

ZBIGNIEW DŁUGOSZ

PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY OF CRACOW

**SELECTED ASPECTS OF FOREIGN IMMIGRATION
TO POLAND AT THE TURN
OF THE 20TH/21ST CENTURY**

ABSTRACT. The aim of this study is to retrace the changes in foreign immigration to Poland in the years 1990–2004. It attempts to provide an assessment of certain, seemingly the most important aspects of immigration to the extent permitted by the data available, such as the size of these influxes and their structure, as well as indicating main directions of such flows of people. The results showed that in recent years the numbers of foreign immigrants to Poland have been growing slightly but steadily.

KEY WORDS: foreign immigration, demographic structure, territorial distribution

Foreign immigration in Poland has a long and noteworthy history. Migrations to our country were particularly connected with specific socio-economic determinants. In different periods of history the extent, structure and directions of migration changed. This was the case when Polish people returned to their country after WW I and, upon Poland's regaining her independence, when some former émigrés returned, as A. Maryński put it, "having earned some money" (1984). This was also the case in the new situation after WW II, as a result of changes in the political situation and borders (Zdrojewski, 2000). Also in the recent history of our country, immigration has been influenced, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, by the new reality connected with the changes that took place in Poland and in Europe as a whole after 1989. They have had a significant impact on the pattern of immigration to our country, the latter still in the process of transformation. Today the most recent fifteen years of the transformation are seen as a period of fundamental change in this respect, since on the one hand

the highest influx of people has been noted, both Poles with their roots in the old or more recent emigration and foreigners who see the prospects of better living conditions, a better life and the opportunities to realize their plans. The causes of such migrations are varied, stemming from political reasons, through family to job or for economic reasons. Referring to Poland's Demographic Situation covered in the Report by the Government Demographic Council Centre for Strategic Studies, there are two categories of immigrants to our country: foreigners not having Polish citizenship, and Poles or persons with Polish roots returning from abroad, who, most often, either lost the right to permanent residence after leaving the country or sometimes have lived abroad since they were born and who because of the turbulent history stayed outside the borders of Poland (e.g. Poles in the neighbouring Eastern countries or Kazakhstan). Apart from illegal immigration, a large group consists of refugees seeking asylum because of political persecution in their country of origin. The Act on Foreigners of 1997 (Journal of Laws No 114, item 739) and EU legislation lays down guarantees of protection, by which immigrants in this category may be offered the opportunity to obtain the right of permanent residence in Poland.

The aim of this study is to retrace the changes in foreign immigration to Poland in the years 1990–2004. The analysis was based on statistical data from *Roczniki Demograficzne* (Demographic Annals) of the General Statistical Office. It attempts to provide an assessment of certain, seemingly the most important aspects of immigration to the extent permitted by the data available, such as the size of these influxes and their structure, as well as indicating the main directions of such flows of people. Part of the data enabled us to provide an overall assessment of this phenomenon and some empirical materials enabled us to cover the spatial aspects stemming from the administrative division of the country into voivodeships, which has been binding in Poland since 1999. However, it should be borne in mind that all data, and therefore the results, refer to the numbers of immigrants who have been registered as permanent residents, and not to the number of those who have actually come to Poland. Thus following the discussion below one can, in rather general terms, assess the proportions of the size and structure of the wide immigrant population which is difficult to assess and remains in our country both legally and illegally (without registered permanent residence), treating their stay here as a stage in further migration or waiting for the legitimisation of their residence in Poland.

Firstly one should note that the rate of influx of people to Poland has been steadily growing over the recent decade or so. While in the years 1963–1990 immigration to Poland did not exceed 3,000 per year, since 1991 the figure did not fall below 5,000 a year to reach the level of 9,500 per year in 2004–2005. The largest proportion of foreign immigrants went to urban centres. Since 1991 at

least 4,000 foreign newcomers have been registered annually in towns. while in rural areas these figures did not exceed 2,500 immigrants per year, except for the recent years 2004–2005 (Fig. 1). Referring to the above-mentioned Report of the Government Demographic Council, recently a half of the number of immigrants have been Poles who emigrated in the 1980s and have now returned to Poland.

In total, in the years 1990–2005, 114,300 immigrants registered their residence in Poland, of this slightly more than 75% being towns and cities. In total, in the period 1990–2004 (Fig. 2) the largest number of them were men (52%), but their percentage was unstable and varied from 56.4% (1990) to 49.3%

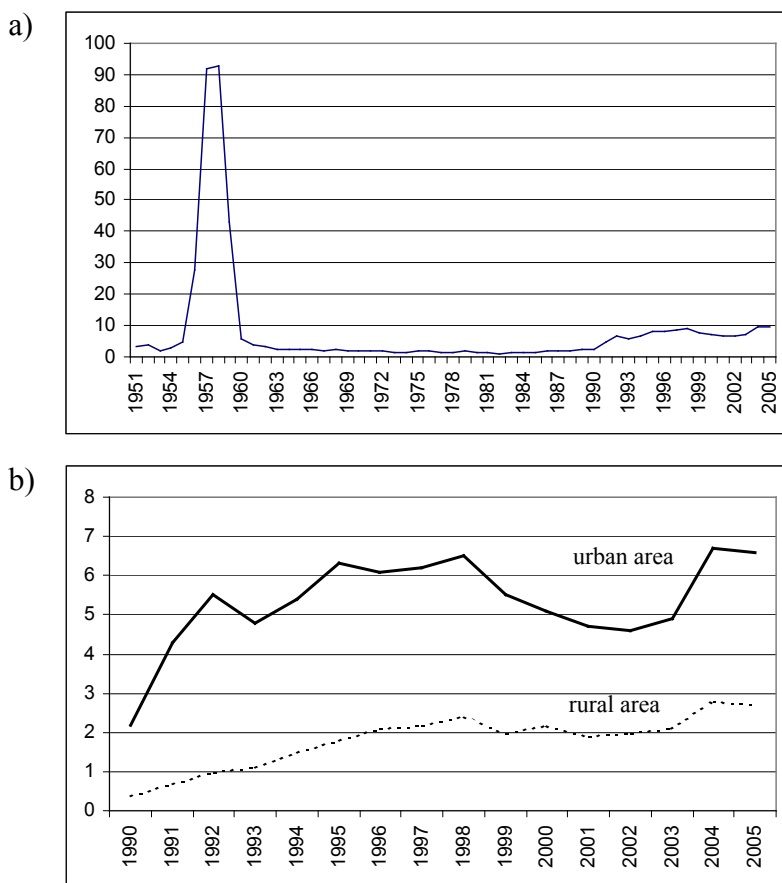


Fig. 1. a) Total foreign population immigration to Poland (in thousand), b) Foreign population immigration to Poland (in thousand)

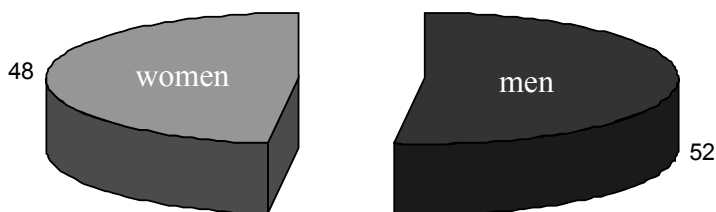


Fig. 2. Foreign population immigration to Poland by gender in the years 1990–2004 (in %)

(1998). Only in 1998 was the proportion of women higher than that of men (Fig. 3). However it seems noteworthy that in this period the percentage of immigrants to towns gradually fell, ranging from 84.9% (1990) to 70.9% (2004), and as a result the people coming to rural areas reached almost 1/3 of the total number of immigrants.

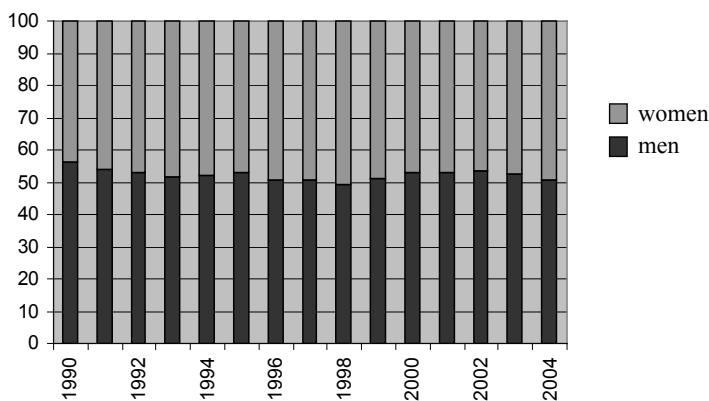


Fig. 3. The dynamics of foreign population immigration to Poland by gender (in %)

In the aspect of the sex and age structure (Fig. 4), in total in the years 1990–2004 the highest proportion in the total number of immigrants was of those in the years of the peak of occupational activity (20–44 years). If the percentage in this age group is broken down into five-year groups, these proportions were above 10% for men and more than 8% for women. A relatively high proportion of immigrants consisted of the youngest (0–4 years of age) and the oldest (70+)

SELECTED ASPECTS OF FOREIGN IMMIGRATION TO POLAND...

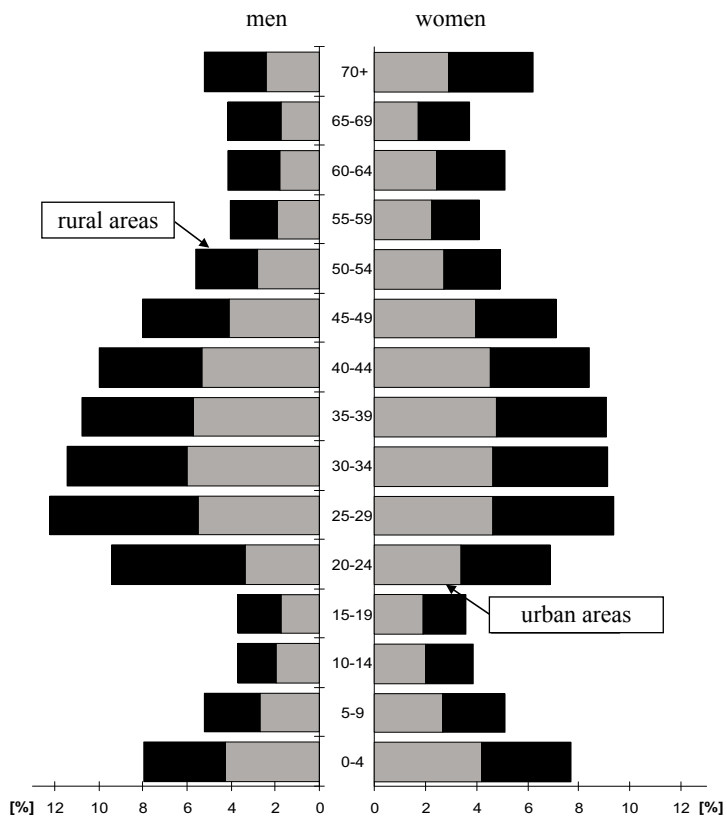


Fig. 4. Demographic structure of population immigration to Poland in the years 1990–2004

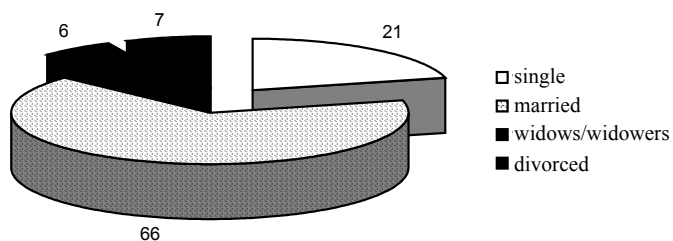


Fig. 5. Foreign population immigration to Poland by marital status in the years 1990–2004 (in %)

age groups, both male and female. The lowest proportion in the total immigrant population was of those of 10–14 and 15–19 years of age, hence young people of school age. Only a slightly higher proportion of groups aged 55–69, i.e. the groups of declining occupational activity or in post-productive age, was noted both for men and women. As regards foreign immigration to towns and cities in the period discussed, women outnumbered men in the groups 10–24, 55–64 and 70+, whilst as regards the influx to rural areas, the proportion of women was higher in groups 10–14, 60–64 and 70+ years of age. It should be stressed that, considering the generally higher proportion of immigrants to towns and cities in our country, men prevailed in migrations to rural areas in the following age groups: 15–29 (almost double in the 20–24 group) and above 55 years of age, while women in groups 20–29 and above 60.

As for the marital status (the population aged above 20 was covered by the study), in total for 1990–2004, married immigrants prevailed, accounting for 66% (Fig. 5). The second category (over 25%) were single. The remaining two categories were widows/widowers and the divorced, whose proportions were similar. The trends in influx of specific groups in the period discussed were noteworthy. While the proportion of married immigrants was on average around 2/3, the proportion of single persons grew from one year to another (14.2% to 26.6%), and the remaining groups declined: widow/widowers (8.5% to 3.9%) and divorced (8.5% to 5.2%) – Fig. 6.

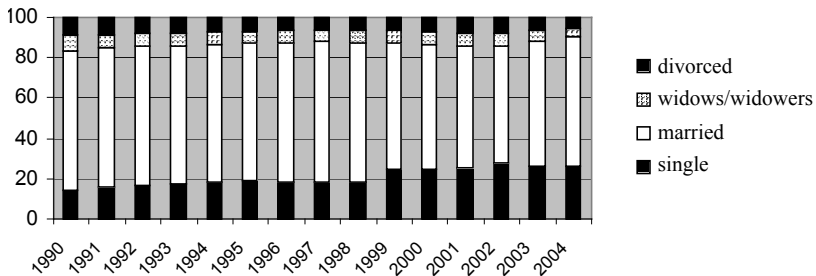


Fig. 6. The dynamics of population immigration to Poland by marital status (in %)

Immigration to Poland as regards to the origin of immigrants from different continents was noteworthy. In the years 1990–2004 the largest number of immigrants (over 48.6 thousand) came from European countries, accounting for 67.7% of the total population of those with the status of permanent residents in Poland (Fig. 7), and this percentage during the period discussed ranged from 62% (1995) to 70% (2001) – Fig. 8. The second largest stream of immigrants

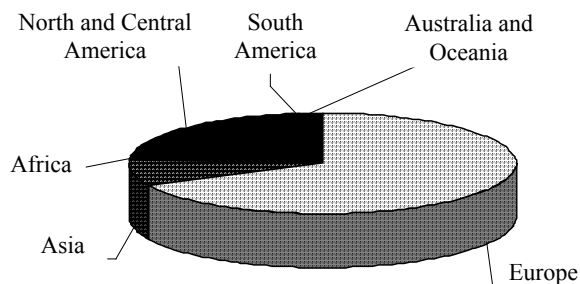


Fig. 7. Regional structure of population immigration to Poland in the years 1990–2004

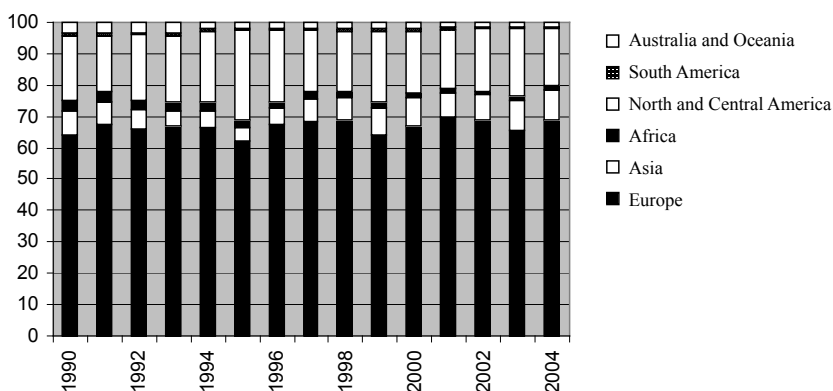


Fig. 8. The dynamics of population immigration to Poland by continents (%)

came from North America (including Central America), wherefrom 14.5 thousand people came to Poland, accounting for 20.2%. In this case the annual proportions of immigrants ranged from 17.8% (1991) to 22.8% (1996). Asia was also a significant source of inflow of people in the years 1990–2004, wherefrom over 5.7 thousand persons came and settled as permanent residents, accounting for 8% of the total number of immigrants to Poland. In this case the annual proportions ranged between 4.4% (1995) and 9.5% (2003). Immigration from South America to Poland in the period discussed was the lowest (413 persons). Immigrants from that continent accounted for 0.6% of the total number of people registered as permanent residents in the period in question. While analysing the dynamics of this process it should be stated that the immigration from individual

continents was unstable in quantitative terms, and the proportions varied from 1.5 percentage points (for Australia and Oceania) to 8 percentage points (for Europe).

However, such an assessment of the immigration from various continents would be too great a simplification, since the influx of people seeking permanent residence in Poland is highly variable depending on the country of origin. On the basis of data published for the entire period 1990–2004, the main wave of

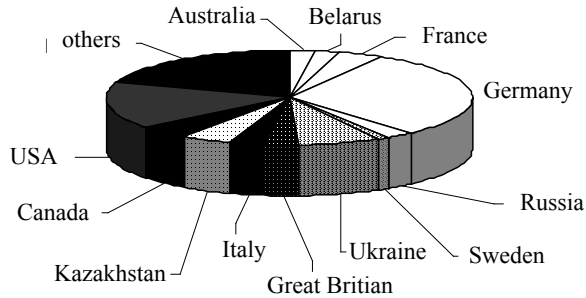
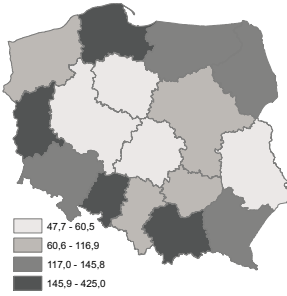


Fig. 9. The structure of foreign immigration to Poland in the years 1996–2004 by main directions

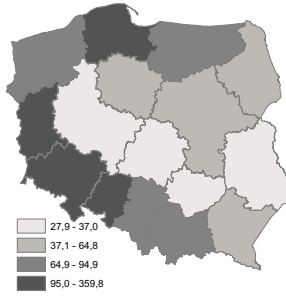
immigration to Poland (Fig. 9) was from Germany, wherefrom over 21 thousand people came to settle here as permanent residents, accounting for 30% of the total number of immigrants to our country. Immigration from the USA was a half of this (over 11 thousand). Significant proportions among foreign immigration were of people coming from Ukraine (7%), Canada (4.7%) Kazakhstan (4.6%) and France (3.8%), as well as Great Britain (3.2%), Italy (2.9%), Russia (2.6%), Austria (2.4%) and Belarus (2.1). Over 1/5 of all immigrants were from other countries, with the highest proportion in this group being those from Australia and Sweden, and, to a lesser extent, Bulgaria, Lithuania and the Netherlands, as well as Vietnam.

Poland is highly diversified as regards the spatial distribution of immigrants from different continents and countries concerning their residence in specific voivodeships. According to comparable statistical data in the years 1999–2004, in total 46.4 thousand foreign immigrants were registered in Poland as residents, of this the largest number being in the Małopolskie (5.9 thousand), Mazowieckie (5.8 thousand), Śląskie (5.6 thousand), Opolskie (4.5 thousand.) and Dolnośląskie (4.3 thousand) voivodeships, which accounted for over 50% of the total of incomers granted permanent residence, whereas the lowest numbers were in

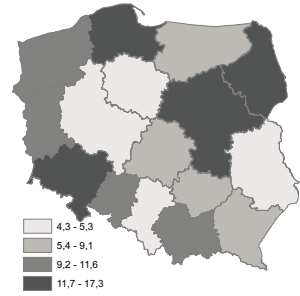
a) World



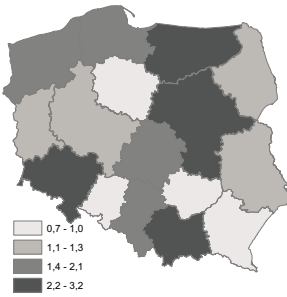
b) Europe



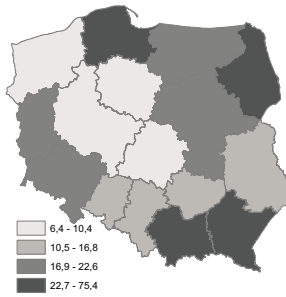
c) Asia



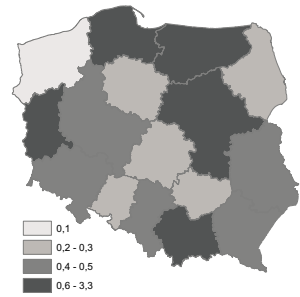
d) Africa



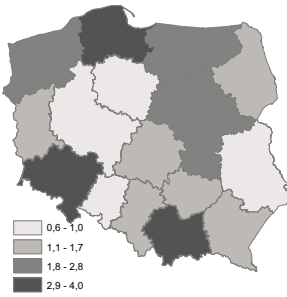
e) North America



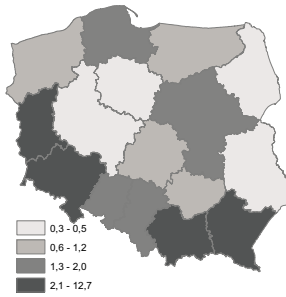
f) South America



g) Australia and Oceania



h) Austria



i) Belarus

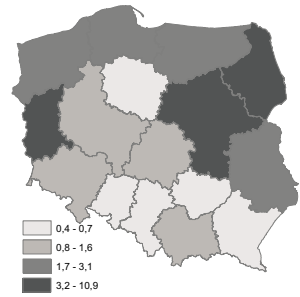
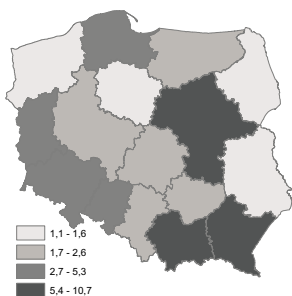
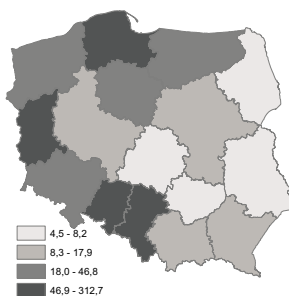


Fig. 10a-i. Foreign immigration to Poland (per 100,000 inhabitants)

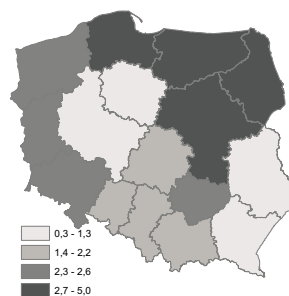
j) France



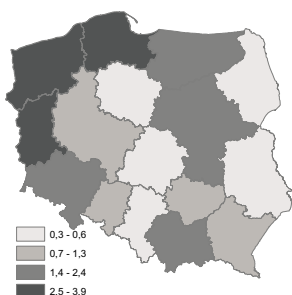
k) Germany



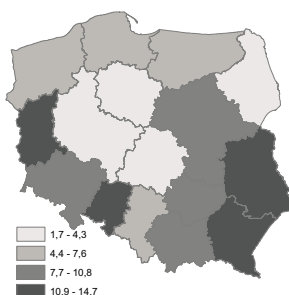
l) Russia



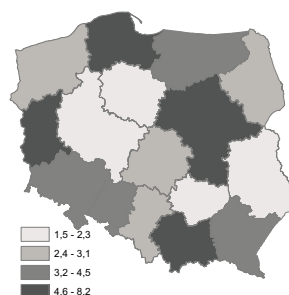
m) Sweden



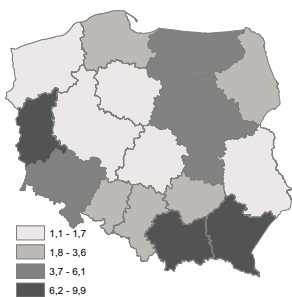
n) Ukraine



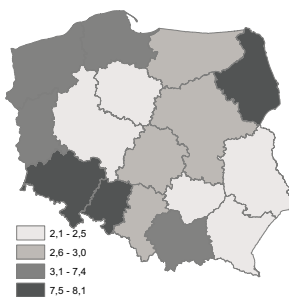
o) Great Britain



p) Italy



r) Kazakhstan



s) Vietnam

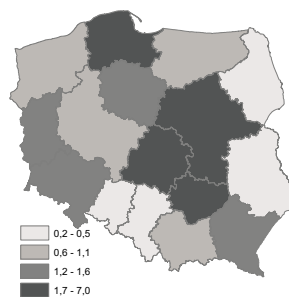


Fig. 10j–s. Foreign immigration to Poland (per 100,000 inhabitants)

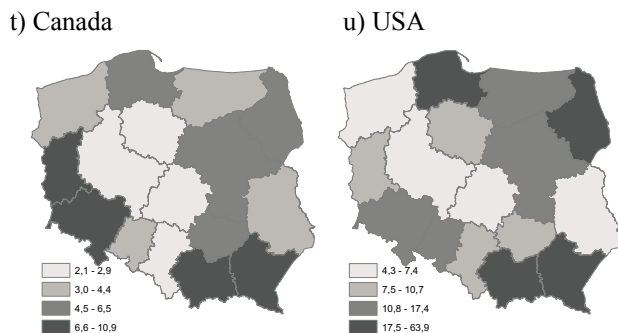


Fig. 10t–u. Foreign immigration to Poland (per 100,000 inhabitants)

the Świętokrzyskie (0.9 thousand.) and Lubelskie (1.1 thousand) voivodeships. In terms of the average size of the population in that period per 100 thousand (Fig. 10-a), the highest rate of foreign immigration in that period was decidedly in the Opolskie voivodeship (425), while the lowest were seen in the Lubelskie (48) and Wielkopolskie (49) Voivodeships.

From among 29.7 thousand immigrants from European countries (64% of the total) in that period, the largest number of persons became permanent residents of the Śląskie (4.5 thousand), Opolskie (3.8 thousand) and Mazowieckie (3.3 thousand) Voivodeships, totalling over 39% of all those registered as permanent residents, while the Świętokrzyskie and Podlaskie Voivodeships featured the lowest popularity (0.5 and 0.6 thousand respectively). In this case (Fig. 10-b), the foreign immigration rate ranged from 360 in the Opolskie voivodeship to 28 in the Lubelskie and 31 in Łódzkie voivodeships.

Of the total number of 3.7 thousand immigrants from Asia (8% of all registered permanent residents in that period), the Mazowieckie voivodeship was decidedly dominant (882 persons), accounting for 24% of immigrants from that continent, whereas only a small number settled in the Świętokrzyskie (97), Lubelskie (100) and Kujawsko-Pomorskie (110) Voivodeships. However, as regards the immigration rate (Fig. 10-c), the highest figures are shown for the Mazowieckie (17), Dolnośląskie (14) and Pomorskie (14) voivodeships, while the smallest are noted for the Wielkopolskie (4) and Lubelskie (5) voivodeships.

A relatively minor number of immigrants from Africa seeking permanent residence in Poland (691) mainly went to the Mazowieckie voivodeship (150 persons), as well as the Małopolskie (88), Dolnośląskie (70) and Śląskie (69) voivodeships, accounting for 54% of the total number of those registered as permanent residents, whereas the least numerous was the group of immigrants to the Opolskie voivodeship (8), which generally concords with the immigration rate in the spatial system (Fig. 10-d).

The North American continent ranked second in terms of foreign immigration to Poland. In the years 1999–2004, 9.1 thousand persons immigrated to Poland, accounting for almost 20% of the total number of immigrants. In this period, the largest number of immigrants were registered as permanent residents in the Małopolskie voivodeship (2.4 thousand), and, to a lower extent in the Podkarpackie (1.4 thousand) and Mazowieckie (1.2 thousand) Voivodeships, which, in total accounted for over 54% of the total number of immigrants from that continent, while the smallest numbers moved to live in the Opolskie (169 persons), Zachodniopomorskie (179) and Lubuskie (180) Voivodeships. As regards the migration rate (Fig. 10-e), the highest values were seen, apart from the Małopolskie (75) and Podkarpackie (66) voivodeships, also in Podlaskie (50) voivodeship, while the lowest numbers were noted for the Wielkopolskie (6) and Łódzkie (8) voivodeships.

The lowest numbers of immigrants seeking permanent residence in Poland in the years 1999–2004 were immigrants from South America. In total, only 276 persons came to Poland from that continent. The largest numbers of persons from this group settled in the Mazowieckie (64 persons), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (48) and Małopolskie (46) voivodeship, which in total accounted for over 57%, while the smallest numbers were noted in the Zachodniopomorskie (2 persons), Opolskie (3), Podlaskie and Świętokrzyskie voivodeships (4 persons each). The immigration rate (Fig. 10-f), ranged between 1.4 in the Małopolskie voivodeship and 0.1 in the Zachodniopomorskie voivodeship.

The situation featuring the scale of migration from different continents resulted from the levels of emigration from each country. Among the countries of Western Europe, the largest emigration to Poland in the years 1999–2004 came from Germany. The largest groups of such immigrants to our country settled as permanent residents in the Opolskie (3.3 thousand) and Śląskie (3.1) voivodeships, which accounted for over 55% of the total immigration from Germany, and a half of that number in the Pomorskie (1.6) and Dolnośląskie (1.4) voivodeships, therefore in the areas showing the most lasting historic links. The lowest number of immigrants from across the western border settled in the Świętokrzyskie and Podlaskie Voivodeships. The immigration rate per thousand residents (Fig. 10-k) ranged between 313 in the Opolskie voivodeships and 7 in the Świętokrzyskie and Podlaskie voivodeships.

Lasting bonds as regards migrations to and from Poland in the postwar period have been shown in the case of Great Britain and France. Emigration from those countries to Poland rose distinctly in the period of transformation after 1989. In the years 1999–2004 the largest number of émigrés from Great Britain settled as permanent residents in the Mazowieckie (417 persons), Małopolskie (233), Pomorskie (141) and Śląskie (149) voivodeships, which accounted for over

60% of the total immigration from that country, while the smallest numbers were noted for the Świętokrzyskie (30 persons), Podlaskie (32) and Lubelskie (34) voivodeships. This situation was reflected in the level of the immigration rate (Fig. 10-o), which ranged between 8 in the Mazowieckie and 7 in the Małopolskie Voivodeship to 2 in the Lubelskie and Wielkopolskie voivodeships. As regards immigration from France, the largest number of those registered as permanent residents in that period was noted in the Mazowieckie (362 persons), Małopolskie (249) and Podkarpackie (225) voivodeships which accounted for 53% of the total number of immigrants from this country. The lowest numbers of people coming from France settled in the Podlaskie (19 persons), as well as the Kujawsko-Pomorskie and Lubelskie voivodeships (25 each). The immigration rate (Fig. 10-j) ranged between 11 in the Podkarpackie and 1.1 in the Lubelskie voivodeship.

The traditional origins of the flows of people from Western Europe to Poland were Austria, Italy and Sweden. In the case of Austria, immigrants from this country in the years 1999–2004 mainly settled in the Małopolskie (411 persons i.e. 42% of the total immigration from Austria), Mazowieckie (100) and Śląskie (93) voivodeships, totalling at 61% of the immigration from this country in all; only a few instances of registration as permanent residents were noted in the Podlaskie (4 persons) and Kujawsko-Pomorskie (8) Voivodeships. Per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 9-h) this immigration rate ranged between 13 in the Małopolskie to 0.4 in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie, and to 0.5 in the Opolskie and Lubelskie voivodeships. Italian émigrés in the years 1999–2004 usually chose the Małopolskie (294 persons), Mazowieckie (191) and Dolnośląskie (176) voivodeships, which accounted for 43% of the total number of immigrants originating from that country; the smallest number of Italian immigrants came to the Zachodniopomorskie (22 persons) and Podlaskie (25) voivodeship. The values of the immigration rate (Fig. 10-p) ranged from 9 in the Małopolskie to 1 in Zachodniopomorskie voivodeship. Immigrants from Sweden seeking permanent residence usually went to the Mazowieckie voivodeship (121 persons), accounting for 23% of the total immigration from that country, while the fewest went to the Podlaskie voivodeship (7 persons). This was not translated, however, into the value of foreign immigration rates per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 9-m), as the highest values were noted for the Zachodniopomorskie (3.9) and Pomorskie (3.4) voivodeships, and the lowest for the Śląskie (0.3) and Łódzkie (0.5) voivodeships.

Significant numbers of immigrants from abroad seeking permanent residence in Poland during the system and economic transformation were from certain countries of Eastern Europe and Asia, particularly those which have a population with strong Polish roots. Among particularly noteworthy countries in this respect in the years 1999–2004 were Ukraine and Belarus, as well as Russia and Kazakhstan. In the case of émigrés from Ukraine, the voivodeships

showing the highest immigration rates in the years 1999–2004 were the following: Mazowieckie (457 persons), Śląskie (336), Małopolskie (324) and Podkarpackie (311), which in total accounted for 48% of the overall number of immigrants from that country, while the smallest numbers were noted to settle in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie (35 persons) and Podlaskie (52) voivodeships. Per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 10-n), these rates ranged between 15 in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship and 3 in the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship. In the same period emigration from Belarus focused mainly on the Mazowieckie (198 persons) and Podlaskie (132) Voivodeships, which accounted for 41% of the total number of immigrants from that country, while the smallest groups settled as permanent residents in the Świętokrzyskie (6 persons), as well as the Opolskie and Podkarpackie voivodeships (8 persons each).

Per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 10-i) this rate ranged between 11 in the Podlaskie to 0.4 Podkarpackie voivodeship. The main stream of the immigration from Russia in the years 1999–2004 went to the Mazowieckie voivodeship, where 214 persons settled, accounting for 25% of the total number of immigrants from that country. The lowest numbers of immigrants from Russia settled in the Lubelskie (6 persons), Kujawsko-Pomorskie (16) and Opolskie (17) voivodeships. Per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 9-l) the immigration rate ranged between 5 in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie and 0.3 in the Lubelskie voivodeship. Immigration from Kazakhstan is particularly important due to its size and links with Poland. In the last six years it was only less numerous than immigration from Germany, the USA, Canada and Ukraine, and similar to traditionally numerous immigration from Great Britain and France. In the years 1999–2004 the largest numbers of immigrants from Kazakhstan settled as permanent residents in the Dolnośląskie (226 persons), Małopolskie (168) and Mazowieckie (153), as well as the Pomorskie and Śląskie (130 each) voivodeships, accounting for 52% of the total number of immigrants from that country, while the smallest group settled in the Świętokrzyskie voivodeship (32 persons). In this case the immigration rate (Fig. 10-r) ranged from 2 in the Lubelskie to 81 in the Opolskie voivodeship.

Immigration from Vietnam, recently matching the flows of immigrants from Russia and Belarus, and exceeding immigration from Sweden, is a recent phenomenon. Immigrants from that group mainly settle in the Mazowieckie (356 persons) voivodeship, accounting for 47% of the total number of Vietnamese registered as permanent residents in Poland in the years 1999–2004. Small numbers of immigrants from that country settled in the Opolskie (3 persons), Lubelskie (5) and Podlaskie (6) voivodeships. The immigration rate (Fig. 10-s) ranged from 7 in the Mazowieckie to 0.2 in the Lubelskie voivodeship.

As regards overseas immigration, Poland still maintains strong links with the USA, Canada and Australia. No wonder then that immigration to Poland is

usually connected with areas of earlier emigration, with established traditions sometimes reaching back to the distant past. In the case of immigrants from the United States of America seeking permanent residence, the main areas of settlement in the period discussed were the Małopolskie (2.1 thousand persons) and Podkarpackie (1.2 thousand), which accounts for 45% of the total number of immigrants from that country who settled in Poland in that period. The smallest numbers of people from the USA who settled in Poland went to the Lubuskie (108 persons) and Zachodniopomorskie (116) voivodeships. Per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 10-u), the rate of immigration from that country ranged between 63 in the Małopolskie voivodeship and 4 in the Wielkopolskie voivodeship. As to the influx of people from Canada seeking permanent residence, the largest numbers of immigrants from that country went to the Małopolskie (362 persons), Mazowieckie (288) and Dolnośląskie (232) voivodeships, which accounted for 45% of the overall Canadian immigration, while the smallest numbers settled in the Opolskie (40 persons) and Pomorskie (58). The immigration rate (Fig. 10-t) ranged from 11 in the Małopolskie voivodeship to 2 in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie and Wielkopolskie voivodeships.

Data from Australia and Oceania show that 96-98% of immigrants to Poland from that region originate from Australia, so data concerning that country were not analysed separately, but were instead discussed in total for the entire region. In the years 1999–2004, nearly 800 immigrants came from the Antipodes to seek permanent residence in Poland, the largest numbers of whom went to the Mazowieckie (144 persons), Małopolskie (125) and Dolnośląskie (92) voivodeships, which accounted for 45% of the total number of those coming from that part of the world, while the smallest numbers settled in the Opolskie (11 persons), Kujawsko-Pomorskie (13), Lubuskie (14) and Lubelskie (15) Voivodeships, so the immigration rate per 100 thousand residents (Fig. 10-g) ranged between 4 in the Pomorskie Voivodeship to 0.7 in the Lubelskie Voivodeship.

While assessing immigrants seeking permanent residence in Poland, in the breakdown by voivodeships it should be remembered their proportion was influenced by that numerous factors. The greatest impact on the spatial distribution of immigration to our country was undoubtedly caused by traditional historic bonds and the superimposing of family and neighbourhood ties. This mainly refers, on the one hand to German immigration focused on south-western and northern territories, while on the other hand to south-western voivodeships (Małopolskie and Podkarpackie), traditionally connected with overseas migrations to America. As to immigration from the East, nationality and family relationships are other important factors. On the one hand they involve the areas of the former eastern borderland of Poland, which were crossed by the state

border after WW II, and thus cross-border migrations, while on the other hand they result from the ties between postwar emigration to the Western Territories of Poland and people who remained on the other side of the eastern border. The distance of such migrations and opportunities for settlement, connected with the current economic situation in particular voivodeships and opportunities to find a flat and job are other important factors. While analysing influxes of people from abroad to Poland broken down into voivodeships, the general rules in this process should be borne in mind. Where historic links are not the case, the situation of the labour market is to a large extent decisive, so immigrants (e.g. Vietnamese) tend to choose large urban centres (e.g. Warsaw) to settle as permanent residents.

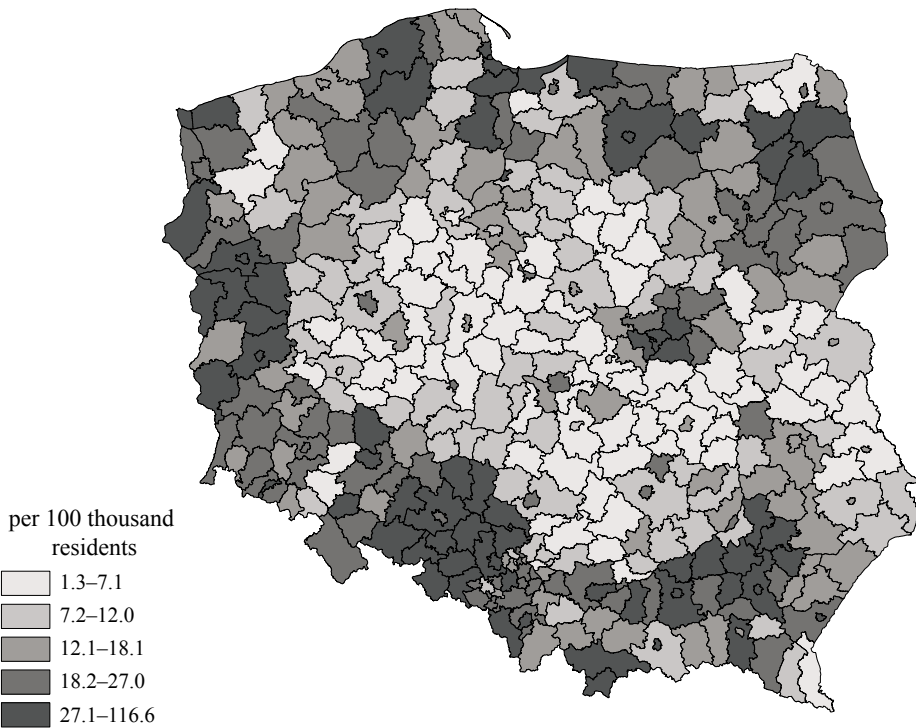


Fig. 11. Foreign immigration to Poland in the years 1995–2005

The above statements have been in some way confirmed by the spatial picture which provides estimated proportions of immigrants, this time by poviats (Fig. 11), in the years 1995–2004. It was developed on the basis of the immigration rate calculated for the entire decade in relation to the population at the mid-term of the period discussed, per 100 thousand residents. The highest

values of the immigration rate were noted in the city of Sopot (116) and in Strzelecki (107) and Opolski (105) Poviats, while the lowest were in Brzeziński (1.3), Zwoleński (1.5), Gostyniński (2.2) and Skierniewicki (2.3) Poviats. In the breakdown into classes (by quintiles), relatively low values among towns having the status of poviats were noted only in the case of Sosnowiec (4.1), Bydgoszcz (5.8), Leszno (8.0), Piotrków Trybunalski (8.1), Dąbrowa Górnicza (8.4), Bytom and Skierniewice (9.4 each), Świętochłowice (9.9), Rybnik (10.4), as well as Toruń (11.2), while among rural poviats, this refers to such units in central Poland and the Lublin Region. On the other hand, relatively high proportions of immigrants were confirmed in large centres and poviats in voivodeships of South-Western and North-Eastern Poland, as well as Warsaw together with neighbouring poviats: Warszawsko-Zachodni, Wysokomazowiecki, Legionowski, Otwocki and Wołomiński.

*

In conclusion, it should be stated that in recent years the numbers of foreign immigrants to Poland have been growing slightly but steadily. These figures show slight variations as regards the sex structure, but men still slightly outnumber women (by ca. 4%). Similar proportions are shown in the breakdown into urban centres and rural areas.

As for the demographic structure and the inflow directions, in general men slightly outnumber women, both as regards the immigration to urban centres and rural areas, younger people of productive age and older people nearing the end of their occupational activity age and of post-productive age generally prevail, while the proportion between urban centres and rural areas is generally similar regardless of sex and age.

Moreover it should be stated that in recent years the proportion of married immigrants grew, with a falling trend as regards single people and a relatively stable level in the categories of the divorced and widows/widowers among immigrants.

As to the territorial aspect, the dominant group is formed by immigrants from Europe, mainly from Germany, with a decidedly smaller group of overseas immigrants, chiefly from the USA. Certain Western European countries are still traditional sources of immigration. Immigration from across the eastern border has become substantial, sometimes from distant countries such as Kazakhstan or Vietnam.

Generally, foreign immigrants seeking permanent residence tend to take their new residence in voivodeships with which they have historical ties or those characterised by relatively higher levels of economic development, which is

confirmed by the concentrations of immigrants broken down into municipalities having the rights of poviats and rural poviats.

It should be assumed that at least during a few years to come the situation regarding migration trends concerning people from abroad seeking permanent residence in Poland will remain at similar levels and the directions of migration will not fundamentally differ.

REFERENCES

- Maryański, A.** 1984: *Migracje w świecie*, PWN, Warszawa.
Sytuacja Demograficzna Polski – Raport Rządowej Rady Ludnościowej Rządowego Centrum Studiów Strategicznych, Warszawa 2000.
- Zdrojewski, E. Z.** 2000: *Wpływ migracji definitywnych na przyrost rzeczywisty ludności i zmiany struktur ludności w Polsce w latach 1975–1996*, Politechnika Koszalińska, Koszalin.

CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Zbigniew Długosz, Pedagogical University of Cracow, Geography Institute
Podchorążych 2, 30-084 Kraków, Poland
[e-mail: zdlugosz@ap.krakow.pl]