Soviet Armenia in the period between 1921 and 1962 was given as 220,000 and for the period of 1962 to 1973, with 26,140 (Koutcharian, Gerayer, 1989).

However this immigration patterns turned to emigration starting from 1970s to 1980s due to number of political and socio-economic reasons. Although the only credible source of information about the migration flows during the Soviet era was the system of recording passengers arriving and departing from Armenia by the regional passport units of the Ministry of the Interior of Armenian SSR, even this data shows that in the 1980s Armenia had rather active external migration flows. According to Gevorgyan (2009, p. 56)from 1980 to 1988, the average annual balance of Armenia’s external migration flows amountedto a net emigration of 12,700 persons.

In the late 80s and early 90s, among other things, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the devastating earthquake of Spitak, the war with Azerbaijan created the atmosphere of mass emigration. Still today, poor socio-economic conditions are ‘push’ factors for emigration from Armenia, mainly to Russia, but also to Europe and America. As a reason, migration continues to be a widespread phenomenon affecting many Armenian families.

Should the type of migration be determined in case of Armenian population, two main migration flows were and still stay common: permanent and seasonal or labor migration.

The history of Armenian labor migration goes back to the Soviet era. Armenians had high mobility rates and the seasonal labor of Armenian men mostly involved work on the virgin lands of the south eastern part of the former Soviet Union region. Despite the existing labor migration, the state was controlling all the migration processes in order to regulate the distribution of population and labor, urbanization processes in the country.

On the one hand, during the Soviet rule, permanent migration of Armenians were mostly migration exchanges between the USSR Republics and on the other hand, permanent migration of Armenians, that is the emigrants leaving the country to establish abroad, were mainly those Armenians, who immigrated to Armenia from the Middle East in the late 40-es and the members of their families. One supporting factor of permanent emigration to foreign states was the Helsinki Summit in 1970s, where understanding was reached to diminish and liberalize the emigration barriers of the USSR, several hundred Armenians that had earlier relocated to Armenia started to emigrate to the West every year (Yeghiazaryan et. al, 2003, p.3, Yeganyan, 2009, p. 29).

Beginning from 1970s to 1980s Armenia started to face changes in economic and population growth as well as in migration patterns. Migration movements in Armenia are tied with some crucial natural, economic and geopolitical factors. According to OSCE and Advanced Social Technologies joint survey (2005) and the estimates of experts; 700,000-1,300,000 people (22-40% of Armenia's 2008 nominal population) left Armenia and settled abroad during 1990-2005 alone.

## **2.1. The Spitak Earthquake**

One of the largest out-migration waves in the recent history of Armenia started after the devastating earthquake of Spitak in the northern part of Armenia in December 7, 1988. The earthquake destroyed a third of the country's industrial capacity, left more than 24.000 dead, and 400.000 homeless (Johansson, 2008, p.3). Following the disaster about 150 000 people were displaced to other USSR countries, and another 70 thousand left on their own (Poghosyan, 2003). Taking into account simple mathematical estimations, that is, according to the 1989 census, the Armenian population was 3.304,776 and the estimations in 1988 were 3.457,000. Furthermore, subtracting the official number of the victims of the earthquake, that counts 24.000, about 150.000 people left the country.

Nevertheless, according to Yeganyan (2009, p. 36) the most dangerous and negative effect of this outflow after the earthquake was not “the direct loss, but rather the fact that this group became a “magnet” that pulled family members and other relatives that were in unenviable situation in the earthquake zone.” This effect created a wave of a large number of outflows in the period of 1992-1994.

The economic theories of migration do not seem to hold for this kind of mass migration caused by natural disasters. Even from the very point of environmental approach, the population displacement due to natural disasters is usually explained through a combination of political, economic and demographic factors that are usually involved in the process along with the environmental factors (Sevoyan, 2011, p.8).

## **2.2. The Collapse of the Soviet Union and the Nagorno-Karabakh War**

Continuously another large wave of mass migrations from Armenia was caused in the early 1990s by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the war with neighboring Azerbaijan over the issue of Autonomous Oblast of NagornoKarabakh (NKAO), a primarily Armenian-

populated region, assigned by Moscow to Soviet Azerbaijan in the 1920s. This led to a harsh socioeconomic crisis in the country that affected, among other things, the scope and patterns of Armenian out migration.

A large scale migration flow occurred at the beginning of the conflict, when Nagorno Karabakh (NK) declared independence. On the one hand the NK war resulted to a large scale of Armenian refugees' (about 500.000) forced displacement from Azerbaijan, and Azerbaijani minorities' movement from Armenia to Azerbaijan. During this period, a total of about 170,000 Azerbaijanis that used to live in Armenia left the country (Yeganyan, 2009, p.35). On the other hand with the blockade of major transportation routes for oil, gas and other products, as well as the closure of the Turkish-Armenian the economic situation in the country became worse and resulted to the new migration outflow from the country.

This large number of inflow of Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan resulted in refugee movements not only to Armenia, but to Russia, the USA and other countries, as Armenia became a transit point for some of them. According to data from the UNHCR, out of 360,000 Armenians expelled from Azerbaijan, 264,339 found refuge in Armenia (UNHCR, 2001); of these, about 100,000 were naturalized (according to independent demographer R. Yeganyan (2012) today only 50,000-70,000 of them is still in Armenia). This is because of what conditions Armenia has been offering them. Being settled in highly industrialized cities as Baku and Sumgait, the Armenian refugees could not find the appropriate workplace and sufficient accommodation in Armenia, thus many of them chose their way in search for better living elsewhere. Besides, Armenia failed to implement correct policies for the refugees during the years coming and established the ground for many of them to leave the country.

### **2.3. The Poor Socio-Economic Conditions (mass outflow of the population from 1992-1994)**

The largest mass emigration phase in Armenia occurred in the period of socio-economic decline of 1992-1994. Only within three years there was an external migration of rather surprising volumes. According to Poghosyan's (2003) estimations, about 700,000 Armenians were driven out of the country in the beginning of 1990s. While according to Yeganyan (2009) the volume of net emigration is calculated about 610-620,000 or about one fifth of the country's population at this period.

Different direct and indirect economic and social factors shape the consequences of this mass emigration. Because of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the industrial capacity of newly independent Armenia declined to zero. The latter was followed by the combination of the damages of the earthquake, oil and gas blockades, electricity, water and heating problems, scarce transportation resources and unemployment accompanied by the shocking hyperinflation which resulted in the decline of real income and in the value of private savings.

Thus poverty became a widespread phenomenon in the country which pushed the more socially active and highly qualified part of the population to out migration. Still today this type of socio-economic migration stays common, because of the increasing unemployment rate and the poor living standards and conditions. According to household surveys carried out in 1993 and 1994, 56% of Armenia's population was recognized as poor and 32% of people were found to be extremely poor (WB reports, 1996).

This economic decline brought to both permanent and labor migration. This migration was followed by the new pattern of unifying the families abroad, as large part of the migrants who settled abroad, had left their families at home and now, at the later stage, they started the unification processes with their families. As a result of this, the amount of migration flows brought to the one fifth of the population decline. At the same time according to different statistics and reports the overwhelming majority of migrants go to various former Soviet

republics, mostly Russia and Ukraine, and only to a much smaller extent to the USA or Western Europe (Bachmann et al., 2004).

## **2.4. Labor Migration from 1996 to the mid 2000s**

By speaking about the emigration flows starting from the second half of the 1990s, it first of all comprises the labor or seasonal migration. Starting from 1994 relative economic growth was witnessed in the country. As a result of special monetary policy to stop the hyperinflation and to stabilize the price, some sort of stability in the purchasing power of the population was observed. However this economic stabilization did not bring to the reduction of poverty and inequality as the unemployment rate in the country was equal to 10.8%-10.4% in the average (Gevorgyan, 2009p. 64). Moreover, according to National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia (RANSS, 2002) statistics during 1996-2001, the average annual net emigration from Armenia was about 50 thousand. Referring to survey carried out by the Ministry of Statistics of RA in 1996, 57.4% of the country's population lived below the general poverty line, and 27.7% of the population was in extreme poverty (Gevorgyan, 2009, p. 64). Continuously the poverty rates continued to decline in the coming years.

However we start to witness a changing picture by the beginning of 2000s and during 2002-2006. An extensive change is seen in the annual net emigration which is first of all followed by the drastic decline of unemployment rate that reached up to 7.7 % in 2006 from the 9.8 % of 2002. And interestingly enough the migration flows during this period of 2002-2007 comprised mostly (94% of the entire external migration flows) the temporary labor migration (ILO Survey, 2007). Ivakhnyuk (2006) reported that in the early 2000s, based on the national estimates, the number of Armenian migrant workers abroad was about 800-900 thousand, out of which, about 650 thousand were working in Russia.

At the same time the national statistics of the last decade shows that net migration

decreased from -10.4 % in 2000, to -7.8% in 2005, and later on to -3.9% in 2009, due to the decrease in the number of emigrants (RANSS, 2005; 2010). However these numbers are considered to have real limitations, as there is no reliable statistics that will show the real data of emigrants. As Sevoyan notes the official numbers are underestimating migration rates in the country, since they are based on the information on the cancellation of the registration in the passport. It is a well known fact that large number of migrants leaves the country on the permanent bases or at least for indefinite periods of time, without cancelling their registration in the local addresses, consequently not being registered as migrants (Sevoyan, 2011, p. 9).

Meanwhile analysts talk about the devastating impact of this socio-economic decline which brought to the loss of human capital, the optimists note the positive effect of seasonal outflows at this period. On the one hand the temporary labor migration during the mentioned decade has contributed to the improvement of the living standards of the households on the other hand it has developed the newly growing trend of 'remittances' that is having tremendous growing impact on the budget of the country.

## **2.5. New Developing Phase of Migration from 2008 to Present**

Because of the scarce published research that would examine the changes in migration patterns in the last four years, this part of the research will be based mainly on the interviews and newspaper articles of the state officials concerned about the migration issues and independent experts.

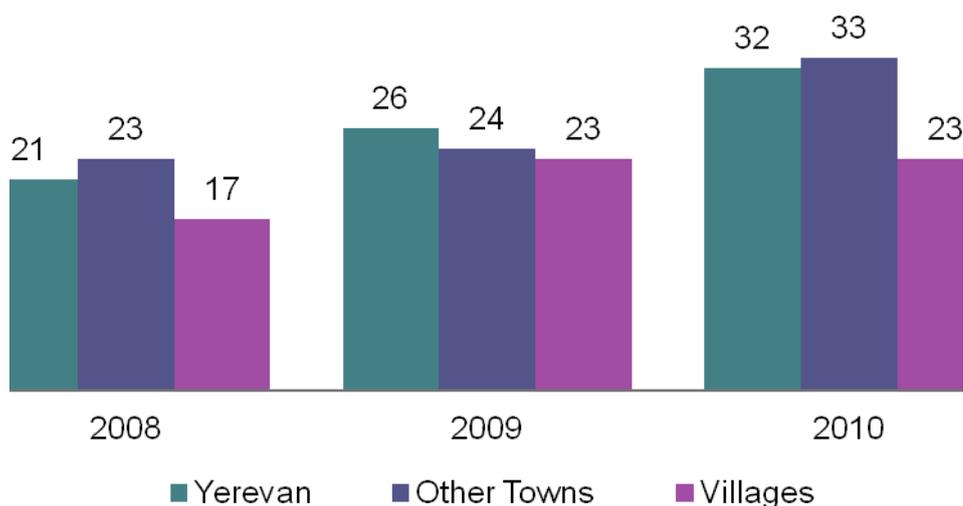
Comparing the reasons for out-migration from Armenia at the beginning of the 90s and during the last four years, the experts point out the existing employment problems in the recent years. People leave the country to earn money to improve the living conditions of their families who remain in Armenia. The causes of such migration are considered to be mainly economic as particularly the inflation rate in the country continues to grow. However, after

the presidential elections of 2008 political conditions also affect the increase in the outflow of the population.

At the eve of world economic crisis of 2008, some researchers had predicted an increase in the potential permanent and labor/seasonal migration from Armenia (Minasyan et al., 2007). According to official statistics of the State Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration of RA (SMSMTA, 2011) in 2008 the number of departing people exceeded the number of arrivals by 23,000; which is the worst indicator since 2001, when about 60,000 people left the country. In 2009 the departure-arrival gap grew to 25,000 and reached 29,860 in 2010, totaling to 77,860 people for three years. During the first five months of 2011 the trend remained unchanged.

The independent surveys conducted by Caucasus Research Resource Centre (CRRC) provide a supporting statistics of the recent increasing interest in permanent emigration for the years from 2008 to 2010.<sup>2</sup>

**Caucasus Barometer: Interest in Permanent Emigration (Yes%)**



The statistics shows that the interest in permanent emigration has grown for about 10%

<sup>2</sup> The exact wording of the question is available in the Appendix 1, Q 12. The data of the statistics is available from CRRC website at [www.crrccenters.org](http://www.crrccenters.org)

within 3 years. This intention to emigrate is similarly growing both in the urban areas and in the villages.

Another obviously supporting factor of the growing supply in emigration trends since 2010, especially in labor emigration, is the introduction of the new program by the Russian Federal Migration Service, which offers easy conditions to Armenians for permanent residence, even not taking into account the fact that Russia has experienced the damages of world economic crisis. According to the decree on supporting voluntary immigration to the Russian Federation, issued in 2006, all those people who want to reside in 26 regions of Russia (especially in outlying regions), not only get a job, a lump sum payment, a compensation for departure and their belongings transfer, but they also receive citizenship of Russia within a few months (not later than six months, as prescribed by a law).

In contrast to the soviet migration flows, most of which were well thought and seriously prepared steps which had its clear end goals, post independent outflows turned into movements for the attempt to escape from the unfavorable realities and uncertain future and to find themselves in more secure and stable environment.

## **Chapter 3. 'Push-Pull' Factors of Student Migration from Armenia**

### **3.1. General Overview of the 'Push-Pull' Factors of International Student Mobility**

According to OECD (2011) statistics more than half of the students (53.9 %) studying abroad are settled in six countries: the US (18 %), the UK (9.9 %), Australia (7 %), Germany (7 %), France (6.8 %) and Canada (5.2 %). Other countries, which have started to attract foreign students in larger numbers, are Russian Federation (3.75%), Japan (3.65%) and Spain (2.35%).

In fact people migrate to seek economic opportunity, a higher level of living or to enjoy one already achieved, because of changes in the economy or other social conditions in an area, and because of changes in personal status, such as retirement (Bogue, 1969). Meanwhile graduate students migrate not for the above mentioned reasons, specifically, but to get higher education.

According to rather an early study by Zook (1923) student may cross state boundaries because he seeks a particular course of study not available locally, because an education may be obtained less expensively, a fellowship is available to him, entrance to a suitable university locally has denied him, he is friendly with students at the institution, the faculty attracts him, for religious reasons, or merely because he wishes to get away from home. Thus we can simply conclude that a student-migrant is the person who has travelled abroad to study for more than a short-term training.

Indeed an important question rises about whether the outflows of students are mainly exogenous, or whether there are certain higher education policy instruments that can redirect these flows. Chen and Barnett (2000) argue that the flows of students are comparatively stable and there are only a limited number of countries, which by and large are at the centre of attracting international students. As a result they classify countries into three categories: the core where most of the students go, such as the United States, France, Germany, the

United Kingdom and Canada, the semi-periphery such as Eastern Europe, and the periphery that does not attract foreign students, such as Latin American and African countries.

At the meantime the international inflow of students is not only by and large connected with education purposes, but at the same time creates the environment of high mobility of high-skilled labor force. This is particularly attractive in view of the high integration potential of high-skilled students (Chiswick and Miller, 2011). Student's migration decisions may also involve economic incentives; however the institutional context of mass inflow of foreign students also depends on higher education policies in place. Hence, the literature points out a number of higher education policies that may affect international student mobility, such as tuition fees, the language of instruction or the quality of the higher education institutions (De Voretz, 2006).

While a group of scholars point out that the inflow of foreign students is highly determined by the cost of education (De Voretz, 2006, Naidoo, 2007, Lowell and Khadka, 2011), researchers of OECD (2011) stress the language of instruction as an important factor. Moreover, the most attractive countries use one of the more spoken languages, such as English, French, German, Spanish or Russian. Furthermore, one of the reasons to study abroad is firstly to enhance their proficiency in one of the most spoken languages, especially in English. As a result according to OECD (2011) study about 42 % of the international students prefer to study in English-speaking countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Although the English-speaking high educational system has a sort of hegemony among other systems, it does not mean non-English speaking countries cannot compete in the marathon of attracting international students. They try to counterbalance this factor by introducing different programs and classes in English and thus still focusing the attention of international students.

In order to achieve greater effectiveness in attracting international students, the receiving countries pay attention to different factors. Among the most important factors is firstly seen the quality of education in general and higher education in particular. The inflow of students is highly dependent on the reputation of the higher education institution and recognition of the degree in the home or international labor market. One attractive way to build up reputation in the market is the position of the higher education institutions in the international ranking. Kahanec and Kralikova (2011) point out that if the recognition of the degree is usually regulated by national legislation, in the labor market it is firstly related to the reputation and standing of the degree-awarding higher education institution.

So as to achieve such recognition and/or to improve placement in the world ranking the governments and higher education institutions of the receiving countries may use different short-term or long-term marketing policies to reach the expectable results. For example in Poland, which has had low levels of international students for many years, the 40 best universities of the country decided to organize a consortium and launched an information campaign thus increasing the number of incoming students by 30% (Siwinska, 2009). But for the long-run the countries should employ more deep changes such as enhancing the academic environment to attract good quality faculty that is necessary for high quality education (De Wit, 2010).

By becoming a part of Bologna Process, Armenia also does its best to be compatible in the higher education market. Although Armenia attracts mostly the students of Armenian descent, there is a small amount of foreign students studying in the higher educational institutions. According to the official statistics of RA (RANSS 2011) the highest number of foreign students studying in Armenia was 4224 in 2005, the year when Armenia became part of the Bologna Process. The number of foreign students was rather the same in the coming 3 years; however decline started to be seen from 2009 (see Table 1).

<i>Table 1: Number Of Foreign Students In Public Higher Educational Establishments</i>										
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1302	2031	1963	3035	3778	4224	4239	4230	4011	3089	3316

Other important factors contributing to the mobility of students include multiculturalism, safety, weather and the friendliness of those who live in the country (Bourke 1997; Park 2009). For example, Korean students who value these factors more highly and are less interested in the quality of education tend to choose Australia over the UK or the US (Park, 2009).

The upper stated are just a little part of the expansive ‘push’ and ‘pull’ theory factors. In general and broader sense among the ‘push’ factors we can mention adverse domestic conditions such as inadequate educational capacity, lower living standards, technology limitations, inadequate coordination between education and labor market, and uncertainty about the future, political unrest, armed conflict, lack of realistic manpower policies, and economic instability (Chang, 1999).

In addition, the ‘pull’ factors of the decision to migrate are related to better personal and professional opportunities in the host country, like favorable immigration policies for better-educated people, wage differentials, differences in the quality of life, educational opportunities for children, interaction with other professionals, political stability, and job security (Hillman and Weiss, 1999).

The ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors, however, are not limited to any scope and include wide range of determinants depending on the nature and characteristics of each sending or receiving country. Hence, as a separate case within the broad framework, Armenia has its special determinants that force the outflow of the population in general. One example of

Armenian migration story is the outflow of Armenian students, which gradually increases its numbers because of various ‘push’ factors at home and ‘pull’ factors both at home and overseas, which generally contribute to the outflow.

### **3.2. ‘Push’ Factors of Student Migration from Armenia**

The history of Armenian student migration can be described as rather rich. While during the Soviet Era the migration flows of students were within the Soviet Republics, and rarely outside of the Soviet borders, the situation changed drastically after the independence. With the migration phases in Armenia, the outflow of students also comprised some amounts. There are almost no estimates on the numbers of students’ outflows, no official statistical data, only some estimates with the help of surveys.

According to OSCE (2008) survey (with sample size of 2500 households) student migration involved less than 1% of the Armenian households. While in the majority of cases (60% of those 1%) only one of the family members has left to study abroad, his or her migration experience often had a multiplier effect – one or more of the family members got engaged in student migration later on. The absolute number of student migrants from 2002-2007 was estimated at 7,000 + 3000 people or 0.3% of Armenia’s population (ages 16 and above).

The same survey finds that the compositions of migration flows differ in terms of place of origin of the migrants. Majority of the student migrants were residents of Yerevan (58%) and only 8% represented the rural population. More than half of student migrants (56%) went to study in Russia, while 26% went to the European Union (EU).

In general, the ‘pushing’ factors that contribute to the out migration are quite the same in different countries, which can be grouped as socio-economic, political and psychological. However, for the more narrow cases as student migration, new determining factors appear to

have 'pushing' consequence on the student outflow, this is because different demographic groups have various reasons for migration in the home countries. The same is the case for Armenian students, who are 'pushed' from the country because of growing rate of tuition fees, unfair educational system/corruption, unequal treatment, lack of technologies, resources and instruments, changing profile of academic professions vs old-fashioned education programs, increasing unemployment rate, uncertainty in the future.

Together with general 'push' factors of Armenian migrants, the Armenian students face the separate other factors that force them to study abroad. The rising rate of tuition fees affects the situation largely. The state recognized universities increase the amount of tuitions, however are not yet able to provide high quality education to the students. Although these universities do their best to implement changes and increase the quality, come close to the internationally recognized standards, the situation remains rather the same.

One big contributor to this undesirable situation is the existing high level of corruption in these institutions. According to the Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International (2011), which ranks the countries based on the level of corruption in their public sector by scale of 0-10, where 0 means that a country is perceived as highly corrupt and 10 is perceived as very clean, Armenia had the score of 2,6 ranked at 129<sup>th</sup> place among 182 countries. Many policies are implemented to reduce the amount of corruption in the country in general and in such sectors as education in particular, but the roots of corruption lie really deep. One reason for this is the old academic staff, for whom taking bribes is rather a common trend. This fact has its direct impact on the attitude of the professors towards the students; this creates grounds for unequal treatment. Another reason for the existing level of corruption is the low wages of the professors, which forces them to be corrupt. In other words the system needs incremental changes from both below and top to reduce corruption.

Next contributor of the ‘pushing’ force is the development of new technologies and new professions. Taking this fact for granted, the Armenian educational system is not yet ready to compete with the leading countries in the field. Even in those fields of sciences, where Armenia had leading role in the Soviet times, the decrease in quality is rather obvious. The lack of new technologies, lack of resources and instruments does not contribute to the development of leading specialists especially in the fields of natural sciences.

All these in mind plus the increasing unemployment rate in the country (the official unemployment rate is about 7%, while according to different independent sources, this number reached up to 20% in 2012) establishes the pessimist believe in the future for Armenian students and contributes to the idea of leaving the country.

### **3.3. ‘Pull’ Factors of Student Migration from Armenia**

While in its’ broader meaning the ‘pull’ factors under the ‘push-pull’ framework have more outside effect on the sending country, as they contribute to the outflow out of the state borders, in examining the Armenian case, the ‘pull’ factors have more or less inside effect as they contribute to the mobility both in the country and out of it. By and large 4 broad categories of factors have ‘pulling’ effect on the student migration from Armenia: different financial aid programs for the students of Armenian descent, different official programs at state and governmental level, rising awareness of information, and employment opportunities.

The mobility of Armenian students in the countries with prominent high education history is not a new phenomenon. The movement of Armenian students to such countries as the US (where the Armenian Students’ Association (ASA) was established in 1910) and Canada has started at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Whereas such movements were rather restricted during the Soviet Era, a new phase of students’ outflows began with independence.

There is almost no data on the number of students who have migrated to foreign countries, nevertheless, the number of outgoing students started to rise by the beginning of 2000s. The rise in the number of outgoing students is widely connected with the increase in information. The development of different social networks has provided significant ground for firstly making different opportunities of higher education public and reachable and secondly contributing to the mass spread of such information.

Although the existing large number of different scholarships available for the students' of Armenian descent, very few students from Armenia used the opportunity in the 1990s. The situation started to change with the rising awareness, the chain of communication between students, public discussions, by different international programs introduced in Armenia and the existing large number of funds by prominent Armenians worldwide, which differ in the amount of money they contribute, in the preferred programs and degrees.

It is important to note that the worldwide Armenian funds aim at preservation of Armenian culture and heritage first. Founded in 1906, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) aims at preserving and promoting the Armenian identity and heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs. Although their activities are concentrated in different Armenian-populated countries, the AGBU also provides different scholarships for Armenian Students.

There is a long list of different Armenian associations, fund and unions in the USA that provides financial aid to Armenian students worldwide; such as Armenian Allied Arts Association, Armenian American Medical Association, Armenian American Pharmacists' Association, Armenian Cultural School Association, Armenian Educational Foundation, Arpajian Armenian Educational Foundation, Armenian Students Association of America, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Constantinople Armenian Relief Society Scholarship, Garikian Scholarship Fund, Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation Scholarship, HaiGuin

Scholarship Association, John M. Azarian Memorial Armenian Youth Scholarship Fund, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Rev. & Mrs. A.K. Jizmejian Educational Fund, Union of Marash Armenian, Armenian Alumni Association, Manoogian Fellowships, Alex and Marie Manoogian Fund, Davidian and Mariamian Fund, Raffi Manoukian Fund etc.

While the different funds by prominent Armenians can be called as non-official way of support, there are many programs that are established and funded at the official levels. These official contributions can be described as state or government sponsored programs, state-to-state cooperation and exchange programs, as well as different international programs having the support of the state.

A vivid example of a state founded and sponsored program is the Luys foundation, which was established by the president of RA Sergh Sargsyan and the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan in 2009. The long-term vision of the Luys Foundation is to create a social institution that will foster positive cultural, academic, business and social change in Armenia by raising the level of education and sense of purpose of the Armenian youth and building an infrastructure of new institutions, programs and relationships within Armenia to support this change (Luys.am). While providing scholarships to the Armenian students, the Luys foundation doesn't require return of the students to the motherland after finishing their education. Although they encourage "to stay connected at all times" and be "the Ambassador of Armenian culture," this does not provide the basis for the students to return home.

At the same time there are various student exchange programs signed between RA and foreign states at the highest level, as well as different student exchange programs between the Armenian and foreign universities. After becoming a member of Bologna System of Education (BSE), which aims at establishing a European area of highest education, so that the lecturers and the students will be able to move without restrictions from one

university to another in different countries with the acceptance of diplomas in all the participant-countries, the RA Ministry of Education (RAME) has been actively working on the expansion of the state-to-state collaboration in the fields of education and science. Agreements of cooperation in the fields of education and science have been signed between Armenia and about 20 European countries (RAME 2012). In the first quarter of 2012 3 agreements of cooperation in the fields of education and science have been signed between the Government of RA and Belgium, Norway and Cyprus respectively. Solid number of such cooperation agreements exists also between RA and Arab countries as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Qatar and others.

Diverse programs of cooperation exist between Armenian and foreign universities. Yerevan State University (YSU) has agreements of cooperation with 120 universities and scientific centers of 37 states. YSU actively participates in the different exchange and cooperation programs as KIMEP, TEMPUS, DAAD, CRDF, IREX, Erasmus Mundus and Fullbright. Such international cooperation and exchange programs are implemented in the Russian-Armenian Slavonic University mainly concentrated on Russian Federation, Yerevan State Medical University, which is cooperating with mainly US and European institutions in the exchange programs, Armenian State Engineering University actively collaborating with wide range of European Universities, having also good partnership with US, CIS and Iranian Universities. Such cooperation and exchange programs are available in all the state universities of Armenia, as well as in some of the non-state ones.

At the same time many short-term and long-term exchange programs are available in different international organizations present in Armenia. The American Councils (AC), one of the leaders in the international education, academic exchange and overseas language immersion, ‘creates opportunities that prepare individuals and institutions for success in an increasingly interconnected world.’ The AC Armenia (ACA), established in 1996, has

implemented more than dozen of programs funded by US Government providing more than 1,200 high school and university students, educators, and faculty members with the opportunity to study, research and get professional training in the US schools (ACA website).

The existing various work and travel agencies also create basis for the student migration. This is connected with the fact that these agencies offer their services to the people aged 18-25, who are in most cases students, and having the employment experience overseas, later on pushes them to think of continuing their education far from home.

One may argue that various pull factors stated above contribute to the development of the individual, however they make ground for the mass outflows. In general the students are at rather vulnerable age, ready to risks and changes and not settled in one place constantly, thus they are ready to use the various opportunities to find themselves better off in suitable places for them. Given these facts, the Armenian Government should do its best to establish and implement such policies that can have the adverse 'pull' effect for Armenia.

## **Chapter 4. Rising Percentage in the Interest of Out-Migration among High-Educated Younger Generation**

In the first part of this research, while examining the migration developments in independent Armenia and paying close attention to the special case of student emigration and its ‘push-pull’ factors, we have drawn the idea that the emigration history of Armenia is still in ongoing process and we are coming across new phase of emigration from Armenia in general and student out-migration in particular.

Hence, this study aims at finding out the new developments in the high-educated young people’s willingness to emigrate. The hypothesis is stated as follows:

*Younger people with higher education are more prone to temporary or permanent emigration compared to middle-aged people with the same level of education.*

At the same time based on the purposes of the paper the following research questions have been put forward:

*Is there a difference in the level of people’s interest to emigrate based on the level of education they get?*

*Is there a difference in the level of people’s interest to emigrate based on the employment status?*

### **4.1. Methodology**

For the purposes of current study a survey was conducted with Bachelor (graduate) and Master (postgraduate) students from four universities of Armenia (YSU, ASPU, YSUE, AUA) with the sample size of N=140 in May 2012. The survey is not representative and was conducted on ad hoc basis aimed at interviewing only graduate and postgraduate students, as the study intends at finding the attitude of graduate and postgraduate students towards

temporary or permanent migration. Thus students at the age of 19-30 were interviewed (see Table 1).

Table 1: Student Survey Age Group 19-30				
Table 1: Student Survey Age Group				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	19	1	.7	.7
	20	11	7.9	8.6
	21	26	18.6	27.1
	22	36	25.7	52.9
	23	33	23.6	76.4
	24	16	11.4	87.9
	25	8	5.7	93.6
	26	4	2.9	96.4
	27	1	.7	97.1
	28	2	1.4	98.6
	30	2	1.4	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	

All the interviews were conducted face to face and all the requirements of IRB were fulfilled: every respondent was informed that the anonymity of his/her responses would be guaranteed. SPSS was run to analyze the data collected.

At the same time, to be able to test the hypothesis and research questions of the study, the independent survey conducted by Caucasus Barometer (CB) in 2010 was used to be able to make comparisons and find the difference in the degree of people's willingness to emigrate in two years. Thus the survey of this study has used the same questions of CB 2010 survey with sample size of N= 1922 for Armenia, which will later on allow us compare the results.

Hence, based on the hypothesis and research questions, the study has five variables, each conceptualized in the following way:

Variable *level of education* was conceptualized as people with complete or incomplete higher education, which includes graduates or postgraduates and people with no higher education, which includes people with secondary or technical education.

Variable *employment status* was conceptualized as people who have jobs either full time or part time, including any type of self-employment.

Variable *younger people with higher education* as conceptualized as graduates or postgraduates aged at 19-30.

Variable *middle-aged people with higher education* was conceptualized as graduates or postgraduates aged at 31-50.

Variable *interest to emigrate* was conceptualized as people’s willingness to leave the country permanently or temporarily.

## 4.2. Findings

To know the respondents’ level of education the Caucasus Barometer asked the interviewed what was the highest level of education they had completed. For the purposes of the study the data on respondent’s education was regrouped and recoded as respondents without higher education and respondents with incomplete or complete higher education. 70.4 percent of the respondents in 2010 did not have higher education, while 29.6 percent had incomplete or complete higher education (see Table 2).

Table 2: CB Respondent Education Recoded				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No higher education	1352	70.4	70.4
	Incomplete or complete higher education	568	29.6	100.0
Total		1922	100.0	

In the same way the data on variable age was recoded as age groups from 19-30, 31-50 and 51 and older. 36.4 percent represented the group of elderly people, 37.0 percent were at their middle ages and 26.6 percent represented the youngest group (see Table 3).

<b>Table 3: CB Age Group Recoded</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	19-30	151	26.6	26.6
31-50		210	37.0	63.6
51 and older		207	36.4	100.0
Total		568	100.0	

The respondents were asked about their employment status and within the age group 19-30 53.6 percent was unemployed at the same time 45.0 percent had either full-time or part-time job (see Table 4).

<b>Table 4: CB Employment 19-30</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Int. error	2	1.3	1.3
No		81	53.6	55.0
Yes		68	45.0	100.0
Total		151	100.0	

Among the interviewed aged 31-50 the 70.5 percent of the respondents had certain employment and only 28.6 percent were unemployed (see Table 5).

<b>Table 5: CB Employment 31-50</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Int. error	2	1.0	1.0
No		60	28.6	29.5
Yes		148	70.5	100.0
Total		210	100.0	

Interest in temporary emigration was measured by asking the respondents in the case of having a chance, would they leave /country/ for a certain period of time to live somewhere else. In 2010 22.5 percent of overall respondents aged 19-30 was not willing to temporary

leave the country. 76.8 percent expressed their interest in temporary emigration. 0.7 percent was uncertain about such decision (see Table 6).

<b>Table 6: CB Interest in temporary emigration 19-30</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Don't know	1	.7	.7
No		34	22.5	23.2
Yes		116	76.8	100.0
Total		151	100.0	

At the meantime 29.0 percent of the respondents aged from 31-50 were not wishing to temporarily leave Armenia and 70.5 percent was willing to emigrate from Armenia for certain period of time. 0.5 percent did not know to emigrate for certain period of time or not (see Table 7).

<b>Table 7: CB Interest in temporary emigration 31-50</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Don't know	1	.5	.5
No		61	29.0	29.5
Yes		148	70.5	100.0
Total		210	100.0	

Interest in permanent emigration was measured by asking the respondents in the case of having a chance, would they leave /country/ forever to live somewhere else. Highest 61.6 percent of the interviewers aged 19-30 were not willing to leave Armenia forever. While 34.3 percent was ready to permanently emigrate from Armenia. Those who did not know whether they wanted to leave forever or not equaled 4.0 percent (see Table 8)

<b>Table 8: CB Interest in Permanent Emigration 19-30</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Don't know	6	4.0	4.0
No		93	61.6	65.6
Yes		52	34.3	100.0
Total		151	100.0	

Meanwhile people aged 31-50 were more confident in their willingness to stay in Armenia making 65.2 percent. Those interested in leaving the country were 32.9 percent. 1.9 percent was not sure to leave or not in case of having such chance (see Table 9).

<b>Table 9: CB Interest in Permanent Emigration 31-50</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Don't know	4	1.9	1.9
No		137	65.2	67.1
Yes		69	32.9	100.0
Total		210	100.0	

Coming to the results of the student survey 2012, out of all the respondents 49.3 percent were employed and 50.7 percent were unemployed (see Table 10).

<b>Table 10: Student Survey Employment</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	71	50.7	50.7
Yes		69	49.3	100.0
Total		140	100.0	

Interest in temporary emigration was measured with the same question as it was in CB 2010. 84.3 percent out of all the respondents expresses the willingness to temporarily emigrate from Armenia. Only 11.4 percent of the respondents do not want to leave the country for certain period of time and 4.3 percent is not sure about the decision to emigrate (see Table 11).

<b>Table 11: Student Survey Interest in Temporary Emigration</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Don't know	6	4.3	4.3
No		16	11.4	15.7
Yes		118	84.3	100.0
Total		140	100.0	

Interest in permanent emigration was also measured by asking the about their willingness to leave /country/ forever to live somewhere else if they had a chance.41.4 percent is willing to emigrate forever, while 46.4 percent of the respondents wanted to stay in Armenia. However, the percent of uncertain people was higher and equalled 12.1 percent (see Table 12).

<b>Table 12: Student Survey Interest in Permanent Emigration</b>				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Don't know	17	12.1	12.1
No		65	46.4	58.6
Yes		58	41.4	100.0
Total		140	100.0	

### **4.3. Analysis and Conclusions**

Statistical tests were run for the received data to see whether there are differences in the level of people's interest to emigrate and employment status, in the level of people's interest to emigrate and obtained education, cross tabulations were run to see the interaction between the variables.

The hypothesis of the research is: younger people with higher education are more prone to temporary or permanent emigration compared to middle-aged people with the same level of education.

In order to test the hypothesis comparison of data from 2010 and 2012 was used. Separate cross tabulations were run for the variables younger people with higher education and their interest in temporary as well as permanent emigration and for the middle aged people with higher education and their interest in temporary as well as permanent emigration. The cross tabulations showed that 76,8 percent of people with incomplete or complete higher education aged 19-30 in 2010 showed their interest to temporarily leave Armenia, while in 2012 their number was increased by 8 percent equaling 84.3 percent. At the same time the interest in temporary migration among the middle-aged group at 31-50 was 70.5 percent. The results show firstly that the percentage of willingness of younger people to temporarily emigrate was higher than the percentage of the middle aged people. Secondly this number has increased in two years.

In the same way the interest in permanent emigration between the two high-educated groups was analyzed. The results showed that in 2010 people aged 19-30 had 35,9 percent interest in permanently emigrating from the country. In 2012 percentage of the interested in leaving Armenia forever rose up to 41.4 percent. In 2010 the percentage of those aged 31-50 willing to emigrate forever was 32.9 percent. As we see the overall picture did not change for the case of those willing to emigrate on permanent basis. Thus we can conclude that younger people with higher education are more prone to temporary or permanent emigration and at the same time the percentage of their interest in emigration has risen from 2010 to 2012 by 6-8 percentage points. All in all we can state that we have full support for the hypothesis of the research.

The Research Question 1: Is there a difference in the level of people's interest to emigrate based on the level of education they get? To find the difference in interest to emigrate temporarily or permanently and obtained education, t-test were run for each of the age group. Although the tests did not show statistical significance in each of the cases, the general statement is that in both age groups people without higher education are more interested in emigration. This is maybe based on the fact that the demand for high-educated labor force is much higher compared to the labor force with low level of education.

The Research Question 2: Is there a difference in the level of people's interest to emigrate based on the employment status? Aiming at answering the research question two, t-tests were run for the two age group variables and their employment status and Pearson's correlation to see the relationship between the variables. The Pearson's correlation did not show statistically significant relationship between the analyzed variables. The same case was with the t-test: it did not show any difference in the means. However, later on cross tabulations were run separately for each case and we are able to draw some conclusions on those tests.

In 2010 45 percent of people aged 19-30 had certain level of employment, and among those 45 percent 31.1 percent were interested in temporary emigration. While in 2012 within the same age group among the 49.3 percent employed 44.3 percent has interest in temporary emigration. In 2010 among the 45 percent employed young aged people 13.9 percent had interest in leaving the country forever. In 2012 from overall 49.6 percent employed younger people 23.6 percent express their interest in leaving the country forever. Both for the cases of permanent and temporary emigration we see increase in the interest to leave the country among 19-30 year old people with certain level of employment. Hence we can conclude that there can be certain level of negative relationship in the people's willingness to emigrate and employment status.

In addition, the following limitations have had an impact on the final results of the study. One of the most important limitations of this study was the sample size of the student survey 2012 and the fact that it was not representative; as the survey was conducted only in four universities the K<sup>th</sup> element was not taken into consideration.

Another limitation of the survey was the limited number of measures. As the study aimed at comparing the received data with the data collected by Caucasus Barometer in 2010, the measures were completely taken from the CB 2010 survey questionnaire.

Additional limitation of the survey is the fact that it was conducted only among the students aged 21-30, however the support for the hypothesis could be stronger, if the survey was conducted among the high-educated people aged 31-50 as well.

Finalizing the study, all these limitations, as well as other factors should be taken into account for future research. More attention can be drawn to the relationship between employment status and people's intention to emigrate as well as the relationship between the level of education and interest in emigration.

## Conclusion

The issue of international migration, including temporary, as well as permanent migration, has been of significant attention of the social scientists over the past decades. Empirical studies on migration demonstrate that the decision to move depends on a wide variety of factors. The economic theories of migration initiation and social theories of migration perpetuation come to explain the root causes of mass outflows.

Over the past two decades Armenia has been facing large number of population outflow because of different socio-economic and political reasons. The processes of international migration in Armenia cannot be explained from the perspective of one single theory. This paper has proposed that large number of Armenian migrations can be connected to the social network and ‘push-pull’ theories.

Examining the history of Armenian out-migration in the past two decades, this research has divided the Armenian mass outflows into five phases. Although migration was not a new phenomenon for independent Armenia, as the outflow of population in Soviet Armenia started at the early 1980s, the mass migration of the last two decades was connected firstly with the devastating earthquake of Spitak in 1988, after which about 150,000 Armenians left the country. The next stage was connected with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Armenian-Azerbaijani war over Nagorno Karabakh. As a result, about 360,000 Armenians expelled from Azerbaijan and settled in Armenia, of which only about 50-70, 000 are still in Armenia. Hence, about 170,000 Azerbaijanis living in Armenia had to leave the country as well.

Continuously, the next mass outflow was connected with the poor socio-economic situation in the country, which resulted to the largest outflow of the population. Different estimations state that the number of migrants was about 600- 700, 000. Later on with the more or less stabilization of the economic situation in the country the permanent migration

process left the stage to the labor migration, which makes the next phase of the mass migration from Armenia. From 1996 to mid 2000s the number of Armenian migrant workers abroad was about 800-900 thousand, out of which only 650 thousand were working in Russia. Lastly, this research has suggested, that with the world economic crisis, the political changes in the country, a new phase of Armenian emigration has started since 2008. The numbers of people leaving Armenia from 2008 to 2010 has increased by 10 percent according to the survey results of Caucasus Barometer.

The study has discusses the main causing factors of Armenian students' out migration. More thoroughly the causes were discussed within the framework of 'push-pull' theory and certain 'push' and 'pull' factors of Armenian student emigration were suggested. Among the 'push' factors were included the growing rate of tuition fees, unfair educational system/corruption, unequal treatment, lack of technologies, resources and instruments, changing profile of academic professions vs old-fashioned education programs, increasing unemployment rate, uncertainty in the future.

Meanwhile four broad categories of 'pull' factors were stated: different financial aid programs for the students of Armenian descent, different official programs at state and governmental level, rising awareness of information, and employment opportunities. The various assistance programs were separately divided as official and non official level programs. More specifically, the official programs supported by the state were categorized as state or government sponsored programs, state-to-state cooperation and exchange programs, as well as different international programs having the support of the state.

Finally by analyzing the self conducted survey in May 2012 and the independent survey by CB 2010, we could get support for the suggested hypothesis of the study. According to the hypothesis *younger people with higher education are more prone to temporary or permanent emigration compared to middle-aged people with the same level of*

*education.* Separate cross tabulations were run to analyze and later on compare the received data. The results showed that high-educated people aged from 19-30 were more willing to leave Armenia both permanently and temporarily compared to high- educated middle aged people from 31-50 according to the 2010 CB survey results. At the same time the percentage in the interest in temporary and permanent emigration among the young generation has increased from 6-8 percent in the last two years.

In addition, the surveys provided more room for analyzing the interaction between high educated people and migration and the correlation between migration and employment status. The analysis suggested that in both age groups people without higher education were more interested in emigration. At the same time the study suggested that there could be certain level of negative relationship in the people's willingness to emigrate and employment status, as those employed were willing to leave country.

Lastly we would like to introduce some recommendations.

The Armenian migration issue lacks thorough research. Even though general aspects of the Armenian mass outflows have been examined by different scholars, specific cases as student migration, migration of Armenian women, causes of different sexual diseases resulted from the labor migration of Armenian male population need to be studied more thoroughly.

Secondly, we recommend taking measures for collecting a nationally representative data on the number of student outflows, as only very few estimates from surveys are providing at least some numbers about the student migration.

Lastly we recommend examining the interactions between employment status and migration. People are interested in leaving the country even though they have certain employment. What are the main reasons for leaving? Is it because of not being satisfied with the job or wages or they do not see their future in Armenia? This is extremely worrisome in case of young generation.

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## APPENDIX 1: Sample Questionnaire

May 2012

ID: \_\_\_\_\_

### Survey on Brain Drain and Emigration

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview date: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview time: \_\_\_\_\_

*All instructions to the interviewer are in the bold italics and are in parenthesis. Please make sure to follow all instructions completely and to fill out the separate page for sampling information . We are interviewing undergraduate(BA) and graduate(MA) students. Read all questions exactly as written and use only the probes and explanations reviewed during training. Write any anecdotal information on the blank page attached to the end of the questionnaire – you should be recording everything said even if it does not seem related to the question itself.*

**1. Do you have a job? This job may be part-time or full-time, or you may be officially employed, informally employed, or self-employed, but it brings you monetary income. (If not, then go to the 3<sup>rd</sup> question)**

<i>Yes</i>	1
<i>No</i>	0
<i>(Don't know)</i>	-1
<i>(Refuse to answer)</i>	-2

**2. Please tell me, overall, how satisfied you are with your job?**

Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	[In the middle]	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	<i>(Don't know)</i>	<i>(Refuse to answer)</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<i>-1</i>	<i>-2</i>

**3. On the scale from 1-10 where 1 is not possible at all and 10 is extremely possible evaluate your perspective of employability in the upcoming 5 months.**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DK
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----

**4. On the scale from 1-10 where 1 is not demanded at all and 10 is extremely demanded evaluate the demand for your profession in the labour market of Armenia.**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DK
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----

**5. Which of the following factors do you consider most important for getting a good job in /country/?**

<i>Age</i>	1
<i>Appearance</i>	2
<i>Connections</i>	3
<i>Education</i>	4
<i>Hard work</i>	5
<i>Luck</i>	6
<i>Professional abilities</i>	7
<i>Talent</i>	8
<i>Work experience</i>	9
<i>Doing favors for the 'right' people</i>	10
<i>(Other)</i>	11
<i>(Don't know)</i>	-1
<i>(Refuse to answer)</i>	-2

**6. In case of not finding a job in the upcoming 5 months you will**

- a. continue searching
- b. try to requalify
- c. leave Armenia
- d. try to find a job in another sphere
- e. another option \_\_\_\_\_

**7. In case of not finding a job in the upcoming year you will**

- a. continue searching
- b. try to requalify
- c. leave Armenia
- d. try to find a job in another sphere
- e. another option \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Have you thought of leaving Armenia forever or for long in the passing year. (If not, then go to question 7)**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

**9. If yes, what are the reasons?**

- a. I want to continue my studies abroad
- b. I want to find a job in Armenia
- c. I cannot imagine my life in Armenia
- d. another option \_\_\_\_\_

**10. What is your profession?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**11. If you had a chance, would you leave /country/ for a certain period of time to live somewhere else?**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <i>Yes</i> | 1 |
| <i>No</i>  | 0 |

(Don't know) -1  
(Refuse to answer) -2

**12. If you had a chance, would you leave /country/ forever to live somewhere else?**

Yes 1  
No 0  
(Don't know) -1  
(Refuse to answer) -2

**13. Generally how comfortable would you feel travelling to the country the language of which you didn't know? Would you feel**

*Extremely uncomfortable* 1  
*Rather uncomfortable* 2  
*Rather comfortable* 3  
*Quite comfortable* 4  
(Don't know) -1  
(Refuse to answer) -2

**14. In what year were you born?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**15. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

-----

**Gender**

Male\_\_\_\_\_

Female\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your support!