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## FOREIGN MIGRATION OF POLES IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AT THE TURN OF CENTURY

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**ABSTRACT.** The article deals with problems related to present foreign migrations of Poles. The attention is concentrated on presenting scientific research results in this sphere indicating many problems caused by migrations not only in the social, demographic and economic spheres but also in political and cultural spheres thus enabling scientists to understand better this complex and multidimensional phenomenon.

**KEY WORDS:** foreign migrations, migration region, scientific research, Poland.

### INTRODUCTION

Problems related to the free international labour flow and to their impact on the situation on national and regional labour markets gain an increasing economic, social and political importance in the period of mass flows. In Poland, due to political preconditions and far-reaching social transformations, important quantitative and qualitative changes took place in migration flows during several recent decades. The specific character of foreign migrations during the period of transformations favoured at the same time undertaking developing analyses of migration problems in their various contexts – demographic, economic, spatial and social. The individual components of this process have constituted, in connection with the above, a subject of regular analyses and studies. This is the reason why the knowledge of the subject is relatively well arranged and the literature on migrations quite abundant (*Cf.: State of the Art...*). In regions where foreign migrations of the population concentrated and manifested themselves in a particular way, we may even talk about a kind of a historical continuity of research as migrations were the subjects of a regular scientific observation

based on many empirical research ventures and conclusions of a great cognitive importance.

The event that was a breakthrough, i.e. the accession of Poland to the European Union in 2004, determines the present character of emigration, and in the context of its scale, poses a question concerning a further shapes of emigration, an emigration potential and current and potential consequences for the socio-economic development of the country. Therefore, the recognition of conditions causing great migration flows and their consequences, and at present also the recognition of problems connected with the return migrations still is an important research venture of a great practical importance for social and economic policy. Also, the impact of foreign migrations on regional development processes gains a particular importance.

### RESEARCH INTO CAUSES OF FOREIGN MIGRATIONS OF POLES

Starting from the early nineties, the main aim of the research is to capture the nature of changes in foreign migrations of Poles taking place in connection with the transformation of the political, social and economic system. This research is to create a scientific base for shaping the regional, social and economic policy, and in consequence, also the migration policy of the country.

During the nineties, a clear change in migration trends was observed. The research into changes in foreign migrations in several regions of the country was conducted with the application of a complex multistage method called ethnic exploration by a group headed by Okólski (1). It was indicated that the double model of migrations reappeared, i.e. the scale of temporary departures related to permanent or seasonal employment increased significantly while one way emigration weakened. The increasing trend of an increase of the economic character of the emigration was clearly noticeable. In the monograph "*Ludzie na huśtawce...*" (People on a Swing) presenting the research results, a concept of an *incomplete migration* was elaborated denoting a pendulum traffic between the place of work abroad and the place of permanent residence of the migrant and his family in the home country. A similar model emerged during the socialist modernisation when a group of peasants becoming workers "*incompletely*" migrated from villages to cities. Starting from the seventies when the system was liberalised, the stream of foreign migrants broadened but the character of migration did not change (Łukowski, 2001: 125–163).

Problems relating to factors shaping migrations both in their international aspects as well as relating to individual motives occupy an important place in

scientific analyses. These publications contain also analyses of legal regulations applicable to foreign mobility and in force in individual countries in this field (2). Due to strong ties with Germany, much attention was devoted to factors attracting Poles to that country. Głąbicka (2000) and Kaczmarczyk (2005: 27–45) while analysing migration policy of Germany, devote their attention to the factor of an ideological or historical character that exerted an impact on its present shape and the special status of the so called *Aussiedlers* (3) from countries of Central and Eastern Europe, also from Poland, and the attitude of Germans towards this group of immigrants during the whole post-war period (4).

At the same time, a research was undertaken to discover the reasons for emigration determined both by the situation in the local environment of migrants and of migrants themselves. It was attempted to place analyses of this kind in the framework of “push” and “pull” factors theory generally used in research on migrations. The studies on motives of leaving the country indicate that apart from economic reasons there were also factors related to the socio-economic situation. Moreover, some additional conditions determining to a considerable extent permanent and temporary migrations become essential in certain regions. Such conditions were, for example, multiple citizenship applicable first of all to national minorities living in Poland [*Obywatelstwo wielokrotnego wyboru...*, 2007 (A Multiple Choice Citizenship)]. The chance to have a foreign citizenship apart from the Polish was one of the factors that caused an emergence of *emigration monoculture* ethnically predetermined and existing ceaselessly in Opole Silesia from the early fifties (Heffner and Solga, 2007: 66–90). Górny and Koryś heading the research group taking up this line of research touched upon a subject not discussed previously in Poland and joined at the same time a broader discussion on possible changes in the concept of citizenship in the situation of the more and more frequent cases of a full or partial affiliation of an individual to more than one national state.

Analyses concerning *network of migration links* also constitute an important line of research. An important role is attached to it. It is considered sometimes that favourable economic conditions are insufficient to cause a mass migration if there is no simultaneous development of links between migrants and potential migrants. Thanks to these links, foreign migrations become a social process gradually embracing local societies and foreign clusters of migrants from these societies. The functioning of this type of network of links is relatively well diagnosed in the areas characterised by a stronger and mainly economically driven foreign migration – Opole region linked with Germany (Solga, 2002), Podlasie with Belgium (Cieślińska, 1994; Popławski, 1994) and Małopolska with Austria (Górz, 1994). The research conducted by Solga proved that thanks to this type of links the emigration to Germany, both permanent and temporary is much easier

from the Opole Voievodeship than from other regions where such a broad and effectively functioning network of links has not been established. Additionally, such a network creates a base for pendulum migrations of former emigrants who left the region recently and who, although already well rooted abroad, usually maintain links with the region of their origin and constitute a strong effective or future base for further emigration (Solga, 2002). A good example here is the circle of Polish economic emigrants in Brussels. Grzymała-Kozłowska who described it proved that an increase of the number of Poles in this city and an exceptionally dynamic development of migration networks caused and emergence of an isolated society members who can live and function with a minimum contacts with the Belgians (Grzymała-Kozłowska, 2001: 272–302).

Networks of links became a particularly frequently exposed factor initiating migration in the context of forecasting the scale of departures from Poland after the accession of Poland to the European Union. The interest in migration at that time was lively and quite often led to formulating controversial evaluations as the problem concerned the freedom of movement of persons and access to jobs on the European common market (5). Poland and other countries acceding to the EU at the time approached the migration problems in a quite different way evaluating the scale, dynamics and scope of movement much more modestly than it would result from analyses of researchers from the old EU member countries (Fassmann, Hintermann, 1997: 142–152; Heffner, Solga, 2000). These differences made the question of free movement one of the more sensitive items of accession negotiations. At the same time, this topic attracted the attention and emotions of the public opinion. Scientific analyses of these problems pointed to an essential role of both demographic (Kupiszewski, 2001: 73–99, Kryńska, 2001: 53–67) and social (Wierzbicki, 2001: 183–197), as well as economic factors (Zienkowski, 2001, 99–127). It was also mentioned that the so called migration potential is of an essential importance in initiating emigration after the next enlargement (Slany, 1997).

The accession of Poland to the EU, unleashing a great migration wave, constitutes undoubtedly a significant turning point for the international mobility of Poles. This circumstance, due to the scale of the economically motivated migration, its character and consequences for the economy and for the whole society, created a quite qualitatively new situation in migration processes. In connection with that, an identification and an analysis of mechanisms and structural features of the newest migration become a part of many reports. Fihel, Kaczmarczyk and Okólski, while analysing spatial mobility in the Central and East European region prove that it is an inseparable component of the history of the region and a king of summing up of processes of changes introduced after 1989 (Fihel, *et al.* 2007).

While analysing “push” and “pull” factors in traffic between Poland and the EU countries – the destination of economically motivated trips of Poles, we can see that factors stimulating the decision to leave Poland still dominate. In spite of the noticeable economic growth, the distance between Poland and the best developed countries of Western Europe is still long. The input by foreign immigrants in the West European economy is significant. They facilitate overcoming the existing bottlenecks and gaps in the West European, and in particular secondary labour markets. This is the reason why the demand for cheaper immigrant labour is still high in spite of the local unemployment. Therefore, in spite of the native labour concern, governments of individual Western countries assure that they still welcome workers from Poland and other new member countries of the EU. The free movement and the ability to take up jobs in the territories of the EU member countries are also favoured by regulations concerning immigration policy in force in the EU territory (Balicki and Stalker, 2006). These factors exert an impact on the present scale of migrations from Poland which undoubtedly is the greatest since the beginning of transformation, although it is difficult to determine exactly.

### **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INTO CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN MIGRATIONS**

An explicit evaluation of consequences of foreign migrations proved difficult for researchers. Numerous publications indicate that migrations bring measurable advantages but also cause dangers and costs suffered both by individuals and by the society both in the economic and non-economic aspect.

Analyses conducted by Rauziński reveal the impact of mass migrations on serious demographic distortions, mainly a decline of the number of births, deformation in age and sex structures of the population, aging of the society, splitting of families and weakening of social bonds (Rauziński and Zagórska 2007; Rauziński, 2006). If foreign migrations are not compensated by internal flows, the permanently negative migration balance may weaken the demographic structure of the region of migrations causing more and more severe problems on the labour market, deformations of the regional socio-economic structure and a significant decrease of development capabilities of the region.

It was proved that foreign migrations exert a negative impact on the demographic and the socio-economic situation also due to the fact that of emigration of educated and professional persons. In Poland, an increasing number of regions suffer shortages of qualified staff in professions represented by permanent and temporary emigrants and even whole professional groups disappear from local labour markets. Migrations of highly qualified specialists are particularly disadvantageous as they

cause a significant loss in social capital. In spite of the fact that Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2005) maintain that there are no reasons to consider the outflow of specialists during the period of transformation as an alarming phenomenon, nevertheless the foreign mobility has a clearly selective character at present and education constitutes an important element of this selection.

Among the negative consequences of temporary migrations, particularly unfavourable are those that result from disintegration of family bonds and splitting of families. The research conducted by Wojaczek (2005: 209–221) reveal that migrations contributed to an emergence of a new type of family split as a result of emigration. It seems, therefore, that in connection with the increasing scale of departures, the frequency of appearance of such a type of family with all its problems will increase. Moreover, analysts of the problem maintain that, similarly to inheritance of unemployment in families, we may speak about inheritance of a family lifestyle with inherent separation for economic reasons. If that is true, then there is a danger of cultural and social sanctioning of the family model functioning with a permanent separation of husband and wife.

The economic consequences of economically motivated migrations are particularly important from the point of view of regional development. In recent years, analyses conducted by Jończy brought many important determinations in this field. They dealt mainly with economic consequences of migration and its profitability (Jończy, 2003). The scale of foreign migrations exceeding the level of unemployment in the region of migrants origin may reduce its stimulating impact. However, the restriction of unemployment must be accompanied by a simultaneous increase of employment and economic activity. Although migrants stimulate business as a result of considerable money transfers, this stimulation is mainly directed to regions and areas of origin of goods and services, and quite often of labour resources.

In recent years, in connection with observations of complex and multilateral character of factors shaping foreign migrations, a concept of a migration region was elaborated in Poland. Its authors, Heffner and Rauziński, referred to the Opole Voivodeship which was the main region initiating foreign migrations during the post-war period in Poland (Heffner and Rauziński, 2003). The process of continuation of a great number of temporary and pendulum departures and of a relatively high level of permanent outflow exerts an impact on a majority of components of social policy and on the economic development of the region (Heffner, 2008). A majority of reasons for mass migration stems not only from the differences in the socio-economic development level between the place of domicile and the place of destination but also from additional circumstances (e.g. the social situation in the Opole region) related to the specific social situation, cultural pressure, family relations and the network of links. Social, demographic

and economic, phenomena accompanying migrations are extremely complex in the migration region both in the spatial and political aspects.

The newest research aimed at dominating attitude and consciousness among temporary migrants and concerning investing their incomes in the development of small and medium enterprises in their region of origin seems to fill the gap on the subject (Heffner and Solga, 2008). There are only just a few examples of effectively functioning firms established by persons who use the capital earned abroad. At the same time, as the example of Ireland illustrates (6), it is a very important question as the emigrant earnings abroad may become a valuable, effective or potential source of capital for the region of origin. In connection with that the research into return migrations of Poles commenced by a group headed by Iglicka (*Migracje powrotne...*, 2002) will gain in importance (7). From the point of view of evaluation of foreign migrations and related costs and advantages, a recognition of factors inducing return and restricting remigration, motives and strategies for return and possibilities of utilisation of migration capital becomes at present of key importance for socio-economic development of migration regions.

## CONCLUSION

Because of the fact that foreign migrations are one of the essential factors of the demographic, economic and social changes taking place in Poland, the need to describe and analyse this phenomenon and to recognise its reasons and consequences proved pressing. Numerous analyses and works on the subject touch upon many problems caused by migrations not only in the demographic and economic spheres but also in political and cultural spheres and broaden understanding of this complex and multidimensional phenomenon. Probably there are still many lines requiring a further scientific penetration in the formula combining multidisciplinary subjects and research methods. Two directions are essential within the context of further research into migrations.

First, from the point of view of development of the country and of individual regions, analyses of an applicatory character are of key importance due to the big scale of foreign migrations of Poles. Excessive emigration clearly weakens economic and social position of emigration regions and in spite of advantageous consequences of migrations in the sphere of individual incomes, the level of consumption and the related services the general development conditions are clearly weakened. In order to assure some positive results of emigration for the emigration regions in the future, a broader activity should be undertaken in order to revert migration trends and to create conditions for remigration while the most

effective strategy preventing the outflow seems to be the creation of conditions favouring a more dynamic socio-economic development of the regions.

Second, the most important task faced by Poland at present is to elaborate the state migration policy lines covering emigration and immigration processes in a complex way. According to Rajkiewicz, the necessary condition for these work is to create a Polish migration doctrine makes possible to formulate cohesive principles of this policy (Rajkiewicz, 2003: 29).

## NOTES

(1) The research results were published in E. Jaźwińska, M. Okólski (ed.), *Causes and Consequences of Migration in Central and Eastern Europe, Podlasie and Śląsk Opolski: basic trends 1975–1994* Warszawa 1996. They were also discussed in K. Iglicka-Okólska, *Analiza zachowań migracyjnych na podstawie wyników badania etnosondażowego migracji zagranicznych w wybranych regionach Polski w latach 1975–1994* (An Analysis of Migration Behaviour Based on Ethnic Exploration Research into Foreign Migrations Results in 1975–1994, “Monografie i Opracowania”, No 438, Warszawa 1998, p. 172 and in P. Kaczmarczyk, *Migracje zarobkowe Polaków w dobie przemian* (Economically Stimulated Migrations of Poles during the Period of Transformation), Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2005, p. 360.

(2) An important place in his field occupy consecutive volumes in the *Migracje i Społeczeństwo* (Migrations and Society) series edited by J. E. Zamojski in the framework of The Historical Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Cf. e.g. *Polska–Hiszpania. Migracje* (Poland–Spain. Migrations), vol. 9, 2004, *Upadek imperiów i rozwój migracji* (The Fall of Empires and Development of Migration), vol. 8, 2003, *Migracje. Historia i kultura* (Migrations. History and Culture), vol. 7, 2002, *Diaspory* (Diasporas), vol. 6, 2001, *Imigranci i społeczeństwa przyjmujące* (Immigrants and Host Societies), vol. 5, 2000.

(3) The notion of *Aussiedler* emerged after World War II to denote German population forced to resettle to Germany from territories of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. This term is still applicable although it seems that it is quite inadequate at present. In the Polish literature on the subject the word *Aussiedler* is generally translated as “resettled person” (instead of a more adequate “displaced person”). However, the Polish translation does not fully reflect the German notion as the true translation of “resettled person” is *Übersiedler*. This word, however, was applicable in The Federal Republic of Germany only to persons arriving from The Democratic Republic of Germany. Then, the term *Spätaussiedler* (“late displaced person”) appeared in relation to persons leaving Poland on the grounds of provisions of Protocol of October 9, 1975 after that date. For more details see: A. Trzcińska-Polus, “*Wysiedleńcy*” z Polski w Republice Federalnej Niemiec w latach 1980–1990 (“Displaced Persons” from Poland in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1980–1990), Państwowy Instytut Naukowy Instytut Śląski w Opolu, Opole 1997, p. 8.



(4) The publication by A. Trzcińska-Polus brought numerous important assignments as it analyses the process of assimilation of this group of immigrants in the German society apart from presenting applicable legal regulations.

(5) For more details on quantitative forecasts of migrations after accession of Poland to the EU see: e.g. A. Trzcielińska-Polus *Masowe migracje po przystąpieniu Polski do Unii Europejskiej – mit czy zagrożenie? (Przegląd prasy niemieckiej)*, (Mass Migrations after Accession of Poland to the EU – A Myth or a Danger? (a review of German press) in M. Duczmal, Z. Nowak, W. Potwora (eds), *Spoleczno ekonomiczne aspekty integracji* (Social and Economic Aspects of Integration), Opole 2000, pp. 105–116. There are also two country reports on the subject of migration from Poland after accession to the EU. The first is the articles by W. Orłowski and L. Zienkowski, *Skala potencjalnej emigracji z Polski po przystąpieniu do Unii Europejskiej: Próba prognozy* (The Scale of Potential Emigration from Poland after the Accession to the European Union: An Attempt at a Forecast), pp. 55–67 and by M. Kupiszewski, *Czy na podstawie doświadczeń innych krajów można przewidywać zmiany migracji międzynarodowej po przystąpieniu Polski do Unii Europejskiej* (Is It Possible to Forecast Changes in International Migration after Accession of Poland to the European Union on the Ground of Other Countries Experience), pp. 67–79 published in the special issue of the bulletin of the Committee of the Spatial Development of the Country of the Polish Academy of Sciences entitled *Przemiany w zakresie migracji ludności jako konsekwencja przystąpienia Polski do Unii Europejskiej* (Changes in the Sphere of Population Migration as a Consequence of Poland's Accession to the European Union) edited by P. Korcelli. The second report: A. Stępnia (ed.), *Swobodny przepływ pracowników w kontekście wejścia Polski do Unii Europejskiej* (The Free Movement of Workers in the Context of Accession of Poland to the European Union), Warszawa 2001 was prepared at the request of the Government Plenipotentiary for Negotiations for the Membership of Poland in the European Union.

(6) The reasons of achieving such a success by Ireland are of a particular interest at present. This country being the poorest among the EU members in 1980 became one of the richest countries in Europe. An analysis of reforms undertaken in Ireland (including a radical restriction of expenditures and of the number of employees in the public sector, restriction of wage growth and of employees rights, low taxes for foreign investors, reorienting the economy from agricultural to industrial and the development of new technologies and services) does not give grounds to maintain that it is possible to repeat the success of Ireland in Poland under the prevailing development conditions. Experts even maintain that it would be purposeless in certain branches of economy due to revealed inefficiencies and related dangers. For more information see e.g. S. Talar, *Determinanty konkurencyjności gospodarki Irlandii* (Determinants of the Irish Economy Competitiveness), <http://mikro.univ.szczecin.pl/bp/pdf/64/24.pdf>.

(7) Many publications on remigration have appeared till now. Apart from K. Heffner and B. Solga, *Wpływ zagranicznych migracji zarobkowych na sytuację społeczno-ekonomiczną regionu (analiza na przykładzie województwa opolskiego jako regionu migracyjnego* [The Impact of Foreign Economically Motivated Migrations on the Socio-Economic Situation of the Region (an analysis using the example of the Opole Voivodeship)],

a research report, Państwowy Instytut Naukowy Instytut Śląski w Opolu, Opole 2008, pp. 130 these problems are also dealt with in L. Kolarska-Bobińska (ed.), *Emigrować i wracać. Migracja zarobkowa Polaków a polityka państwa* (To Emigrate and to Return. The Economically Motivated Migration of Poles and the Policy of the State), Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2007, p. 94.

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