A8 Labour Migration: Flooding the Gates or Filling the Gaps?

A Comparative Study of Central and Eastern European Migration to the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

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1. Introduction

The fall of the Berlin Wall on the 9th of November 1989 may be considered a landmark in European history, not only because it opened the physical barrier separating Western from Eastern Germany, but also since it paved the way for a reunification of the Eastern and Western parts of the continent. Accordingly, the collapse of the Soviet Union signified the first step of this reintegration process in which Eastern Europe was ‘welcomed back’ by its Western counterpart, which, in turn, appeared eager to facilitate Eastern Europe’s so-called ‘return to Europe’.

In order to avoid new divisions across the continent, the European Council of June 1993 allowed all Central and Eastern European applicants to start the accession negotiations at the same time. This ultimately resulted in the biggest enlargement in the history of European integration as eight Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries joined the European Union (EU) together with Cyprus and Malta as of May 2004. The eight CEE countries, commonly referred to as the ‘A8 countries’, that acceded in 2004 are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. In anticipation of the Eastern enlargement, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, at the time President of the European Council, remarked in December 2002:

In 1989 brave and visionary people tore down the Berlin Wall. They would no longer tolerate the forced division of Europe. Today, we have delivered on their hopes. We have decided to heal our continent. We have decided to create One Europe. Today we have closed one of the bloodiest and darkest chapters in European history. […] Our new Europe is born.

Nevertheless, the enthusiasm about the 2004 enlargement at the European level was arguably not shared by many politicians at the national level who foresaw great challenges for their societies and labour markets as a consequence of considerable influxes of CEE labour migrants. Interestingly enough, the concerns expressed following the enlargement seemed to come from all sides of the political spectrum. In the Netherlands right-wing politician Wilders repeatedly called for longer restrictions of the free movement right for workers of the A8 countries, while a Labour

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party alderman spoke of a ‘tsunami of Eastern Europeans’ last year. In the UK, Labour Party leader Miliband admitted that the previous Labour government had “under-estimated significantly the number of people who were going to come in from Eastern Europe”, whereas Prime Minister Cameron stated his aim to reduce net migration to the “tens of thousands”. At the same time, however, the sharp increase in CEE labour migration to Western Europe cannot be regarded as instigated solely by the weaker A8 economies producing large numbers of fortune-seekers. Indeed, many Western European economies nowadays partly thrive on labourers from A8 countries and a reduction in the migration from these countries may therefore not be desirable.

Against this backdrop, this paper is interested in the migration flows of A8 nationals to the Netherlands and the UK following the 2004 enlargement. In particular, it will elaborate upon the increased migration from A8 countries to these two countries between the date of accession and the date the transitional period for A8 migrants expired, that is, between May 2004 and May 2011. This period has been chosen for the symbolic reason that after May 2011 EU15 member states could no longer impede A8 migrants exercising their free movement right as well as the practical reason that the availability of more recent data was limited at the time of writing. In addition, this paper will discuss the effects of A8 migration on the Dutch and British labour markets and societies at large. In this sense, the impact of temporary migrants will be looked at with special interest as this migrant group has considerably grown in number in recent years. Moreover, due to the fact that migrants staying for a period shorter than four months are not required to register with the local municipalities, the actual size and influence of temporary migrants on employment rates in the host country have often been difficult to assess.

Accordingly, this paper states that the significant rise in A8 labour migrants to the Netherlands and the UK is primarily a consequence of the need for these migrants in certain sectors of their economies. The hypothesis of the present paper is therefore that the increasing presence of A8 migrants on the Dutch and British labour markets has predominantly a complementary effect on the Dutch and British labour forces rather than a substitutionary effect. Migration from A8 countries will be considered substitutionary if a direct correlation between an increase in A8 migration and a decline in native employment can be identified. If the employment

rate of A8 migrants increases without significantly affecting the native employment rate in the Netherlands and the UK, then A8 migration will be perceived as complementary.

As a result, this paper consists of six parts. Firstly, the theories of rational institutionalism and social constructivism in relation to European integration will be used to explain the EU’s decision to allow eight CEE countries and two Mediterranean countries with different levels of economic development to accede simultaneously. The second part will deal with the migration of A8 nationals to the Netherlands and the UK in the period prior to the 2004 enlargement, starting from the fall of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s. Thirdly, the British and Dutch government’s approaches towards the accommodation of A8 migrants as a result of the Eastern enlargement will be discussed. In the fourth part, migration figures in the post-enlargement period will be analysed in order to assess the impact of the A8 countries’ accession to the EU on British and Dutch demographics. This paper will use official government statistics and estimations, as well as figures provided by independent statistical agencies such as Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS) in the Netherlands and the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) in the UK. Fifthly, the implications of the substantial rise in A8 labour migration on the British and Dutch labour markets will be elaborated upon. Finally, a number of concluding remarks and policy recommendations will be offered.

2. Reasons for the 2004 Enlargement: Uniting a Continent or Expanding a Market?

On the 1st of May 2004, the number of EU member states increased from fifteen to twenty-five, thereby officialising the fifth and most comprehensive enlargement since the start of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951. Counting from the Copenhagen summit of June 1993, in which the accession criteria were defined by the European Council, the process of granting the new states formed in Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of communism membership thus took eleven years. According to a number of scholars, the accession process lasted this long so that the costs of enlargement could be brought down, while others argue that the A8 countries simply needed a decade to prepare for full membership of the Union. More important, however, is the question of why the EU chose to incorporate such a large number of new member states in a single enlargement round. In this respect, it may be helpful to first have a look at the reasons to expand before turning to the migration of A8 nationals to the Netherlands.

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and the UK, which occurred as a consequence of it. Consequently, this part will elaborate on the decisions of member states and the EU as a collective to allow the simultaneous accession of eight CEE and two Mediterranean countries using European integration theories, that is, rational choice and social constructivist theories.

2.1 The Copenhagen Criteria

As aforementioned, the official discourse of the EU concerning the Eastern enlargement is largely dominated by positive statements emphasising ‘the return’ of the Central and Eastern European states to Europe and the reunification of the continent. It is important to remember, however, that this enlargement round was not without its controversies. Accordingly, frequently heard objections to the accession of ten states at the same time were the enormous pressure it would cause on the institutional system, apart from the new divisions that it might also create in Europe. Moreover, the accession negotiations were expected to impose considerable pressure on the newly developed state systems of the post-communist countries and the costs of enlargement would clearly outrun the benefits in the short term. After all, a number of member states would be asked to significantly increase their financial contribution to the budget, while others could await a substantial decline in their share of regional policy funds or the CAP.

In spite of all this, the European Council came up with the Copenhagen declaration during the Copenhagen Summit of 1993, which entailed criteria that were specifically set out for post-communist states to meet in order to become full members of the Union. As a result, the requirements for potential applicant states could be summed up as follows. First, the applicant must be a ‘European state’ respecting the principles of liberty, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. This is necessary to receive a positive recommendation from the Council which allows an applicant to start accession negotiations. Moreover, the so-called ‘Copenhagen criteria’ must be fulfilled before EU membership might be gained. The Copenhagen criteria consist of three criteria: one political, one economic, and one relating to the adoption of the acquis communautaire. In addition, the European Council has repeatedly stated that “the Union’s capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of

both the Union and the candidate countries”. The criteria that a candidate country needs to fulfil are:

- stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- a functioning market economy, as well as the ability to cope with the pressure of competition and the market forces at work inside the Union;
- the ability to assume the obligations of membership, in particular adherence to the objectives of political, economic and monetary union.

Of these three criteria the political criterion may be considered the most important as the European Council indicated at the Luxembourg summit of 1997 that compliance with this criterion is essential before commencing accession negotiations. The EU was arguably more flexible in assessing the economic and acquis criteria which had to be evaluated in a ‘forward-looking, dynamic way’. To determine whether a country has a functioning market economy the EU considers, amongst others, the working of market forces, barriers to market entry and exit, business regulation, protection of property rights, and macroeconomic stability. As the EU focuses primarily on the rate of progress which is more difficult to compare across countries than absolute measures of preparedness, the Copenhagen criteria have been criticised for being too vague. In this sense, Grabbe has pointed out that the EU, especially in the first years after the conditions were set, left plenty of room for ambiguity as regards which elements of the economic and political requirements needed to be fulfilled in order to be eligible for certain benefits. Additionally, it has become apparent that Poland has received considerable financial support from the EU so that accession negotiations with all the CEE countries would run synchronically.

This raises questions as to why the EU was so determined to have all CEE countries acceding in a single enlargement round. Therefore, the decision to enlarge will now be analysed using three different types of arguments, that is, pragmatic, ethical-political and moral. The

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11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 41.
pragmatic approach assumes actors to act rationally according to predetermined interests so that they follow a utility-maximising strategy. Subsequently, the ethical-political approach argues that actors will act according to the values of a community, thereby opting for the best collective outcome. Finally, a moral approach justifies actions not according to either utility or the values of a community, but rather in accordance with universal standards of justice. This approach considers the decision to enlarge as the outcome of a deliberative process in which the better argument prevailed.

The analysis will be built for an important part on the arguments put forward by Helene Sjursen and Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, all of whom considered the three arguments mentioned above essential in explaining the EU’s decision to enlarge. Sjursen, a political scientist, then concluded that the existence of a value-based liberal-democratic community among EU member states proved decisive in allowing ten new member states to accede simultaneously. Piedrafita, a political scientist and economist, and Torreblanca, political scientist as well as sociologist, considered the 2004 enlargement to be the result of a deliberative process in which utility-maximising arguments best explain the members’ initial positions.

2.2 The Eastern Enlargement explained through rational institutionalism

The theory of rational institutionalism considers states to be the most relevant actors in the policy process as they are the only ones who decide on its outcome. In this sense, states act according to self-interests which have been determined at the member state level prior to the bargaining process that takes place at the supranational level. The aim of actors, therefore, lies primarily in maximising economic and security gains, whereas in case of conflicting preferences the outcome will be the result of the distribution of power among all actors involved. This type of reasoning has been called ‘the logic of consequentiality’ and arguments of this kind generally follow the pragmatic approach. Following this theory, the 2004 enlargement came about as a consequence of calculations of utility in which the EU weighed the costs of enlargement against its economic, political and security benefits. In this regard, it has been argued that the EU simply had to support the A8 countries arising after the fall of the Soviet Union in order to ensure the stabilisation of its own region. Engaging with these states would by all means be an essential incentive for the new democratic regimes to continue on this path. At the same time, by including most of the A8 countries, the EU might obtain a higher status as a global geopolitical actor thereby increasing its

influence in international politics. Moreover, enlargement on this scale would undeniably bring about great economic benefits as a consequence of the expansion of the common market; especially in the long run higher efficiency and a better allocation of resources could significantly strengthen the EU’s competitiveness.

These benefits, in turn, needed to be considered in the light of the costs that the enlargement would produce, such as an increase in heterogeneity within the Union, more complicated decision-making because of a substantial increase in the number of actors, and a high need for additional financial means. Furthermore, in addition to the fact that not all member states gained equally while many states faced a clear loss in weight in the decision-making process, it had become apparent that the financial costs of enlargement would undoubtedly outrun the financial gains in the short run. In addition, it has been stated that incorporating eight CEE countries might still lead to a security vacuum further east.

Nevertheless, rational institutionalists argue that the EU15 eventually decided that the EU’s security and the political stability of the continent was better served by allowing eight CEE countries to accede simultaneously rather than dividing their accession over different enlargement rounds. New divisions may have been considered unlikely due to the fact that nearly all post-communist states in the East are currently either EU member states or part of the EU’s neighbourhood policy which still links them tightly to the EU. More importantly perhaps, is the Union’s alleged focus on the long term. Consequently, it has been argued that the EU has been acting rationally by acquiescing with the enlargement of ten countries, as this would eventually lead to clear economic and security advantages. Finally, rational institutionalists have put forward that the accession negotiations with the A8 countries took purposefully long in order to bring down the costs of enlargement. Besides, the fact that the *acquis communautaire* needs to be implemented by applicant states well before accession, meaning that EU firms can benefit from an expanded market in advance, has been used as an argument supporting the pragmatic approach of the EU. However, as the fact remains that the EU would have profited more from spreading the expansion of the Union over different enlargement rounds, whereas certain member states were clearly worse off after the 2004 enlargement suggests that rational institutionalist arguments are not sufficient in explaining the decision to enlarge. Therefore, this paper will now have a look

20 Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 38.
21 Ibid.
24 Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 41-44.
at a second theory to interpret the 2004 enlargement which is the social constructivists’ point of view.

2.3 Social constructivism and the ethical-political approach towards the Eastern enlargement

For social constructivists, actors in the political realm are not exclusively motivated by obtaining the best possible outcome for themselves. Rather, “[a]ctions, they posit, are guided by principles, norms and identities, not only by self-interest”. As a result, they argue that norms and values play a significant role during the policy-process, causing actors to act in a way that they are expected to act as opposed to striving for the most favourable outcome for themselves. Arguments of this kind are commonly referred to as ‘the logic of appropriateness,’ which is generally linked to the ethical-political approach. According to this approach, actors are considered to be acting rationally when they act according to a common identity of their community rather than holding on to predetermined goals that are set at the member state level. In this respect, shared values and solidarity with the group are deemed more important than striving for efficiency when taking collective decisions.

With regard to the Eastern enlargement, social constructivists argue that this process was primarily a result of the EU member states’ collective decision to act according to shared values. In this sense, it has been stated that the 2004 enlargement of ten countries, including eight CEE countries, was considered ‘the right thing to do’. Accordingly, the EU may have reached such a decision for the following reasons. Firstly, the EU member states are said to have felt a sense of kinship with the CEE countries, which may have caused them to think that Eastern Europe, rather than Western Europe’s opposite, was seen as “the kidnapped West”. This argument is further supported by the fact that the EU already started to build a ‘special relationship’ with CEE countries from the late 1980s onwards, whereas it might also explain why Turkey is yet to become an EU member state; namely its ‘Europeanness’ is contested and there may be no sense of kinship with this country. Secondly, and related to the first reason, is the idea that Western Europe had a ‘special responsibility’ towards the East. Consequently, in order to prevent new divisions across the continent, the EU may have felt obliged to help the A8 countries in their

25 Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 33.
27 Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 34.
28 Ibid., 46.
30 Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 46-49.
economic and political reform after the fall of communism. It has been argued that this is exactly why traditional beneficiaries to the EU budget such as Spain and Greece did not consider vetoing the accession of the A8 countries. For even though enlargement was expected to have a negative impact on their share of the CAP and regional policy funds, Spain and Greece had been in a similar position in the 1980s and were thus in no position to block the enlargement. Thirdly, the fact that the EU followed the ‘regatta principle’ has been used to illustrate that solidarity had played a bigger role in the decision to enlarge than efficiency. After all, this meant that all applicant countries were allowed to start accession negotiations simultaneously regardless of certain countries not meeting the set criteria of the European Commission, which implies certain solidarity with these countries. In addition, it has been noted that virtually all EU member states agreed with enlargement without heated public debates, which suggests that the 2004 enlargement was ‘the natural thing to do’.

The social constructivist approach may thus certainly have a number of useful additions to the rational institutionalist explanation of the enlargement. There is a third logic, however, which will be discussed next in order to get a complete picture of the debate.

2.4 Social constructivism and the moral approach argument

A third strand of reasoning, relatively new and closely related to the previous approach, focuses on the theory of communicative action. Contrary to the first two theories, the theory of communicative action considers the features of the institutional setting more important to the outcome of the policy process than motivations behind a political action. Although it argues that certain principles and norms play a role during the policy-making process, it reasons that actors act rationally when decisions settle around the better argument instead of being based on self-interest or common values. As a result, this theory is generally identified with the moral approach, which justifies policy by following universal standards of justice as opposed to using arguments based on utility-maximising or community values. This, then, has been called ‘the logic of justification’. Applying this logic to the decision to enlarge, it follows that certain member states argued that the ‘special relationship’ with the CEE countries commenced in the late 1980s was not sufficient in facilitating peace and stability while others argued that neither the

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31 Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 47.
32 Ibid., 49.
33 Ibid., 35.
EU nor the applicants were ready for accession.\(^{35}\) Subsequently, the EU decided on the better argument by drawing up the ‘Copenhagen criteria’, which, if fulfilled, would allow the A8 countries to accede without further opposition. In this regard, the argument that enlargement would be beneficial for the EU in the long run prevailed over the argument that it would be costly in the short term. Or, in other words, “the various policy options available were discussed not only in terms of cost/benefits to the EU but also in terms of factual and normative adequacy”\(^{36}\).

However, even though this theory certainly helps in complementing the arguments provided by the first two theories, it may be considered unlikely that this approach in itself fully explains the decision to enlarge. The fact remains that during the negotiation process applicant states are in a very weak negotiating position as concessions need to be made almost exclusively from their side, while certain bonds of solidarity might also have played a role in invoking the ‘regatta principle’.\(^{37}\) Consequently, the decision of the EU15 to allow the simultaneous accession of eight CEE countries and two Mediterranean countries can probably only be explained by using a mixture of the rational institutionalist and social constructivist theories. Moreover, it is likely that states with a self-interest in enlargement, as Sjursen has argued, may even have used normative arguments in a strategic way in order to pressure other states into a favourable decision.\(^{38}\) In addition, different approaches might have applied to explain the behaviour of different member states during the decision-making process.

In any case, this paper considers long-term economic and security benefits to be the predominant reasons for enlargement. Many Western European states were able to benefit greatly from the accession of ten new member states as it would both expand the common market and facilitate the migration of cheap labourers that were needed to support various sectors of their labour markets. The fact that the EU15 were granted the opportunity to impose temporary restrictions on the free movement right of A8 nationals may also illustrate that the interests of the old member states were given priority over the interests of the new member states. Accordingly, EU member states were given considerable discretion in deciding the type of restrictions, for instance, a quota system or a work permit system, and the length of the transitional period according to the needs of their labour markets. This has caused great differences among the EU15 as A8 nationals were able to access the British labour market from May 2004, the Dutch labour market from May 2007 whereas free access to the German labour market was only granted in May 2011. It is therefore probable that if these economic benefits, combined with the security

\(^{35}\) Sonia Piedrafita and José Torreblanca, “The Three Logics of EU Enlargement,” 52.

\(^{36}\) Ibid.

\(^{37}\) Andrew Moravcsik and Milada Vachudova, “National Interests, State Power, and EU Enlargement,” 44.

benefits of increased political stability in Eastern Europe, had not been present, the EU15 may have been less inclined to help the CEE countries out of solidarity.

As previously mentioned, various Dutch and British politicians have expressed their concerns about the increased inflow of A8 migrants in the post-enlargement period, though the decision to enlarge in itself does not seem to be regretted. However, in the period leading up to the 2006 elections in the Netherlands, politicians of the Dutch liberal party did express their dissatisfaction with the EU’s choice to let ten new member states accede at the same time in May 2004. The then Minister for Immigration Rita Verdonk even called the simultaneous accession of the ten states a “wrong decision” as enlargement should have taken place in phases instead of this “big bang” enlargement.\(^39\) It needs to be noted that these statements were made in an election period, meaning that it may have been a strategy to appeal to eurosceptic voters. In the UK, the decision to enlarge has not reappeared in the political sphere which may in part be explained by the fact that ‘Europe’ has not been a major theme in recent election campaigns. Moreover, the decision to allow ten states to accede simultaneously might have been less controversial in the UK as well, as a Dutch liberal has said that the Netherlands was the only country that had a problem with the big enlargement of 2004.\(^40\)

The next section will therefore discuss the pre-accession period more thoroughly so that the argument that the decision to enlarge was primarily a result of the economic and security benefits might be more adequately tested. By focusing on the political and economic situation of the Netherlands and the UK in the years prior to the 2004 enlargement, it might be explained whether there was an actual need for cheap labour on the Dutch and British labour markets.

3. The Pre-Accession Period

Although this paper is mainly interested in the migration of A8 migrants to the Netherlands and the UK after 2004, it may be useful to include a concise overview of the migration that occurred prior to the Eastern enlargement in order to be able to ascertain the impact that the enlargement has had on migration flows. This may be deemed important since it has been observed that A8 migrants, and Poles in particular, were hardly noticed in the pre-accession period, whereas


\(^{40}\) Ibid.
nowadays the ‘Polish plumber’ has become a symbol of cheap labour across Europe.\textsuperscript{41} It is therefore instrumental to verify the extent to which A8 migration to the Netherlands and the UK occurred in the pre-accession period in order to be able to explain the substantial increase after their countries’ accession. After all, it may be fairly short-sighted to attribute this development solely to the opening of the borders between the EU15 and the newly acceded member states. Although this could certainly be one of the reasons, it is equally plausible that the Dutch and British labour markets have become increasingly dependent on A8 labourers to keep the economy functioning. Consequently, this section will show whether a pattern can be identified in A8 migration which might support this premise.

Although East-West labour migration in Europe is not exactly a new phenomenon, it may be argued that the origin of the most recent migration wave of A8 migrants to the Netherlands and the UK can be traced back to the introduction of the free movement right of persons within the Union. Together with the free movement of goods, capital, and services, the free movement of people became part of what was later called the ‘four freedoms’, which basically signified the abolition of the legal frontiers hindering labour migration between member states.\textsuperscript{42} After having been introduced with the Treaty of Paris of 1951 establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the free movement right was first limited to people working in the coal and steel industries. Six years later, the 1957 Treaty of Rome indicated the member states’ desire to further European integration by creating the European Economic Community (EEC) and as a result the free movement right was extended to all workers within the Community. With the extension of this individual right for workers, however, came the first objections of member states fearing large-scale migration of Italian nationals to their countries as a consequence of the liberal agreements regarding labour migration. Similar concerns were expressed with the accession of Greece in 1981 and of Spain and Portugal in 1986, as these traditional emigration countries combined with their comparatively weak economies were expected to trigger a substantial increase in intra-Community migration. Nevertheless, the expected flood of Southern European labourers to the other member states never materialised in the proportions that were initially predicted.

For this reason, the consequences of introducing the free movement right are said to have been limited to migration of highly-skilled labour, migration in border regions, and circular


migration prior to the 2004 enlargement. Accordingly, it has been put forward that the European Community never intended to bring about large-scale labour migration by introducing the free movement of people provision. However, one could argue that the free movement right has always had the potential of having a significant impact on intra-Community migration patterns. In this sense, it might be compared to the institution of European citizenship which started out as a purely symbolic title as it was initially regarded as having weak content, a derivative nature, and adding little new to the previously established free movement rights. Still, the grave implications of installing this ‘decorative citizenship’ soon became clear after a number of important decisions by the European Court of Justice, which clearly shifted “[t]he transformative potential of Union citizenship […] from the margins to the centre”. In a similar way, the Eastern enlargement has made clear that the decision to abolish state frontiers within the EU certainly did facilitate a considerable increase in labour migration across the continent.

Consequently, various reasons have been put forward to explain why the Eastern enlargement turned out to have a far profounder impact on migratory flows compared to previous enlargements. The first of these reasons lies in the long standing migration tradition of A8 nationals to the West, which dates back to the mid-nineteenth century. During this period, East-West migration started to develop as a consequence of the industrialisation centres rising in many Western European cities. Difficult economic circumstances at home, occasionally in combination with the rise of a violent nationalism, are said to have been important push factors for Central and Eastern Europeans to migrate westwards. Since industrialisation was primarily an urban phenomenon, the migration of A8 migrants remained rather limited to the major cities and the coal and steel regions in the West. The first years after the Second World War, however, might have seen the most intense migration across the continent with countless people moving in both directions after the whole of Europe had been freed from the Nazi-regime. As a result, it has been estimated that nearly eighteen million people migrated in that period of which thirteen million moved from the East to the West before the Soviet regime made migration increasingly problematic during the Cold War period. From the 1970s onwards, East-West migration

44 Ibid., 7.
46 Ibid., 2.
47 Simone Goedings, “EU Enlargement to the East and Labour Migration to the West,” 17.
gradually resumed due to pressure from Western states on Eastern Europe to liberalise travel restrictions and after the fall of communism in the late 1980s migration was quickly restored to pre-war levels.49 Accordingly, Simone Goedings has argued that

The present movements are not new phenomena but represent the re-emergence of the flows after a period of artificially reduced migration due to restrictive emigration policies. The fall of the Berlin Wall ushered in a new era in a longstanding pattern of migration.50

Although it is certainly true that countries such as Spain, Portugal and Greece might have been considered emigration countries as well until at least the 1980s, one needs to bear in mind that nationals from these countries more often opted for migration to the Americas rather than Northern Europe. Apart from a brief period in the twentieth century in which Northern Europeans recruited people from the Mediterranean to support their economies, one could state that migration from Southern Europeans to the North has never been as comprehensive as East-West migration. This might explain the rather limited effect that the Southern enlargement has had on intra-Community migration.

Furthermore, another cause of the considerable increase in migration within the EU after the 2004 enlargement may be found in the poor economic state of the Eastern European accession countries. It is true that the Southern European states were not in a particularly strong economic state with a combined GDP comprising only 10 per cent of the nine EC members. However, the economies of the A8 countries acceding in 2004 were considerably worse as the GDP of the ten new member states accounted for a mere 4 per cent of the existing fifteen EU members.51 Moreover, to illustrate the economic situation of the new member states at the time of accession, the GDP per capita in the A8 countries as a percentage of the existing EU member states is shown in Figure 1.

According to Figure 1, five out of the eight CEE countries acceding in 2004 had a GDP per capita that was lower than 50 per cent of the average in the fifteen present members of the EU. It follows from Figure 1 that citizens in all A8 countries would profit from higher wages if they decided to migrate to one of the EU15 member states.

49 Simone Goedings, “EU Enlargement to the East and Labour Migration to the West,” 18-19.
50 Ibid., 17.
In addition, to give an even clearer illustration of the discrepancy between the Western and Eastern European economies: in January 2004 monthly minimum wages in the UK and the Netherlands were 1,083 euros and 1,265 euros respectively, while these figures for Poland and the Czech Republic were 177 euros and 207 euros.\textsuperscript{52} Accordingly, as the EU15 countries were comparatively more affluent this might be regarded a pull factor for A8 nationals to migrate to one of these countries; at the same time the fact that the economies of the A8 countries were less prosperous can be considered a push factor to migrate from Central and Eastern Europe to Western Europe. Moreover, another important push factor to consider for labour migrants is the unemployment rate in the home country. Accordingly, Figure 2 displays the unemployment rates of the A8 countries in the year after the 2004 enlargement.

\textbf{Figure 2} Unemployment rates in A8 countries in 2005

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Considering that the average unemployment rate in the EU15 countries was 7.9 per cent in 2005, it can be concluded that five of the A8 countries had a lower unemployment rate than the EU average. With Latvia being on the EU average, only Poland and Slovakia had substantially higher unemployment rates compared to the older EU member states. Consequently, it may be clear that the push factor for A8 labourers to migrate to the economically more developed EU partner countries might have been more present in Poland with the highest unemployment rate and one of the lowest GDP per capita than in Slovenia where both the unemployment rate and the GDP per capita were the most favourable among the A8 countries.

Given the poor economic situation of the A8 countries and their peoples’ propensity to migrate, it can hardly be a surprise that migration from the A8 countries had already steadily increased in the years leading up to the Eastern enlargement. As a result, the annual inflow of A8 migrants in the period 2000-2003 had on average been 3,500 in the Netherlands.\(^5\) In the UK, it is estimated that approximately 110,000 A8 nationals had migrated to its country by the summer of 2003.\(^5\) Although these figures do not exclude the possibility that the 2004 enlargement was, at least partly, based on solidarity and common values among EU member states, it does show that there were clear incentives for A8 nationals to migrate to economically more prosperous countries in Western Europe. In addition, given the fact that migration from A8 countries to the Netherlands and the UK had already steadily increased in the years leading up to the enlargement, it can be argued that there was a considerable demand for cheap labour on the Dutch and British labour markets. This, in turn, suggests that economic benefits from the simultaneous accession of eight Central and Eastern European countries may have been an important factor for the EU15 in deciding to enlarge eastwards.

4. When and how to include A8 labour migrants? The British and Dutch approaches

The Cold War period might be seen as a period during which traditional East-West migration flows were temporarily and forcibly restricted. In this sense, it may be rather clear that once the Soviet regime ended in the late 1980s, this greatly affected the CEE countries previously controlled by the communists. Indeed, it signified a crucial moment in the history of these countries as it inaugurated a new age that brought about reforms which altered society in many

\(^5\) Godfried Engbersen, “Liquid Migration in Europe” (lecture given at the University of Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 14 April 2008), 15.
respects. Democratic forms of government were established in the majority of the former Soviet satellite states and basic freedoms, such as the freedom to migrate, were regained. It can therefore hardly be surprising that once the borders reopened, migration figures from Eastern to Western Europe were quickly restored to pre-Cold War levels.

Although many countries in the West may have been eager to attract labour migrants from Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1990s, they proved less willing to accept these migrants in the late 1980s. Accordingly, the Netherlands and the UK had been receiving large influxes of migrants in the decades after the Second World War, the majority of them citizens from former colonies and guest workers. As a consequence, both Dutch and British government policies regarding migration had undergone great changes in order to restrict the number of migrants to their countries. This had a significant impact on migration from Central and Eastern Europe to the Netherlands and the UK and the legal status of these migrants. This section will therefore first describe the changes in government policies in the Netherlands and the UK before explaining their effects on migration from the East. Finally, this part will discuss the measures that were taken by the Dutch and British governments in anticipation of the Eastern enlargement of 2004.

4.1.1 Migration policy in the Netherlands: the unforeseen need to integrate guest workers

For the Netherlands, the period after the Second World War was characterised by profound demographic changes. Up to the early 1970s, approximately 500,000 Dutch citizens migrated to various countries overseas, North America and Oceania being the most popular destinations. At the same time, a total of 300,000 persons arriving from the Dutch East Indies moved to the Netherlands. Since the Dutch economy had recovered rather rapidly after the war, in part as a result of the Marshall Aid that the Netherlands had received together with most European countries from the United States, a need for guest workers arose to fill vacancies particularly in low-skilled jobs. Consequently, a considerable number of guest workers started to arrive from the Mediterranean from the late 1950s onwards. In the course of the 1960s the origin of the guest workers shifted; whereas these labour migrants initially came from Southern European countries such as Italy, Portugal and Spain, Moroccan and Turkish nationals became more and more dominant in the second decade after the war. As it was assumed by the Dutch government that

56 Ibid.
these guest workers would return to the country of origin after having worked for a number of years in the Netherlands, little effort was put in integrating this group of migrants into Dutch society. Indeed, at first the majority of migrants from the Mediterranean were males who had left their families behind to work for a few years in an economically more prosperous country. Even when the first migrants brought their families over, no change in government policy to help guest workers integrate could be identified. In fact, quite the contrary happened as children of guest workers were being taught in their native language and culture with the intention of facilitating the remigration of these labour migrants to their home countries.\textsuperscript{57} In the words of Engbersen, Snel and De Boom:

\begin{quote}
In the 1970s and 1980s, [Dutch] policymakers embraced the myth that guest workers from Mediterranean countries would return to their countries of origin once the jobs they came for were finished. This myth of immigrants returning home dominated official Dutch thinking on immigration and immigrant integration for many years.\textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

In spite of this effort to help migrant children getting familiar with their parents’ country, it became apparent that these families preferred to stay in the Netherlands rather than returning to their native country. It thus became clear that the Dutch government policy towards guest workers and their families had been rather inadequate; children of guest workers had been educated and familiarised with a culture different from the one they were living in, while their parents in many cases had never even learned the Dutch language. As a consequence, when family reunification had become the rule rather than the exception during the mid-1970s until the early 1990s, government policy became more focused on integrating these migrants into Dutch society.

Moreover, the Netherlands saw the arrival of many migrants from the West Indies, most notably people from Surinam, in the 1970s. Especially around 1975 when Surinam had gained its independence, ten thousands of citizens from that country decided to migrate to the Netherlands. This led to the situation that during this decade close to 50 per cent of all non-Dutch migrants originated from only five countries, that is, Indonesia, the Netherlands Antilles, Surinam, Morocco and Turkey.\textsuperscript{59} At present, these five countries account for one fifth of non-Dutch

\textsuperscript{57} Adrie van der Rest, “Samen naar de taalschool.” (Speech held at the conference ‘OALT is dood, leve de meertalige burger in een pluriforme samenleving’ The Hague, The Netherlands, 12 September 2006).
\textsuperscript{58} Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel, and Jan de Boom, “‘A van full of Poles’: Liquid migration from Central and Eastern Europe,” in \textit{A Continent Moving West? EU Enlargement and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe}, ed Richard Black, Godfried Engbersen, Marek Okólski and Cristina Pantiru (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 118.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 116.
migrants arriving in the Netherlands. In addition, the Dutch government had opened its borders for large numbers of asylum seekers that sought refuge in its country.

However, due to the fact that the economy had started to slow down which had led to high unemployment rates in the 1980s, these large numbers of migrants were not particularly desirable. The already present migrants increasingly formed a considerable burden on the social security system which caused the Dutch government to adopt the Dutch Aliens Employment Act (WAV) of 1994. This act may be considered representative of migration policy in the 1980s and 1990s as it aimed to limit labour migration to job positions that could not be filled by Dutch or EU citizens. Only when these ‘preferred workers’ could not be obtained, employers were able to apply for a temporary work permit (TWV) for a foreign employee.

Accordingly, it might be understandable that the Dutch authorities were not eager to welcome great influxes from the post-communist states. In this sense, migration from Eastern Europe after the fall of communism was restricted until the late 1990s when the economy recovered again. In this period, the strict migration policy of the Dutch government loosened again in order to attract seasonal labourers that were needed on the tight Dutch labour market. As initially this labour migration was largely irregular, particularly in agriculture and horticulture, the 2002 Seasonal Work Project was set up to facilitate the legal employment of Eastern European workers.

4.1.2 British migration policy: living with the consequences of world domination

Similarly to the Netherlands, the UK’s population underwent great changes in the post-war era as a consequence of the Second World War and the country’s colonial past. Having previously been a country of emigration with many British nationals settling in overseas territories such as North America and Oceania before the war, the UK quite rapidly turned into a country of immigration once its empire came to an end. Suddenly the country found itself in a position in which a redefinition of the nation-state was necessary and the creation of a national citizenship, for the first time in its history, had become essential. Initially, British citizenship did not distinguish

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62 Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel, and Jan de Boom, “A van full of Poles,” 120.
between UK citizens and Commonwealth citizens which meant that the British government continued to allow every person with British citizenship entry into the UK. Accordingly, the vast majority of people migrating to the UK in the aftermath of the war originated from the independent Commonwealth countries; these persons were granted access to British soil being British citizens possessing full citizenship rights. 65 These migrants holding a British passport could be divided into two groups that were generally most dominant among all migrants entering the UK, namely migrants from South Asia and people from the West Indies. As a result, this open door policy of the government initially contributed to a quick recovery of the British economy as many migrants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh found employment in the cities. Especially the textile industries of Northern towns and factories in London recruited these South Asians in the 1950s, particularly for their low wages which kept these industries competitive. 66

However, in the late 1950s it became apparent that the post-war migration policy was not sustainable as the rising number of migrants and the increasing segregation of British society started to cause social unrest. 67 In addition, the economic need to keep admitting migrants had decreased considerably. Consequently, in 1962 the British government decided to make a distinction between UK citizens and Commonwealth citizens in order to control migration, most notably from India, Pakistan, and Jamaica. In practice, this created a ‘second-class citizenship status’ for persons from former British colonies as they were still considered British nationals, though deprived from the right to migrate to Britain. Although these controls managed to reduce migration from overseas territories, the different categories of British citizenship would only be legally adopted in the British Nationality Act of 1981. Additionally, the British Islands also attracted many asylum seekers in the 1980s and 1990s, which is why four acts were adopted in the period 1996-2004 in order to significantly restrict the number of asylum seekers. 68

However, since migration from the communist states in Central and Eastern Europe was still highly restricted until the late 1980s, migrants from South Asia, the West Indies and the Caribbean remained dominant in the UK. This is not to say that A8 migrants were not present in British society, as many of them settled in the UK in the aftermath of the Second World War. Polish soldiers, for instance, were given the opportunity to demobilise in the UK through the Polish Resettlement Act of 1947. In general one could argue that British migration policy in the first years after the war was rather lenient due to the fact that the government actively recruited

66 Ibid., 73.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., 73-74.
foreign labourers to rebuild the country.\textsuperscript{69} From the late 1990s onwards, the UK has experienced a shift in the origin of the migrants as the group Central and Eastern Europeans has become more dominant while the share of people from former colonies has decreased. Throughout the 1990s, as a consequence of the end of the communist era, A8 migrants started to find their way to the UK again. Though at first the majority of this group of migrants consisted of seasonal workers and irregular labourers, it did lead to the setting up of various migration networks which helped their nationals adjust and find employment.\textsuperscript{70} These networks, then, greatly facilitated A8 migration to the UK after the 2004 enlargement. Especially Polish nationals have come in large numbers as they comprise by far the biggest part of the A8 migrants and even outnumber people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Caribbean in the UK in terms of first generation migrants since 2004.\textsuperscript{71}

\textbf{4.2.1 The 2004 Enlargement: The response of the Dutch and British governments}

Although the Netherlands and the UK had already experienced a significant influx of A8 migrants in the 1990s, it was nonetheless expected that the 2004 enlargement would bring about a considerable increase in these labour migrants to their countries. Considering that the economies of the acceding member states were still relatively underdeveloped compared to the Western European economies, the opening of the borders to these A8 migrants was bound to have an impact on migratory movements. Subsequently, this caused most EU member states to negotiate a transitional period with a maximum of seven years in order to prepare before nationals of the new members would have the same free movement rights as nationals from any other member state. The most important reason behind the temporary limit to the free movement right was the fear that A8 labour migration would become uncontrollable with national labour markets unfit to deal with the new situation. Consequently, the 2+3+2 system was created which granted EU15 states the freedom to impose quota or work permit restrictions for a period of two years. This period

\textsuperscript{69} Agnieszka Fihel and Pawel Kaczmarczyk, “Migration: A Threat or a Chance,” 31.

\textsuperscript{70} Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures? An investigation into recent Polish migration to the UK,” in \textit{A Continent Moving West? EU Enlargement and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe}, ed Richard Black, Godfried Engbersen, Marek Okólski and Cristina Pantiru (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 74.

might be extended for an additional three or even five years if states could convincingly show a need for the continuance of this measure.\textsuperscript{72}

\textit{4.2.2 The Netherlands: a work permit clause until 2007}

The Dutch government deemed it necessary to opt for a transitional period of two years during which a work permit system was enforced in order to limit A8 labour migration. As this mechanism was later extended by another year, until May 2007, the Netherlands has been regarded a ‘third wave’ country. The first wave countries comprised the UK, Ireland and Sweden which had already opened their borders in 2004; the second wave countries were Finland, Greece, Portugal and Spain which admitted A8 migrants freely from May 2006 onwards. In practice, the Dutch work permit system meant that A8 labourers could only migrate to the Netherlands and enter its labour market with a work permit. This work permit, however, could only be procured in case no Dutch nationals were available to fill the job position.\textsuperscript{73} Nevertheless, many authors have observed that the imposed restrictions were already largely eased by 2006 as a consequence of the great demand for A8 labour migrants on the Dutch labour market.\textsuperscript{74} Despite this need to attract A8 migrants to work in economic sectors where the labour market is tight, the fear of a recurrence of the events of the 1970s may have been an important argument to limit the inflow of A8 workers. Similar to the Turkish and Moroccan guest workers that permanently settled four decades ago, the A8 migrants were expected to remain in the Netherlands. In The Hague, for instance, an urban district is nowadays popularly called ‘Little Poland’ due to the extensive Polish community residing in this area. Here one can even find various Polish shops, pubs and churches serving in particular the needs of the Polish migrant population.

Even though it is certainly true that Poles have become a more regular and permanent feature of Dutch society as many have decided to reside in the host country, statistics show that most A8 migrants remain for a short period only before returning home.\textsuperscript{75} In this sense, one can identify an important change in Dutch migration policy in recent years as the government is currently more focused on accommodating the large influx of circular migrants. Before Dutch policy predominantly focused on restricting the number of migrants.

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} See, for instance, Engbersen, Snel and De Boom and Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger.
\textsuperscript{75} Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel and Jan de Boom, “A van full of Poles,” 118.
The British government, as mentioned above, decided against a transitional period for A8 migrants to enter the British labour market. It was therefore, together with Ireland and Sweden, a ‘first wave’ country allowing A8 nationals in the country from the moment of their countries’ accession. It has to be noted, though, that the UK and Ireland do not take part in the Schengen Agreement as these countries have their own passport-free zone called the Common Travel Area. Thus, until the British and Irish governments decide to join the Schengen Area the two islands will have a stronger control of their borders than the continental EU member states involved in Schengen.

In spite of this, the British government considered it necessary to take its own measures in response to the 2004 enlargement. These measures constituted a tightening of the access to social security benefits for A8 labour migrants. Accordingly, migrants from the newly acceding member states needed to pass both a ‘habitual residence’ test and a ‘right to reside’ test before they were entitled to live and work in the UK. The habitual residence test was drawn up in 1994 so that people claiming benefits from the British government first needed to prove that they are in fact habitually resident in the UK. The right to reside test requires migrants to be living in the UK and to be legally employed. Data from the Department for Work and Pensions show that the tightened access to social security benefits has proved effective as the percentage of adult overseas nationals claiming an out-of-work benefit within six months of registration dropped from 12.5 per cent in 2002-2003 to under 6 per cent in 2004-2005 and to only 3 per cent in 2007-2008.76 These numbers are based on National Insurance Number (NINo) allocations and since four A8 countries are in the top ten of NINo allocations to adult overseas nationals, it is plausible that this drop in benefit claimants is a consequence of government measures installed after 2004.

In addition, registration with the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) was also made compulsory.77 The WRS was a temporary measure of the British government which was conceived in order to keep track of the number of A8 labour migrants entering the British labour market. Migrants therefore were required to register in the first month after they had found employment; in case the migrant had more than one employer, it was mandatory to register

multiple times with the scheme.\(^{78}\) The WRS, however, was intended to function for a limited time only and is no longer in operation since April 2011.

5. Facts and Figures: A8 labour migration to the Netherlands and the UK since 2004

In recent years migrants from Eastern Europe have become more ‘visible’ in public debate in both the Netherlands and the UK. Phrases like ‘Polish carpenter’ and ‘Czech plumber’ have noiselessly slipped into public discourse and are often used in the context of national unemployment.\(^{79}\) This implies that the 2004 enlargement has had a substantial effect on migratory movements within the EU. Indeed, as previous sections have shown, A8 labour migration to the Netherlands and the UK already grew quite significantly in the years leading up to the Eastern enlargement. Moreover, only two years after the accession of the A8 countries it was observed that the migratory movements taking place due to this enlargement had brought about “the largest-ever migration wave to have arrived in the UK”.\(^{80}\) In the case of both countries Polish migrants have by far been the most dominant among the A8 migrants, which has caused Fihel and Kaczmarczyk to argue that “since 2004, in a very short period of time, they have become one of the most important, and dynamic, immigrant groups”.\(^{81}\) This section will focus on the A8 labour migration that occurred following the 2004 enlargement. First, migratory waves to the Netherlands will be elaborated upon, afterwards migration figures in the UK will be scrutinised.

5.1 Post-2004 A8 labour migration to the Netherlands: Exponential rise of Polish migration

As aforementioned, the Netherlands decided to impose temporary restrictions on labour market access for A8 labour migrants. As a result, the country only started to notice the effects of the free movement right of A8 nationals a few years after the 2004 enlargement, when most restrictions for migrants from the new EU member states had effectively been lifted. Being a ‘third wave’ country, the Netherlands only granted A8 migrants unrestricted access to its labour market from May 2007 onwards though it has been argued that most restrictions had already virtually disappeared in 2006.\(^{82}\) Since migration statistics are often incomplete as a consequence of migrants failing to

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\(^{78}\) Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures,” 75.


\(^{80}\) Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures,” 73.

\(^{81}\) Agnieszka Fihel and Pawel Kaczmarczyk, “Migration: A Threat or a Chance,” 45.

\(^{82}\) Godfried Engbersen, Erik Stuel and Jan de Boom, “A van full of Poles,” 115.
register making them invisible in official records, it is necessary to use a variety of sources to be able to draw accurate conclusions. Accordingly, the first set of data comes from the Central Statistics Office (CBS) and shows the number of A8 migrants that are registered in the Dutch municipal administrations, gemeentelijke basisadministratie (GBA). Migrants are required to register with the GBA when they intend to stay for a period of at least four months. According to estimations of CBS approximately one fourth of the A8 labour migrants is registered in municipal administrations though this number is steadily growing.83 Especially temporary labour migrants intending to stay for less than four months decide not to register. On the other hand, A8 nationals that do register have often found employment for a longer period and have decided to reside in the Netherlands for a number of years.84 Table 1 displays the number of A8 nationals registered in the GBA since 2007, that is, after the effects of enlargement had become evident.

Table 1: A8 nationals registered in the Municipal Administration (GBA) in the Netherlands, 2007 – April 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Czech &amp; Slovak Republic</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Slovenia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>34,831</td>
<td>5,736</td>
<td>7,033</td>
<td>1,233</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>41,533</td>
<td>6,185</td>
<td>7,513</td>
<td>1,397</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>57,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>50,518</td>
<td>7,183</td>
<td>8,218</td>
<td>1,625</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>68,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>57,496</td>
<td>8,279</td>
<td>8,456</td>
<td>2,027</td>
<td>1,184</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>78,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011*</td>
<td>66,044</td>
<td>9,377</td>
<td>9,182</td>
<td>2,708</td>
<td>1,885</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>89,939</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2011 data until April

Source: “Bevolking; generatie, geslacht, leeftijd en herkomstgroepering, 1 januari,” CBS, 13 April 2011.

From the data in Table 1 follows that in the case of four A8 countries the number of migrants registering with the GBA doubled between January 2007 and April 2011. In the case of Latvians this number even tripled, while the number of registrations made by other A8 nationals grew in slightly more moderate proportions. This may in part be a result of an increase in the stock of A8 migrants though it is also plausible that a number of these migrants had been present in the Netherlands prior to their country’s accession and decided to register when they could do so without needing a temporary work permit. Although Table 1 certainly suggests that the number of A8 migrants has considerably grown since the transitional period expired in April 2007, it is likely that these data insufficiently display the true effects of migration from Central and Eastern Europe. After all, A8 labour migration peaks during the summer months when many A8 nationals work in

84 Ibid.
Dutch agriculture and horticulture as temporary employees; these temporary migrants are usually not registered with the GBA since they generally stay less than four months in the host country.

Furthermore, in Figure 3 the GBA data for April 2011 are used to sort the A8 migrants according to their country of origin. According to Figure 3, nearly three out of four A8 migrants registering with the GBA have the Polish nationality.

**Figure 3** Nationality of A8 nationals registered with the Dutch Municipal Administration (GBA), April 2011

![Pie chart showing nationality distribution of A8 migrants registered with the GBA in April 2011.](chart)

Source: “Bevolking; generatie, geslacht, leeftijd en herkomstgroepering, 1 januari,” CBS, 13 April 2011.

Considering Poland’s history as an emigration country and the fact that it is by far the biggest country among the new EU member states, this outcome may have been expected. Especially when taking into account that organised labour mechanisms for Polish workers had already been present in the Netherlands since the 1990s. These mechanisms arose as a consequence of an increasing demand for CEE labourers on the Dutch labour market and consist of social networks and recruitment agencies which facilitate Polish nationals in finding housing and work and getting accustomed to the local culture. After the initial transition period these mechanisms could be used to ease migration flows so that Polish workers were able to move in large numbers to the Netherlands without needing a work permit. Still, three fourths of the Polish migrants were not registered with the GBA in 2011.\(^5\) Further, it follows that Hungarians and people from the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic also have a reasonable share in A8 nationals living in the Netherlands as each accounts for approximately 10 per cent. It has to be noted, though, that migrants from the Czech and Slovak Republics are still counted together in Dutch statistics despite the fact that they have been separate states since 1 January 1993. The share of migrants from the Baltic states, though their numbers are growing, is at present relatively small but this might change if labour mechanisms develop similar to the Polish ones with their increasing presence. The

number of Slovenian migrants is still negligible but this is in line with previous sections which have shown that wages and the unemployment rate in Slovenia are relatively good which could decrease the incentive to migrate.

However, since the primary focus of this paper is to establish to what extent labour migration from A8 countries has grown since the 2004 enlargement, it may be valuable to consider data dealing with this specific type of migration. Accordingly, Figure 4 shows the number of temporary work permits (TWV) issued to A8 nationals in the period that these migrants still required a work permit to formally access the Dutch labour market.

**Figure 4** Number of temporary work permits (TWV) issued to A8 nationals (1996-2006)


It is important to bear in mind that the figures in Figure 4 refer to work permits rather than individuals. As a result, these data are limited in the sense that they do not accurately reflect A8 labour migration since migrants are often able to obtain more than one permit in a given year. In addition, it should be noted that figures after 2006 are not interesting for the present study as A8 migrants no longer need a work permit to access the Dutch labour market since May 2007.

Nonetheless, the data in Figure 4 are still helpful in depicting the exponential increase in issued temporary work permits in the transitional period after the enlargement. Consequently, Figure 4 displays the capital role that Polish nationals have played in bringing about this rise in work permits as the increasing presence of other A8 nationals can only be considered relatively moderate compared to the figures of Polish nationals. Whereas the number of work permits issued

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to A8 nationals had been limited in the 1990s, TWVs were increasingly granted in the early 2000s. It is, however, difficult to argue that this necessarily signifies increased migration from A8 countries as a considerable number of labour migrants were already working irregularly in the Netherlands in the 1990s. Still, the fact that the number of TWVs issued to A8 migrants doubled between 2003 and 2004 and again between 2005 and 2006 cannot be omitted and does suggest a vast growth in A8 labour migration to the Netherlands in the first years following the enlargement. Thus, considering that an incremental rise in issued work permits occurred in the transitional period, it might be argued that there was a great demand for A8 labourers on the Dutch labour market. In this sense, the Dutch government may have used the temporary restrictions for A8 migrants not to limit migration but to effectively channel it.

Finally, data from CBS concerning the stock of A8 labour migrants after the transitional period was expired are displayed in Figure 5. It should be noted that irregular workers, the self-employed and maids are excluded from the data as it only shows persons employed in Dutch enterprises. The figures are based on payroll tax data that employers submitted to government authorities. The data in Figure 5 are probably the most accurate in depicting labour migration from A8 countries in absolute figures.

**Figure 5 Stock of A8 labour migrants in the Netherlands, 2006 – September 2011**

*2011 data until September

Subsequently, Figure 5 clearly outlines the dominance of Polish migrants among all A8 nationals that work in the Netherlands. Although both Polish migrants as well as the other A8 migrants have consistently increased in number since 2006, only the former might be considered responsible for the extensive stock of A8 labour migrants that currently resides in the
Netherlands. According to CBS, four out of five CEE labour migrants in the Netherlands are Polish.

Additionally, as women only account for 38 per cent of the migrants and the fact that this percentage is steadily falling clearly implies that A8 migrants, unlike the Mediterranean guest workers that settled in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s, do not intend to permanently reside in the host country. Indeed many A8 nationals are staying for periods shorter than four months and commute back and forth between the Netherlands and their home country.\(^{87}\) According to CBS, 60 per cent of the Polish migrants that arrived in the Netherlands since the year 2000 has already left the country. About 90 per cent of this group moved back to their country of origin, while smaller numbers migrated to Germany, Belgium and the UK.\(^{88}\) In addition, Figure 5 seems to suggest that the economic crisis that started in 2008 has had a limited effect on migration flows from the A8 countries to the Netherlands as it may only have slowed down the strong influx of labour migrants.

\textit{A8 labour migration to the UK after 2004: great underestimations by the government}

Previous sections have outlined that the British government, as opposed to the Dutch authorities, decided against the imposition of temporary restrictions on A8 labour migration from the newly acceded EU member states. As a result, the effects of the Eastern enlargement on migratory patterns were felt much earlier in the UK than in the Netherlands as the following data will show. Nevertheless, similar to the data available for A8 labour migration to the Netherlands, conclusions about migratory flows can only be drawn by using a variety of statistical sources, none of which without its limitations. The first statistics shown are provided by the Office for National Statistics, the official governmental body for statistics in the UK since 1996. Table 2 displays the inflows and outflows of A8 nationals between 2004 and 2010.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{lcccccccc}
\hline
\hline
Inflow & 53,000 & 76,000 & 92,000 & 112,000 & 89,000 & 68,000 & 86,000 \\
Outflow & 3,000 & 15,000 & 22,000 & 25,000 & 69,000 & 52,000 & 37,000 \\
Balance & +49,000 & +61,000 & +71,000 & +87,000 & +20,000 & +16,000 & +49,000 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Inflows and outflows of A8 nationals in British society}
\end{table}


Despite that these data primarily focus on long-term migrants and therefore largely exclude seasonal migrants, Table 2 is still valuable in illustrating the increased presence of A8 migrants in British society. Accordingly, it follows from Table 2 that since 2004 the annual inflow of A8 nationals has grown from over 50 thousand in 2004 to approximately 90 thousand between 2006 and 2010. There was a peak of 112 thousand migrants in 2007 and a trough of 68 thousand migrants in 2009. In addition, it is interesting to note that there seems to be a tendency among A8 nationals to increasingly migrate from the UK as well. In 2004, for instance, the number of A8 nationals migrating from the UK comprised only 6 per cent of the people migrating to this country. In 2008 and 2009, however, this number had already risen to 78 and 76 per cent respectively.

The fact that A8 nationals more and more decide to leave the UK may in part be explained by the economic slowdown of recent years as one of the primary reasons for migration is the possibility to improve one’s financial situation. Nevertheless, it has also been argued that recent migration from A8 countries has increasingly become temporary as opposed to permanent migration which used to be the norm in the 1980s and early 1990s. Similar trends have been identified in the Netherlands where a substantial number of A8 nationals has migrated back to the country of origin or to another EU member state. This new type of migration has been called ‘incomplete migration’.89

According to Górny, incomplete migration usually deals with poorly skilled people from peripheral regions and contains four main features. First, mobility is temporary or circular as labour migrants only wish to reside for a limited time in the host country. Second, both the length of stay and the type of work that is carried out in the host country is highly irregular. Migrants do not limit themselves to a specific type of job and let the duration of their time abroad depend on the length of their contracts. Third, the motivation behind migration arises from an unstable occupational position in the country of origin and a ‘loose’ social status in its society. In other words, many people undertaking this kind of migration are generally not strongly embedded in their environments, for instance because of an important job. Fourth, there is regular contact with family in the home country, which most of the time is being sent a significant share of the wages earned in the host country.90 However, though most features in Górny’s definition of incomplete migration are still applicable, Drinkwater, Eade and Garapich have stated that the vast majority of

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90 Ibid., 8.
A8 nationals arriving in the UK have relatively high educational levels. In the long run, it is plausible that remigration might become an even more frequent phenomenon when the national economies of the A8 countries improve. After all, when wages rise and unemployment rates drop in Central and Eastern Europe, the motivation to temporarily migrate to an economically more affluent country is likely to decrease significantly.

Considering that this paper is essentially interested in labour migration from A8 countries, it may be useful to compare the above statistics with figures that centre more on labour migrants. The Labour Force Survey (LFS), for instance, shows the stock of A8 migrants aged sixteen or over living in the UK. The LFS is a survey conducted every quarter by the Office for National Statistics and provides information about households living at private addresses in the UK. It should be noted that LFS figures are merely estimates based on small sample sizes for A8 migrants. Consequently, LFS data may underestimate the number of A8 migrants, particularly migrants staying for less than six months. Table 3 shows the stock of A8 migrants aged 16 or over between the summer of 2003 and the summer of 2005.

Table 3 Stock A8 migrants aged 16 or over in the UK, summer 2003-summer 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stock of A8 migrants (16+)</th>
<th>A8 migrants as percentage of migrant population (16+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2003</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2004</td>
<td>165,000</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2005</td>
<td>245,000</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to the LFS, A8 labour migration had grown more than twice in size between the summer of 2003 and the summer of 2005. In 2003 the number of A8 migrants of at least 16 years old was estimated to be 110 thousand accounting for 2.8 per cent of the total migrant population aged 16 or over; in 2005, this figure had increased to 245 thousand making up 5.6 per cent of all migrants over 16 residing in the UK. The sharp increase of A8 labour migrants in the first years after the 2004 enlargement as shown by the LFS is further supported by statistics of the Accession Monitoring Report, a joint report by the Home Office, the Department for Work and Pensions,

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91 Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures,” 82.
HM Revenue & Customs, and the Department for Communities and Local Government. The data used in this report consist of WRS applications which record gross inflows only, meaning that the number of applications does not necessarily reflect the exact number of migrants: an individual migrant may apply more than once for the WRS in case he has more than one employer. In addition, it is important to point out that although migrants are legally required to register with the WRS a considerable number still fails to do so while self-employed workers do not need to register and are therefore excluded from these figures. Accordingly, Table 4 displays the number of WRS applications by A8 migrants in the first four years after the 2004 enlargement.

Table 4 Number of approved WRS applications by nationality, May 2004 – September 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Slovakia</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Czech Republic</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Slovenia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>71,025</td>
<td>19,270</td>
<td>13,020</td>
<td>8,670</td>
<td>8,255</td>
<td>3,620</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>125,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>127,325</td>
<td>22,990</td>
<td>22,035</td>
<td>12,960</td>
<td>10,575</td>
<td>6,355</td>
<td>2,560</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>204,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>162,495</td>
<td>17,065</td>
<td>21,755</td>
<td>9,490</td>
<td>8,345</td>
<td>7,060</td>
<td>1,475</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>227,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>150,255</td>
<td>14,260</td>
<td>22,450</td>
<td>6,285</td>
<td>7,510</td>
<td>8,875</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>210,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008*</td>
<td>83,400</td>
<td>8,380</td>
<td>14,925</td>
<td>4,725</td>
<td>5,110</td>
<td>7,730</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>125,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>594,500</td>
<td>81,965</td>
<td>75,715</td>
<td>42,130</td>
<td>39,795</td>
<td>33,640</td>
<td>7,495</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>894,770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2008 data until the third quarter (September)

Similar to the figures of the Office for National Statistics and the LFS, the WRS numbers clearly show that there was a substantial rise in applications by A8 nationals in the first year after the Eastern enlargement. Particularly remarkable about the above figures is that WRS applications already steadily dropped after 2005 in the case of most A8 nationals with Poland as an important exception. Moreover, one can identify a considerable decrease in the total number of applications by A8 nationals after 2007 which is consistent with the data shown in Table 2.

Figure 6 Nationality of WRS applicants, May 2004 – September 2008

Based on the figures of Table 4, Figure 6 clarifies the distribution of WRS applications by the applicants’ country of origin. The fact that Polish nationals account for the vast majority of the applications made by A8 nationals may not be entirely surprising when considering Poland’s population size and the country’s high unemployment rate. Still, it is noteworthy that two thirds of the WRS applications were made by Poles even though Poland only represents just over 50 per cent of the total population of the A8 countries. 93 Although this might suggest that Polish nationals are most likely to migrate to the UK, Gilpin, Henty, Lemos, Portes and Bullen have argued that Lithuanians have the greatest propensity to move to Britain relative to the size of the country’s population. Poland only comes in fourth as even Latvians and Slovaks are, in relative terms, more likely to enter the UK. 94 Of all the A8 countries, Slovenians are the least likely to migrate though this is probably because of the country’s economic situation as wages are higher than in other A8 countries while the unemployment rate is considerably lower as well.

As a final point of reference, this paper looks at the number of National Insurance Number (NINo) registrations made by A8 nationals between 2004 and 2008 as it could offer a more accurate view of the number of labour migrants present in the UK. NINo registrations are generally regarded as a reliable source since registration is essential in order to be legally employed in the UK. 95 Nevertheless, it also has its shortcomings as registration is only required the first time migrants arrive in the UK, while it does not provide any information on how long migrants have already been residing in the country. NINo registrations are displayed in Figure 7.

**Figure 7** NINo registrations of A8 nationals, 2004-2008


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93 Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich “What’s behind the figures,” 77.
95 Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures,” 75.
The data in Figure 7 dealing with the number of NINo registrations once again confirm that there was a sharp increase in migration from the A8 countries in the first years after the 2004 enlargement. An explanation for this significant rise in NINo registrations early on might lie in the fact that A8 nationals who had been irregularly employed in Britain prior to their country’s accession decided to register in the post-enlargement period. The figures for most countries peak either in 2006 or 2007 and start to fall again after that date. As previously noted, this could be a consequence of the opening up of the other European labour markets. In addition, the last year also coincides with the start of the financial crisis, meaning that job vacancies might have become scarcer in that period. In addition, one needs to bear in mind that these figures may still underestimate the number of A8 nationals employed in the British labour market as many short-term migrants, especially those staying for a few months only, might not bother to register.

Thus, although a considerable influx of A8 labour migrants certainly took place in the UK as a consequence of the accession of eight CEE countries, this may not entirely explain the commotion that it brought about. Arguably an important reason why the attention suddenly became centred on this particular group of migrants is the fact that the British government had greatly underestimated the number of A8 migrants that would arrive to its country. In the first years after the 2004 enlargement, the number of migrants from the newly acceded member states registering for work in the UK turned out to be twenty times higher than government predictions had shown.96

A study by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has noted that the grave miscalculations are the result of inadequately taking into account the restrictions imposed by most other EU member states causing A8 migrants to divert to the UK. As mentioned in the previous section, the UK, Ireland and Sweden were the only countries of the EU15 that opened their borders to A8 migrants from the moment the ten new member states acceded to the Union. This is likely to have pushed migration figures from the A8 countries to the UK upwards. In addition, the government’s focus on permanent rather than temporary migrants and the fact that 30 to 40 per cent of the migrants registering for work was already living in the UK have been identified as causes for the great discrepancy between predictions and actual figures.97 Indeed, the 2004 enlargement did not only provide a stimulus for A8 migrants to migrate to one of the EU15 countries, it also provided an opportunity for irregular migrants that were already present in these countries to legalise their residence.98 Even though the IPPR research may sufficiently explain the

96 Catherine Drew and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, EU Enlargement: Bulgaria and Romania, 8.
97 Ibid., 8-9.
distorted figures, one might understand why the arrival of an unanticipated high number of A8 migrants has instigated media interest and public debate around the issue.

5.3 Comparing A8 migration to the Netherlands and the UK: new patterns of migration

In spite of the fact that the stock of A8 labour migrants in the Netherlands and the UK has significantly increased since the 2004 enlargement, labour migration from this specific region in itself cannot be considered a new phenomenon. As previously mentioned, migration from A8 countries, most notably Poland, dates back to the nineteenth century though there have been long interruptions in which migration was limited. Accordingly, A8 migration recovered virtually as soon as the Soviet hegemony had ended and the communist curtain had vanished.

Nevertheless, two important changes have been ascertained in recent migration flows compared to the migration occurring before and immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Firstly, the nature of migration has changed as the majority of A8 migrants no longer desires to permanently reside in the host country but prefer ‘incomplete migration’ which has also been termed ‘liquid migration’. According to Godfried Engbersen, liquid migration can be defined as “[t]ransitory, legally stratified, and temporary patterns of transnational work and settlement”. As a result, migration to the Netherlands and the UK has increasingly become differentiated while it has led to more diverse and floating populations in the host countries. Subsequently, this trend is further underlined by the fact that a decreasing proportion of the A8 migrants is female whereas the dominant group of migrants comprises men between the age of twenty and forty. This clearly suggests that family migration has largely been replaced by labour migration. In addition, more than half of the Polish migrants arriving in the Netherlands since the start of this millennium has already left the country, which indicates the temporary character of present migration patterns. In this sense, Engbersen, Snel and De Boom have observed that

The fairly stable migration patterns that marked the period 1950-1990 have dissolved into more complex, transitory patterns in terms of transient settlement – transnational or otherwise – and shifting migration status.

100 Ibid., 8.
103 Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel and Jan de Boom, “A van full of Poles,” 117.
A possible explanation for the emergence of this new type of migration could be that people from Central and Eastern Europe decided to permanently migrate with the intention of escaping the communist regime in the aftermath of the Second World War and the Cold War. At present, however, all CEE countries that acceded in 2004 are governed by democratic regimes and as a result the decision to migrate is no longer motivated by political reasons but almost exclusively by economic reasons. This might be why most A8 labour migrants are less inclined to permanently reside in the host country.

Secondly, nationals of A8 countries increasingly settle in peripheral regions whereas before labour migrants almost exclusively lived in the biggest cities. With regard to the UK, London is still the most popular destination for A8 labour migrants as it receives nearly 30 per cent of the A8 labourers that migrate to the UK. However, it has been ascertained that London is becoming a less popular destination for A8 migrants as they more and more settle in peripheral regions of the UK, such as the West Midlands, South West England and Northern Ireland. In the Netherlands, a similar trend has been identified as a decreasing percentage of A8 nationals migrates to the four biggest cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. Of the biggest group of A8 migrants, that is, Polish nationals, a little over 20 per cent comes to live in one of the four biggest municipalities. Consequently, A8 migrants increasingly reside in the provinces of Noord-Brabant, Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland which are the regions with the biggest agriculture and horticulture industries.

Furthermore, as there has been a substantial increase in the stock of A8 labour migrants in both the Netherlands and the UK since the Eastern enlargement, it might be argued that there is a great demand for A8 labour migrants on the Dutch and British labour markets. Especially the sharp increase in work permits issued to A8 nationals in the transitional period suggests that A8 migrants are requested by employers. Even though the influx of A8 migrants to the UK has seen a minor drop after 2007, this might be explained by the fact that the UK opened its labour market to A8 migrants in an earlier stage than the Netherlands. In addition, A8 migration may have been diverted to other EU member states whereas another explanation could be that the industries are still in demand in A8 countries.

109 Ibid.
employing A8 nationals in the Netherlands may have been less vulnerable to the economic crisis than the ones employing A8 migrants in the UK. In any case, it should be noted that the number of A8 nationals is on the rise in both countries.

**6. Labour market implications of post-2004 migration**

After having discussed the migratory patterns of A8 nationals to the Netherlands and the UK after the 2004 enlargement, this paper will now explore the effects of this migration on the Dutch and British labour markets. As noted in previous sections, A8 labour migrants have become a much more visible part of the Dutch and British societies which has, in turn, led to increased interest from media and politics in this migrant group. Rhetoric in media and political debates seem to suggest that the rising numbers of A8 migrants could lead to considerable problems such as social unrest and higher unemployment rates. At the same time, the increased presence of A8 migrants also implies that parts of the Dutch and British economies thrive on cheap labour from Central and Eastern Europe.

Indeed, the fact that the number of A8 migrants rose significantly in the first years after enlargement despite the restrictive measures implies that there are many job vacancies in the Netherlands and the UK that apparently cannot be filled by Dutch, British or other EU-citizens for that matter. On the other hand, the alleged willingness of A8 nationals to work for lower wages than Dutch and British nationals may also play a role. In addition, the fact that migration has increasingly become temporary with a considerable number of A8 nationals staying for a period shorter than four months, it may be interesting to see what impact temporary migrants have on the Dutch and British labour markets. This new type of migration has caused Claire Wallace to suggest that the term ‘mobility’ might be more applicable nowadays than ‘migration’, though for the sake of clarity this paper will keep on using the term migration, thereby distinguishing between permanent and temporary migration.

Accordingly, in order to be able to verify the implications of post-2004 migration on the Dutch and British labour markets this section will establish in which sectors A8 nationals are most likely to find employment. After establishing the sectors that most frequently employ A8 migrants, this paper will then compare the proportion of natives working in these sectors with the share of A8 migrants in order to be able to argue to what extent these two groups might compete for the same type of jobs. Moreover, besides the type of work that A8 nationals usually carry out,

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this paper will discuss the wage difference between native workers and A8 migrants. Additionally, to determine the effects of migration on the national labour force these data will be compared with employment rates in the Netherlands and the UK.

6.1 A8 migrants on the Dutch labour market

Previous sections have shown that the stock of A8 labour migrants in the Netherlands has continuously grown in the past years, even in the transitional period in which A8 migrants needed a work permit to formally access the Dutch labour market. However, when comparing the number of A8 migrants to the total number of persons aged between 15 and 65, i.e., the working age population, it has to be concluded that the share of A8 nationals is presently not very extensive. Accordingly, nearly 21 per cent of the working age population in the Netherlands consisted of migrants while migrants from A8 countries accounted for about 2 per cent of this population in 2008.\footnote{Arbeidsmarktsituatie van allochtonen,” Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 23 February 2011. \url{http://www.cbs.nl/nl-NL/menu/themas/arbeid-sociale-zekerheid/cijfers/incidenteel/maatwerk/2009-arbeidsmarktsituatie-allochtonen-cm.htm} (accessed 3 February 2012).} Even when focusing strictly on the Dutch labour force, that is, people in the Netherlands that are either employed or seeking employment, A8 migrants only comprised 2.5 per cent in 2008.\footnote{Ernest Berkhout, Arjan Heyma & Siemen van der Werff, \textit{De economische impact van arbeidsmigratie: verdringingseffecten 1999-2008} (Amsterdam: SEO Economisch Onderzoek, 2011), 8.} Based on these figures it might be expected that the arrival of A8 migrants in itself has not been extensive enough to have detrimental effects on the Dutch labour market.

Figure 8 Temporary work permits issued to A8 migrants by type of profession and nationality, 2006

As aforementioned, the Dutch government granted an exponential number of A8 nationals a temporary work permit in the first years after the 2004 enlargement. It might therefore be interesting to verify in which sectors of the economy A8 labour migrants are particularly required. Consequently, in Figure 8 the temporary work permits issued in 2006 to A8 nationals are sorted by type of profession and nationality.

It may be clear from Figure 8 that the majority of the temporary A8 migrants that arrived in the Netherlands in 2006 found employment in the agriculture and horticulture sector. However, it is interesting to see the considerable differences that exist between the nationalities in terms of the type of profession that they carry out. Most Poles and people from the Baltic states end up in agriculture or horticulture whereas most Hungarians and Slovenians seem to prefer a job in manufacturing. Czechs and Slovaks, still grouped together as people from the former Czechoslovakia, often find employment in the transport sector. Despite the differences between the different nationalities, it can be ascertained that A8 migrants were for the most part required for low-skilled jobs on the Dutch labour market. In addition, a relatively small proportion of A8 nationals worked in science while there is a clear absence of other high-skilled jobs among the granted work permits. This clearly suggests that A8 migrants were almost exclusively granted a work permit in the transitional period to carry out low-skilled work, which may contradict somewhat “the established objective of encouraging knowledge circulation throughout the EU”. Furthermore, as the stock of A8 migrants in the Netherlands grew even stronger after the temporary restrictions had been lifted, it might be interesting to see whether there have been changes since A8 nationals were able to use their free movement right.

**Figure 9** Top ten industries in which A8 nationals work by sector, March 2011


To that end, Figure 9 displays the top ten industries in which A8 migrants were employed in March 2011. It has to be noted that the data in Figure 9 differ from the data in Figure 8 in that the former are based on registered workers paying taxes in the Netherlands whereas the latter deals with work permits. Therefore, Figure 8 focused exclusively on temporary migrants whereas Figure 9 centres around long-term migrants.

At first sight, the data presented in Figure 9 give a rather different view of A8 nationals on the Dutch labour market compared to Figure 8. Firstly, it appears that nearly 70 per cent of all A8 migrants are working in business services even though this category was not included in Figure 8. This, however, might be explained by the fact that temporary work permits are usually not granted to people working in the business sector. Business services comprise work in a number of industries ranging from consultancy and marketing to operational services such as security and cleaning services. Many people in this category have found work in recruitment and employment agencies or in facility management, which is usually not the type of work carried out by temporary migrants. As the category business services includes a great variety of services across different sectors in the economy, this might explain why many A8 migrants are listed as being employed in business services. Further, considering that work in the agricultural sector is for the most part seasonal, it might be logical that many temporary migrants staying for a short period are not included in the data of Figure 9. In addition, it is clear that apart from the A8 migrants working in the business sector most A8 nationals have low-skilled jobs in transport, agriculture, manufacturing or construction. This is consistent with the data on temporary work permits granted in 2006.

To see whether A8 labour migration has a complementary or a substitutionary effect on the Dutch labour market, it may be useful to compare the percentage of A8 nationals working in certain industries with the proportion of Dutch native workers in these sectors. For that reason Figure 10 depicts the percentages of Dutch nationals, A8 long-term migrants, and A8 temporary migrants working in a number of sectors of the Dutch economy. From Figure 10 it follows that in most sectors where a substantial proportion of Dutch nationals work, the share of A8 migrants is considerably lower. This is the case in, for instance, the educational and health care sectors. Temporary migrants from A8 countries in particular do not seem to be a threat to the employment rate of Dutch nationals. Additionally, it should be noted that, considering the modest share of A8 migrants in the Dutch labour force, their presence may not have a significant impact on Dutch employment rates. Still, especially the high percentage of temporary migrants working in the agriculture and fisheries sector compared to Dutch workers does seem to suggest that A8 nationals are in most cases complementary to the Dutch labour force.
Nevertheless, Figure 10 cannot be presented as conclusive proof that A8 labour migrants in general do not compete with Dutch nationals for jobs as it has become apparent in previous sections that a much higher percentage of A8 migrants works in low-skilled jobs compared to natives; this means that the presence of A8 migrants might have a substitutionary effect in low-paying sectors of the economy. In addition, it should be noted that nearly 55 per cent of the A8 temporary migrants and over 25 per cent of the long-term migrants from A8 countries work via recruitment agencies, meaning that these migrants could not be allocated to a specific sector as they might do a variety of work.

In spite of the fact that most A8 labour migrants find employment in low-skilled jobs, it has been verified that the greater part of these migrants has a higher educational level than the average Dutch worker. Accordingly, only one in four A8 migrants arriving in the Netherlands between 2000 and 2006 was low educated, which implies that many A8 migrants work in professions that do not correspond with their levels of education.\textsuperscript{114} Subsequently, it has been ascertained that ‘de-skilling’ often occurs as a consequence of cross-border mobility. De-skilling, as defined by Bauder, is the phenomenon that “[migrants] are highly educated, yet accept work

\textsuperscript{114} Jan de Boom, Afke Weltevrede, Sara Rezaï & Godfried Engbersen, \textit{Oost-Europeanen in Nederland. Een verkenning van de maatschappelijke positie van migranten uit Oost-Europa en migranten uit voormalig Joegoslavië} (Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit, 2008), 41.
for lower wages in occupations outside of their formal training”.  

This, in turn, leads to ‘brain waste’ as high-skilled migrants from A8 countries end up carrying out low-skilled jobs in the host country. When a migrant exchanges his job in a sector corresponding to his educational level for one that has a lower occupational status, this might be called ‘occupational skidding’. However, one needs to bear in mind that A8 migrants, regardless of their educational background, often only qualify for low-skilled work in the host country due to, for instance, language barriers which may prevent A8 nationals from taking up employment in high-skilled professions abroad.

Although de-skilling as a consequence of A8 migration is likely to have rather negative effects on the country of origin due to the loss of high-skilled labour, it does seem to be rather positive for countries such as the Netherlands. Accordingly, A8 migrants are more inclined to fill positions below their educational level in low-paying sectors of the economy than native workers. Moreover, it has been put forward that Dutch agricultural companies that considered relocating their business outside of the Netherlands due to a lack of motivated workers were able to stay as a result of the arrival of A8 migrants. This implies that A8 migrants are more likely to fill the gaps on the Dutch labour market rather than replace native workers. In addition, it may be tempting for A8 nationals to migrate to the Netherlands to do low-skilled jobs as a consequence of the substantial wage differences within the EU. Even if A8 migrants work for wages below the Dutch minimum wage, they still might earn considerably more than they would if they carried out a job more suited to their skills in the country of origin.

Since A8 migrants often have no problems with working for lower wages than is customary, employers have found a number of strategies to circumvent official wage levels. Consequently, employers occasionally pay A8 migrants partly the minimum wage while overtime is paid below minimum wage levels. Another tactic for employers is to pay A8 migrants less than minimum wage but to provide them with housing, while it has previously been mentioned that more and more A8 nationals register as being self-employed so that they are not tied to the statutory minimum wage. Most employers, however, pay A8 migrants wages that are in line with collective wage agreements for their respective sector according to employers’ organisations.

Although it might be assumed that the arrival of an increasing number of A8 migrants working for

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118 Ibid., 131.
119 Ibid.
lower wages than customary could bring about a fall in wages, there is at present little evidence of a drop in wages for low-skilled work in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{120}

Thus, the data presented so far seem to suggest that the increased migration from A8 countries has not had a significant effect on either wage levels or job displacement on the Dutch labour market. However, it has to be noted that these data almost exclusively deal with the situation prior to the economic crisis. The outcomes presented above may therefore partially depend on the relatively favourable economic climate that existed a few years ago when the labour market was tight and the effect of A8 migration might have been limited. In this regard, it is interesting to identify what impact the economic recession has had on employment rates of Dutch nationals and A8 migrants on the Dutch labour market. Figure 11, then, compares the employment rates of Dutch nationals and A10 migrants, that is, migrants from A8 countries, Bulgaria and Romania, in June 2008 with those in June 2010.

\textbf{Figure 11} Employment rates of Dutch nationals and A10 nationals, June 2008 – June 2010

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure11.png}
\end{center}


The data in Figure 11 are based on a study of the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), an independent research centre of the European Trade Union Confederation. According to the data in Figure 11, it can be concluded that the economic crisis has predictably had adverse effects for both Dutch nationals and migrants from A10 countries. However, it may be clear that the crisis has had a much stronger impact on A10 nationals as their employment rate decreased with about 7

\footnote{\textsuperscript{120} Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel and Jan de Boom, “A van full of Poles,” 131.}
per cent compared to a fall of less than 1 per cent in the case of Dutch nationals. Although it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from these data as the sectors employing A10 migrants could simply have been hit harder by the crisis than other sectors, Figure 11 does suggest that Dutch employers prefer to lay off A10 migrants rather than Dutch nationals in times of economic recession. Moreover, considering that the employment rate of A10 nationals was higher than the employment rate of Dutch nationals in the period leading up to the economic crisis, it might be argued that the employment rate of A10 migrants is more sensitive to the economic cycle compared to the rather stable employment rate of Dutch nationals. This may not be altogether surprising since workers from the A10 countries are often temporary employees and employers usually first lay off temporary employees in times of economic slowdown. However, the stronger decrease in the employment rate of A10 nationals could also be explained by the fact that A8 migration in the period of the economic crisis continued to grow. It is therefore understandable that when the supply of labour increases in a time of economic stagnation, employment rates must in consequence drop.

6.2 A8 migrants on the British labour market

Similarly to the Netherlands, the number of A8 migrants on the British labour market has vastly increased since the 2004 enlargement despite a slowdown of A8 migration to the UK after 2007. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the share of A8 migrants in the working age population, that is, persons aged between 16 and 64, is still rather small. Accordingly, migrants comprise in total 12 per cent of the working age population in the UK, while the share of A8 migrants was less than 1 per cent in 2006. However, in accordance with the sharp increase of migrants from A8 countries that has been outlined before, it also follows from LFS data that one in three migrants that arrived since 2004 was an A8 national. It is, therefore, doubtful that the presence of A8 migrants is currently extensive enough to negatively influence the British labour market, for instance, by lowering employment rates of British nationals.

Before turning to employment rates, it may be useful to verify in which sectors of the economy A8 migrants in most cases find employment. Accordingly, Figure 12 depicts the top ten sectors in which A8 migrants were working between May 2004 and September 2008 based on WRS registrations.

122 Ibid.
From Figure 12 it can be concluded that migrants from all A8 countries find employment in the same industries though there are small differences in how these migrants are divided across the different sectors. The majority of A8 migrants registered to work in administration, business and managerial services as on average 40 per cent worked in this sector. However, one should bear in mind that the majority of migrants working in the administration, business and management sector work for recruitment agencies and could therefore be employed in various sectors. In addition, this sector was in the case of six out of eight countries the most significant industry with only Hungarians and Slovenians having a higher proportion of migrants working in the hospitality and catering sector. Furthermore, an IPPR study states that the most common job among A8 migrants is working as an operative or packer in factories and warehouses. Work in the agricultural sector is also quite popular, especially among migrants from the Baltic states, though this type of work is largely seasonal with the majority of people only being employed between April and September. Further, the study shows that only a low percentage of A8 migrants works in high-skilled jobs though there has been an increase of this migrant group in such sectors. The number of registered doctors from A8 countries, principally from Polish descent, has substantially risen between 2005 and 2007.

In order to determine to what extent A8 migrants compete with British nationals for the same jobs, it may be important to see how many Brits are employed in sectors where most

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123 Naomi Pollard, Maria Latorre & Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, *Floodgates or turnstiles? Post-EU enlargement migration flows to (and from) the UK* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 2008), 35.
124 Ibid., 36.
nationals from A8 countries find work. Consequently, Figure 13 shows the four sectors of the economy, as defined by the LFS, in which most A8 and A2 workers are employed and compares the proportions with the proportion of British nationals working in those particular sectors.

**Figure 13** A8/A2 migrants arrived since 2004 compared with UK nationals, by industry, 2007

It should be noted that Figure 13 combines A8 migrants and A2 migrants, i.e. people from Bulgaria and Romania. Although the four main industries that employ Central and Eastern European workers in Figure 13 do not completely correspond with the data from Figure 12, this might be explained by the fact that the LFS disposes of different data than the WRS whereas Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are not included in Figure 12. In addition, the LFS may have used slightly different categories than those used during WRS registrations. According to Figure 13, the four sectors in which roughly 75 per cent of all A8 and A2 migrants are employed are considerably less popular among British nationals. Less than half of the British nationals that are part of the working population work in these sectors, which for the most part consist of low-skilled jobs. In all four sectors the employment rate is higher among migrants from the newly acceded member states than among British nationals. The difference in employment rates is sharpest in the manufacturing sector in which nearly one third of all A8 and A2 migrants is employed compared to an employment rate of only 13 per cent amongst UK-born nationals.

It seems therefore that low-skilled jobs are more popular among migrants from the A8 and A2 countries than among British nationals. However, as in the case of the Netherlands this does not mean that merely low-qualified workers from the A8 countries are attracted to migrate to the UK. In fact, A8 migrants employed in occupations not commensurate with their educational levels might even prevail in post-accession migration. According to Drinkwater, Eade and
Garapich only 9 per cent of the Poles and 19 per cent of the other A8 migrants arriving in the UK between 2004 and 2007 were low educated.\(^\text{125}\) In spite of this, three out of four A8 migrants had either routine or semi-routine jobs, which are typically low-skilled professions.\(^\text{126}\) From these data it follows that similarly to the Netherlands de-skilling is common among A8 migrants migrating to the UK.

Although the occurrence of de-skilling is generally not considered positive, it seems that the European Commission welcomes this trend to a certain extent. Accordingly, after having acknowledged that an important part of the A8 migrants is relatively high-skilled, the European Commission wrote in its report of February 2006 that

> mobility from EU-10 Member States [the A8 countries plus Cyprus and Malta] may have positive effects on labour markets by relieving labour shortages in certain areas. New jobs can be created, for example in the construction and in the domestic and catering services sectors that would risk not being filled otherwise in some countries.\(^\text{127}\)

The de-skilling that currently occurs when A8 nationals migrate to another EU member state was probably not the rationale behind the EU’s promotion of cross-border mobility but it might be argued that the tacit approval of this phenomenon by the Commission is rather sensible. Although it is certainly regrettable that A8 labour migrants do not always perform the jobs that they were trained to do, it is equally understandable that A8 nationals decide to work abroad in low-paying sectors when domestic unemployment rates are high and wages in other countries are higher than at home.

Curiously, it has been observed that besides the willingness of A8 migrants to do low-skilled work, they are also prepared to work for lower wages than native workers. As a result, it has been identified that A8 migrants earn approximately 14 per cent less than British nationals.\(^\text{128}\) Moreover, counting only A8 migrants that arrived after the 2004 enlargement, the wage difference with UK-born workers is 18 per cent, while non-A8 migrants earn on average 20 per cent more.\(^\text{129}\) As the vast majority of A8 migrants works in low-paying occupations, it has been said that 75 per cent of the registered A8 workers earned less than 6 pounds per hour in the first

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\(^{125}\) Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures,” 82.

\(^{126}\) Ibid., 85.


\(^{129}\) Ibid.
four years after the 2004 enlargement. Additionally, it is interesting to note that for most British employers the strong ‘work ethic’ of A8 migrants is the predominant reason to hire these migrants rather than lower wages.

However, the data shown in Figure 13 and the fact that A8 migrants generally earn less than native workers are not conclusive enough to make any strong arguments as to whether migrants and natives compete for the same jobs. In this regard, the overall employment rates of A8 migrants and British nationals over a longer period might be helpful in clarifying the impact that migration from A8 countries has had on the British labour market. As a result, Figure 14 reproduces the employment rates of UK-born workers and A8 migrants, in the graph depicted as ‘EU8 born’, on the British labour market between the second quarter of 2001 and the fourth quarter of 2007, that is, between June 2001 and December 2007.

Figure 14 UK-born and A8 migrant employment rate, June 2001 – December 2007

Source: Lemos & Portes, “The impact of migration from the new European Union Member States,” 18.

Figure 14 clearly suggests that the employment rate of A8 migrants on the British labour market has had no discernible effect on the employment rate of British nationals. Accordingly, the employment rate of UK-born citizens has been stable as it fluctuated between 75 and 76 per cent in the period June 2001 - December 2007. It is, however, remarkable to observe the pace at which the employment rate of A8 migrants overtook the employment rate of non-migrants after the CEE countries joined the EU in May 2004. Within a year after accession, the employment rate of A8 nationals had already risen from a little over 60 per cent to the same employment rate of British nationals, that is, over 75 per cent. From the beginning of 2006 the employment rate of A8 nationals appears to have become rather stable around 82 per cent. Nevertheless, there is no

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130 Stephen Drinkwater, John Eade, and Michal Garapich, “What’s behind the figures,” 86.
131 Catherine Drew and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, EU Enlargement: Bulgaria and Romania, 12.
evidence based on Figure 14 that the significant increase in the employment rate of A8 nationals has in any way led to adverse consequences for the employment rate of British nationals. In addition, Blanchflower, Saleheen and Shadforth have come to similar conclusions as their study has shown that in the six British regions where the share of A8 migrants had been dropping, three regions had seen the largest increase in unemployment rates. At the same time, the regions with the biggest rise in migration from the A8 countries had seen the smallest growth in unemployment rates. Consequently, it has been argued that most labour migrants prefer to move to regions where unemployment rates are lowest and job opportunities greatest.

However, the data presented above merely deal with the situation on the British labour market before the economic crisis. It might therefore be useful to have a look at the change in the employment rates of British nationals and A10 nationals as a consequence of the economic crisis. Accordingly, Figure 15 compares the employment rates of British nationals and A10 nationals in June 2008 with those of June 2010.

**Figure 15** Employment rates of British nationals and A10 nationals, June 2008 – June 2010

According to Figure 15, the British labour market was negatively affected by the economic crisis as the employment rates of both British nationals and A10 nationals fell between 2008 and 2010. Compared to the Netherlands, the fall in employment rates is more equal for British and A10 nationals, though it is noteworthy that native workers were slightly more affected than A10 nationals. Again, it is hard to make any strong statements based on this graph as it does not

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133 Ibid.
specify which sectors of the economy were hit hardest by the economic recession. In addition, it is important to note that migration from A8 countries to the UK decreased during this period which, in turn, might in part explain why the employment rate of A10 migrants diminished with a smaller percentage than the employment rate of British nationals.

6.3 Comparing A8 migrants on the Dutch and British labour markets: filling the gaps

After having examined the position of A8 migrants on the Dutch and British labour markets, the following can be ascertained. In both countries the stock of A8 migrants as well as their employment rates have been increasing in the first years after accession when the economic climate was still rather favourable. With the arrival of the economic crisis, however, the employment rates of this migrant group dropped in the Netherlands and the UK though considerably stronger in the first country. Moreover, it is worth noting that A8 migrants in the majority of cases find employment in low-paying sectors of the economy carrying out routine or semi-routine jobs even though only a small proportion of these migrants had been low educated. Considering that most nationals from A8 countries migrated to the Netherlands and the UK out of economic reasons, it appears that these labour migrants are more inclined to work in professions below their educational level compared to Dutch or British nationals. The most straightforward explanations for this may be the considerably higher wage level in the host country and a high unemployment rate in the country of origin. As a result, it can be concluded that A8 migrants for the most part work in occupations that are available in the host country rather than occupations that correspond to their skills. Samantha Currie has therefore observed that:

the nature of the political debate […] prior to enlargement on the granting of labour market access for EU8 migrants focussed very much on ‘what they can do for us’. From the outset the suggestion was that migrants from the EU8 would ‘fill the gaps’ in the labour market and, consequently, their rights to access employment have been shaped by this proposition.134

As this paper has shown that most A8 migrants indeed take jobs on the Dutch and British labour markets that have proved hard to fill by native workers, it may be argued that the respective governments, as Currie implied, have had a role in allocating migrants to industries where the labour market was tight. However, it should also be considered that certain diplomas and degrees

134 Samantha Currie, Migration, Work and Citizenship in the Enlarged European Union, 68.
of A8 nationals may not be recognised in the Netherlands and the UK while language barriers could also prevent these migrants from carrying out high-skilled professions in the host country.

Regardless, A8 migration could be regarded as a useful supplement to the Dutch and British labour forces and may even prove vital in certain sectors of the economy which increasingly rely on cheap labour from Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, this paper has demonstrated that A8 migration does not seem to have an effect on the native employment rate in the Netherlands and the UK. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the arrival of A8 migrants does not have a substitutionary effect in any sector as, for instance, job displacement of native workers by immigrants in the transport sector is difficult to measure. Still, in general terms migration from A8 countries to the Netherlands and the UK seems to have been largely complementary to the Dutch and British native labour forces.

Although it could be desirable for the Netherlands and the UK, which are both facing a shrinking labour force, to keep attracting A8 migrants, it is by no means certain that the current migratory patterns will continue in the forthcoming years. Statistics show that in past years wages have risen in A8 countries while unemployment rates have decreased considerably as a consequence of labour shortages particularly in high-skilled professions. In addition, research among Polish nationals has shown that higher incomes in the home country would encourage migrants to permanently re-migrate to the country of origin. The fact that migrants from Slovenia, the country with the most favourable conditions on the domestic labour market, have by far been less numerous compared to migrants from the other A8 countries may underline this argument. Building on the premise that A8 migrants are less inclined to migrate in case conditions at the domestic labour market improve, it can be stated that A8 migration to the Netherlands and the UK might decrease in the future provided that the economies of A8 countries continue to improve. Consequently, since this paper has argued that A8 migrants are largely complementary rather than substitutionary on the Dutch and British labour markets, this may not be a positive development for the Netherlands and the UK.

Finally, it has to be considered that A8 migrants still account for a relatively small part of the working age population in the Netherlands and the UK. In this sense, it may not be surprising that the employment rate of this migrant group seems to have had a negligible influence on the employment rate of native workers. It is, however, notable that the employment rate of A8 migrants could grow at a strong pace after the 2004 enlargement which implies that A8 migration

136 Naomi Pollard, Maria Latorre & Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, Floodgates or turnstiles, 50.
137 Ibid.
has had rather positive implications for both the Dutch and British labour markets. Scholars in the Netherlands as well as the UK have therefore concluded that the economic consequences of A8 migration since the enlargement have been largely advantageous as downwards wage effects or job displacement have not been proved. Additionally, Drew and Sriskandarajah have stated that “any localised negative effects on the labour market have been too small to influence the overall positive economic impact of accession” on the Dutch and British economies.

7. Conclusion

The 2004 enlargement has in many ways had an enormous impact on the future of Europe, both in terms of the EU’s bureaucracy as well as European society at large. The simultaneous accession of ten new member states has caused the EU to modify its internal decision-making procedures while it has significantly altered the demography of various nation-states. It may therefore be stated that the implications of the free movement of workers principle have been most clearly demonstrated by the Eastern enlargement. Although the political importance of having all CEE countries accede at the same time may not be overlooked, this paper has argued that the EU’s decision to enlarge was primarily motivated by economic and security interests. It may be stated that without the economic benefits of an expanding common market and the long term prospect of becoming a stronger geopolitical power in world politics, it seems unlikely that the EU would have opted for an enlargement as comprehensive and laborious as the 2004 enlargement turned out to be. However, the argument that the EU allowed the A8 countries to accede out of solidarity should not be discarded. After all, spreading the accession of the CEE countries over multiple enlargement rounds would have been more beneficial in economic terms while it would also have been easier to incorporate these countries in the EU’s institutional system. In addition, due to various recent developments such as the economic crisis, the euro crisis and the euroscepticism that has been growing in the political and public spheres of the member states, it is currently difficult to assess the intended goals of enlargement according to the rational institutionalist and social constructivist theories. In general, it might be argued that the 2004 enlargement has not had a negative economic impact on the Netherlands or the UK while the stability and security argument still holds as well. Indeed, the accession of the A8 countries in itself has not been disputed though there have been voices claiming that a phased enlargement of the EU may have been wiser. This criticism, however, should be viewed in the context of the recent economic

138 Godfried Engbersen, Erik Snel and Jan de Boom, “A van full of Poles,” 133.
139 Catherine Drew and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, EU Enlargement: Bulgaria and Romania, 12.
slowdown and a general dissatisfaction with EU policies in certain political circles. This, however, may change when the European economies recover and public opinion towards the EU alters.

Since this enlargement included eight countries with less developed economies and populations with a propensity to migrate, the EU15 countries were given the possibility to install a transitional period in order to prepare their countries and labour markets for considerable influxes from the East. As this paper has shown, the Dutch and British governments merely chose to monitor A8 migration to their countries rather than restrict it. In the UK, A8 nationals needed to register with the WRS until April 2011 in order to access the British labour market, whereas the Netherlands opted for a three-year transitional period during which temporary work permits were compulsory for A8 migrants. However, since migration from the A8 countries increased exponentially, even when temporary restrictions were in place, it may be argued that neither policy intended to effectively restrict migration but to manage it, instead.

Indeed, limiting the supply of labour arriving from Central and Eastern Europe would not be desirable for the Dutch and British labour markets as this migrant group is largely complementary to the native labour force. The fact that employment rates of A8 nationals in the Netherlands and the UK rose quickly in the post-accession period and fell only slightly during the economic crisis seems to illustrate that they are a useful supplement to the labour force. At the same time, the rising employment rates of A8 nationals in both countries did not appear to have an effect on the employment rates of either Dutch or British workers. In both the Netherlands and the UK employers of low-skilled jobs in, for instance, the agricultural and manufacturing sectors experienced great difficulties in filling job vacancies as many native workers proved unwilling to take a job below their educational levels. However, though this paper has argued that A8 migration does not appear to have had a noticeable effect on native employment rates in the Netherlands and the UK, this does not necessarily mean that job displacement does not occur at all. Especially in the transport sector A8 nationals may increasingly displace native workers even though job displacement of native workers by immigrants has not been statistically proved. Nevertheless, for many firms in low-paying sectors recruiting A8 migrants has turned out to be a solution as these migrants generally have no problems with working in occupations not commensurate with their skills.

Thus, with A8 migration de-skilling became a common phenomenon as high wages in the host country and high unemployment rates in the home country caused many A8 nationals to take up employment abroad in low-skilled professions. As previously stated, language barriers may be an important reason why A8 nationals are not able to work in high-skilled professions in the host
country. Accordingly, for the Netherlands as well as the UK counts that “the majority of post-accession EU8 workers are currently situated within the lower echelons of the […] labour market”. This is not surprising because low-paying sectors in both countries have had difficulties with filling vacancies for years, which is why CEE migration to the Netherlands and the UK has been increasing since the late 1990s. As A8 migrants have been working in industries where the supply of labour was scarce, Engbersen, Snel and De Boom argue that “[t]he arrival of additional workers safeguards the prolongation of production in some economic sectors and economic growth”.

Furthermore, new patterns of migration from A8 countries to the Netherlands and the UK have been ascertained. Until the early 1990s, the predominant pattern of East-West migration had been CEE migrants settling permanently in Western Europe. In recent years, however, migration from A8 countries has increasingly become circular, meaning that A8 migrants are continuously moving between the host country and the home country residing for short periods only in the host country before returning to the country of origin. In the words of Claire Wallace:

rather than permanent one-way migration (the dominant pattern until recently) there has been a predominance of short-term, circulatory movements backwards and forwards across borders. This would be better termed mobility than migration.

This new type of migration might be explained by the fact that contemporary migration is in most cases motivated by economic reasons rather than political. Whereas before CEE migrants may have left the home country to escape the communist regime, the A8 countries nowadays have democratic governments. This largely takes away the need to migrate out of political considerations. The true extent of the temporary migration that has developed as a consequence remains difficult to assess as data on temporary migrants are scarce and often not entirely reliable; many of these migrants simply do not register while most official data comprises registered workers. In addition, it has been observed that “the fluid nature of short-term, circulatory migration makes many forecasts of East-West migration unreliable”.

Nevertheless, when considering that the primary motive for A8 migrants is, as aforementioned, economic, it may be expected that A8 migration will decrease in the next years in spite of the recent growth of this migrant group in the Netherlands and the UK. After all, the economies of most A8 countries have greatly improved since their accession in 2004, as

140 Samantha Currie, Migration, Work and Citizenship in the Enlarged European Union, 68.
142 Claire Wallace, “Opening and closing borders,” 604. [italics in original]
unemployment rates have fallen and wage levels have risen. Therefore, in case this trend continues A8 migrants will be more likely to stay in their home countries as the economic gains deriving from migration might no longer be present. This may be a reason why Polish nationals have been more inclined to migrate to the Netherlands and the UK than Slovenians, as the conditions on the domestic labour market of Slovenia were much more favourable compared to those in Poland. Accordingly, as this paper has shown that certain sectors of the Dutch and British economies partly thrive on A8 migrants, it can be expected that these employers will eventually need to recruit migrants from other, less developed regions or offer A8 nationals higher wages in order to keep attracting them. Although it will probably still take years before the wage gap between the EU15 countries and the A8 countries has been overcome, it may be argued that the extent to which the stock of A8 nationals will grow in the Netherlands and the UK will largely depend on two other aspects. First, the effect that the economic crisis turns out to have on the Dutch and British economies may be important in determining the demand for A8 labour migrants on the Dutch and British labour markets. Second, as A8 migrants now have the opportunity to access the German labour market, which is bigger and within closer proximity of the A8 countries compared to the Netherlands and the UK, many A8 migrants may divert to Germany; this could greatly affect the supply of A8 labour on the Dutch and British labour markets.

Nevertheless, it may be expected that both the Netherlands and the UK can anticipate a considerable increase in the stock of A8 migrants in the next decade. Considering that these migrants, unlike the migrants and guest workers that arrived in both countries in the 1970s and 1980s, do not have the intention to permanently reside in the host country, these influxes from A8 labour migrants may well be welcomed since “the economic impact of migration from the new EU Member States has been modest, but broadly positive, reflecting the flexibility and speed of adjustment of the […] labour market”. In this sense, the focus of Dutch and British government policies should not be on restricting temporary migration from A8 countries but, rather, on improving the accommodation and integration of these labour migrants. The Dutch and British governments therefore ought to monitor and facilitate this type of migration so that A8 migrants will fill the gaps in their labour markets rather than simply flood the gates.

144 Nicola Gilpin et al., “The Impact of Free Movement of Workers,” 49.
8. Glossary

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>The two countries acceding the EU in 2007: Bulgaria and Romania</td>
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<tr>
<td>A8</td>
<td>The eight Central and Eastern European countries acceding in 2004: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia</td>
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<td>A10</td>
<td>A8 countries plus Bulgaria and Romania</td>
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<td>CAP</td>
<td>Common Agricultural Policy</td>
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<td>CBS</td>
<td>Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (Central Statistics Office)</td>
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<td>CEE</td>
<td>Central and Eastern European</td>
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<td>ECSC</td>
<td>European Coal and Steel Community</td>
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<td>ETUI</td>
<td>European Trade Union Institute</td>
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<td>EU10</td>
<td>The ten countries acceding in 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia</td>
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<td>EU15</td>
<td>The fifteen member states of the European Union prior to the 2004 enlargement: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the UK</td>
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<td>GBA</td>
<td>Gemeentelijke Basisadministratie (Municipal administrations)</td>
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<td>Institute for Public Policy Research</td>
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<td>LFS</td>
<td>Labour Force Survey</td>
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<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>WRS</td>
<td>Worker Registration Scheme</td>
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