

Migration between Ukraine and Poland

Background

**METOIKOS - Circular Migration Patterns in
Southern and Central Eastern Europe:
Challenges and Opportunities for Migrants
and Policy makers**

KATARZYNA GMAJ, KRYSZYNA IGLICKA



CENTRUM STOSUNKÓW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Determinants and Consequences of Ukrainian Migration to Poland

- 1990ties *primitive mobility* - ephemeral and mass spatial movement of citizens of the former USSR.
- Poland's labour policy, which protects local labour forces, and its liberal visa policy for Ukrainians.
- Seasonality has become a way of life - the strategy of minimizing household risks.
- Movement is held between social peripheries of the sending country and peripheries of higher economically developed and wealthier receiving countries.
- Aging of rural population, fertility reduction, losses in rural labor potential, prevention of further agricultural and rural development
- A local community factor - in many cases labour migration is a result of the change in the hierarchy of values.
- Labour migration decreases the fertility rate and thus diminishes the reproductive potential of the family.
- Redistribution of traditional gender roles.
- Within Ukraine one can observe regional preferences on the main direction of migration.a

Demographic Data on Ukrainian Immigration to Poland

- Ukrainian citizens constitute the most numerous national group regarding those foreigners who received settlement and stay permit in Poland (Office for Foreigners data)

		Positive decisions on application for permanent settlement in Poland	positive decisions for temporary residency	positive decisions on applications for long-term EU residency permit
2006	male	361	2,482	190
	female	1,077	5,251	234
2007	male	410	2,423	152
	female	1,199	4,958	195
2008	male	455	2,904	139
	female	1,230	5,403	160
2009	total	1,280	8,489	331

Ukrainian Citizens Staying in Poland on the basis of Settlement and Stay Permit

- The number of Ukrainian citizens staying in Poland on the basis of settlement and stay permit is still not very high. At the end of the year 2008 it was 22, 801. At the end of 2009 13,787 Ukrainians held permanent residency cards, while 11,074 held temporary residency permits (Office for Foreigners data).
- About one third of these immigrants graduated University and only a few percent has an elementary or lower level of education.
- In 2004 80% of Ukrainian citizens residing in Poland were in the age 20-49 while younger were only a few percents.
- About 40 % resided in one of the following cities: Warsaw (and its surroundings), Krakow, Wroclaw, Lublin and Szczecin.

A 'Suspended Immigration'.

- The predominant category of arrivals constitute shuttle or circular migrants from the former Soviet Union with Ukraine leading.
- They often find employment in sectors showing a stable demand for unskilled or skilled low-paid workers: construction and agricultural sectors and domestic/caretaking services.

Opening of the Polish Labour Market for Seasonal Workers

- Till 2007 according to Polish official data Ukrainians were granted with approximately 3,000 – 6,000 of work permits annually while the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimated that approximately 300,000 Ukrainian citizens worked in Poland.
- Three ordinances of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy (issued in the years 2006–2008) open possibilities for foreigners originating from neighbouring countries who wanted to work legally in Poland for a few months per year.
- Employer declarations issued for Ukrainian citizens
 - July 20th–December 31st, 2007: 22,000
 - 2008: 156,000
 - 2009: 181,000

Review of Studies on Circular Migration

- Growing unemployment, degradation of life conditions on the one hand and profits from petty trade accompanied with higher salaries in Poland led to mass mobility of Ukrainian citizens.
- Till the late 1990ties the main economic activity undertaken by Ukrainians was trade. Employment, predominantly irregular, was less preferable option.

A Shuttle Mobility

a usually declared purpose of visit in Poland a tourist one, a real aim - trade

- This kind of mobility was possible due to non-visa entrance.
- When profitability of this form of economic activity decreased Ukrainian immigrants started working on construction, renovation and agriculture. They also got engaged in domestic services sector.
- in the mid 1990. four categories of Ukrainian migrants, were distinguished.
 1. Poor, low skilled, not young and economically inactive people trying to survive.
 2. Middle-aged people who before economic transition were financially and professionally stable; however as a result of reforms they were threatened by degradation. Trips to Poland were a strategy of living on (keeping the life standards that they got used to, keeping their social position).
 3. Highly skilled professionals who due to the unfortunate accidents had financial problems and when they overcame them they return to Ukraine.
 4. Entrepreneurial young people – students or University graduates – who took advantage of the difference between prices in Poland and Ukraine In order to accumulate money and start their own business.

Trade → A Short Term Employment

- Trade was replaced by a short term employment as a main economic activity of Ukrainian citizens in Poland. Migrants situated in less favourable segment of labour market choosing activities that were not attractive for Polish workers.
- Institutionalized practices that accompany circular form of labour force mobility. They include:
 - 'driver'
 - 'employment exchanges'

Ethnic and Sex Division

- Since the beginning of the economic transformation an ethnic division characterized foreign labour market in Poland.
- Foreign labour market in Poland is also segmented by sex.

Short Term Employment and Shuttle Migration

- This is the strategy predominating among Ukrainian citizens working in Poland.
- This is the way, how they adopt to the Polish labour market demand.
- This strategy allows them to enter and to survive at the Polish labour market.

Integration and Reintegration Policies

- Poland and Ukraine still do not have a normative document that would establish the foundations of the country's migration policy, recognizing its goals, objectives, mechanisms and instruments.
- So far integration activities concerning immigrants have been offered by the state only in case of immigrants seeking international protection in Poland or repatriates.
- Attracting foreign seasonal workers, from countries with small cultural distance, mainly Ukrainians, who do not cause cultural tension seems to be a state strategy.
- The majority of immigrants do not treat Poland as a settlement country. It seems that a state strategy of attracting seasonal workers responds to potential supply.

What are the most interesting questions to inquire further

- It seems that circular migration is a form beneficial for both countries. For Poland it responds to a demand for seasonal workers, for Ukraine it does not occur in a permanent lost of population and provides remittances for the families left home.

1. Whether Poland and Ukraine have different priorities with regards to circular migration or whether their priorities are matching?

2. What kind of policies would influence this circularity (e.g. a short term visa with repeated entries for employment in specific sectors of the labour market)?

What are the most interesting questions to inquire further

- Actual immigrants' integration to Polish society comes about thanks to a combination of non-institutional factors.
- In case of circular migrants, their social contacts with Poles, that could create opportunity for integration, are rather limited by their main aim - accumulating money and returning home.

1. It is an open question what circular migrants needs are?

2. Whether they would be interested in any integration programs?