

Eastwards EU enlargements and migration transition in Central and Eastern Europe

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ABSTRACT Most Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries are net-emigration countries, in contrast to Western and Southern European countries, which usually represent net-immigration areas. The economic, demographic and legal outcomes of the 2004 and 2007 EU eastwards enlargements reshaped the migratory context in CEE in many ways. The article demonstrates, however, that in the decade (and more) that has passed since these enlargements, the changes in volumes and patterns of immigration to CEE have not been particularly substantial. This can be linked to the still relatively low economic attractiveness of the CEE region within the EU, and also to the importance of ethnic-based and local movements (but frequently from outside the EU after enlargements) in immigration to this region. These create a basis for, first of all, temporary and circular inflow. The article also acknowledges the diversity in developments in immigration within the CEE region.

KEY WORDS Central and Eastern Europe – EU enlargements – migration transition – immigration

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1. Introduction

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) constitutes a specific area on the map of Europe due to the still existing economic, political and social disparities between this region and the rest of Europe. With regard to migratory reality, the unique role of CEE in the European migration system dates back to the early 1990s. It was then that terms like 'buffer zone' or 'migration space' were conceived to address the migratory processes taking place in the CEE region (Wallace, Stola, eds. 2001). At the same time, most CEE countries are still net-emigration areas, in contrast to the net-immigration Western and Southern European countries.

The eastwards enlargements of the European Union in 2004 and 2007 changed the political and legal context of mobility in the CEE region. It resulted in introduction of freedom of movement within the EU for CEE emigrants, but also in tightening of admission rules for immigrants coming to the region from countries that remained outside the Union, such as ex-USSR countries. On the eve of these enlargements, discussion on immigration to CEE was overshadowed by heated debates about expected emigration from this region to Western and Southern EU countries. However, there were also reasons to believe that the accession of CEE countries to the EU could accelerate their transition into net-immigration countries. These relate to convergence of the CEE economies with more developed EU economies and growth of emigration from the accession countries to other EU countries. These outcomes *ceteris paribus* are unquestionably conducive towards increased immigration to CEE, since they imply increased attractiveness of accession countries as destination areas and deficiencies in the CEE labour markets.

The objective of this article is to provide an overview of developments in immigration to the CEE region after the eastwards enlargements in 2004 and 2007, with the aim of discussing the factors that stimulate and hinder its growth. We demonstrate that, although economic convergence between the CEE countries and the rest of the Union is taking place, and the post-enlargement high outflow from the CEE region – certain countries especially – has created a foundation for replacement immigration, it has not yet taken place on a large scale. Moreover, the changes in immigration patterns to the CEE region after the enlargements are not particularly substantial.

The concept of Central and Eastern Europe is not uniform. It is frequently used to refer to all post-communist countries. Some authors differentiate, however, between the Commonwealth of Independent States and Central Europe, comprising the Baltic States, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and former Yugoslav countries (cf. Górný, Ruspini 2004). Accession of most countries from the latter group to the European Union¹ accentuated this division of the

¹ To date, only two former Yugoslav countries have accessed the EU: Slovenia (2004) and Croatia (2011).

region. Therefore, in this article we focus on the 10 CEE countries that accessed the EU in 2004 and 2007,² since this has clearly shaped a distinct path of their development with regard to migration when compared with non-EU countries, e.g. ex-USSR countries. In analyses to follow we name these countries EU-10 CEE countries.

The article starts with three sections setting the context for analyses of immigration to the CEE region. They comprise: a demonstration of the concept of migration transition, a brief description of migratory processes in CEE before the enlargements, and selected post-enlargement outcomes relating to economic indicators and emigration from the CEE region. These contextual sections are followed by analyses of immigration to EU-10 CEE countries after the enlargements preceded by the short section on data sources on migration to CEE. The last analytical section of the article is devoted to the case of Ukrainian migrants – the most numerous national group coming to virtually all CEE countries.

2. Migration transition and migration cycle

The view that we should expect a transition from net-emigration to net-immigration countries in the CEE region, put forward in this article, derives from the concepts of ‘migration transition’ and the related ‘migration cycle’. They formulate the vision that all European countries will follow a uniform general path including three phases, such as: a phase when emigration outnumbers immigration, a phase of migration transition, when the numbers of immigrants grow, approaching the numbers of emigrants, and the final phase, when immigration predominates over emigration and foreigners account for significant proportions of the population (Okólski 2012). The migration transition in turn involves three sub-phases, as proposed by Dassetto (1990). The first of them applies to the time when migrants tend to be socially marginalised foreign workers. The second phase involves increased family reunion processes and intensified settlement of migrants. The third stage pertains to long-term inclusion and integration processes in the receiving society (cf. Arango 2012). Such a conceptualisation of migration transition implies that (large-scale) permanent migration constitutes a precondition for a country to become an immigration country and to complete the migration cycle. It can be argued, however, that the available literature does not offer guidelines on how to identify the end of the cycle. Instead, migration scholars try to locate different countries on the path of the migration cycle (Okólski 2012). In this vein, Arango

² Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. We exclude Croatia from our analyses due to the relatively short time that has passed since it joined the EU.

(2012) proposes dividing Europe into two groups of countries: 'old' immigration countries, encompassing Western and Northern Europe, and 'new' immigration countries, comprising Southern Europe. As regards CEE countries, they are treated as 'future' immigration countries (Okólski 2012; Grabowska-Lusińska, Drbohlav, Hars, eds. 2011).

As summarised by Okólski (2012, 38), two processes stimulated by modernisation are important to initiate and shape migration transition. The first of them relates to demographic processes, namely a change of population in the course of demographic transition (decrease in mortality and followed by delayed decrease in fertility), resulting in periodic substantial population growth. The second applies to shrinking of the subsistence sector of the economy in favour of the growing importance of the monetary sector. The two processes – demographic and economic – tend to result in a high outflow of redundant labour from the area in question. This apparently took place in Southern European countries in the 1950s and 1960s (Layard et al. 1994), which Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2008) referred to as a 'crowding-out' effect.

Subsequently, immigration increases along with the growing and stabilising demand for workers, which cannot be satisfied by the national workforce. Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2008) argue that only when the above two processes take place can growth of immigration and migration transition be expected. This argumentation directly implies that one can expect a high diversity of migration transition paths given the complexity of processes involved in modernisation. Moreover, Arango (2012) argues that the time of transition ('generation effect' in his terms) also matters for the final shape of migration transition.

We acknowledge the complexity and long-term timeframe of the processes involved in migration transition. In this article, however, we confine our task only to examination of the change in volumes of immigrants coming to CEE region and selected patterns of their mobility after the eastwards EU enlargements. These enlargements can be treated as important impulses with regard to factors stimulating migration transition: modernisation of countries' economics and emigration to the countries of the Union. Therefore, examination of post-enlargement developments in immigration to the CEE countries contributes to a better understanding of how migration transition can develop in the EU-10 CEE countries. Given the migratory diversity in the CEE region, the picture sketched in this article is by no means simplified, and should be supplemented by in-depth country studies in the future.

3. CEE as a separate migration space prior to 2004

During the period of economic and political transition in the CEE region prior to the eastwards enlargement of the European Union, mobility movements in

Central and Eastern Europe (including the countries of the former USSR) were by large contained within the region itself (Okólski 2004). Moreover, ethnic-based movements constituted an important proportion of mobility within CEE. This was related to the relatively frequent changes to the borders in the CEE region – e.g. division of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia – and ethnic links between persons living in different CEE countries. Movements related to these links were facilitated by visa-free regimes between the post-communist countries maintained in many CEE countries during the transition period in the 1990s (*ibid.*). Consequently, several authors argue that a separate CEE migration space evolved in the course of the 1990s (Wallace, Stola, eds. 2001).

According to M. Okólski (2004), factors responsible for the emergence of this specific migration space in CEE include:

- anticipatory controls in place in member states of the Schengen zone area accompanied by the very existence of CEE ‘magnets’, namely Czechia, Hungary and Poland (and a few smaller CEE countries)
- cost-benefit calculations of individual migrants, which often suggested that the potentially higher economic benefits associated with travelling to the West as opposed to Central and Eastern Europe were insufficient to offset the related expenses, inconveniences and risks
- the rapid development of migration in Central and Eastern Europe and migrants’ familiarity with a common post-communist reality.

The hallmark of migratory movements of CEE citizens – both emigration and immigration – during the transition period in the 1990s was their high temporariness. Migration from CEE to EU countries was short-term, circulatory and frequently irregular in nature (Wallace, Stola, eds. 2001). The relatively low scale of permanent outflow can be explained not only by legal barriers to settlement in the EU, but also by the fact that permanent emigration was no longer a unique mobility option. Additionally, along with the change in the cost/benefit ratio, temporary or circular mobility became a much more profitable option than permanent migration (Okólski 2001, 2004). Similar factors were driving immigration to the CEE region. The combination of legal entry and illegal work or trade in CEE countries was a common model for ex-USSR immigrants coming to Poland, Hungary and Czechia. Meanwhile, trans-border movements related to trade flourished in many CEE countries (Iglicka 1998). Such temporary circular mobility – both emigration from and immigration to the CEE region – started to be termed ‘incomplete migration’ (Okólski 2001). ‘Incomplete migrants’ were not migrating permanently, but international migration constituted a survival strategy for their households in home countries based on the rule of ‘earn abroad, spend at home’ (*ibid.*).

4. Selected post-enlargement developments: economy and emigration

Economic convergence between CEE countries and the rest of the EU unquestionably requires time. The still existing economic differences between the accession countries and the rest of the Union can be illustrated by the disparities between GDP per capita in CEE countries and in the remaining EU states (Fig. 1). In 2014, Slovenia reached the level of Portuguese and Greek GDP per capita, as measured in 2005 USD dollars, but, in Bulgaria and Romania, the values of this indicator were still 10 times smaller than in the EU-15 leader – Ireland. We should stress, however, that a ‘catching-up’ process has definitely been observed. Between 2000 and 2014, the growth in GDP per capita ranged from 33.6% in Hungary to even 114.5% in Lithuania. The increase was particularly high in the Baltic States and latecomers Bulgaria and Romania. At the same time, respective growths were much smaller in the EU-15 countries, with the highest value of 21.5% in Ireland and minimal ones in South European countries, and even negative values for Greece and Italy.

Economic disparities between the EU-10 CEE and EU-15 countries were one of the main reasons for the unprecedented increase in the scale of emigration from CEE to Western Europe in the years immediately following the EU’s eastwards enlargements. Brücker et al. (2009), on the basis of European Labour Force data, estimated that the number of EU-10 CEE nationals in the EU-15 countries rose

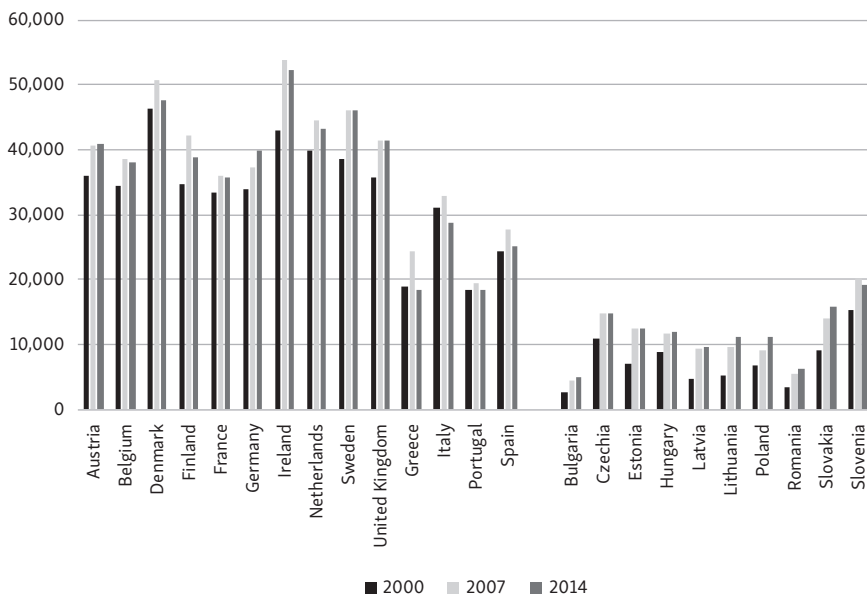


Fig. 1 – GDP per capita (in 2005 USD dollars) in European countries in 2000, 2007 and 2014. Source: World Bank data.

from around 1.5 million in 2003 to over 3.7 million in 2007. The biggest incidence of outflow was noted in the case of Poland and Romania: 1.3 million and 1.5 million respectively. Romania also stood out as a country experiencing the highest relative loss of the population, due to post-enlargement emigration amounting to 7% of the total Romanian population in 2007. Smaller but still substantial percentages of emigrants in the sending populations were recorded in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia (3–4%). The economic crisis of 2008 slowed down emigration from the CEE region and induced some return moves, albeit not particularly substantial ones (Zaiceva, Zimmermann 2012). Fihel et al. (2015) demonstrated, based on EU LFS data, that within 10 years following the 2004 EU enlargement the total number of migrants originating from EU-10 CEE countries and residing in the EU-15 countries reached around 6.1 million.

At the same time, Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2008) argue that post-accession emigration from Poland involved new groups of individuals with different characteristics from those of the pre-accession migrants (younger, better-educated, more frequently originating from urban areas). These observations would suggest that the EU enlargement mobilised new categories of migrants. This argument would explain not only the high volume of post-accession emigration but also the change in the relative importance of selected destination countries, such as the UK and Ireland, after enlargement, related to the different preferences of 'new migrants'. Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2008) link these observations to 'crowding-out' migration involving export of the 'labour surplus' existing in backward CEE economies, which did not emigrate until the eastwards enlargement of the Union.

Regarding permanency of emigration from CEE to the EU, in the first years following enlargement, the mobility of CEE nationals was of a highly transient and temporary nature. It even earned the name 'liquid migration' (Engbersen, Snel, De Boom 2010). Migrants representing this type were open to changing their destination countries. This was illustrated well during the crisis, when apart from return migration, CEE migrants also migrated to other destination countries in search of better job prospects (Zaiceva, Zimmerman 2012).

Nevertheless, the late 2000s brought about a growing permanency of CEE emigration to the EU. This is demonstrated in the case of Polish emigration to four European countries: the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany and the UK. Between 2009 and 2012, the average length of a migrant's stay increased by at least 18 months in all four of these countries. Moreover, what Janicka and Kaczmarczyk (2016) call the 'permanency indicator' increased in all four countries in the studied period (Fig. 2). Apparently, the emigration of CEE nationals proceeding within the framework of the EU freedom of mobility has been becoming more and more permanent, especially after the crisis, with the limited role of return migration.

Overall, the consequences of post-accession emigration for the CEE region are difficult to disentangle from the more general consequences of the CEE accession

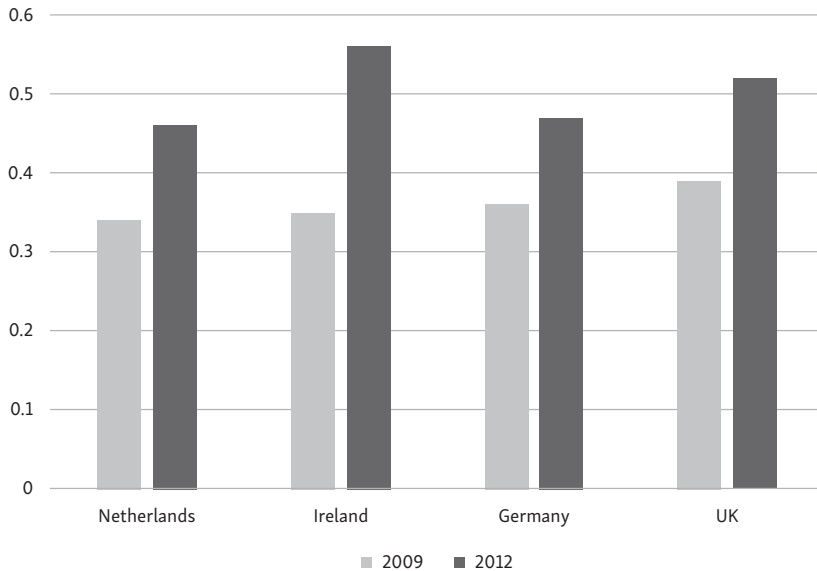


Fig. 2 – Average value of migration permanency indicator for Polish emigrants in the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany and the UK in 2009 and 2012. The permanency indicator was constructed as the average of responses to sets of questions referring to the length of stay, migration record, return/settlement plans, reservation wage, ownership of real estate in the destination country, registration in the social security system abroad, presence of family at the destination, and remitting behaviour. Higher values of the permanency indicator suggest an inclination towards settlement. Source: Own elaboration on the basis of Janicka, Kaczmarczyk (2016), National Bank of Poland data.

to the European Union. The latter refer first of all to economic consequences: growth of investments, decreased unemployment and so on. Research suggests that they were rather positive for the labour markets of the sending countries (Fihel et al. 2015). Meanwhile, high emigration did not result in severe labour shortages in the sending countries, mainly due to the still ‘unfinished’ economic transition in the post-communist countries and the economic crisis that hit five years after eastwards EU enlargement (Kaczmarczyk, Okólski 2008).

5. Data sources on immigration to CEE

The analyses presented in this article are based on a variety of sources and studies on migration in CEE. Given the deficiencies and the fragmented character of registry data on international migration, presenting a comprehensive picture of immigration to the whole of CEE constitutes a challenging task. We thus focus on examination of the magnitudes and compositions of stocks of migrants in the

analysed region. We built our analyses on most recent information originating from three data sources that allow for international comparisons of migratory processes: World Bank data for 2013, census data for 2011 and OECD data collected within the SOPEMI network for the years 2006–2015.

National censuses data would constitute the most appropriate data source for the analysis of migrant stocks since they cover various categories of migrants including temporary migrants and irregular migrants (at least in theory) and allow for international comparisons. We supplement this data source with World Bank data which are based on national censuses, but adjusted with the help of population registries for periods in-between censuses. Moreover, the World Bank data not only provide more recent information than census data, but also a more detailed account on countries of migrants' origin than available (e.g. in Eurostat) census data. Finally, OECD data, though gathered mainly from official registries, constitute the most reliable migration data in developed countries since they are compiled by experts in the field and are supplemented with expert commentaries, which helps to better understand the migratory processes taking place in the given country (OECD, various years). The weak point of the OECD data is that they do not provide full range of internationally comparable indicators (e.g. shares of foreigners or foreign-born for all involved countries) due to deficiencies of registry data or lack of appropriate studies in some countries.

In our view, the triangulation of data sources conducted in this article and supplemented with results of various national migration studies is adequate to provide a general picture of migratory processes in CEE. However, more in-depth analysis of given national case studies should involve more detailed examination of various types of official registries such as residence permits, work permits and naturalisation registries and others.

6. Post-enlargement immigration to CEE

6.1. Moderate increase

As mentioned previously, CEE countries are considered as being in the preliminary phase of their transition towards net-immigration countries (Okólski 2012). According to World Bank data, the migration balance has remained negative since 1992 for the overall region. In 2012 it amounted to around 770,000 migrants. In 2013 of all CEE countries only Czechia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia recorded a positive migration balance, which demonstrates the role of these countries as magnets attracting migrants within the CEE region. In Poland – considered another CEE magnet before the EU enlargement – the migration balance was negative, mainly due to the high outflow from this country during the post-accession period

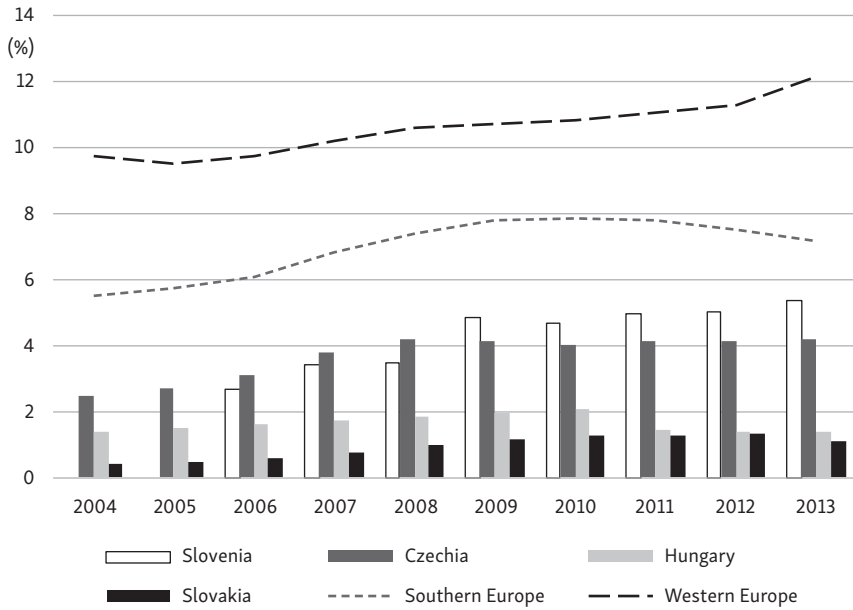


Fig. 3 – Shares of foreign citizens in the population of Czechia, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Southern Europe and Western Europe in 2006–2013. For Slovenia, data for 2004 and 2005 are unavailable. Source: OECD.

and the small inflow of long-term immigrants (Górny et al., eds. 2010). According to Grabowska-Lusińska, Drbohlav and Hars (eds. 2011), comparing migration transition in Czechia, Hungary and Poland in the late 2000s, the main differences between these countries related to three main aspects. These include different proportions of permanent vs. temporary migration – the smallest in Poland – advancement in economic transition especially in relation to the structures of the labour markets – with a clear Czech leader – and finally development of migration policies. They argue that the preliminary phase of migration transition in Czechia can be termed as a ‘take off’, while in the least advanced migration transition in the region, Poland, it can be called an ‘embryonic phase’.

Nevertheless, all the CEE countries are still characterised by relatively small proportions of foreign citizens in their populations when compared to the rest of the Union. While the average proportion of foreign citizens was around 10% in the EU-15 countries in 2013, with an even higher proportion in Western Europe exceeding 12%, the proportion of foreigners in the population of the leader from the CEE region – Slovenia – did not reach 6%.

According to OECD data, the proportions of foreigners in the four ‘immigration leaders’ – Czechia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia – increased relatively

dynamically until 2010 (Fig. 3). Since that date (in fact already in 2008) the volume of immigrants in Czechia has remained virtually unchanged, while in Hungary and Slovakia immigration has diminished. It is clear that the 2008 economic crisis resulted in a decrease of inflow to the three Central European 'migration magnets' (cf. Çağlar 2013). A slightly different tendency has been observed in the case of Slovenia, where the increasing trend was rather stable, with only a small incidental drop in the percentage of foreigners in 2010. In other CEE countries hosting smaller numbers of migrants, such as Bulgaria, Poland and Romania, as suggested by fragmented OECD data, a gradual increase of the stock of migrants by several percent annually has been observed (OECD, various years).³

6.2. *Ethnic and local character*

One migratory specificity of the CEE region relates to the fact that the percentages of foreign-born persons in the populations of all CEE countries, except for Estonia and Latvia, have been higher than the proportions of foreign citizens (Fig. 4). In the Baltic States and Slovenia the percentage of foreign-born persons exceeded 15% in 2013. For example, according to the estimations by Medved (2014), half of foreign-born immigrants to Slovenia were Slovenian citizens around 2012.⁴ This predomination of foreign-born persons over foreign citizens relates to the shifts in the borders within the CEE region and ethnic-based movements, which started already before the EU enlargement (Okólski 2004). These movements intersect with the facilitated visa policy for members of ethnic minorities, relatively frequent in the CEE region, also policies to grant quasi-citizenship (such as Polish and Hungarian Cards) or citizenship without a requirement for a minimal stay in the country granting citizenship. This kind of preferential citizenship policy is directed, for example, towards the Bulgarian minorities in Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia and Serbia; the Hungarian minorities in several EU-10 CEE countries, Serbia and Ukraine; the Romanian minorities in Moldova and Ukraine; and the Polish minorities in Belarus and Ukraine and many others (Kovács, Toth 2013; Iordachi 2013, OECD various years). For example, in 2015, most of the 10 thousands naturalisations conducted in Bulgaria were based on ethnic criteria, and half of the naturalised persons originated in Macedonia.⁵ In Hungary, according to Juhász (2014), around two-thirds of foreign citizens and almost 90% of

³ We do not refer here to two of the Baltic States – Estonia and Latvia – although the proportions of foreigners in their populations exceed 10%. We describe these countries more in depth in the following section.

⁴ The author did not specify an exact period to which these estimations apply.

⁵ EUDO citizenship data

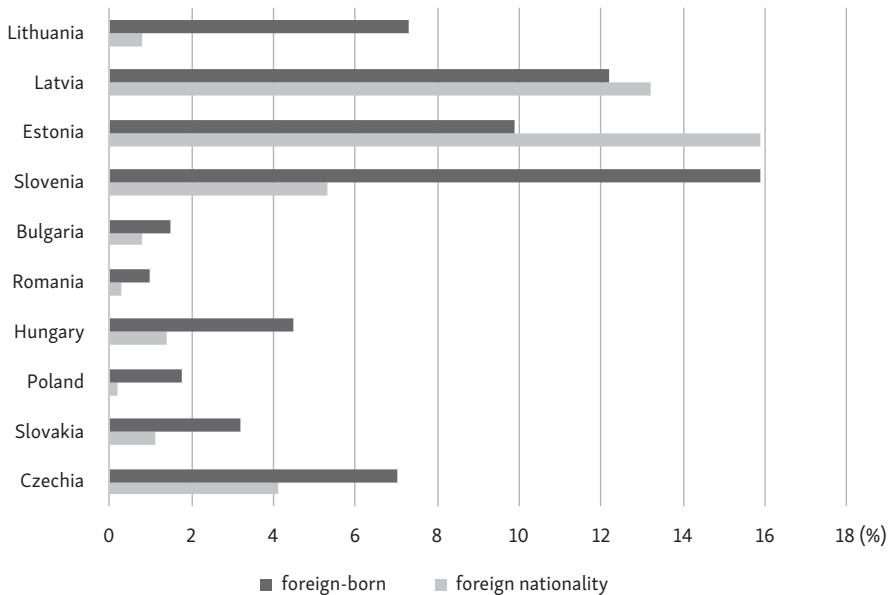


Fig. 4 – Foreign-born and foreign citizens in the populations of CEE countries in 2013 (in %). Data are derived from the OECD database, with the exception of the percentage of foreign-born persons in Poland and Lithuania, which were derived from World Bank data. The percentages of foreign citizens for Latvia and Romania are for 2010, and for Lithuania for 2012. Source: OECD and World Bank.

naturalised persons were ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring countries around 2012.⁶ At present, there are no systematic studies on the migratory patterns of such naturalised persons or owners of ethnic cards, but some evidence from the Transcarpathia region suggests that they do not necessarily emigrate to the EU-10 CEE countries. Some of them take advantage of the ‘new’ passport in trans-border mobility for family or economic reasons (Çağlar 2013, Józwiak 2014).

As regards main countries of origin, we observe diversity between CEE countries, but what virtually all countries of the studied region have in common is that the main part of the inflow to these countries originates from neighbouring countries. We can also identify three sub-regions sharing some similarities: the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Central Europe (Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and the Balkan States (Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia).⁷

In Central Europe, in each country there was one main country of origin from which immigrants accounted for at least one third of the total stock in 2013,

⁶ The author did not specify an exact period to which these estimations apply.

⁷ These countries constitute only part of the Balkans, which also include other former Yugoslav countries, Albania and Moldova (Baldwin-Edwards 2005).

according to World Bank data. In all cases this was a direct neighbour: Slovakia (39%) for Czechia, Czechia (55%) for Slovakia, Ukraine (33%) for Poland and Romania (49%) for Hungary. The remaining countries of origin usually did not account for more than 10%, but were still usually neighbouring countries. Moreover, ex-USSR migrants – Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians – constituted significant proportions of the stocks and flows of migrants in all Central European countries.

A completely different picture emerges in the case of the Baltic States, which mainly host people born in the former USSR. They accounted for over 90% of the immigrant stocks in these countries in 2013. In all three countries, individuals born in the Russian Federation unquestionably constituted the leading group, with proportions exceeding a half and amounting to almost three quarters in Estonia. However, it can be argued that at present the issue of immigration is the story of the future in the Baltic States. Nowadays, the Baltic States, hit severely by the 2008 crisis and high emigration rates to the European Union, are more concerned about inducing return migration (OECD various years).

The collection of origin countries is more diversified in the case of the Balkan States, and corresponds to the complex ethnic and migratory reality in the region, only part of which belongs to the European Union (Baldwin-Edwards 2005, Medved 2014). However, we can also talk about domination of immigration from neighbouring countries in this sub-region. The main countries of origin of migrants forming the stock of foreign-born persons in these countries were as follows in 2013: Russia (24%) for Bulgaria, Moldova (25%) for Romania and Bosnia and Hercegovina for Slovenia (34%). At the same time, Slovenia is the only country in the CEE region that did not host a considerable number of Ukrainian migrants. Their share in the total stock of immigrants in Slovenia reached only 0.6% in 2013.

6.3. *Non-EU migrants*

The overview of the main countries of origin of immigrants coming to the CEE region proves that more than a decade on from eastwards EU enlargement, although the emigration routes of CEE citizens have moved to the West, immigration to the region is still of a 'local' character. Nevertheless, not all the main sending countries belong to the Union. This applies first of all to the ex-USSR countries constituting important sending areas for the CEE region, but also to some former Yugoslavia countries sending migrants to the Balkan States. After the eastwards enlargements, the shifted border of the European Union crossed the routes of CEE migrants, who by and large enjoyed tourist visa-free regimes in the CEE region before the enlargement (Okólski 2004).

In principle, the share of non-EU migrants in the total stock of immigrants in the CEE region was not that much higher than in the EU-15 countries in 2011:

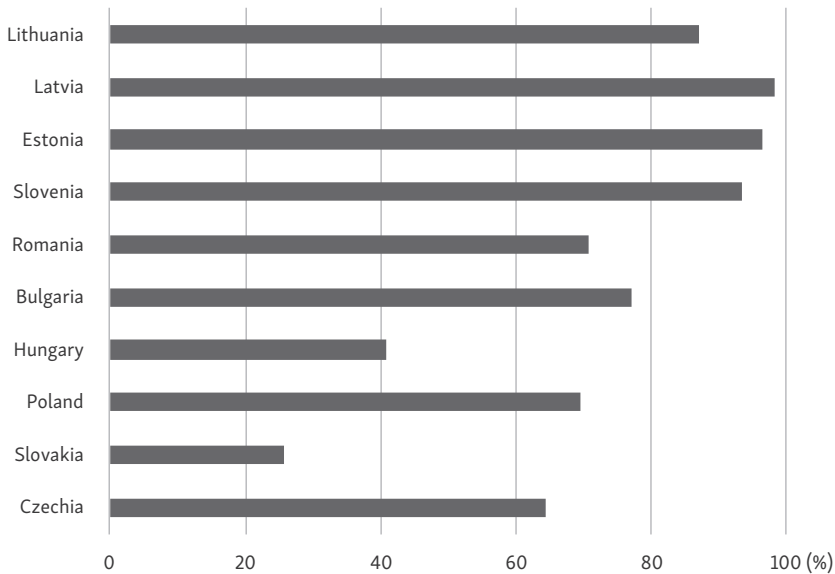


Fig. 5 – Non-EU citizens in the total stock of migrants in CEE by country in 2011 (in %). Source: Eurostat (census data).

72% versus 57%. However, important differences between CEE countries can be observed in this regard (Fig. 5). While in Hungary and Slovakia less than half of foreigners originated from non-EU countries in 2011, in the Baltic States and Slovenia the respective shares amounted to as many as 90%. This demonstrates that especially the Central European countries are capable of attracting more EU immigrants, which is related to their geographical location, but also presumably to their relatively high economic attractiveness within the CEE region.

6.4. *Temporary and irregular migrants*

It is important to stress that data on the stock of migrants do not adequately portray inflow to the CEE region, since a substantial proportion of these movements, especially from the former USSR, are still of a temporary, often circular and irregular nature (Górny, Kindler 2016). The exception to this tendency is definitely Czechia, where immigration has become more permanent in recent years (Leontiyeva 2016; Janská, Čermák, Wright 2014). This corresponded with the introduction of relatively restrictive measures for, especially unskilled, labour migrants in 2011 (Blahoutová 2014). In other CEE countries, temporary work permits granted to foreigners still unquestionably outnumber the stocks of permanent

foreign residents (OECD, various years). Migrants also frequently take advantage of simplified procedures for ethnic minorities living abroad or of tourist visas allowing them to enter the Schengen area, but not enabling them to work there legally (for example Moldovans since 2014). Generally speaking, in many CEE countries with regard to temporary migration we can still observe unmanaged circularity (Çağlar 2013; Ilées, Kincses 2012; Górny et al., eds. 2010, Medved 2014).

The extreme example of this can be found in Poland. It is related to the simplified procedure of work permit acquisition (very fast and free of charge) introduced in 2006 for citizens of selected ex-USSR republics. These work permits entitle a migrant to work in Poland for at most six months during one year, and allow for very flexible circulation between Poland and the sending country. Consequently, for example, in Poland, although the number of Ukrainian migrants with residence permits for at least one year reached 'only' 65,000 in 2015, the volume of the annual number of visas for seasonal work within a simplified procedure issued to Ukrainian nationals was more than 10 times higher in that year. At the same time, this simplified procedure has created a ground for various abuses of the employment law such as: work for more (or different) employers than allowed by a work permit, work without a legal contract etc. This situation is due to, among others, lack of measures allowing for monitoring of the employment of migrants in Poland (Szulecka 2016).

Migration pattern involving legal entry, but work without an adequate work permit constitutes a continuation of immigrants' strategies observed in temporary immigration to the EU-10 CEE already prior to the EU eastwards enlargements (Okólski 2004). What can be called 'status-related irregularity' (overstaying visa, working without an adequate work permit etc.; cf. Kraler, Reichel 2011) has constituted most frequent type of irregular migration in immigration to the EU-10 CEE countries. At the same time, after the EU eastward enlargements, some decrease of illegal crossing of the Eastern EU border has been observed (ibid.).

7. The case of Ukrainian migration

There is no doubt that Ukraine is the main reservoir of foreign labour coming to the CEE region, although Ukrainians also go to other parts of Europe. According to World Bank data, in 2013 the main European receiving areas chosen by Ukrainians were Germany, Italy and Poland, where the stocks of Ukrainians exceeded 200 thousands, but also Czechia, where the numbers of Ukrainian migrants approached 140 thousands (see Fig. 6). However, Ukrainians are present in most CEE countries. According to World Bank data, in 2013 in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Slovenia alone, the number of Ukrainian migrants was below 10 thousands. At the same time, the importance of immigration from Ukraine to CEE countries is

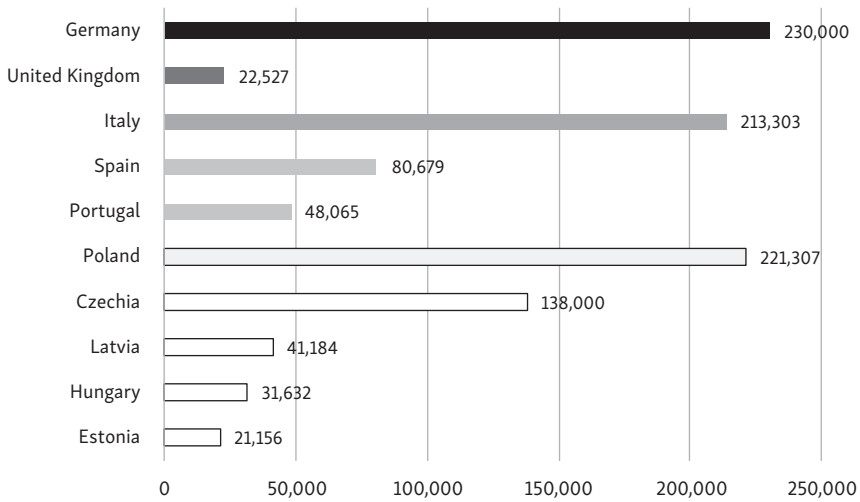


Fig. 6 – Stock of Ukrainian migrants in selected European countries (top 10 countries) in 2013. Source: World Bank.

definitely underestimated in the official data on stocks and inflows, since a large proportion of Ukrainians engage in temporary, usually circular, migration (Górny, Kindler 2016). It can thus be argued that if migration transition is to take place in CEE countries, Ukrainians will definitely contribute to this process.

Overall, Ukrainian migration to the EU is highly temporary in nature almost everywhere (*ibid.*). The persistence of temporariness in Ukrainian migration can be explained by the legal barriers for settlement for ex-USSR migrants in the Union, yet not only by this. Fragmented data suggest that while Ukrainians tend to choose temporary circular migration when going to CEE countries, they are more eager to acquire long-term residence permits in South European countries. For example, in 2012, an average migrant coming to the Warsaw agglomeration had a migration experience of three years and took 10 trips.⁸ Studies from Italy and Spain, meanwhile, demonstrate that migrants make an effort to regularise in these countries. This can lead to permanent migration, although Ukrainian migrants usually try to maintain links with their families back home after regularisation (Hosnedlová, Staněk 2014, Vianello 2013).

Ukrainian migrants going to the CEE countries are negatively pre-selected with regard to their level of education (Kupets 2011). Moreover, according to several studies on Ukrainian migrants conducted in the Warsaw agglomeration after

⁸ Data from the 2012 National Bank of Poland survey based on respondent-driven sampling.

2009,⁹ migrants with shorter migration experience tend to be better-educated than more experienced migrants. This might suggest that better-educated migrants are less likely to participate in circular migration to Poland for a long time, choosing instead to return to Ukraine or to migrate further to the West. Poland, Czechia and other CEE countries are treated as the first and the easiest stops on the way to richer countries (Vollmer 2016). Examples of Ukrainian migrants starting their migration by going to the CEE region and subsequently migrating to Italy have been described in several studies (Vianello 2013; Igllicka, Gmaj 2013).

The above observations demonstrate that CEE countries, already 10 years after their accession to the European Union, have not yet become a first choice for Ukrainian migrants, except for migrants who intend to reduce costs and risks associated with international migration and chose migration to neighbouring countries (Vollmer 2016). These migrants, however, chose a strategy of 'earn abroad, spend at home' instead of leaving Ukraine for good, as suggested by the still small rates of settled Ukrainian migrants, especially in Poland. Consequently, Ukrainian migration to CEE countries, with few exceptions such as Czechia, has above all been taking a form of unmanaged local circulation.

However, the recent evidence from Poland suggests that some changes can be expected in the near future. Their origins lie in the military Russian-Ukrainian conflict, associated with the severe economic crisis in the Ukraine and a very high emigration potential materialising in many ways (Drbohlav, Jaroszewicz 2016). Most of the Ukrainians aiming for the EU rely on the simplified procedure for work permit acquisition available in Poland. The numbers of such visas¹⁰ grew from 235,000 in 2013 to 782,000 in 2015 and exceeded one million in 2016. Almost all of these visas have been issued for Ukrainians.

Moreover, as a comparison of two studies on Ukrainian labour migrants in the Warsaw agglomeration conducted in 2012 and 2015¹¹ suggests, the 'profile' of migrants changed especially with regard to gender, education and area of origin in Ukraine. The proportion of migrants originating from Western Ukraine decreased in favour of Central Ukraine. Furthermore, if we focus on 'new' migrants – with experience in migration to Poland of two years or shorter – then migrants interviewed in 2015 are persons that started to come to Poland after the beginning of the military conflict in Ukraine. The percentage of men among these migrants was higher when compared to the proportion of males among 'new' migrants in 2012: 59% versus 44%. Moreover, 'new' migrants who started their migration to

⁹ Data from the 2012 and 2015 National Bank of Poland surveys based on respondent-driven sampling.

¹⁰ These numbers refer, in fact, only to declarations of employers intending to hire a foreigner. The number of visas issued is slightly lower.

¹¹ Data from the 2012 National Bank of Poland survey based on respondent-driven sampling.

Poland after the military conflict in Ukraine were better educated. In particular, the percentage of people with a university degree was high among them: 46% in 2015, compared to 30% in 2012.¹²

Overall, it can be argued that these observations suggest that we are probably witnessing some important changes in the trends in migration from Ukraine to Poland, or more broadly to the CEE region. How this will impact the propensity of migrants towards settlement in Poland or other CEE countries is yet to be seen. As yet, we do not observe visible increases in settlement Ukrainian migration in CEE, but in Poland, for example, the number of permanent residence permits holders grew by one third between 2014 and 2016, reaching 24,322 in 2016. At the same time, the number of temporary residence permits (an important step in acquisition of a settlement permit in Poland) almost quadrupled in the same period, reaching 75,404 in 2016. These increases are exceptional in the short history of immigration to Poland, dating back to the late 1980s.

8. Discussion

The concept of migration transition and the related notion of migration cycle have been contested by many authors as too simplified given the complexity of migratory movements, dependent on a plethora of local and international factors (Okólski 2012). However, it is difficult to ignore the fact that becoming a net-immigration country appears to be the destiny of European countries in the light of deficits on their local labour markets and population ageing processes. When and whether CEE countries will indeed become immigration countries cannot be answered today, especially in the light of still existing substantial economic disparities between CEE countries and the rest of the EU. We can only formulate some observations on how the EU's eastwards enlargements might have contributed to this process and what are the other factors with an impact on its dynamics.

There is no doubt that the post-enlargement outflow from the CEE countries, especially Poland, Romania and Bulgaria, but also Latvia and Lithuania, was unusually high. The growing permanency of CEE nationals' emigration to the EU means that their home labour markets lost a considerable proportion of their productive labour force, presumably forever. Consequently, the concept of the 'crowding-out' effect related to export of the redundant labour force can constitute an important factor in shaping migration transition in the CEE countries. However, although immigration to CEE countries is gradually – and slowly – growing, we have not yet

¹² It should be stressed that corresponding comparisons between experienced migrants from 2012 and 2015 surveys revealed negligible differences with regard to gender, education and region of origin in Ukraine.

observed significant replacement labour migration to the CEE region. One reason for this may be the still insufficient modernisation of the CEE economies and the still unstable demand for foreign labour in the CEE countries (Kaczmarczyk, Okólski 2008). Additionally, the economic crisis of 2008 introduced a divergence in these processes, inducing a decrease in immigration to some CEE countries, such as Hungary and Slovakia (Çağlar 2013).

An overview of the fragmented data on immigration to CEE countries also suggests that the eastwards enlargements did not cause a dramatic change in patterns of inflow to the region. The Central European countries considered as migration magnets prior to enlargement have remained the main destination areas in the CEE region. Immigration is still largely of a local nature, and what can be called unmanaged circularity remains an important feature of inflow to the CEE region. Its preservation can be linked to two parallel processes. The first is erection of additional legal barriers for migrants from countries that remained outside the Union – an important part of migrant source areas for CEE – after the accession of the EU-10 CEE countries to the Schengen zone. The second process is the reaction of the EU-10 CEE countries to this situation, namely, implementation of a variety of measures enabling inflow (mainly of a circular character) of non-EU migrants who had been coming to these countries already prior to the enlargements. These measures include: ethnic cards (like the Polish and Hungarian card), simplified naturalisation procedures for ethnic minorities living abroad and a simplified procedure for seasonal workers from the former USSR in Poland. These two parallel processes apparently resulted in retention of the migratory status quo from before the eastward enlargement, contributing to preservation of an ‘informal’ temporary migration regime in which circular incomplete migration constitutes the optimal solution. Given that such temporary mobility satisfies the labour market needs of the CEE countries, it might have slowed down the transition of the CEE countries towards immigration countries. There are certainly some exceptions from this model, but not many. The most prominent is Czechia, which has not introduced any special ‘simplified’ measures for migrants from outside the Union, instead tightening its admission policies (Leontiyeva 2016).

It should be stressed, however, that it is not only policies that created the duality of emigration – permanent – and immigration – temporary – regimes in the CEE countries. Evidence from research on Ukrainian migrants in Europe suggests that temporary migration has also been a preferred option for migrants. Apparently, CEE countries, especially Poland, have not constituted the final destination for at least some migrants, but only an intermediary step in their migration further to the West. While Ukrainian migrants aiming for Southern Europe tend to undertake steps allowing them to settle in these countries for longer, such as participation in regularisation programmes, those coming to CEE countries mainly pursue only an ‘earn abroad, spend at home’ strategy.

The importance of preferences and aspirations of migrants is echoed in changes observed in migration from Ukraine after the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict, although the evidence is still very preliminary and comes mainly from Poland. Post-conflict Ukrainian migrants use various 'old' ways to enter Europe, such as a simplified procedure for seasonal work in Poland, tourist visas in Moldova, and presumably many others. However, their strategies apparently differ from what had been observed in migration from Ukraine to CEE in the past. This relates to a change in the 'profile' of Ukrainian migrants coming to Poland and to an exceptional increase in the numbers of residence permit holders in Poland between 2014 and mid-2016. Overall, the available data suggest that the military conflict in Ukraine can be a game-changing factor in the process of transition of some CEE countries in net-immigration countries, especially those already hosting considerable numbers of Ukrainian nationals. For the rest of the CEE region, especially the Balkan States, one may ask what is to be the role of the refugee crisis, which has so far affected above all this part of the CEE region.

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SHRNUTÍ

Rozšíření EU na východ a migrační přechod ve střední a východní Evropě

Většina středoevropských a východoevropských (SVE) zemí figuruje jako státy se záporným migračním saldem (převahou emigrace nad imigrací) na rozdíl od západoevropských a jihoevropských zemí, které obvykle představují oblasti s kladnou celkovou migrační bilancí (převaha imigrace nad emigrací). Z rozšíření Evropské unie (EU) na východ v letech 2004 a 2007 vyplynuly ekonomické, demografické a právní důsledky, které v mnoha směrech přebudovaly migrační poměry v SVE zemích. Především přispěly k rychlejšímu ekonomickému sbližování deseti nováčků Evropské unie se zbytkem EU a k hromadnému odchodu vystěhovalců z těchto zemí, zejména z Polska, Rumunska a pobaltských států. Tyto nové poměry bezpochyby také napomáhají zvýšenému přistěhovalectví do SVE zemí.

Tento článek předkládá přehled vývoje u imigrace do regionu SVE zemí po rozšíření EU na východ, přičemž sleduje cíl probírat faktory, které tento růst stimulují, nebo ho naopak brzdí. Zaměřuje se na deset SVE zemí, jež vstoupily do EU v letech 2004 a 2007. Je to Bulharsko, Česko, Estonsko, Maďarsko, Lotyšsko, Litva, Polsko, Rumunsko, Slovensko a Slovinsko. Analýza imigrace provedená v tomto článku vychází z údajů Světové banky a OECD a dále z dostupných studií o imigraci do SVE regionu.

Článek začíná třemi oddíly, jež nastiňují rámec, v němž je rozebírána imigrace do SVE regionu. Nejprve je tu ukázka pojmu migračního přechodu, poté následuje stručný popis migračních procesů v SVE zemích před rozšířením EU a nakonec vybrané výsledky po rozšíření v oblasti ekonomických ukazatelů a emigrace z SVE regionu. Na tyto oddíly o kontextu navazuje rozbor imigrace do SVE zemí po uvedeném rozšíření. Poslední, analytický oddíl článku je věnován případu ukrajinských migrantů – nejpočetnější migrační skupině, jež přichází prakticky do všech SVE zemí.

Analýza provedená v článku ukázala, že ani po deseti a někdy i více letech, jež uplynuly od rozšíření v letech 2004 a 2007, nejsou změny u objemu a vzorců imigrace do SVE zemí nijak zásadní. Lze to připisat relativně nízké ekonomické přitažlivosti SVE zemí v rámci EU, což má původ v „nedokončeném“ ekonomickém přechodu a nestabilní poptávce po zahraničních pracovnících v těchto zemích. Ekonomická krize v roce 2008, jež vypukla ve stejné době, kdy tyto země vstoupily do Schengenského prostoru, a po níž následovalo omezení u víz pro občany třetích zemí, navíc vedla téměř ve všech SVE zemích ke snížené imigraci. Dalším faktorem, který může osvětlit omezené změny u přistěhovalectví do SVE regionu, je význam národnostně podmíněných a místních pohybů u imigrace do tohoto regionu, jež se však týkají občanů zemí, které zůstaly mimo EU po jejím rozšíření na východ, jako například bývalého Sovětského svazu a Jugoslávie. Lze tvrdit, že takovýto kontext imigrace do SVE regionu utváří základ především pro dočasný a kruhový pohyb do SVE zemí.

Posledně uvedenou tendenci probírá článek za použití příkladu ukrajinské migrace do EU. Z přehledu dostupných údajů a studií plyne, že zatímco ukrajínští migranti do jižní Evropy s větší pravděpodobností usilují o trvalou migraci zapojením do programů na usazení, pokud jde o SVE země, jejich migrační orientace je převážně dočasná. Konkrétně platí, že Ukrajinci mířící do SVE zemí zpravidla uplatňují strategii „vydělat v cizině, utratit doma“.

Článek konečně také uvádí rozmanité vývojové trajektorie u imigrace v rámci SVE regionu. Poukazuje na případ Česka, pokládané za „vůdce imigrace“ mezi SVE zeměmi, jakožto příklad SVE státu, kde trvalá migrace předstihuje dočasnou. Jsou tu probírány i specifika Maďarska a Polska. Maďarsko je ukázkou výjimečného významu národnostně podmíněných migračních proudů, kdežto Polsko vyniká v SVE regionu jako země s velice pružnou politikou, určenou pro sezónní migraci z vybraných zemí bývalého Sovětského svazu.

- Obr. 1 HDP na hlavu (v dolarech z roku 2005) v evropských zemích v letech 2000, 2007 a 2014. Pramen: údaje Světové banky.
- Obr. 2 Průměrná hodnota ukazatele trvalé migrace za polské emigranty v Nizozemsku, Irsku, Německu a Velké Británii v letech 2009 a 2012. Poznámky: ukazatel trvalosti byl sestaven jako průměr odpovědí na soubor otázek týkajících se délky pobytu, migrační minulosti, plánů na návrat nebo naopak usazení, nejnižší mzdy, za niž je migrant ochoten pracovat, vlastnictví nemovitostí v cílové zemi, registrace v systému sociálního zabezpečení v cizině, přítomnosti rodiny v cílové zemi a posílání peněz do vlasti. Vyšší hodnoty ukazatele trvalosti se pojí se sklonem k trvalému usazení. Pramen: vlastní

- zpracování na základě údajů Janické a Kaczmarczyka (2016), údaje Polské národní banky.
- Obr. 3 Podíl zahraničních občanů na obyvatelstvu Česka, Maďarska, Slovenska, Slovinska, jižní Evropy a západní Evropy v letech 2006–2013 (v %). Poznámka: údaje za Slovinsko nejsou k dispozici za roky 2004 a 2005. Pramen: OECD.
- Obr. 4 Občané narození v cizině a cizinci v obyvatelstvu SVE zemí v roce 2013 (v %). Údaje jsou odvozeny z databáze OECD s výjimkou podílu osob narozených v cizině v Polsku a Litvě, jež byly převzaty z údajů Světové banky. Podíl zahraničních občanů za Lotyšsko a Rumunsko je k roku 2010 a za Litvu k roku 2012. Pramen: OECD a Světová banka.
- Obr. 5 Občané zemí mimo EU z celkového počtu přistěhovalců v jednotlivých SVE zemích v roce 2011 (v %). Pramen: Eurostat (údaje ze sčítání).
- Obr. 6 Ukrajínští přistěhovalci ve vybraných evropských zemích (deset zemí s největším počtem) v roce 2013. Pramen: Světová banka.

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