



Migration in Bulgaria



Alberto AMBRASSA
Anna BECCU
Micol CLAPIS
Inna KONSTANTINOVA
Michela VALEZANO

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The first part of this paper contains an overview of migration, with special attention to a series of issues: age, sex, education, family, asylum seekers, refugees, country of origin and citizenship. This will be developed by referring to some datasets, especially Eurostat and the National statistical Institute of Bulgaria (NSI). The second part is about the analysis of labour market in Bulgaria.

The Republic of Bulgaria is a member of the European Union and NATO. Moreover it is a founding state of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OCSE) and it has taken a seat at the UN Security Council three times. This country, situated in southeastern Europe, is bordered by Romania to the North, Serbia and Macedonia to the west, Greece and Turkey to the south and the Black Sea to the east. With a territory of 110,994 square kilometers it is Europe's 16th-largest country. Bulgaria's population is predominantly urbanized and concentrated in the administrative centers of its main provinces.

In a 2011 population census in Bulgaria has emerged that 36,677 people, with foreign citizenship, representing 5% of the entire population. Among them 23% are European Union citizens, especially from the United Kingdom and Greece, while the majority comes from European countries outside the Union: there are many people from Russia, Ukraine, Republic of Macedonia, Moldova and Serbia.

The current Migrants Profile related to Bulgaria focuses on five different topics: resident foreign population by gender, age cohorts and citizenship; population flows (internal migration, emigration, immigration); presence of immigrants in the national labour market; foreign population by level of education and the remittances/transfers of money to the country of origin.

The graph below shows the people with foreign citizenship living in Bulgaria: they represent 0.5% of the country population. Among them, 8,444 (23.0%) are European Union citizens, coming especially from the United Kingdom (2,605) and Greece (1,253), while the majority comes from European countries outside the EU. In particular, the most represented countries of origin are Russia (11,991 persons), Ukraine (3,064), Republic of Macedonia (1,091), Moldova (893) and Serbia (569).

Source: <http://countrymeters.info/en/Bulgaria>

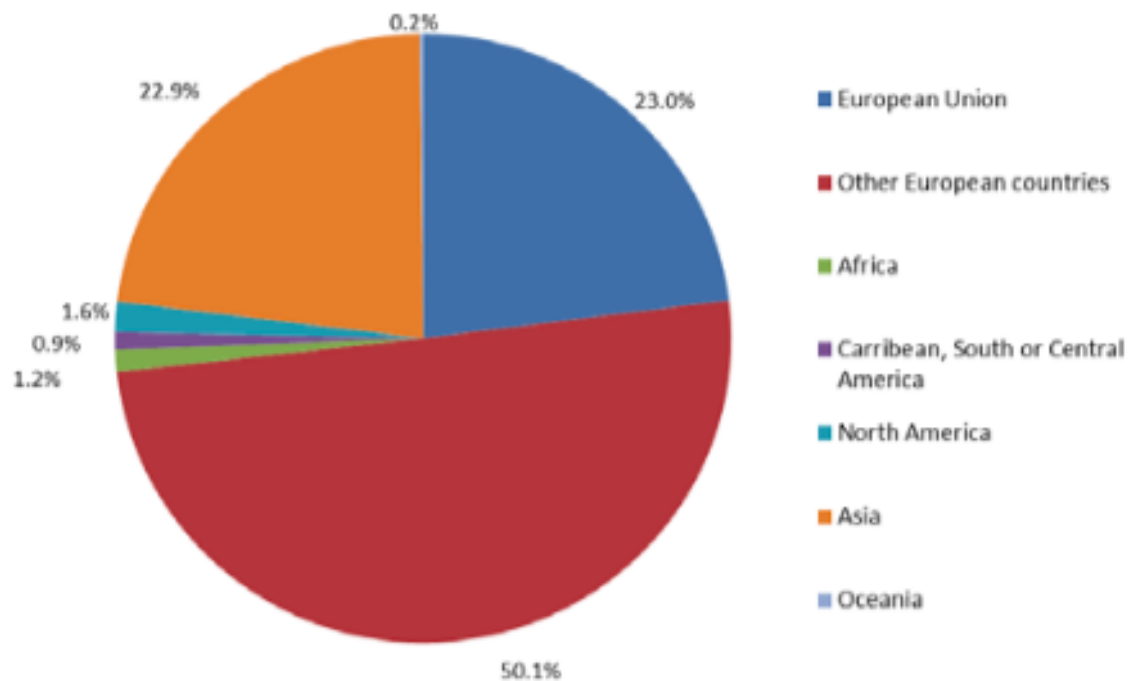


Fig.1

1. IMMIGRATION

1.1 IMMIGRATION RATE/ EMIGRATION RATE BY SEX AND AGE

In the following graphs, the same set of data has been split to offer more readability. In fact, every graph is referred to a specific year (from 2008 to 2016). On the horizontal axis we can find four-year cohorts of age, while on the vertical one the number of people. Each graph contains three sections: the first one, on the far right, shows the number of the female immigrants and emigrants and the migration growth for them; in the middle section, the same types of data are presented for the male. On the far left, the third section describes the sum of both genders.

In 2010, for example, there has been the largest loss of population in the country, around 20,000 people, with prevalence of emigrants on immigrants. In the same year, there has been a peak in emigration for the 25-39 span of age into the overall population.

On the contrary, little losses have been recorded in 2008, 2012 and 2013 (nearly 1,000 people each), respectively with a peak in the 25-34 belt of age and in the 20-29 one for both the other years of reference.

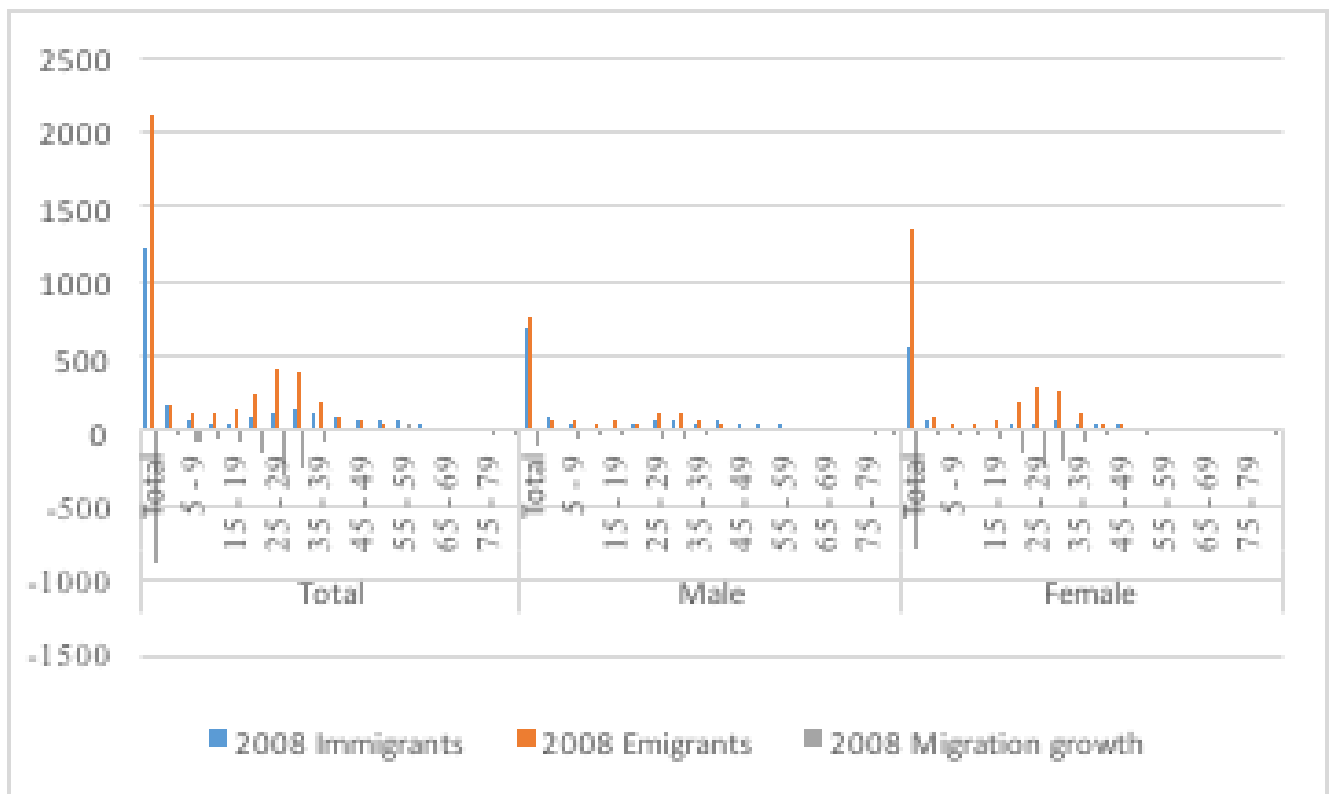


Fig.1 (year: 2008)

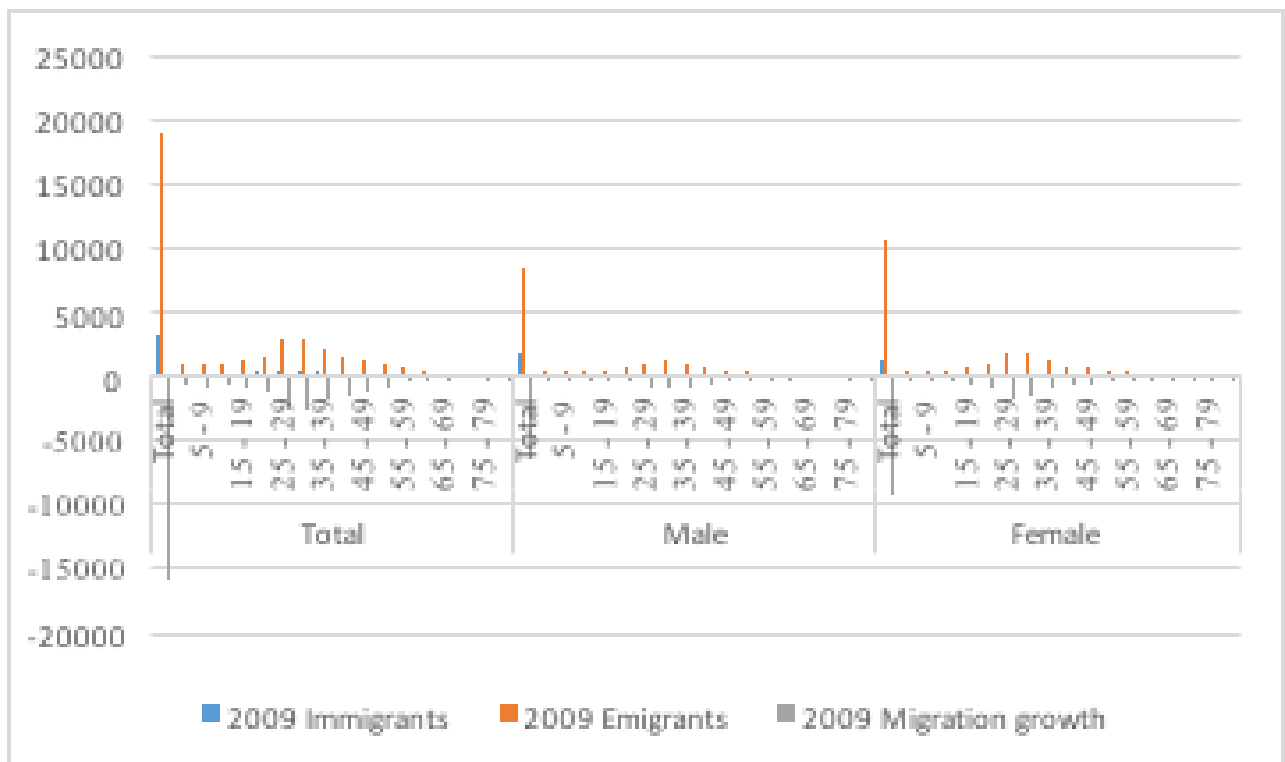


Fig.2 (year: 2009)

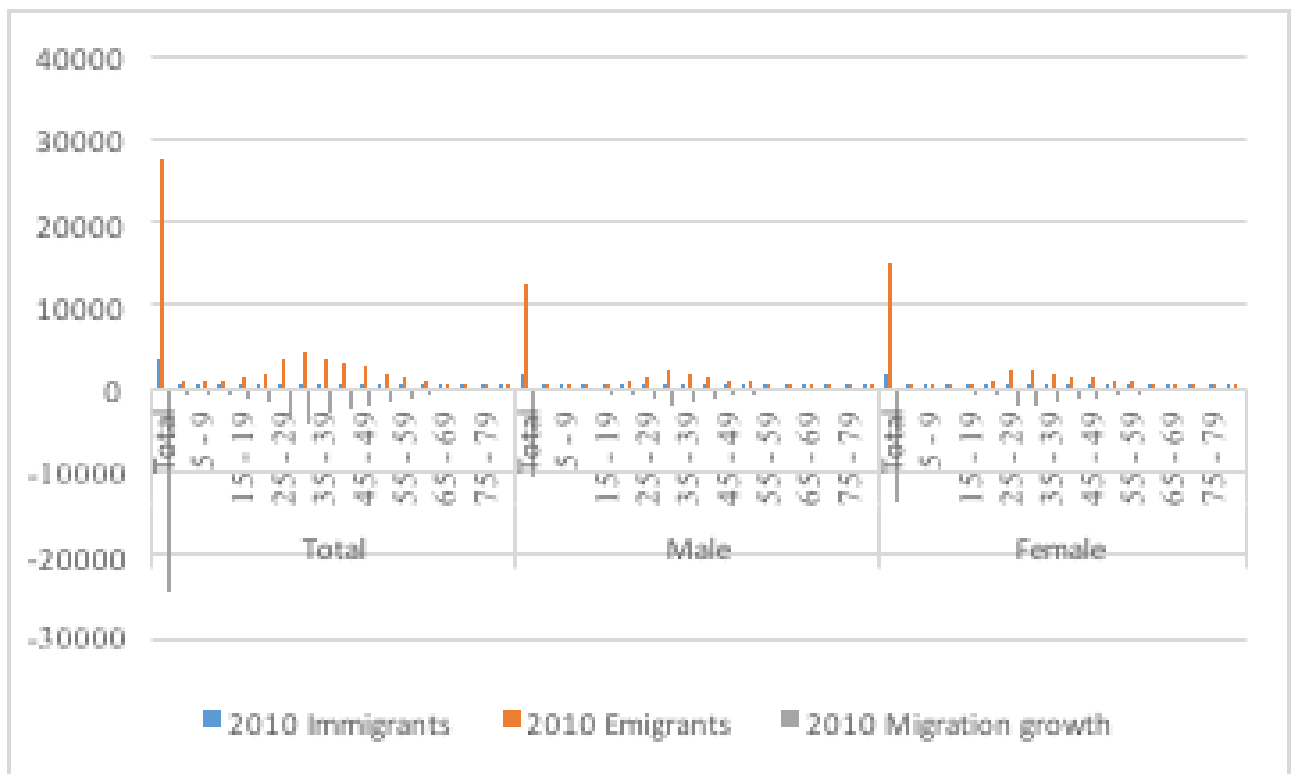


Fig.3 (year: 2010)

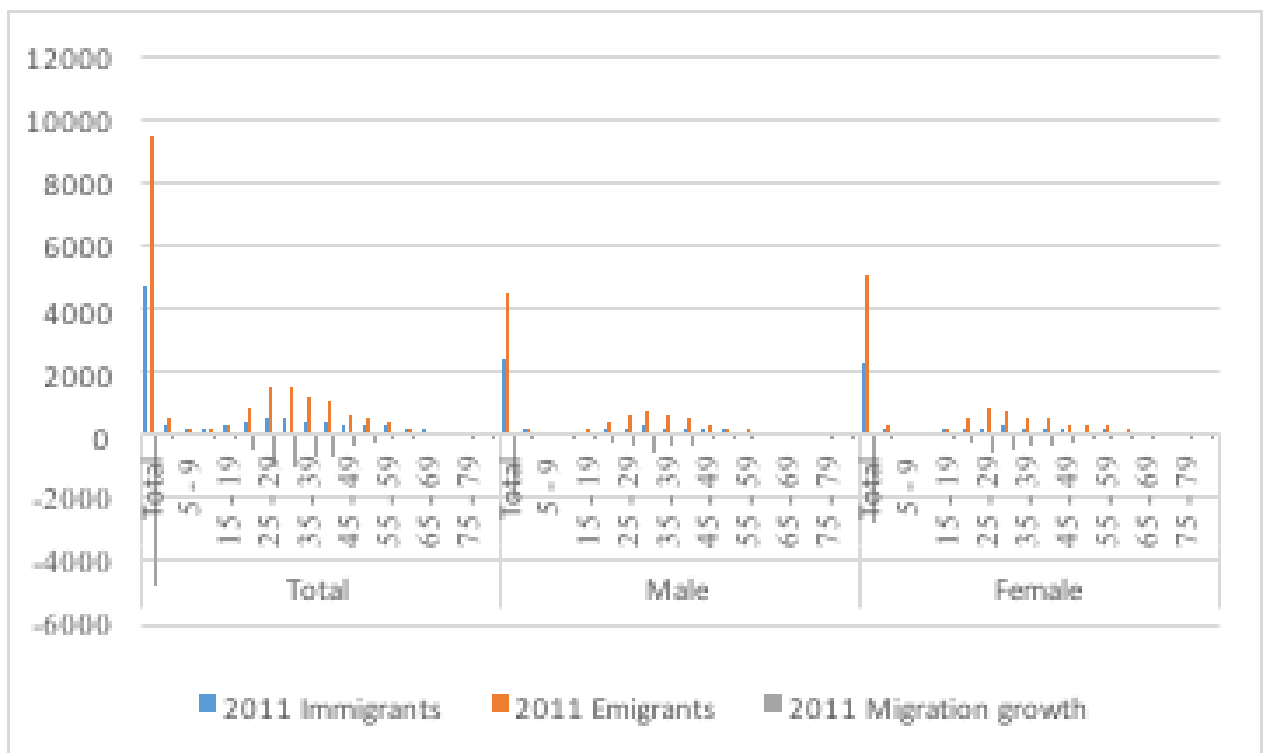


Fig.4 (year: 2011)

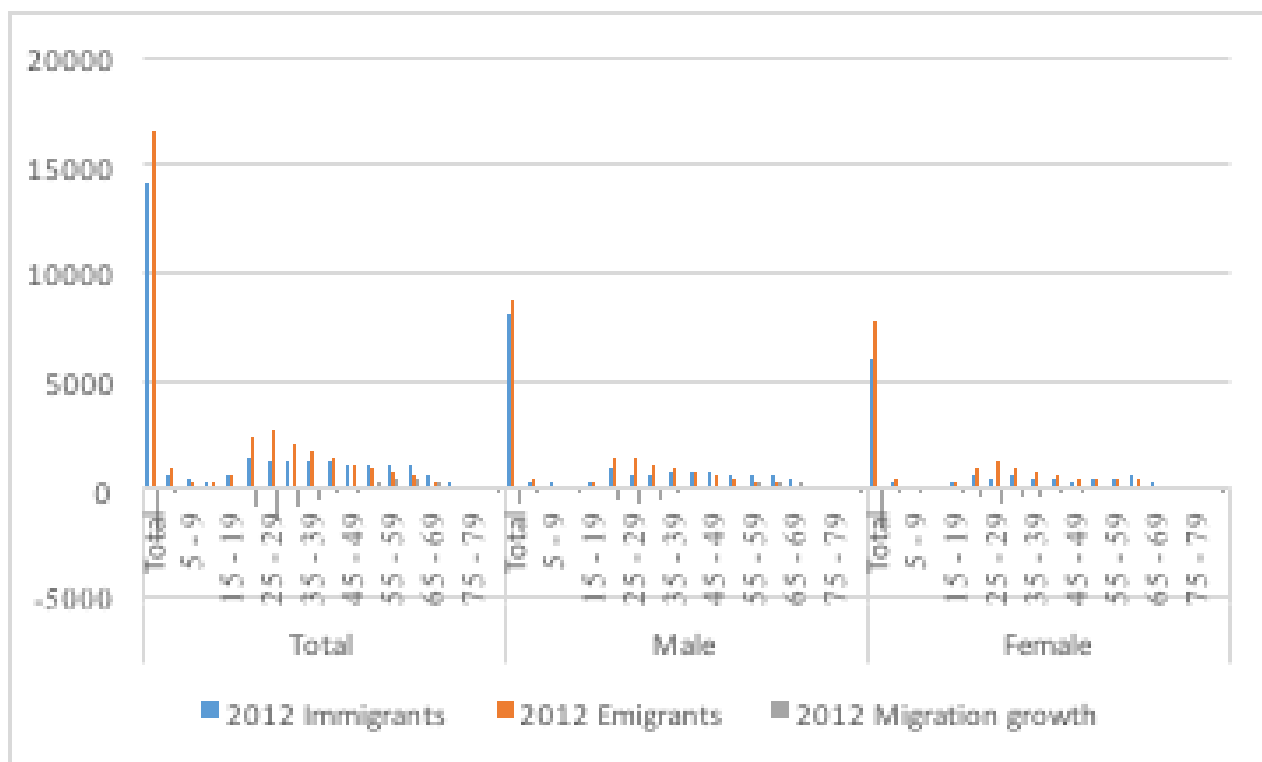


Fig.5 (year: 2012)

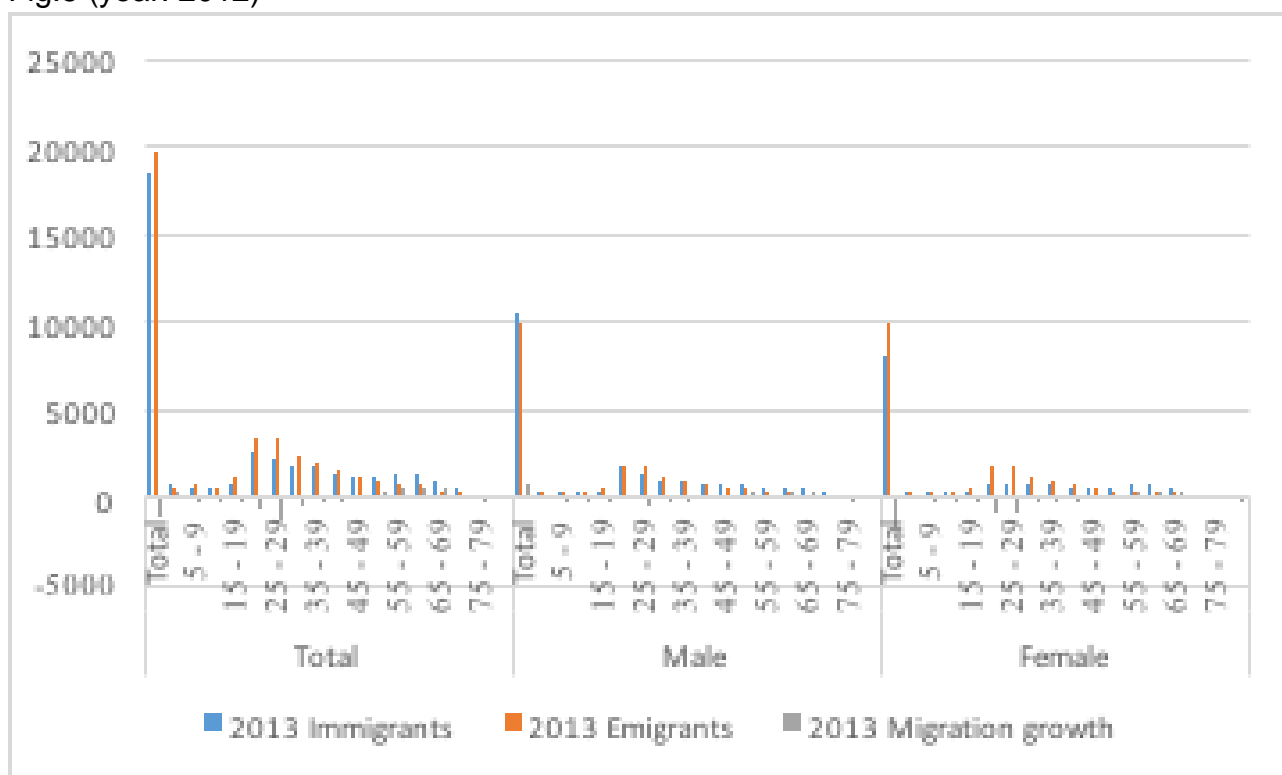


Fig.6 (year: 2013)

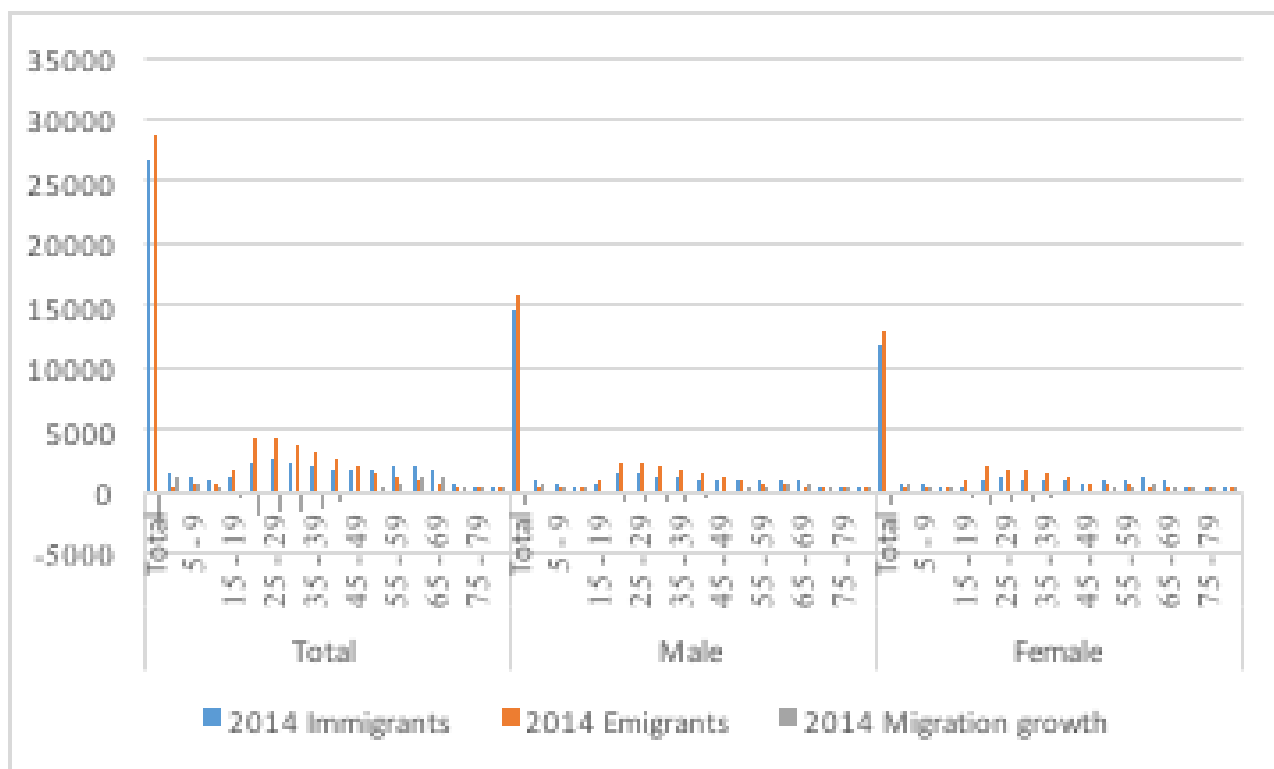


Fig.7 (year: 2014)

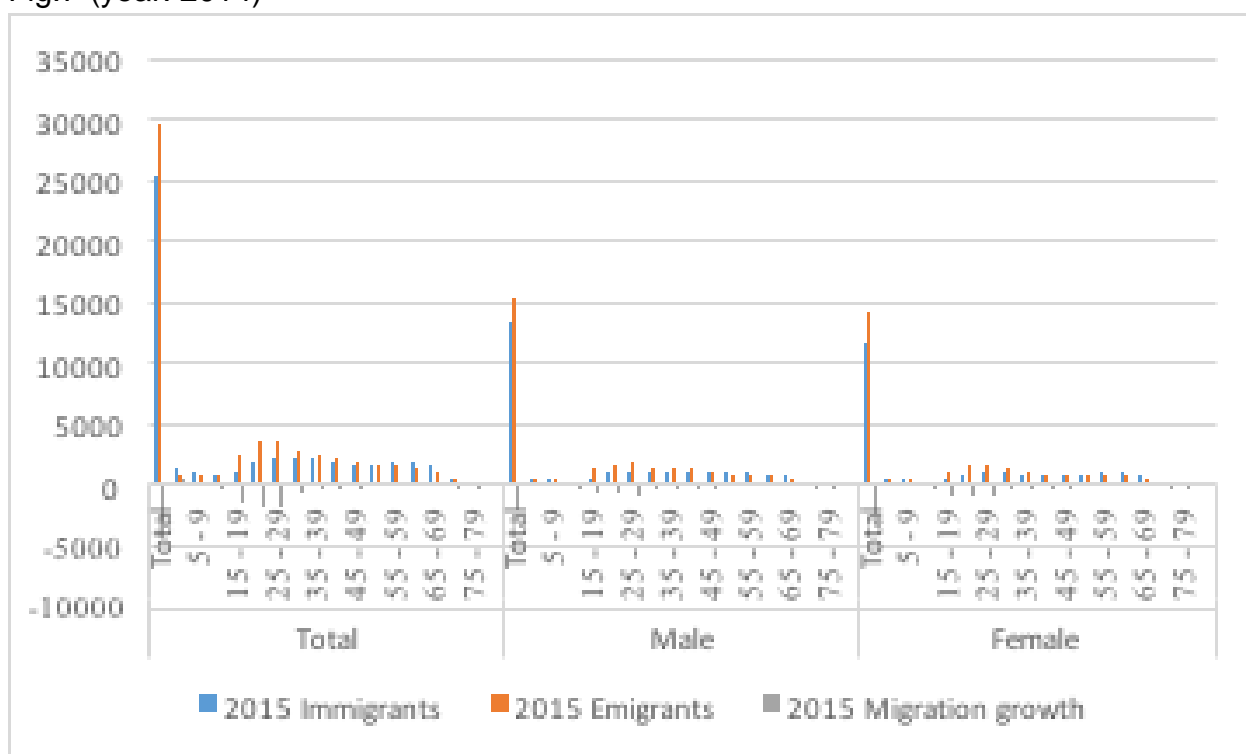


Fig.8 (year: 2015)

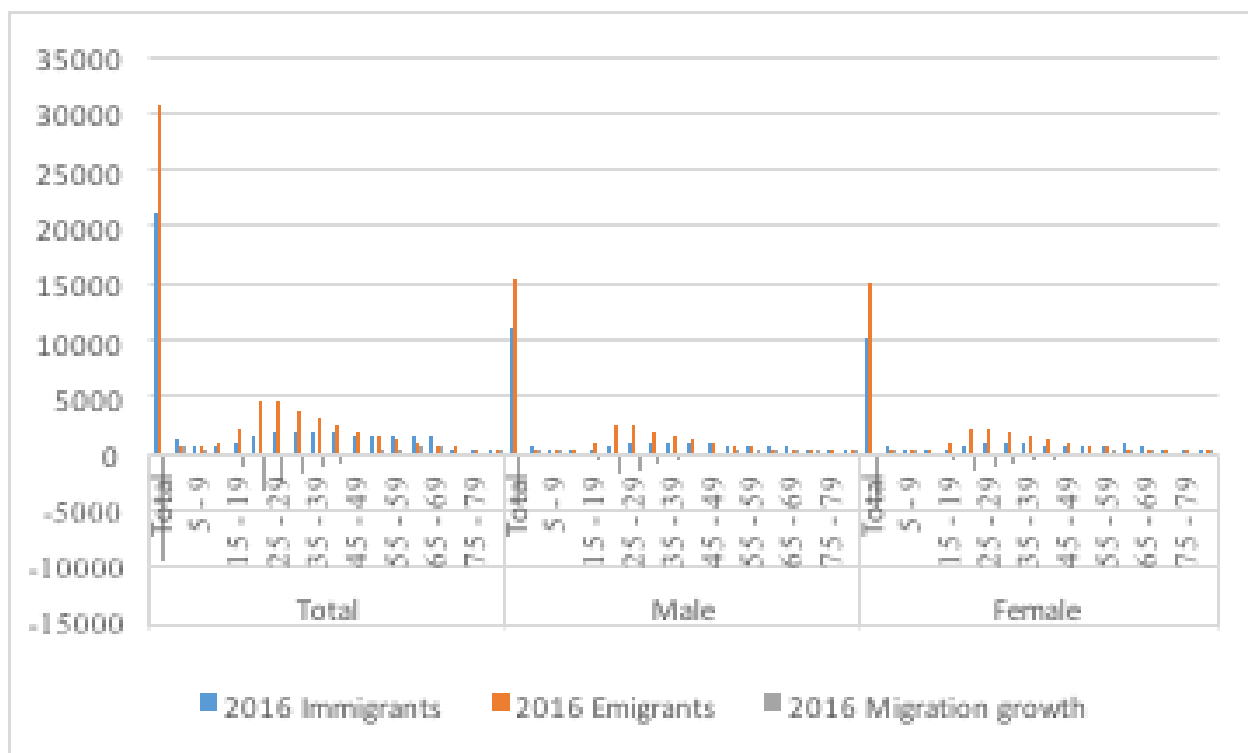


Fig.9 (year: 2016)

Fig. 2-9, Source: https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x_2=38

2. IMMIGRATION RATE BY COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Considering the two following graphs, we can observe that the migration growth keeps negative values all over the considered years. In 2016 a peak is present. Bulgaria constantly has more outflows than inflows, thus it can be considered a sending country, instead of a destination one.

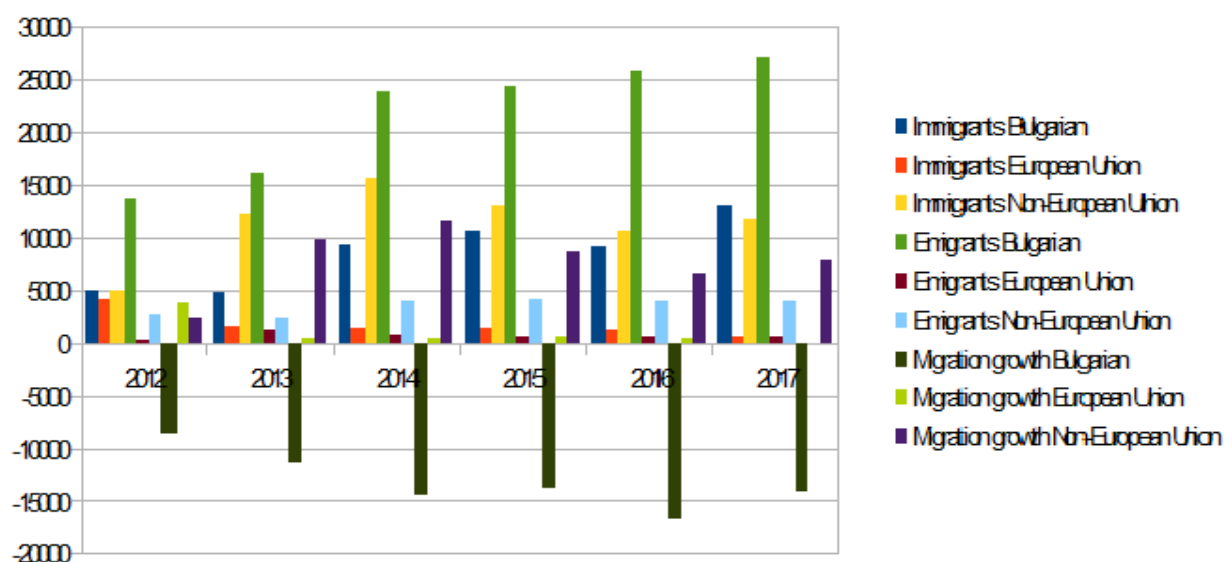


Fig.10 Country of citizenship

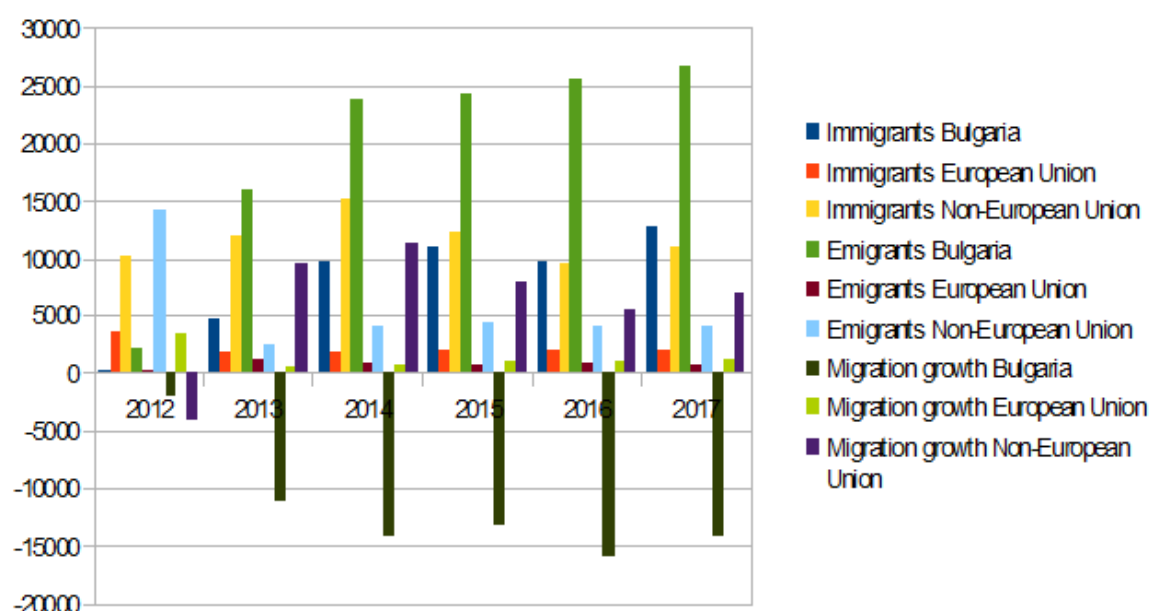


Fig.11 Country of birth

3. CHANNEL OF ENTRANCE

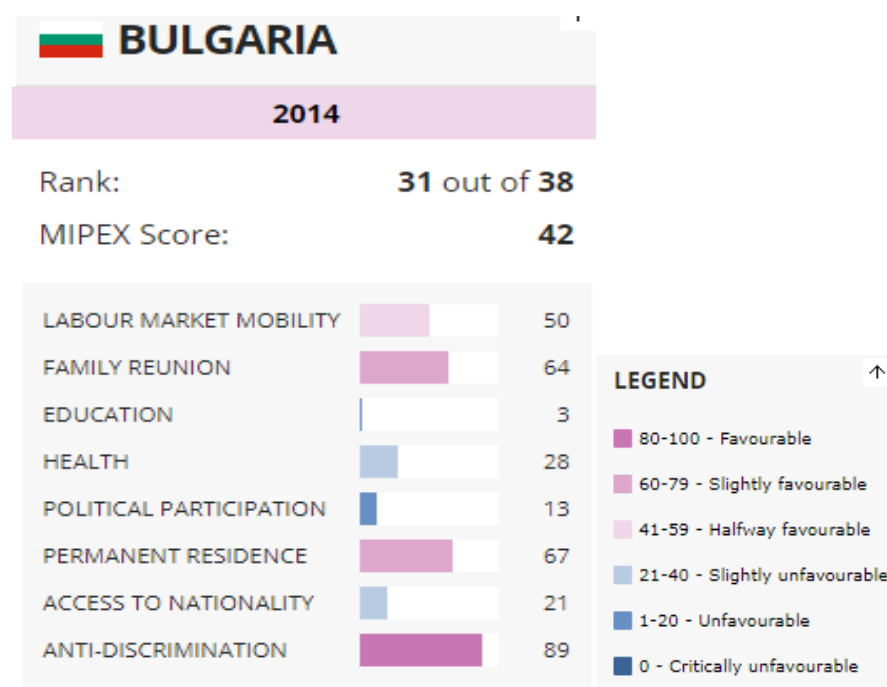


Fig.12

The table above is a general account about the channels of entrance in Bulgaria. The most favourable ways are those concerning family reunion, permanent residence and anti-discrimination. Even if the public opinion, in Bulgaria, is mostly negative towards immigrants, given that only 37% think that immigration economically and culturally enrich the country (Mipex), the reality shows a strong

anti-discrimination law that encourages the inflows. Moreover, the permanent residence is slightly favourable, especially thanks to the EU law, as well as the family reunion, given that Bulgaria opened its restrictive definition of family to include minors for medical reasons. Anyway, long-term residents may be uncertain about the future, as authorities retain wide discretion and hinder access through disproportionate fees. So, the procedures still contain several discretionary elements.

3.1 EDUCATION

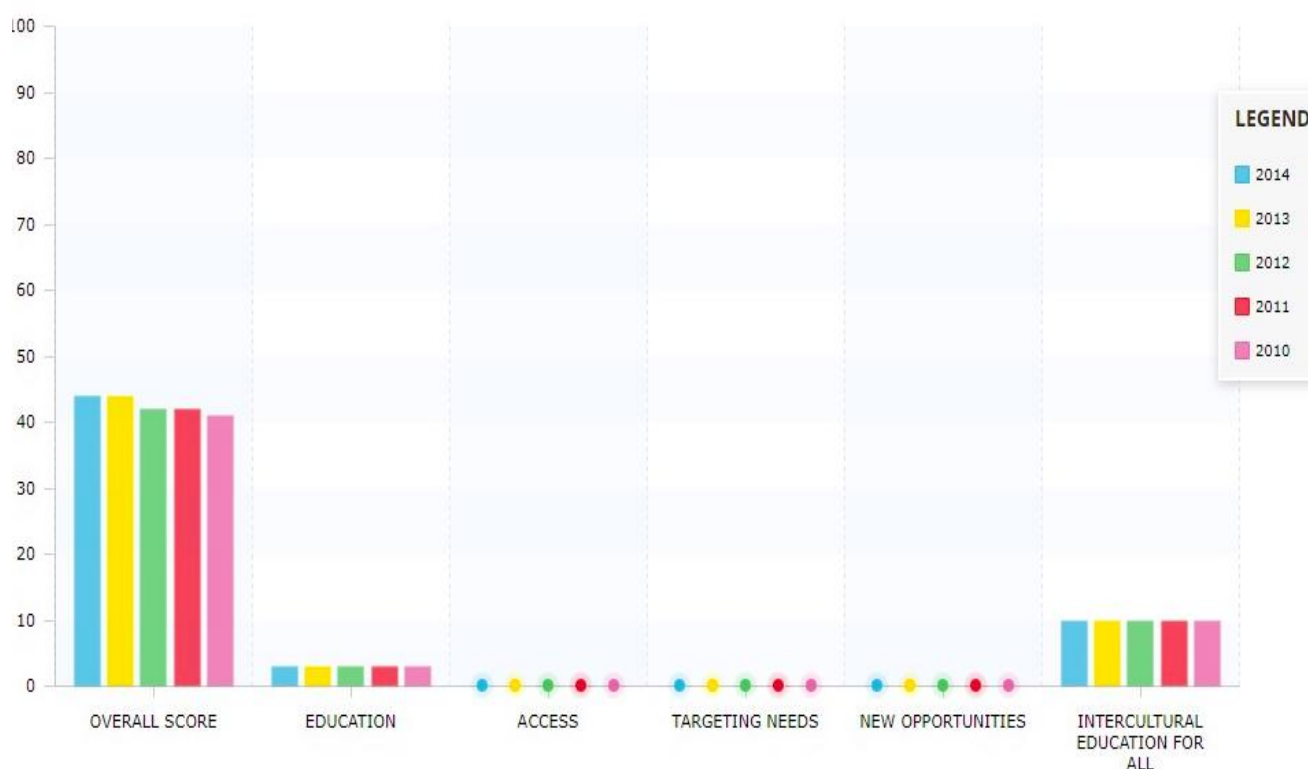


Fig.13 Source: Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) <http://www.mipex.eu>

In the graph (Fig-13) it is noticeable that the school system is unprepared to address the new needs of and opportunities from the immigrant children. The number of foreign-born children in Bulgaria remains very small as a new and minor country of immigration. For immigrant children it is hard to find any targeted support in schools (in fact, it scores only 3/100 and ranks 38th). The school system creates barriers to access for certain categories of immigrant children and largely ignores the specific needs and opportunities that they bring to the classroom. So, Bulgaria still lacks a nationwide framework for responding to the needs of newcomer children with accompanying measures and funding to increase these schools' capacities.

3.2 LABOUR MARKET

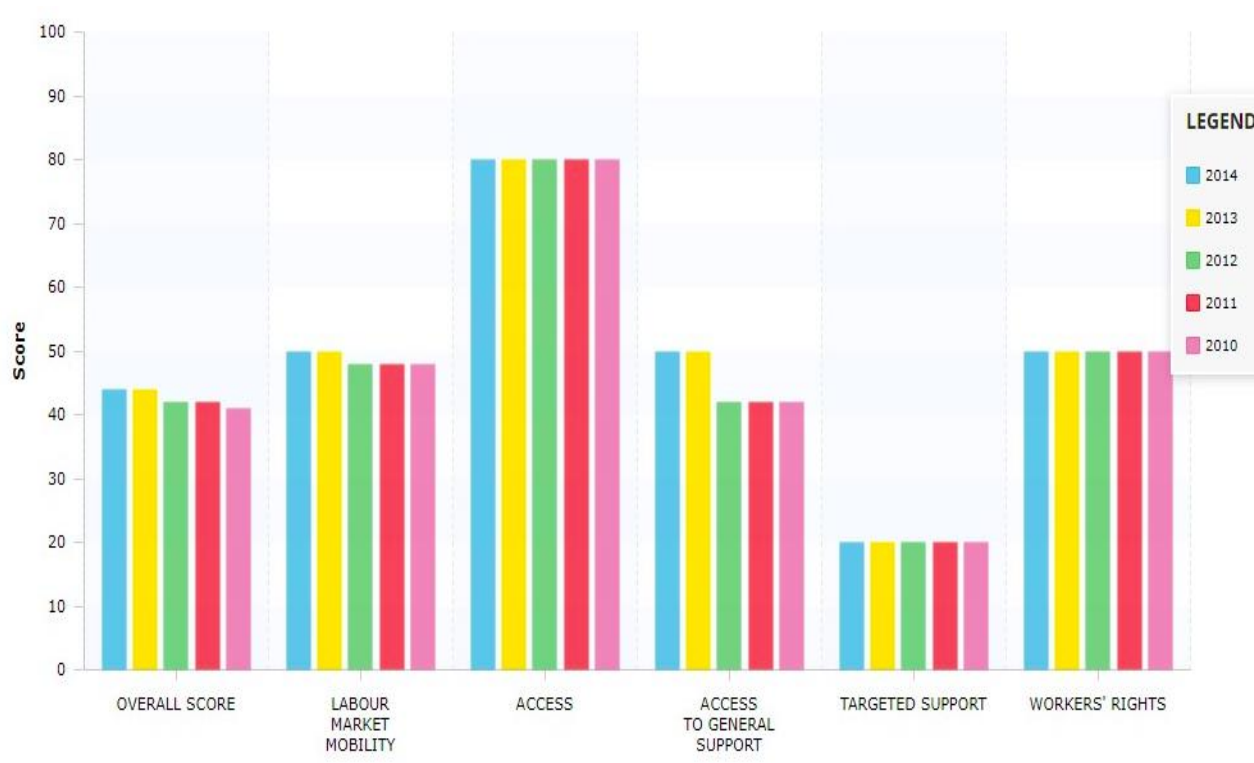


Fig.14

Non-EU workers and families lack the support, information and targeted programs to pursue jobs and further training in Bulgaria. Non-EU newcomers still face only halfway favourable opportunities for labour market integration and non-EU labour migrants and family members must wait 5 years to gain equal access to the labour market and general support. All non-EU citizens face weak procedures to recognise their foreign qualifications and are recipients only of ad hoc projects providing them the specific information and skills they need to pursue jobs and further training. General access to the labour market continues to be favourable for long-term residents and open to immigrant entrepreneurs. The targeted support is quite limited through ad hoc EU-funded projects and foreign-trained workers can benefit only from a one-stop-shop National Centre for Information and Documentation and regulations for academic qualification recognition procedures. Finally, in Bulgaria the lowest score on worker's rights is registered.

Source: Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) <http://www.mipex.eu>

3.3 FAMILY REUNION

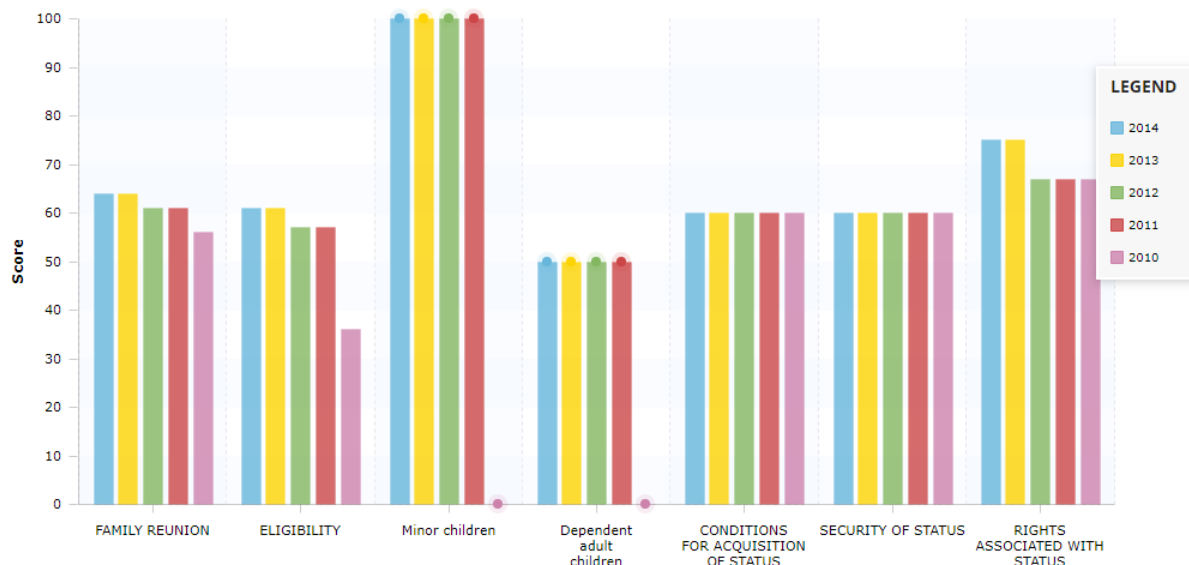


Fig.15 Source: Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) <http://www.mipex.eu>

Non-EU families have slightly more favourable chances to reunite in Bulgaria, thanks to EU law. Even if Bulgaria opened its restrictive definition of the family to include all minor, it still does not allow reunion with same-sex partners and a non-EU citizen's parents. The procedure itself still contains several discretionary elements and, despite legal amendments in 2013, family members are still generally dependent on sponsorship until they become long-term residents. The conditions to acquire the status are quite restrictive, since in Bulgaria only basic legal income and costs for reuniting families are accessible, when compared to the normal administrative fees and average income in the country. With regards to the security of status, it is noted that reuniting families are only slightly certain of their chances to reunite and settle in Bulgaria (as we can see in the graph).

4. REFUGEES

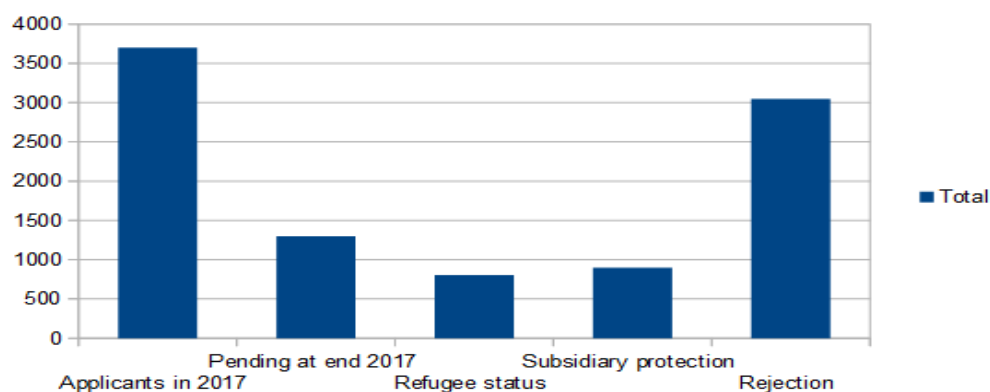


Fig.16

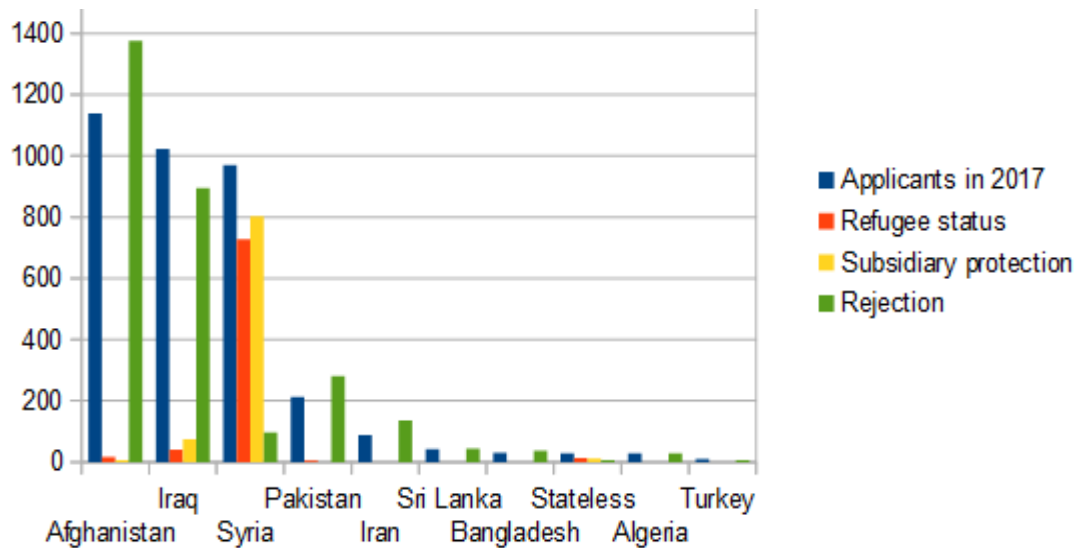


Fig.17 *Refugees provenance*

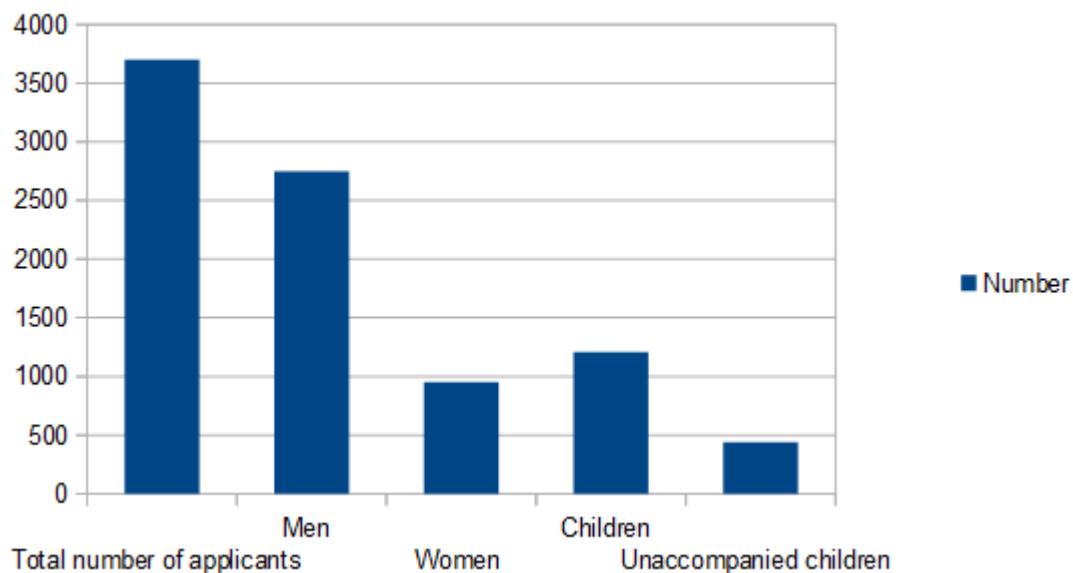


Fig.18 *Refugees number*

The graph in Fig.16 shows that in 2017, the total of applicants obtaining the Refugees status is equal to 3700 and only 804 finally obtained it, while the most part of them has been rejected. Among them, we can distinguish their provenance (see Fig. 17); we can find a majority of Afghans both for the applications and the rejections. Secondly there are the Syrians, that are quite obviously those who mostly obtain the Refugee status and also the subsidiary protection. Finally, in Fig.18 the

composition by sex and age is reported. Men are those who mostly apply for the refugee status, while we can also find a part represented by children, almost the half of which are unaccompanied.

Source: SAR, Statistics and reports: <http://bit.ly/2DPWlXw>.

5. ASYLUM

First-time asylum applications are country-specific and imply no time limit. If an asylum seeker lodges again an application in the same country after any period of time, (s)he will not be considered a first-time applicant. Focusing on the definitions of age for acquisitions of citizenship.

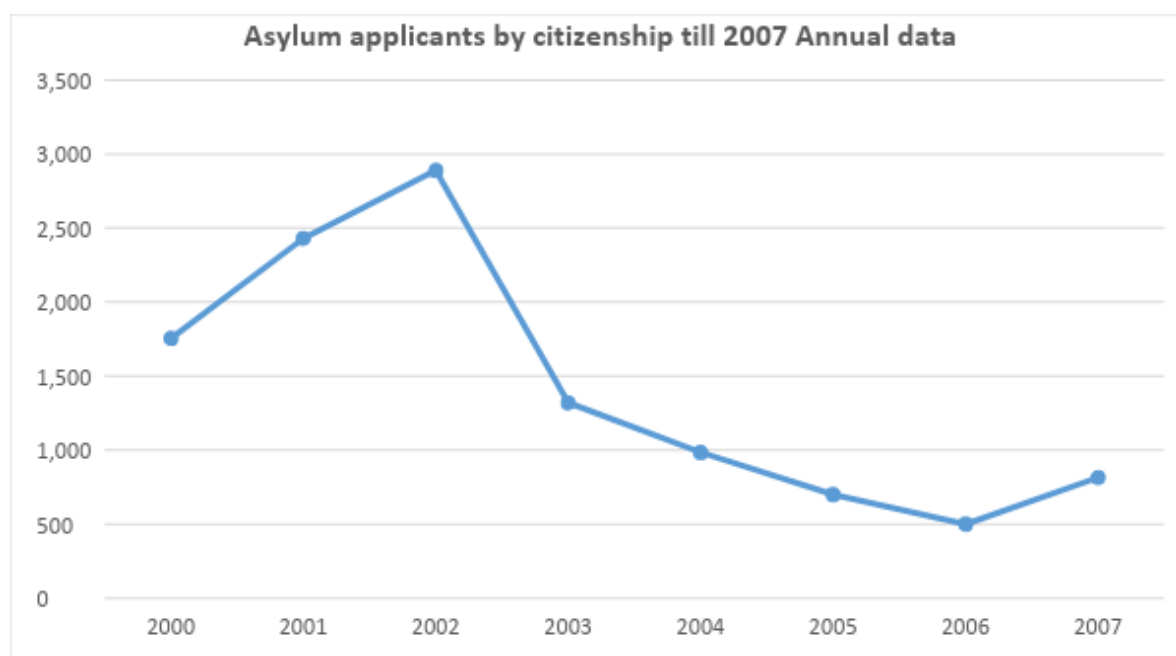


Fig. 19

The graph points out a growth in the number of asylum seekers' applications between 2000 and 2002, with an average of 2500. In the following years, a decrease in number has been registered, reaching an average of 500 applications, while in 2007 it is possible to see a little resurgence.

Source: Eurostat [migr_asyctz]

CONCLUSIONS

The data show that Bulgaria is more a country of emigration than immigration, except for some channels of entrance that, thanks to EU policies, have recently been improved. New destination countries of immigration like Bulgaria need to keep in mind that migration is a global phenomenon, as old as history itself. It is governed mainly by economic factors that influence the efforts to manage migration flows. The unprecedented high number of refugees globally, in the Balkan region and in the European Union has provided new challenges to the institutional and conceptual framework of migration and asylum policies. Decision-makers will be asked to act

wisely enough to reconsider the human society in a way that will foster its development, residing also in the immigration.

SITOGRAHY

- <https://data.oecd.org/searchresults/?q=bulgaria>
- <http://mipex.eu/bulgaria>
- <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdde230&plugin=1>
- <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/6683/migration>
- https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x_2=38
- <http://bulgaria.bordermonitoring.eu/statistics/>
- <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/bulgaria/statistics>
- http://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/IMO%202012_Country%20note%20Bulgaria.pdf
- http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics/it
- https://www.indexmundi.com/it/bulgaria/tasso_di_saldo_migratorio.html
- <https://www.unhcr.it/risorse/statistiche>
- <http://www.mipex.eu/bulgaria#/tab-access-to-nationality>
- http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics
- <https://www.easo.europa.eu>
- [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/563457/IPOL_STU\(2015\)563457_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/563457/IPOL_STU(2015)563457_EN.pdf)