

Migration and Socio-Demographic Processes in Central and Eastern Europe: Characteristics, Specificity and Internal Differences

Although Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is sometimes referred to as a buffer zone (Iglicka 2001) because of its location between the huge Asian continent and Western Europe, it is also an area of intense and diverse migration flows both internal and external. In a broader sense, the region of Central and Eastern Europe may include countries of the Visegrád Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), the states of the former USSR, as well as southern post-communist states, Bulgaria and Romania, and even the states of the former Yugoslavia and Albania (Okólski 2004; Castles, Miller 2003). This extensive list includes both the countries whose accession to the European Union took place between 2004-2013 (the Visegrád Group countries, the Baltic states, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia), as well as countries which are not EU member states. The EU enlargements created a considerable difference between the status of the countries which became part of the EU and the other states of the region, and influenced intra- and extra-regional migration processes.

Mobility in CEE should be analysed with reference to the interrelated fundamental social, economic, and political changes taking place in the region. First, notable is the shrinking and aging of the societies in CEE countries, brought about by fertility decline and family breakdown. Second, we must consider existing migration pressure and intensified post-accession emigration. Third, what is specific to the region are the processes of European integration and of the related profound modernisation. All of the above features create a unique combination of migration-related factors.

Since the 19th century CEE countries constituted a traditional reservoir of workers for western countries. This was stopped by the post-war bipolar division of Europe into socialist and capitalist semi-isolated groups of countries. During that period, following the immediate post-war population movements, migration occurred mainly within the Eastern Block and between 'friendly' countries. Emigration to western countries was caused mainly by political and ethnic factors. Economic migration was predominantly illegal. After the fall of the Iron Curtain and the systemic transformation in this part of the world, an opportunity opened up for the residents of Central and Eastern Europe to move freely across the borders and undertake employment (however mostly in the shadow economy) in Western Europe. This had led to the development of migration which Marek Okólski (2012a) described using the term 'incomplete'. Incomplete migration denotes usually short-term (often circular) but not excluding long-term migration characterised by various forms of irregular employment and/or stay, as well as by living 'on hold'. The latter feature occurred due to the lasting tempo-

rality of employment abroad while a major part of the migrant's life remained in the country of origin (Grzymała-Kazłowska 2005).

The accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia¹ to the European Union in 2004 gave rise to a large wave of labour migration from these countries to the EU15 states, in particular those that were first to open their labour markets to 'new' EU citizens (especially to the United Kingdom). According to the conservative estimates of the World Bank (2006), from May 2004 to the end of 2005, as a result of the emigration to the West, mainly to the three countries, which were first to entirely open their labour markets to the workers from EU10 (the United Kingdom, Sweden and Ireland), Lithuania lost 3.3 per cent of its working-age population, Latvia - 2.4 per cent, Slovakia - 1.3 per cent, Poland - 1.2 per cent, Estonia - 1.1 per cent. Compared to migration in the transition period, post-accession migration was characterised by not only higher intensity, but also a greater diversity of migrant strategies. Post-accession emigrants were more likely to be regular long-term and permanently settled migrants (often accompanied by their whole families) than those who emigrated in the 90s of the 20th century. Only such intensive, long-term and permanently settled migration in the post-accession period could have led to serious and permanent changes in the socio-demographic structure of societies in CEE. Marek Okólski (2012b) puts forward a hypothesis about a crowding-out and modernising impact of contemporary emigration from Poland. It is presumed that this emigration process may allow for a permanent outflow of structurally redundant population and, as a consequence, for the acceleration of the development processes.

Based on research on the Polish post-accession emigrants, a new form of emigration has been also identified, which is based on the strategy of intentional unpredictability (Eade 2006). Engbersen (2011) describes this specific type of migration of 'new Europeans' as 'fluid migration'. The term refers to individualised patterns of migration, such that migrants look for a place for themselves in different countries, taking advantage of open borders and free labour market access. Fluid migrants have, on the whole, weak ties with both sending and receiving countries (Engbersen *et al.* 2013).

In absolute terms, Poles are the largest group among migrants from the eight CEE countries which accessed the EU in 2004. This is due to both the largest demographic potential in Poland, related to the size of its population, and the culturally institutionalised pattern of migration. It is estimated that between 1 May 2004 and 1 January 2007 at least one million people emigrated from Poland. Between 80 and 90 per cent of those migrants did not have a job in Poland. In general, emigrants constituted over 4 per cent of the working-age population (Okólski 2012c). According to the estimates of the Polish Central Statistical Office, in 2011 as many as 2.06 million permanent residents of Poland had stayed abroad for over three months, a large majority - for over one year. Out of this number 1.75 million people stayed within the European Union, mainly in the United Kingdom (625 thousand), Germany (470 thousand), Ireland (120 thousand), the Netherlands (95 thousand), Italy (94 thousand), France (62 thousand), Belgium (47 thousand), Spain (40 thousand), Sweden (36 thousand) and Austria (25 thousand). Other European countries hosted 85 thousand Polish residents (out of these 56 thousand stayed in Norway). As the data shows, although Western Europe is, undoubtedly, the main destination for Polish migrants, one should not forget about traditional immigration countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, where Poles still emigrate and where the subsequent generations of people of Polish origin strive to progress socially and professionally (Sosnowska in this issue) and preserve elements of Polish identity (Markowski and Williams in this issue). According to the Polish 2011 Census data, the United States hosted the third highest number of Polish residents who stayed abroad for over three months - almost 219 thousand. The number of Polish residents who *de facto* stayed in Canada amounted to 48 thousand and 14 thousand in Australia. Other significant sending countries in post-communist Europe include the Baltic states (especially Latvia and Lithuania, although despite significant emigration in relative terms, immigrants from these countries are less visible due to their small absolute numbers), Roma-

nia and, to a lesser extent Bulgaria (i.e. new members of the EU which joined in 2007) as well as traditional emigration countries such as Ukraine, Moldova and Albania which are not members of the EU.

Besides being traditionally a region of emigration to western countries, CEE is also a place where intense intraregional migration takes place, accompanied by a significantly lower inflow of immigrants from outside the region. Although, according to the United Nations' estimates, Central and Eastern Europe hosted around 10 per cent (21 million) out of the 213.9 million global stock of international migrants² (for comparison: Western Europe hosted 48.8 million and Africa – 50 million migrants), the bulk of migration occurs within the region itself and even within the specific migration systems which in the past comprised multinational states (UN 2010). Immigration to, leading in this respect, countries such as Russia (12.3 million migrants), Ukraine (5.3 million) and Belarus (1.1 million)³ is, to a large extent, a result of intense migration within the former Soviet Union, in particular from its Asian to its European part. For comparison, in West European countries, including those with the largest numbers of immigrants such as Germany (10.8 million), France (6.7 million) and Great Britain (6.5 million), a significant number of migrants originate from outside Europe.

To a large extent internal migration in CEE is a result of earlier ethnic policies. The aftermath of the complicated history of the countries which comprise CEE is the emergence of specific phenomena in this region. These include the presence of significant populations of non-citizens (especially in Latvia, the Russian Federation and Estonia), migration within the institutionalised repatriation systems (e.g. population of Polish origin from the former Soviet Union), the issue of national minorities living in neighbouring countries (as in Hungary), return migration (Fihel and Górný in this issue) and policy towards emigration in sending countries (Lesińska in this issue).

From the last decade of the 20th century thousands of Bulgarians, Romanians and Ukrainians started to migrate in search of income to other countries in CEE including the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (Grabowska-Lusińska et al. 2011). Initially, dominant among them were petty traders and irregular workers engaged in unskilled jobs. They were later joined by contract workers and entrepreneurs including migrants from China (in Hungary and the Czech Republic) and Vietnam (in the Czech Republic and Poland). Distinctiveness and cultural distance from receiving societies coupled with specific Asian migrants' socio-cultural characteristics lead to different patterns of their functioning and integration than in the case of migrants from non-EU European countries (Stefańska, Szulecka in this issue). Asylum-seekers are a separate category of migrants in CEE. The largest number of them come to Poland. In recent years applicants for refugee status in Poland have been mainly Russian citizens declaring Chechen nationality and Georgians. In 2012 9 180 applications for refugee status were submitted. For comparison, in other countries of the region the numbers of applications submitted were: Serbia and Kosovo – 2 770, Romania – 2 510, Hungary – 2 160, and the Russian Federation – 1 240 (UNHCR 2012). Finally, one cannot forget about migration within the EU and the inflow, especially to the Visegrad countries, of high-skilled workers from Western Europe. Due to their socio-economic status, these migrants form a distinct group living in specific enclaves and their temporary stay connected with their job contracts does not encourage integration (Piekut in this issue).

As regards immigration processes, the Czech Republic, Hungary and, to some extent, Poland are transforming into immigration countries, undergoing a process similar to the one observed earlier in Western Europe (Okólski 2012c). The first two countries are at a slightly later stage of the migration cycle than Poland, which is currently in the transition phase from a net emigration country into an emigration-immigration country. Unlike in Poland, in the Czech Republic and Hungary emigration remains at a low level with simultaneous significant immigration, especially in the case of the Czech Republic (Drbohlav 2012). Moreover, a significant part of the inflow to Poland is short-term and transit immigration, whereas in the Czech Republic and Hungary settlement immigration plays a more important role (Górný et al. 2009; Grabowska-

-Lusińska *et al.* 2011). However, Poland, so far a typical emigration country, is also slowly transforming into a net immigration country. This is visible, for example, in Poland's migration balance (Fihel 2011). From the 1990s to 2005 the registered permanent emigration greatly exceeded immigration, thus, the population balance was definitely negative. This phenomenon reached its peak in 2006 and remained high in the subsequent two years due to the rapid growth of emigration connected with European integration. However, in the years 2009-2010 an equalisation of both flows was observed as a result of both decreasing emigration and a marked increase in immigration (noticeable from 2007).

Central and Eastern Europe is not only a place of significant migration flows, but also of intense demographic changes connected with increasing life expectancy and a decline in fertility rates, which is commonly called population ageing. In this part of the world these processes are particularly intense which, with the general persistent dominance of emigration over immigration, leads to serious demographic, social, economic and political challenges. It is worth adding that in the years 2005-2010 Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania were among the ten countries with the lowest fertility rates in the world (1.33) (UN 2013).

Although the number of people will continue to grow, albeit at a slower rate, mainly as a result of the demographic explosion in less developed countries, especially on the African continent, a negative population growth rate is expected from the second decade of the 21st century on in the most developed countries. As a consequence, according to moderate estimates, by 2050 the population in Europe will have decreased by 96 million including 83 million in CEE. Thus, the population in CEE will have shrunk by 27 per cent (UN 2004). The largest (20 to 30 per cent) decrease in the number of people in the world is forecast in as many as five countries in the CEE region: Bulgaria, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine and Belarus. The population of post-communist countries such as Latvia, Romania, Croatia, the Russian Federation, Lithuania and Georgia is projected to decrease by over 15 per cent. In other CEE countries a slightly lower population decline is expected, e.g. by around 11 per cent in Poland (UN 2013). Additionally, the age structure of the region's population will be strongly affected. The share of people in working-age will markedly decrease, whereas the number of people over 60 years of age, including those over 80 who require care, will sharply increase. For example, average estimates predict that the percentage of the people in the latter group will grow from 3.8 per cent in 2013 to 8.6 per cent in 2050, to subsequently reach 13.4 per cent in 2100 (UN 2013). The dynamics and intensity of these changes show that societies such as Serbians, Poles or Slovaks, currently some of the youngest in Europe, will become some of the oldest by 2050.

The persistent high level of emigration in CEE thus couples with demographic changes (connected with the decline in fertility rates and increasing life expectancy) which lead to the permanent decrease in and ageing of native population in this region. On the one hand, in the long run, this may lead to decreasing the rate of emigration. On the other hand, modernisation, economic development and increasing labour market segmentation will bring about an inflow of immigrants. As can be predicted, the demand for labour in certain states will result in a new immigration status of these countries.

* * *

The diversity and specific character of migration phenomena and problems of Central and Eastern Europe are presented in the 2nd issue of our journal. This issue particularly concentrates on Poland as the main sending and one of the major receiving countries. The texts collected in this volume are especially related to the following three topics which are of critical importance to Poland: 1) the characteristics of numerous Polish diasporas which are rooted in many Western countries and which form a context for new Polish migrants, 2) return migration during the transition period and after the EU enlargement and its significance for the Polish state, 3) the features of immigration and specificity of immigrant adaptation in Poland.

The issue starts with a text by Stefan Markowski and Katarzyna Kwapisz-Williams *Australian Polonia: A Diaspora on the Wane?*, that presents the problem of maintaining the Polish identity by the Polish migration community consisting of the settled post-war emigrants, who found themselves in an environment allowing full integration into the Australian society. The authors believe that an inevitable process of cultural assimilation of the group takes place along with the transformation of the Polish community, from the group preserving the Polish language and customs into Australians of Polish ancestry. This phenomenon, as the Authors suggest, can be explained on the one hand by strong bonds with Australia, and on the other hand, by time-consuming and costly travels to Poland, by the weakness of the idea of an ancestral spiritual home, and also by scarce new migration flows of Poles to Australia and the dissimilarity between the 'old' and the newly-arrived Polish migrants.

A similar category of the Central and Eastern European immigrants (the settled immigrants) in a similar context (traditional, multiethnic immigration country on another continent) is analysed in *Top Rank Labourers and Poor Professionals. Polish and Post-Soviet Immigrants in New York City at the Turn of the 20th and 21st Century* by Anna Sosnowska. In the article the Author explains a different economic situation and status of two groups of immigrants on the New York job market: Poles and Jews from Ukraine and Russia. The dissimilarities in their status are attributed to differences in the human capital of both groups and their social resources (support of a blue-collar, but settled group of Americans of Polish descent and members of other white catholic ethnic groups versus support of a rich and prestigious group of people of Jewish descent) and a different legal status (simplifying: immigrants, including undocumented ones versus refugees).

The next part of the issue includes two articles concerning new migration from Central and Eastern Europe to Western Europe, that concentrate on the phenomenon of return migration and the policy of sending states towards the emigration and return of their citizens. In the text *To Settle or to Leave Again? Patterns of Return Migration to Poland During the Transition Period* Agnieszka Fihel and Agata Górny analyse factors influencing permanent stay or re-emigration (a successive migration after return to home country) on the basis of census data concerning the Polish migration between 1989 and 2002. The results of their study show that people who return to stay permanently, in comparison to re-emigrants, more often live in the cities, and differ from the other group by a higher level of the human capital and stronger family bonds with Poland.

In the following text entitled *The Dilemmas of Policy Towards Return Migration. The Case of Poland after the EU Accession* Magdalena Lesińska analyses the dimensions and problems of a reactive and active state policy towards return migration. She notices that while, in general, the state policy has a limited influence on the residents' decision about emigration or return, it can have larger influence on obtaining political support for given governments or parties. The author illustrates her analysis with examples of numerous activities undertaken in Poland by governmental institutions, local governments, and even non-governmental and private organisations in reaction to the mass post-accession emigration from Poland.

Two subsequent texts show the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as an immigration area for people from the European Union and from third countries. In the first article entitled *A Secure Legal Status as a Determinant of the Professional and Economic Promotion of Different Immigrant Groups in Poland* Renata Stefańska and Monika Szulecka, using the examples of immigrants from Ukraine and Vietnam in Poland, analyse the influence of an improvement of the immigrants' legal situation, which is related to more legal rights and an increase in the sense of security and stabilisation, on their professional and economic situation. The results of the presented study show that the legal advance of the immigrants hardly contributed to a significant improvement of their professional and economic situation. Clear differences between the respondent groups in terms of adaptation patterns on the Polish job market mainly depend on other factors,

especially such as the availability of particular jobs and the type of their networks and social capital as well as a general legal context.

The article by Aneta Piekut <*You've got Starbucks and Coffee Heaven... I Can Do This!*> *Spaces of Social Adaptation of Highly Skilled Migrants in Warsaw* concentrates on daily practices and patterns of the social adaptation of internal EU migrants from Great Britain, France and Germany staying temporarily in Poland. The Author draws attention to the spatial location of their social practices and the role of spaces such as international schools or places of leisure and consumption in the adaptation of this category of migrants.

The issue closes with two reviews. One is of a unique collection of letters detained by the tsarist censorship in the 19th century, that were sent by the Polish emigrants to their families from the North and South America. The letters were edited by Witold Kula, Nina Assorodobraj-Kula, and Marcin Kula, and their re-edition appeared last year (*Listy emigrantów z Brazylii i Stanów Zjednoczonych*) [*Emigrants' Letters from Brasil and the United States*]. The second review is of a book by Izabela Wagner entitled *Becoming Transnational Professional. Kariery i mobilność polskich elit naukowych* [*Becoming Transnational Professional. Careers and Mobility of Polish Scientific Elites*] (2011), which describes the interesting community of the transnational migrants-scientists.

Aleksandra Grzymała-Kazłowska
Centre of Migration Research
University of Warsaw

Notes

¹ Also Cyprus and Malta joined the EU in 2004.

² i.e. the stock of the foreign-born.

³ The statistics mentioned do not include migrants who permanently stay abroad illegally and short-term migrants who significantly increase migrant population. For example, in 2010 341 thousand temporary foreign workers were employed in Germany, 88 thousand in Great Britain. The number of international students enrolled in full-degree programmes in the two countries amounted to 180 thousand and 369 thousand, respectively.

References

- Castles S., Miller M. J. (2003). *The Age of Migration. Third Edition: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. New York, London: The Guilford Press.
- Drbohlav D. (2012). Patterns of immigration in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. A comparative perspective, in: M. Okólski (ed.), *European Immigrations: Trends, Structures and Policy Implications*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Górny A., Grabowska-Lusińska I., Lesińska M., Okólski M. (ed.) (2010). *Immigration to Poland. Policy, Employment, Integration*. Warszawa: Scholar.
- Eade J., Drinkwater S., Garapich M. (2006). *Class and ethnicity: Polish emigrants in London*. Research Report for ERSC, CRONEM, University of Surrey.

- Engbersen G. (2011). Migration Transitions in an Era of Liquid Migration: Reflections on Fassmann and Reeger, in: M. Okólski (ed.), *Europe: the Continent of Immigrants: Trends, Structures and Policy Implications*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Engbersen G., Leerkes A., Grabowska-Lusińska I., Snel E., Burgers J. (2013). A Typology of Labour Migration. On the Differential Attachments of Migrants from Central and Eastern Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(6): 959–981.
- Fihel A. (ed.) (2011). *Recent Trends in International Migration in Poland. The 2011 SOPEMI Report*. CMR Working Papers 52/110. Warsaw: Centre of Migration Research, University of Warsaw.
- Grabowska-Lusińska I., Drbohlav D., Hárs Á. (2011). *Immigration puzzles: A comparative analysis of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland before and after joining the European Union*. Saarbrücken: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Grabowska-Lusińska I., Okólski M. (2009). *Emigracja ostatnia?* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Grzymała-Kazłowska, A. (2005), From ethnic cooperation to in-group competition: Undocumented Polish workers in Brussels. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31(4): 675-697.
- Iglicka K. (2001). *Poland's Post-War Dynamic of Migration*. London: Asghate, Aldershot.
- OECD (2012). *International Migration Outlook 2012*. Paris: OECD Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2012-en.
- Okólski M. (2001). Mobilność przestrzenna z perspektywy koncepcji migracji niepełnej, in: E. Jaźwińska, M. Okólski (eds), *Ludzie na huśtawce. Migracje między peryferiami Polski i Zachodu*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Okólski M. (2004). Migration Patterns in Central and Eastern Europe on the Eve of the European Union Enlargement, in: A. Górny, P. Ruspini (eds) (2004), *Migration in the New Europe. East-West Revisited*, pp. 23-48. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Okólski M. (2012a). Spatial Mobility from the Perspective of the Incomplete Migration Concept. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 1(1): 11-35.
- Okólski M. (2012b). Modernising Impacts of Emigration. *Studia Socjologiczne* 3(206): 49-79.
- Okólski M. (2012c). Transition from Emigration to Immigration, Is it the Destiny of Modern European countries?, in: M. Okólski (ed.), *European Immigrations: Trends, Structures and Policy Implications*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- UN (2004). *World Population Prospects. The 2002 Revision*. Volume III: Analytical Report. New York: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations.
- UN (2011). *The Age and Sex of Migrants 2011*. Nowy Jork: United Nations.
- UNHCR (2012). *Asylum Trends 2012. Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries*.
- UN (2013). *World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision. Key Findings and Advance Tables*. Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP.227.
- World Bank (2006). *Labour migration from the new EU member states*. World Bank EU-8 Quarterly Report September.