

Socio - economic Dimensions of Migration from Poland to Sweden (preliminary version)

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Abstract

International migration is not a new phenomenon in the Baltic Region or in Global Economy. For ages people have been moving from one place to another in search of better opportunities in life. While the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were called “The Age of Mass Migration” because of the intensive movement of millions of people, nowadays concern is more over “brain drain”. Due to the enlargement of the EU and other documented developments in the global perspective, as the world is becoming more accessible, migration problem has regained some actuality. One of the main forces of current migration is globalization, facilitated by lower travelling costs. In addition, information and communication costs have fallen, effecting the decrease in international cultural differences. Furthermore communication technology developments have lowered the psychological and social costs of moving to another country.

Migration as a very complex and interdisciplinary research dilemma has been explored from different perspectives. The process is driven not only by economic forces but also by social and psychological factors. From an economic point of view, people emigrate from a low income country to a high income one in search of better employment opportunities. Unemployment, low wages and lack of career prospects for educated workers are the examples which are most often raised as the push factors of migration. On the other hand, higher income in the receiving country is considered as one of the most important pull factors. However, not everyone from lower income countries emigrates to a higher income one. In the explanation of this phenomenon some emphasis is put on the role of cultural differences across countries, such as different languages, tradition and family relations. Furthermore immigration policies in some potential destination countries are not favourable to immigration.

As far as the consequences of migration are concerned, the biggest fear among authorities of the countries of origin is put on the loss of people who are qualified and active in terms of employment. The main discourse in most literature is concerned with “brain drain” and “brain circulation”. The return of emigrants to their motherland with experience and knowledge gained abroad is extremely desirable by the domestic country. In addition, migration has a fundamental impact on the economic situation not only of the domestic country, but also of the receiving one. Hence it is vital to explore this phenomenon from the perspective of both the country of origin and the country of destination in regard to regional development.

The aim of this paper is to present the current trends of the migration process from Poland to Sweden. While Poland is a typical example of a net emigration country where more people emigrate from, than move into the country, Sweden is by contrast a net immigration country with a very high proportion of immigrants in the total population (around 3 times higher than the average for the EU).

It is also extremely important to understand why people emigrate. To respond to this question this paper examines some theoretical explanation of the reasons and consequences of emigration. Additionally, the main push and pull factors of migration are examined on the basis of comparative analysis of the socio-economic situation in Poland and Sweden. Finally some methods of empirical research over the socio-economic aspects of migration are presented, with the aim of proving the following hypothesis: “The better economic situation and social integration of particular immigrants in the destination country, the lower probability of the return to the domestic country”

JEL Classification numbers: J61 - Geographic Labour Mobility; Immigrant Workers

key words: migration, brain drain, socio-economic development

Introduction

Migration is an old theme in global economics that has regained some actuality recently. While the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were called “The Age of Mass Migration” because of the intensive movement of millions of people searching for a better life overseas, nowadays concern is more over “brain drain”. Globalization and EU enlargement have facilitated the flow of workers over national borders. There are different approaches in the theory of migration which have tried to explain this phenomenon. A brief outline of the theories is presented in the first part of the paper. The second part is devoted to the current migration patterns from Poland and to Sweden. These two countries are considered respectively as good examples of net emigration and net immigration countries. The number of migrants does not explain the phenomenon as migration both depends and exerts an impact on the socio-economic situation in the sending and receiving country. The next section of the paper, therefore, investigates factors of migration on the basis of comparative analysis of the socio-economic situation of the selected countries. The aim of the last part of the paper is to present methods of empirical research over the socio-economic aspects of migration, mainly concentrating on the integration of immigrants. On the basis of such research the possible effects of migration can be drawn.

International Migration – The Theoretical Approach

Migration as a very complex and interdisciplinary problem has been explored by many researchers and from different perspectives. As a result a great number of theories have been built on the grounds of miscellaneous disciplines. In this part of the paper some brief explanation of the most significant theories are presented.

The neoclassical macroeconomic theory of migration, proposed by Lewis, states that people move from a low income country to a high income one. The main causes of migration are mostly the differences in wages. The main assumption is that people behave in a rational way and consequently seek better place of employment in the country of birth or abroad. Within this approach, migration leads to labour market equilibrium, as the movement of labour force will take place until the differences in wages diminish to the level of costs of migration (Fihel, Kaczmarczyk, Okólski, 2006). This approach is very basic and does not explain other aspects and factors of migratory decisions, such as individualised costs and gains connected with migration.

The so called neoclassical microeconomic theory created by Sjaastad and Todaro examines migration at the microeconomic level. According to this approach potential emigrants calculate individual costs and gains. They take into account not only the possible income, but also qualifications they can gain abroad and of course migration costs. Unemployment level and probability of being employed abroad are also taken into consideration in the migratory decision process. Therefore migration constitutes a form of investment, rewarded with a difference in income earned in the home country and in the country of destination (Kupiszewski 2005).

A totally different explanation was presented by Stark and Bloom, the authors of the New Economic Theory of Migration (Stark and Bloom 1985). In their opinion, migration is much more complex than in the neoclassical theories. One of the basic assumptions is that potential emigrants take into account not only the opinions, but also the economic and social situations of relatives. Hence decisions are not made by isolated individuals but by families or households. By diversifying labour markets, in other words by sending one member of the family abroad, they try to limit the risk of

losing revenues. According to this theory people will move from one country to another to change their own or their family's relative position in the domestic society (Stark and Bloom 1985). Therefore apart from financial aspects, the position of the family is also taken into consideration.

According to the Dual Labour Market theory (Piore 1979), migration is caused more by pull factors than by push factors. The driving force of migration is the demand for labour and the recruiting system in the destination country. Salary level differences are less important in Piore's approach. The main assumption of the theory is that a labour market is divided into two sectors: primary and secondary. The primary, contrary to the secondary, is characterized by secure employment conditions, comparatively high wages and social security standards. Consequently local inhabitants rarely accept the positions offered in the secondary market, therefore those vacancies are often filled by immigrants. Moreover the secondary sector jobs can be attractive for immigrants due to the fact that they usually perceive their stay abroad as temporary and consequently they do not take into account social position but concentrate mainly on the financial benefits.

The above presented economic theories do not explain the problem totally, as migration is not only an economic phenomenon, but also has sociological roots and effects. According to the Network theory, which partly fills in the gap, the interpersonal ties that connect potential migrants with people living abroad play a very important role in the migratory decision. The networks make migration easier due to the reduction of risks and costs of moving abroad

Whilst migration is a very important issue in the world economy, understanding its likely effects is of even greater significance. The effects of migration can be recognised from two perspectives; from the point of view of the sending and receiving countries. The most often discussed negative effect of migration on the domestic country is a reduction of productive capacity due to the loss of highly-qualified workers. In addition to this direct effect on the supply of qualified labour, another consequence is a reduction in support for funding of higher education and voting support for effective political and economic reforms. Moreover as educated workers often earn more money than those less qualified, so the national tax income decreases due to the outflow of higher income workers.

While most of the time we can hear about "brain drain", some researchers prove that "brain gain" or "brain circulation" takes place in many regions of the World. There might therefore be some positive effects of migration for the sending countries. One of the possible benefits for the domestic country may be an increase in encouragement to invest in native human capital. Due to the relative scarcity created by the "brain drain" more and more people who stay in their home country consider higher education as a better prospect for their futures. Furthermore, qualified emigrants often keep in contact with former colleagues and professional institutions (workplace, university), which can be a facilitator for international knowledge exchange and a powerful source of international networks of contacts. Also new import-export opportunities are created. Another positive aspect may come about if emigrants return to their motherland with experience and knowledge gained abroad. Such a situation generates a gain of human capital which may not have evolved if the people had not emigrated.

From the economic point of view the most often raised negative impact of migration on the receiving countries is "stealing" the work of locals, lowering wages and the use of the welfare system by immigrants. The "losers" are often the local workers with worse or similar skills to the immigrants. On this basis some social

conflicts between immigrants and natives can emerge. On the other hand immigration tends to fill in the shortages of labour resources in specific types of jobs, which are not attractive to locals or/and are economically important for the country.

Concluding this theoretical part of the paper there have been many different approaches to explaining the phenomenon of migration. The outflow of human capital is not only driven by better opportunities in the countries of destination (pull-factors) but also by the economic and political situation in home country (push-factors). Looking from the perspective of the country of origin, the migration of highly-skilled workers appears to have a more negative impact on the labour market than the migration of manual/unskilled workers. "There is a strong consensus that deficiency in human capital is a major reason why poor countries remain poor" (Stark 2004). It was also suggested that brain drain causes not only the losses of highly-skilled labour, but, due to asymmetric information, the immigrants tend to be the best individuals within the work group in the destination country (Lien and Wang, 2005). In this case they are not only a loss to the domestic society but also a huge gain for the destination country. Hence the disparities between the countries can intensify.

Current Migration Flows from Poland

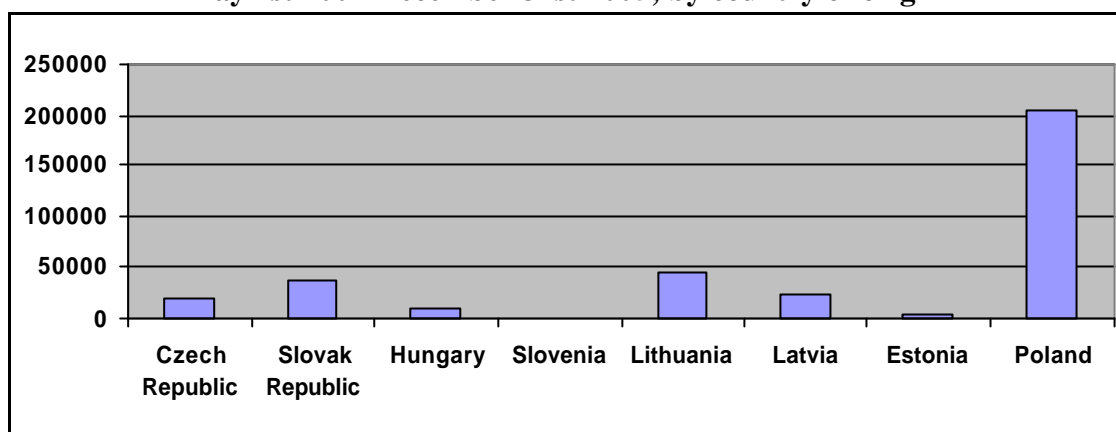
Poland is an example of a typical emigration country where, for ages, emigration has played an important role. This phenomenon was mainly influenced by political factors due to the post war conditions and communist regime. The unstable political situation pushed many Poles to western countries where they found better living conditions. The total number of emigrants from Poland in the 1980s is estimated at more than 1 million people, which accounts for around 3% of the total population. (Fihel, Kazmarczyk, Okólski, 2006). When the Communist system collapsed and the political and economical transition started, the economic situation of many Polish citizens worsened due to growing unemployment. Since the 1990s a very common way of financial support for Polish households has been temporary migration. Many temporal emigrants have worked abroad illegally unfortunately, therefore there are no reliable statistics available to quantify this phenomenon.

Moreover Polish diasporas are the most numerous ethnic groups in many countries. For instance in 2000 around 16,000 Poles lived in Sweden, more than 25,000 in UK and more than 33,700 in France.

A very significant emigration from Poland has been observed since the EU Enlargement in 2004. The biggest outflow of Polish citizens was observed in Great Britain. According to the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS)¹ from May 1, 2004 to March 31, 2006 a total of 204,895 migrants from Poland applied for a job in the United Kingdom, which is 61% of all applications. It is worth mentioning that when the UK opened the labour market to new EU countries in 2004, thousands of Polish immigrants had already been working in Great Britain. For many of them the registration in the WRS was the only way to legitimize their employment (Fihel, Kaczmarczyk, Okólski, 2006).

¹ WRS is a register of all migrants from the EU8 countries wishing to take up employment in the United Kingdom. It was set up on May 1, 2004 to provide at least an estimation of migration flows. Source: Fihel, Kaczmarczyk, Okólski 2006, p. 29

**Figure 1 Number of WRS applicants in the United Kingdom;
May 1st 2004-December 31st 2005; by country of origin**



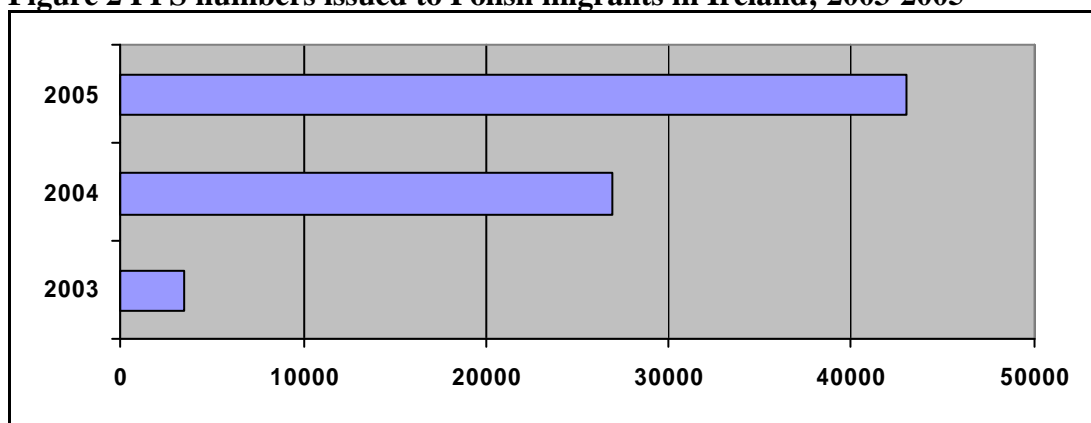
Source: Fihel, Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2006), page 30

Compared with other nationalities, Poles are the most numerous immigrant group in the United Kingdom, accounting for 61% of all applicants, while, for example, Lithuanians represent 13% and Slovaks 10%. As far as other EU8 countries are concerned, they seemed to show little or no reaction to the opening of the British labour market.

Regarding the employment sector, the newcomers make a very heterogeneous group. According to The Accession Monitoring Report of 2006, most immigrants are employed as low-skilled workers in manufacturing, agriculture or catering. However, the human capital of migrants seems to be misused in Britain as this country is the most attractive destination for educated migrants from Poland (Kaczmarczyk, Okólski 2005). The outflow of highly-skilled Poles, especially physicians, scientists and students has become a very visible and significant phenomenon.

As in Britain, Poles are the highest population of newcomers in Ireland². Moreover the number of immigrants from Poland has grown at a rapid pace since the 1st of May 2004.

Figure 2 PPS numbers issued to Polish migrants in Ireland; 2003-2005



Source: Fihel, Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2006), page 31

In contrast to Britain, the number of immigrants employed in the highly-skilled sector in Ireland is comparable to the number of foreigners working in low-skilled sectors.

² The scale of immigration to Ireland is reflected by the Personal Public Service numbers (PPS)

Although the biggest percentage of Polish immigrants is noticed in Great Britain and Ireland, in the period from May 2004 to August 2005 the number of first – time work permits issued to Polish citizens was as high as 8,900 in Norway, 3,800 in Sweden and 1,700 in Denmark. Such a difference when compared to Great Britain and Ireland is most probably connected with little, or lack of, knowledge of the Scandinavian languages among Polish citizens.

In the period of time analysed, educated and work-experienced Poles, working in the primary labour market, seldom considered emigration from Poland as a much more attractive option (Kupiszewski, 2005). The costs of migration, such as difficulties in adjusting to a new society and severing family links are probably among the most important. Moreover married couples overcome financial problems with the employment of both spouses. The comparison of earning two salaries in Poland with one salary abroad deter them from migration. However, medical professions have been in high demand and subject to active recruitment campaigns in the UK, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway. Some evidence of migration of dentists and nurses, who are employed often as carers for the elderly has been noticed.

Sweden as one of the most important destinations of immigrants

Sweden is known as a typical net immigration country. The first inflow of foreigners, mainly from northern Europe and the Baltic Region, was observed in Sweden in the 17th century. The next stage was after the Second World War when a huge labour shortage was noticed due to economic development. The biggest group of immigrants in that period were Norwegian, Danish, Finnish and Polish citizens. The main reasons of the inflow of emigrants in the 1960's were not only economic factors but also political push factors due to the Vietnam War and the persecution of Polish Jews. On the other hand the Swedish immigration policy during that period of time was very liberal and unrestricted due to the shortages in labour and needs of industry.

In the 1970s negative attitudes of Swedes towards immigrants restricted the access of foreign labour. Sweden was at that time in recession and Swedish Unions and local authorities were scared of the results of further labour immigration. On the other hand Sweden left open borders for refugees. The countries which sent the most numerous refugees were Chile, Syria, Turkey and Lebanon. (Lundh C., Ohlson R., 1994)

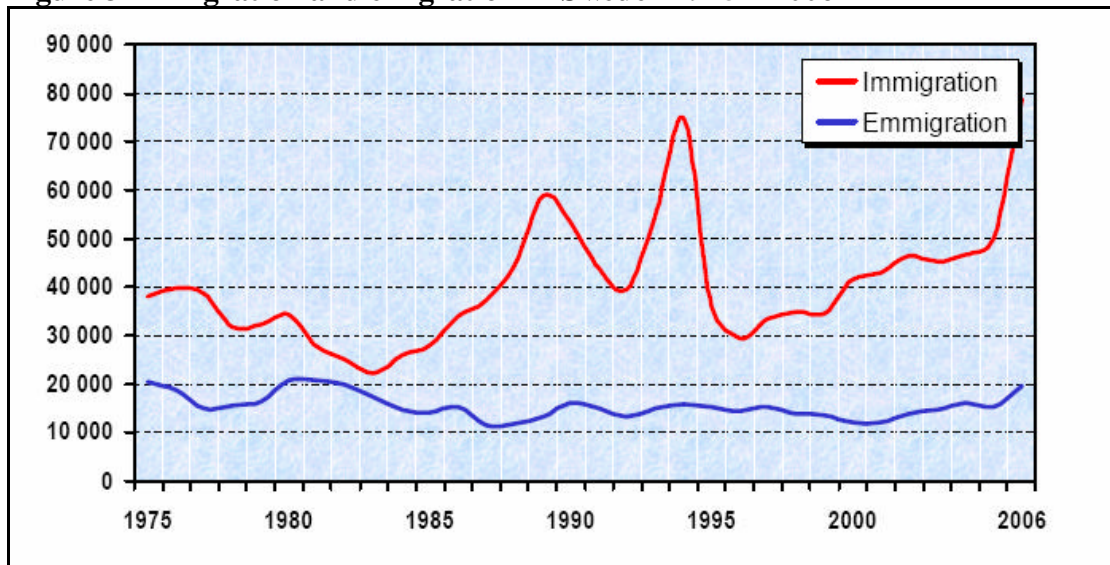
Up until 1975 almost 90% of the immigrants came from European countries. In the 1980s there was a change in the current of immigration, 50% of the immigrants came from non-European countries. More than 400,000 individuals immigrated to Sweden in the 1980s. A large portion of the immigrants during this period were refugees from Iran and Iraq as well as from countries in eastern Africa (Allwood J. Edeback C., Myhre R., 2006).

It is interesting how immigration structure has changed during the period analyzed. Immigration to Sweden during the 1990s and 2000s has mainly involved political refugees and cases of family reunion. The war in former Yugoslavia pushed a large number of refugees to Sweden from the Balkan region.

Sweden together with Britain and Ireland were the only members of the EU to welcome workers from the 10 countries which joined the EU in 2004. The 2004 expansion to include former Soviet-bloc nations plus Cyprus and Malta had not affected Sweden as much as UK and Ireland.

According to statistics from the Swedish Migration Board for 2006 approximately 80,000 people immigrated to Sweden while nearly 20,000 foreign citizens emigrated (Facts & Figures 2006). Immigration to Sweden is presented in figure 3.

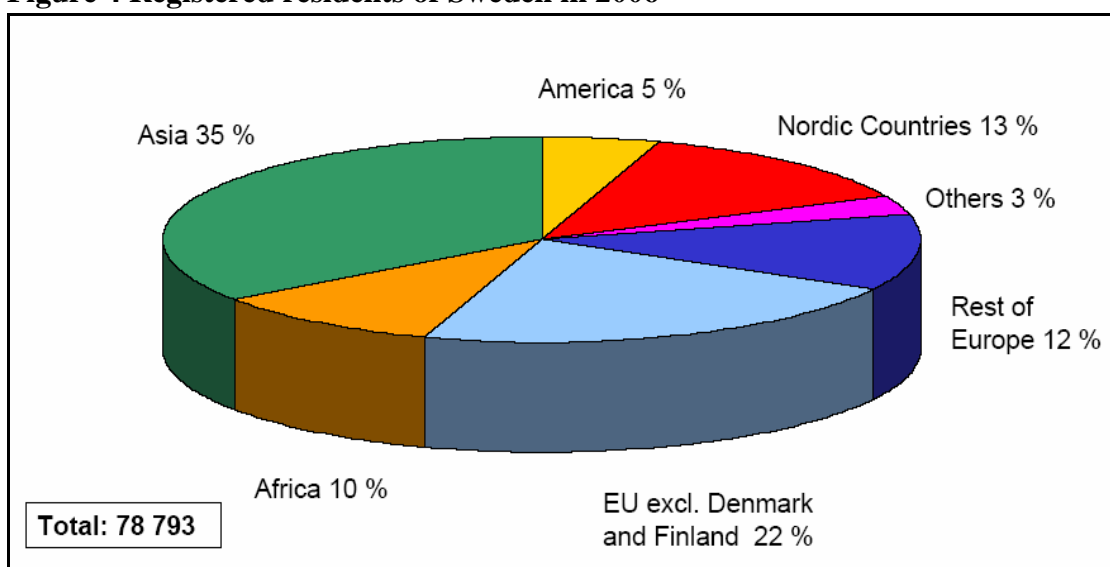
Figure 3 Immigration and emigration in Sweden 1975—2006



Source: Facts & Figures 2006, the Swedish Migration Board

Figure 4 shows immigration in 2006, divided into individuals holding citizenship from Nordic countries, citizenship from other countries within the EU, the rest of Europe, Africa, Asia, America, and others.

Figure 4 Registered residents of Sweden in 2006



Source: Facts & Figures 2006, the Swedish Migration Board

Among all immigrants in 2006 the biggest group was European (34%) and Asian (35%). In figure 5 the numbers of immigrants from Poland and other selected countries into Sweden in 2003 and 2004 is presented.

Figure 5 Immigration to Sweden of selected groups in 2003 and 2004

Country of origin	2003	2004
Poland	1143	2552
Estonia	291	397
Lithuania	217	427

Source: Migration 2004, SCB

As a consequence of the EU enlargement in 2004 and quite liberal immigration policy, a very rapid increase of immigration to Sweden was observed in 2006, when according to official figures published by Statistics Sweden, Immigration reached a level not seen in over 100 years. Swedish citizenship was granted to more people than ever before in 2006, a year in which the country's population increased by more than 65,000. The total population recorded on 31st December was more than 9,000,000. Immigration increased by 47 percent compared to 2005, reaching a total of 95,750 people. This constituted just over 12,000 more immigrants than the previous record year of 1994, when Sweden welcomed large numbers of refugees from former Yugoslavia.

This huge increase can primarily be explained by temporary asylum legislation, which gave asylum seekers the right to have their cases reassessed. The largest immigrant group consisted of returning Swedish citizens, who accounted for 16 percent of total immigration. Iraqi citizens accounted for 11% of the total immigration. Inflow from this middle eastern country was more than twice as high as in 2005. Poland and Denmark were next on the list, with immigration from these countries also higher than the previous year.

Figure 6 Number of immigrants by country of citizenship 2006 (Selected countries)

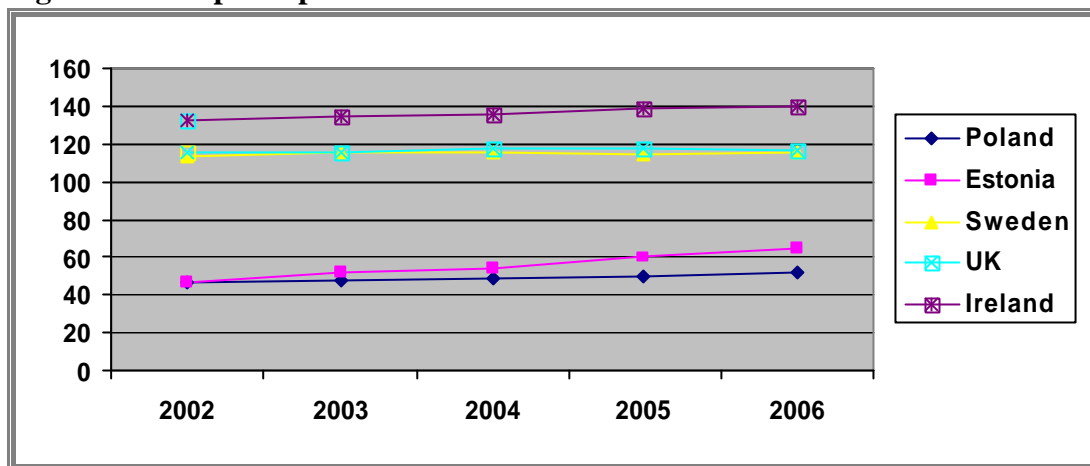
Afghanistan	1669
Germany	2883
India	1024
Iran	2008
Iraq	10850
Ireland	196
Russia	1393
Somalia	2974
UK	1537
USA	901

Source: Statistics Sweden

The socio-economic situation in Poland and Sweden

According to the theories presented in the first section of this paper the migration patterns are influenced by socio - economic factors. Therefore it is extremely important to investigate the socio economic situation in the domestic and destination countries. One of the measures of the level of economic development is the GDP per capita. This indicator also gives a view of comparable incomes perceived as a significant factor of migrations. The figure below presents GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) (EU-25=100) in selected countries.

Figure 7. GDP per capita in PPS in selected countries 2002-2006

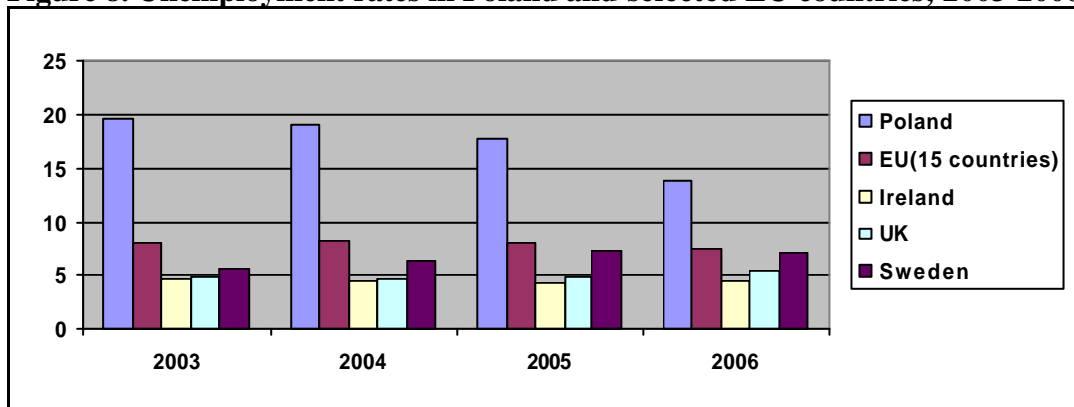


Source: Eurostat

Analysing the statistical data presented in Figure 7 we can draw a conclusion that the emigration from Poland can be substantiated by the much lower GDP per capita. The statement articulated in the Macroeconomic Theory of Migration that people emigrate from a low income country to higher income one can be proved on the basis of comparison of GDP per capita in Poland, Sweden and the UK. It is interesting that this relation is not applicable to Estonia, where GDP per capita is much lower than in Sweden and the UK. A possible simple explanation of this phenomenon can be the rapid growth of this indicator which influences the lack of interest of Estonians in migration. They simply believe that the economic situation will improve to the level of the EU in a very short time.

Another indicator that reflects the socio-economic situation in a country is the unemployment rate. The figure below shows the unemployment rates in selected countries.

Figure 8. Unemployment rates in Poland and selected EU countries; 2003-2006



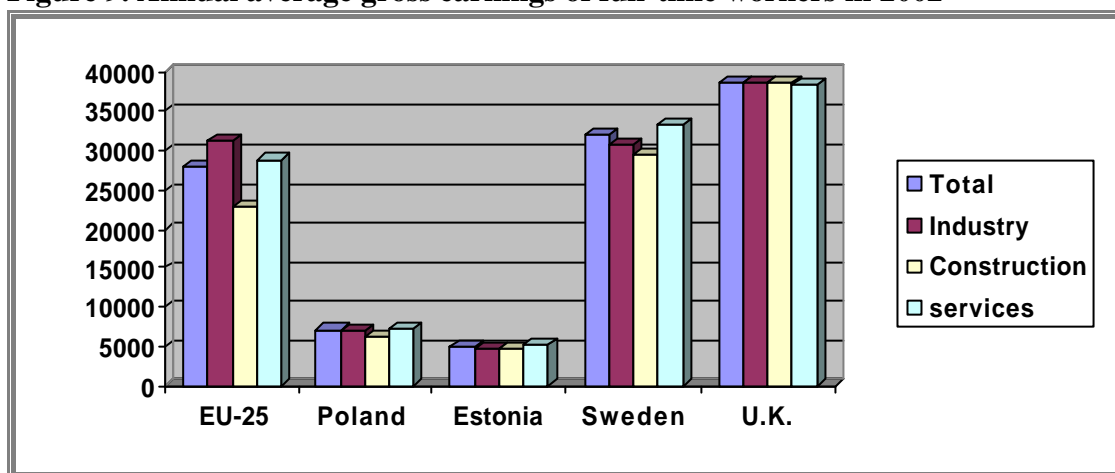
Source: Central Statistical Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny) and Eurostat

The unemployment rate in Poland is much higher than in the rest of the countries analysed. The main reason for such high unemployment is the effects of the transformation from a centrally planned to a market economy. The liquidation, in the late 80s and early 90s, of the nationalised factories which were ineffective economic products of the Communist system, had a great impact on the scale of this phenomenon. High unemployment rates in Poland are perceived as one of the most important push factors of migration from Poland to the UK, Ireland and Sweden

where the socio-economic situation in terms of employment is much better. As is presented in figure 8, the unemployment rate in Poland has decreased over the period of time analysed. The main reason is connected with the EU enlargement and the use of structural funds and also the huge outflow of Polish workers abroad. The next indicator which gives a better view of the situation in the labour market is the Job Vacancy Rate.³ It was lower in Poland than in Sweden during the period of time analysed. For instance, in the second quarter of 2006 it was 1%, which is 0.1 percentage points higher than for the previous quarter, while in Sweden it dropped from 1.3% to 1.2% in the time analysed.

A very important factor, certainly taken under consideration in the migratory decision process is the difference of wage levels in the destination and domestic country. The figure below shows the annual average gross earnings of full-time workers in 2002.

Figure 9. Annual average gross earnings of full-time workers in 2002



Source: Eurostat

As presented above average earnings are almost six times lower in Poland than in Sweden or the UK. This difference is even higher in some particular professional groups. For example it is estimated that doctors and nurses in Poland earn even 10 times less than in the UK or in Sweden. Although the higher level of earnings in Sweden and the UK is an explanation for the migration from Poland, it does not explain the lack of emigration of Estonians, where the wages are even lower than in Poland. Such a situation proves that in some cases the economic incentives do not play that important role in the migratory decision. Therefore it is vital to explore this phenomenon from the social, psychological, political, cultural and even historical point of view.

³ Job Vacancy Rate is expressed as the proportion of posts that are vacant ; $JVC = \frac{\text{number of job vacancies}}{\text{number of occupied posts} + \text{number of job vacancies}} \times 100$

How to measure the socio-economic integration of immigrants.

As stated in the first part of the paper international migration exerts a very important impact on the socio-economic situation of both the destination country and the country of origin. The loss of well-qualified and active in terms of employment people is the biggest concern in the country of origin. As far as consequences of migration for the destination country are concerned one of the issues is the social dissatisfaction and conflicts between immigrants and locals. In both cases the problem of economic integration and social assimilation of immigrants occurs.

Newcomers become members of the receiving society and the better they integrate with this society the better their work situation and participation in social life. Assimilation and integration of immigrants means that they behave as locals and they accept the culture and rules of the destination society. Therefore they become very similar to locals and are treated equally. In this context when immigrants conform to the typical lifestyle of natives, we can say, there is less cause for social conflict and dissatisfaction.

Integration should also be taken into consideration while assessing the consequences of emigration from the country of origin perspective. It is understandable that emigrants who are better integrated with the destination society will more likely stay there and return to the motherland will not be considered. In this situation we can talk about real “brain drain” due to loss of well qualified workers, who will most probably never come back to their motherland, where they grew up and gained their education.

Integration of foreigners can be measured in different ways. One of the indicators is the wage level. When immigrants earn as much as natives, they are considered to be economically well integrated (Li P.S., 2003). But this measure does not present the whole view of the phenomenon. It is very important to explore the social assimilation of immigrants, though, because it reflects their feelings and attitudes. For example, successful social integration implies immigrants adopting the language of locals, moving away from ethnically concentrated immigrant enclaves and participating in social and political activities of the society (Lie P.S., 2003)

The research on immigrants assimilation was started first in the USA. The studies were based on the information included in the USA Census. Differences in the results obtained depended on the amount of information available and the type of controls introduced. Two possible outcomes were observed in the above studies; namely over-assimilation and under-assimilation. (F.Peracchi, D.Depalo, 2006)

Over-assimilation was attributed to the fact that immigrants tend to be more entrepreneurial, more talented and more risk-prone. Two alternative explanations may be given for the evidence of better productivity of immigrants: one is that immigrants belong to groups having higher quality of life, the other has to do with a different economic situation upon arrival. In contrast, under-assimilation of immigrants was attributed to the lower “quality” of the most recent immigration intake. This different quality at the time of immigration may be due to various factors: changes in immigration policy whereby individuals with different abilities are selected; different economic conditions in the destination country and the country of origin.

In Europe the research on socio-economic integration commenced a little later and is mainly based on national panel data, such as the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) or the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP). Regarding the choice of controls, the first set of relevant variables are related to the human capital of the immigrant. This concerns the immigrant’s education before and after arrival, work

experience before and after immigration, and also the knowledge and proficiency in the language of the destination country. (F.Peracchi, D.Depalo, 2006)

It was discovered by Chiswick (1991) that a crucial factor for assimilation into the labour market in the destination country is a knowledge of the natives' language. Neilson, Rosholm and Smith (2000), in a study involving Denmark, discovered that a foreigner's job assimilation increases with the number of years that the particular immigrants have worked in the country. It was also discovered, that one of the reasons of the lack of assimilation is that few immigrants continue their studies in the receiving country. The results of the large empirical research on this issue are difficult to compare because the data vary within the reference countries. It is also difficult to measure the quality of the education received in the origin country.

It is also very important to predict an immigrant's future prospect. The level of the business cycle upon arrival in the labour market is crucial for immigrants assimilation, but so is the sector of employment. Rosholm, Scott and Husted (2000) found that, both in Sweden and Denmark between 1985 to 1995, job opportunities for male immigrants diminished due to economic recession. However, they used a panel of administrative data which showed that the worsening situation was independent of the different market trends in the two countries. It was due to structural changes in the markets, favouring the demand for workers with high interrelation and communication skills, which meant that immigrants were at a disadvantage. (F.Peracchi, D.Depalo, 2006)

The aim of this part of the paper is to present briefly the research project on the assimilation of Polish well-qualified emigrants to answer the question: if their emigration is temporary or if we experience an irreversible „brain drain” from Poland. The main hypothesis of the research is: “The better economic and social integration of particular immigrants in the destination country, the lower probability of return to the domestic country”

To answer this question a simple enquiry form has been created, which deals with such aspects as:

The date of emigration

The main assumption of this research question is that the longer emigrants are abroad, the better they are integrated with the destination society and therefore they are less prone to come back to their motherland. The length of stay in the host country represents a key aspect of assessing the integration of immigrants.

Marital status

Married emigrants with spouses left in Poland will most probably consider coming back to the country, while single emigrants will be more prone to settle in the destination country. Of course marriage to locals is an examples of irreversible brain drain.

The knowledge of the local language

The language proficiency of particular emigrants clearly indicates the level of assimilation. Immigrants who speak the language with a high level of proficiency are more likely to work in better positions, therefore they feel more satisfied and happier and they integrate more with the locals.

The place of living in the destination country

The answer to this question clearly indicates if and dictates whether the emigrants integrate with other foreigners or with locals.

The work place and job of the immigrant

This aspect helps to answer the question if the person improves his/her qualifications and work experience or if we can talk about “brain waste”.

Way of spending free time

This question measures the possible relations with other citizens of the destination country. In researching social assimilation it is extremely important to investigate how the particular immigrant spend his/her free time, whether they prefer to cultivate boundaries with other immigrants or with locals. People who spend their free time at home and do not keep contact with others are not integrated at all, therefore they most probably consider coming back to the motherland.

The contacts with friends and family in the domestic country

The level of satisfaction from work and social relations in the destination country

This measure clearly shows if the person is content and well integrated with the society in the destination country.

Preliminary conclusion

Migration as an interdisciplinary research problem has been explored in many different ways. Different approaches have shown different aspects of this phenomenon. To give full insight into the problem it is extremely important to combine different ways of analysis. In this particular paper inter-country analysis has revealed the push factors of migration from Poland, which is considered as a typical net emigration country, and pull factors of migration to Sweden, which by contrast is a net immigration country, where more people immigrate to, than move out of, the country.

The main reasons for emigration from Poland are a high level of unemployment and lower wages than in destination countries. Moreover, international migration exerts an impact on the socio-economic situation of both the destination country and the country of origin. The loss of well qualified and active (in terms of employment) people is the biggest concern in the country of origin. From the perspective of the destination country the social dissatisfaction and conflicts between immigrants and locals are the main problems. In both cases the problem of economic integration and social assimilation of immigrants occurs. Therefore it is extremely important to investigate this aspect of migration.

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