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Transnational Migrations  
in the Enlarged European Union:  
A Perspective from East Central Europe

EWA MORAWSKA

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**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE**

**ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE  
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**

**Transnational Migrations  
in the Enlarged European Union:  
A Perspective from East Central Europe**

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This paper was written for a meeting of the Reflection Group on the Long-Term Implications of Eastward Enlargement of the European Union: the Nature of the New Border, set up jointly by the Robert Schuman Centre and the Forward Studies Unit of the European Commission, and chaired by Professor Giuliano Amato. The European University Institute and the Robert Schuman Centre are not responsible for the proposals and opinions expressed by the author. For information on this and other projects on Eastern Europe at the Robert Schuman Centre, please contact Professor Jan Zielonka ([zielonka@datacomm.iue.it](mailto:zielonka@datacomm.iue.it)).



An immense increase in transnational population flows worldwide in the late twentieth century as a consequence of and a contributor to accelerating globalization has made international migrations a priority issue in the economies and politics of sender and receiver societies and a hotly debated subject in international relations. (On the volume, mechanisms, and destinations of contemporary global migrations see, e.g., Hammar et al. 1997; Cornelius et al. 1994; Castles and Miller 1993; Kritz et al. 1992). Millions of people have moved across statal borders on the European Continent. Reflecting the global pattern, most of these migrations move “compass-like” from South to North (SN) and from East to West (EW). East-West flows and their potential growth have been a sensitive issue in the negotiations between the European Union and the East Central European candidate members to enlarge EU borders eastward. (On contemporary East-West migrations see Frejka 1996; Morokvasic 1996; Morawska and Spohn 1997; *Trends in International Migration* 1998; on westbound population movement as a sensitive issue in the enlargement negotiations see Kerremans 1997; Lavenex 1998; Koslovski 1998).

The issue of concern for the EU negotiators and West European public opinion addressed in this report are the potential migratory consequences of including three East Central European (ECE) countries: Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in the European Union. Transnational migrations are shaped by diverse, complex circumstances including international relations; macroeconomic opportunity structures and demographic dynamics; social organization and cultural traditions of home and host societies; existential needs of individuals and their households; their life-goals, needs for security, social support and self-fulfillment; and, reflecting all those factors, the sociocultural resources available to potential migrants to help them realize their objectives. (For reviews of these contributing elements and major [im]migration theories see Massey et al. 1993; Hammar et al. 1997). Considering the complexity of conditions shaping transnational migrations and the “fluxibility” of processes transforming East Europe, only tentative, “open-ended” prognoses contingent on the specified configurations of circumstances can be formulated; they should be treated as such by the reader.

Regarding the temporal framework of the EU eastward enlargement and the proposed appraisal of future transnational migrations, I have assumed the informal opinion among EU member governments that the formal accession to the European Union of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic will take place no earlier than 2005<sup>1</sup>; the resulting freedom of movement, work, and settlement of

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1 The officially endorsed *Agenda 2000 Blueprint for Enlargement* (1997) sets this date for 2003. Recently, however, the EU officials have repeatedly mentioned in public the probability of a delay in this agreed on timetable owing to the necessity of carrying out the reforms of EU budgetary and agricultural policies before admitting new members (cf. *The Economist* editorial



people within the new Union borders will be suspended for a transitional period of no less than ten years from that date. (On "gradual integration" of the new member countries into the European Union see Preston 1997; Kerremans 1997; *Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; Weidenfeld 1997). Potential transnational migrations from and into the newly acquired eastern parts of the European Union are discussed within a 2000-15 temporal framework. Because of the specific characteristics of post-1989/90 transnational migrations whose current volume, mechanisms, and destinations have served as the basis for evaluating future trends in that region, the concept of *migration* as used in this analysis denotes one-way and repeated movements across nation-state boundaries for purposes other than (1) exclusively tourism and (2) cross-border shopping trips for individual/household needs, regardless of migrants' political (legal or undocumented) status and the duration of sojourns abroad. The primary focus of this discussion is on the *main types* of transnational movements and on the *common features* of the macro- and microlevel contexts and mechanisms that generate transnational migrations from and into East Central Europe. Within the limited scope of this paper, however, and to the extent the unsystematic data permit, the relevant differences between particular sender and receiver countries are noted.

The sources used for this report have included statistical reports published regularly by EU and sender and receiver country government agencies on international migrations into and out of East Central Europe from the early 1990s to the present; twenty-odd survey and ethnographic studies conducted during the 1990s in East Central and Eastern European sender and Western destination countries of (e)migrants; existing prognoses of future East-West migrations commissioned from scholar specialists by the European Union and international organizations (Council of Europe, World Bank, IOM, ILO) and state national institutions<sup>2</sup>; press reportages and secondary analyses thereof on the potential

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on November 7, 1998, "Widening the European Union - but not too fast" [p.51]; the statements by EU member-states' representatives made at the Colloquy on Migration in Central and Eastern Europe held at the Polish Parliament, Committee on Migration, Refugees, and Demography, Warsaw, December 17-19 1998; or the statements by German Foreign Minister, Joschke Fischer, during his meetings with Polish and Czech officials in January 1999).

2 Unfortunately, excepting two (Okolski and Stola 1998; Sik 1998), all these prognoses (Thranhard 1996; Bauer and Zimmermann 1997; Honekopp 1997; Hars 1998; *Migration Potential in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; Fassmann and Hintermann 1998; Demel and Profazi 1998) have shortcomings that make their utility rather limited, either due to the exclusive focus on legal migrants (a large majority of ECE cross-border travelers are undocumented; the lack of distinction between permanent and temporal migrations (most of contemporary ECE migrations have been short-term, back-and-forth travels); the reliance on respondents' declared general "wish to travel abroad" as the basis for the assessment of the actual migratory potential or else, when the attempt is made to select the likely future migrants, the use of inadequate

ECE migrants' projects and preparations for transnational travels; prognostic analyses of the economic transformation processes in East Central and Eastern European regions and countries, and, in particular, the effects of privatization and foreign investment on Domestic labor markets and wages; and personal correspondence and informal interviews with fourteen scholar and policy specialists on the EU enlargement, migration and development, the new ECE economies, and the economic and migration pressures in the CIS.

The main conclusions I have derived from these sources can be summarized as follows. As part of the global population movements that result from and contribute to growing interconnectedness among different world regions, transnational migrations from and to East Central Europe constitute an integral element of that region's progressive incorporation into the world-system and, in the case considered here, the European Union. As such they will persist into the next century, making the interstatal boundaries within the enlarged European Union after its eastward expansion (when it eventually takes place), naturally and unavoidably transnational by linking, rather than separating, the territories and residents on two sides of the borders through work, shopping, and entertainment mini- and mezzoregions. At the same time, although some kinds of westbound movement of East Central Europeans and some migrations from the East and South into East Central Europe are likely to maintain their current volume or even increase during the transitional period (while other types will decline), even combined they will not approximate the avalanche of "twenty to forty" or "five to seven" million predicted by some alarmed West European commentators. Those that do occur will be composed predominantly of temporary, short-term income-seeking migrants who will draw any public welfare provisions they receive, such as medical insurance, unemployment benefits, and social security, from their home countries. They will leave their families behind during their sojourns abroad and will not require social welfare provisions, parental care, and public education services from the host country as some analysts of the "burdensome consequences" of these migrations for the EU nation-states have worried they would. (For critical assessments of the "flood from the East" prognoses see Baldwin and Haaparanta 1995; *Trends in International Migration* 1998; Bauer and Zimmermann 1997; Thranhardt 1996).

Specifically, one of the two most common types of post-1989/90 westbound migrations of East Central Europeans, the short-term, income-seeking

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criteria for this selection (such as, for example, arranging in advance for contract work or learning the language of the destination country none of which has been practiced - nor needed - by short-time undocumented ECE worker- and trader-tourists). I have selectively used the parts of these reports which, in my judgement, were not or only minimally affected by those shortcomings.



*Arbeitstourismus* of transnational migrants, who remain and engage in work abroad without appropriate immigration documents, and a much smaller temporary migration of formally contracted ECE workers are likely to retain in general their current volume, destinations, and characteristics. The other most common category, *Handelstourismus* of cross-border travelers, who circumvent customs regulations by hiding the quantity of merchandise they carry or smuggle will decrease in volume (the decline has already begun) to the extent that the functions performed by the individual *marchands pendulaires* (a large proportion of whom operate in the border regions) will be replaced by economic micro-to-mezzoregions with well-developed commercial infrastructures merging both sides of the border. At the same time, professional westbound travels of highly skilled East Central Europeans can be expected to increase in volume.

While continuing to send income-seeking migrants to the West, during the 1990s East Central Europe has emerged as a new (im)migration pole attracting migrants from the East and West. Legal and undocumented income-, transit-, and asylum-seeking (im)migration from territories of the former USSR, Romania, ex-SFR Yugoslavia, and easternmore parts of the Asian Continent, Africa, and the Middle East may first decrease as the result of border controls tightened by ECE states seeking to comply with the EU *acquis*, but will probably gradually rebound, "pushed" and "pulled" by economic incentives in sender and receiver regions and facilitated by organized and informal social networks of assistance, or forced by ethnoreligious conflicts and political turmoil in refugees' home countries. At the same time, legal and undocumented employment-seeking migration to ECE from the West (primarily the European Union) will likely intensify. Intra-regional employment-seeking migration between ECE countries should also increase.

In the remainder of this paper I discuss, first, westbound cross-border travels of ECEs, then the main types of migration from East Eastern Europe (EEE) and Third- World countries to and across ECE, and, finally, eastbound (to ECE) transnational travels of Westerners (West Europeans and North Americans).

## **Westbound Transnational Migrations of East Central Europeans**

The volume of transnational migrations of East Central Europeans since the mid-1990s, including short-term, back-and-forth, small business/trading moves across stata borders (but excluding noncommercial shopping trips) has been estimated at 20-25 million "crossings" annually. Because the repeated cross-border travels by the same people have been common, the number of actual migrants has been significantly smaller. As already mentioned, the two most common types of post-

1989/90 ECE - W migrations have been clandestine income-seeking travels of tourist-traders (the bulk of the movement) and tourist-workers directed primarily to Western Europe (85%), especially to nearby Germany and Austria, and then to Scandinavia, France, the Benelux, and, increasingly, Italy and Greece; and to North America (15%).

Current estimates of the number of ECE tourist-workers are about 600,000-700,000 annually from the entire region, with average sojourns in Western Europe, often repeated a few times a year, lasting 2.5-3.5 months (in North America average sojourns last longer, 5-10 months). In comparison, ECE contract workers legally employed in Western Europe at any given time during the year have numbered about 300,000 in total. It should be noted that, although sizeable, the total number of work-seeking migrant citizens of ECE countries in the West in the mid-1990s did not differ much from the combined number of registered (450,000-500,000 annual inflow) and undocumented worker (estimated at 250,000-300,000) Western (15 EU countries plus Switzerland and Norway and the United States) migrants in the European Union<sup>3</sup>.

Cross-border migrations of tourist-traders, directed almost exclusively to neighboring Germany and Austria, have been more frequent, typically ranging from a few times each month among those who draw from such "business travels" only supplementary income to everyday multiple crossings of so-called ants, who have made these buying-and-selling-trips their main occupation. (Estimates of worker-/trader-tourists compiled from *Trends in International Migration* 1998; *Tourism in Central and Eastern Europe* 1995; Okolski and Stola 1998; Wilpert 1998; Mydel and Fassmann 1997; Morokvasic and Rudolph 1996; Morawska and Spohn 1997; Frejka 1996; Horakova 1993; Fassmann, Kohlbacher, and Reeger 1996; numbers of contract workers from Rudolph 1998; Honekopp 1997; Lederer 1997). Of the three countries considered here and in proportion to the total volume of international migration from each of them, Poles have engaged in such *indocumentado* work and unreported commercial trade during their sojourns abroad considerably more than either Czechs or Hungarians.

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<sup>3</sup> Information on registered West-West migration was compiled from *Trends in International Migration* 1998; *Eurostat Yearbook* 1997; *Council of Europe Report on Europeans Living Abroad* 1996. Although international migration specialists in the EU seem to agree that the number of undocumented worker migrants from member countries in the European Union is "quite high" or "sizeable", it is nearly impossible to locate any published estimates of this figure. I, therefore, presented to my migration specialist colleagues - and obtained from them tentative confirmations such as "it is possible" and "not unlikely" - my own (conservative) estimate of this figure as at least double the estimated number of such undocumented Western migrants in the mid-1990s in the three ECE countries combined (see below). Unfortunately, no more reliable estimates exist at this moment.



Asked about the purposes of their international travels, nearly all respondents in studies of westbound *Arbeits-* and *Handelstouristen* conducted in recent years, returned and potential migrants alike, have pointed either to the necessity to make additional money to “make ends meet” (about 60%) or to the desire of *dorobic sie* (Polish), significantly to elevate their socioeconomic status through the accumulation of material goods (about 40%). (Social surveys, ethnographic studies, and field reportages that served as sources for this and the following information about ECE (and later EEE) migrants’ purposes, support networks, and orientations informing their actions are marked with asterisks in the bibliography).

Analyses of the mechanisms of post-1989/90 transnational income-seeking migrations of ECEs have pointed to the following factors. In the political sphere the major contributors have been the “domestication” of passports after the collapse of communist regimes (previously, passports were granted for specific reasons upon application and were surrendered to state authorities upon return) and the elimination by most West European countries of entry visas for short-term ECE visitors (up to three months). In addition, a relatively lesser politicization of international tourism *vis a vis* other types of migration by the receiver states has allowed ECE - W income-seekers to use tourism as a convenient “screen” for the main purpose of their transnational travels. Finally “gaps” in the receiver states’ immigration policies resulting from the multiple, often contradictory interests involved in deciding these policies (see Cornelius, Martin, and Hollifield 1994; Guiraudon 1998) have further facilitated undocumented income-seeking sojourns of ECE *Handels-* and *Arbeits-*tourists. The geographic proximity between their home and (most popular) destination countries, made closer by rapid advances in communication and transportation technologies, has made it easy for these migrants to avoid the existing controls by moving back-and-forth across borders.

Concurrent with these facilitating circumstances, the economic conditions in both the sender and the receiver societies have been of crucial importance in generating income-seeking westbound transnational travels of East Central Europeans. Although the collapse of the Soviet regime in East Europe opened the door for the accelerated incorporation of that region into the global system, the long-term processes of capitalist perestroika to overhaul and bring up to date unproductive state-socialist economies have not thus far reduced the long-standing gap in economic development between the eastern and western parts of the Continent. Measured by the per capita GNP, the economic performance of East Central Europe in 1996 was only 35% that of Western Europe and the United States combined (a minimal improvement since the 1910 when it was 29%), whereas the ratio of (average) wages between these two parts of the world



was 1:6 to 10 (in 1910 it was 1:4-6)<sup>4</sup> (GNP rates estimations from Berend 1996; Biffi 1997; wage rates from Black 1997; Turnock 1997; Wilpert 1998; Morawska and Spohn 1997; ethnosurvey/ethnographic studies marked with asterisks in the bibliography).

In the context of this enduring East-West disequilibrium in economic performance, structural relocations and material hardships affecting large segments of the region's populations<sup>5</sup> combined with the lifting of the iron curtain separating East Europe from the western parts of the Continent and the rest of the world, rapid advances in global transportation and communication technologies, and the diffusion via global media of the titillating images of material affluence in the "core", Western parts of the world have expectedly generated or, more precisely, revived the early twentieth-century pattern of "compass", E-W income-seeking migrations from that region (For comparisons of present-day E-W economic migration with its predecessor one century ago see Bade 1992; Morawska and Spohn 1997).

The supply of income-seeking migrants on the ECE side has been met with increased demand in receiver, Western societies for undocumented, cheap, and dispensable labor for construction work, personal services, and small shops and for buyers and sellers of contraband merchandise. The core Western economies have already nearly completed what the post-communist ones have only begun, that is, postindustrial restructuring, or a shift to short-term production of services based on small and versatile companies and the accompanying rapid growth of an informal sector offering variable, usually substandard, wages and no employment security, which is unattached to the legal-institutional structures of the fiscal and welfare systems (see Portes et al. 1989; Sassen 1995; Wilpert 1998)<sup>6</sup>. (Im)migrants from (semi-)peripheral SE parts of the world have provided the bulk of the labor force in Western informal economies. Such has also been the location

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4 It should be noted, however, that there are differences between countries in the level of economic development within East Central Europe: the 1995 per capita GNP, for example, in the Czech Republic was 45% (it has since decreased by 7 points as the result of the economic difficulties in this country) and in Poland 33% (it has since increased by 2 points) of the average figure for Western Europe and the United States combined (figures compiled from Berend 1996 Biffi 1997; Black 1997; Turnock 1997).

5 In 1996 the unemployment ranged, depending on subregions, between 10% and 35%, while 20%-25% of the employed population in each of ECE countries had lived below the poverty level and close to one-third experienced difficulties in making ends meet (compiled from Turnock 1997; Black 1998; Bak, Kulawczuk and Hampal 1997; Hoos 1997, Sik 1998, and occasional press reportages).

6 This informalization, it should be noted, has affected specific regions and cities of the European Union unevenly - more so the Mediterranean than the Nordic regions and global cities (such as Berlin or London) than cities less "densely" connected to the world economy.

of *Arbeits-* and *Handelstouristen* from East Central Europe.

Other, microlevel factors have been instrumental in stimulating, channeling, and sustaining transnational income-seeking travels of ECEs in the 1990s. As studies demonstrate, the critical role in shaping people's decisions to move and determining destinations and volume of movement has been played by local migration traditions and social support networks on both sender and receiver sides of the migration circuit. (The importance of local migration traditions and social support networks in shaping transnational migrations has not been unique to present-day East Central Europe; see Massey 1990; Hammar et al. 1997, for reviews thereof in different regions of the contemporary world; Morawska 1990 for past migrations).

Depending on the vitality of migratory traditions in the region that often stretch back to the beginning of the twentieth century, between 33% and 66% of post-1989-90 ECE tourist-workers have relied on information and assistance in planning and executing their transnational travels provided by family members or friends in the home country who either had already worked in the West themselves or had helpful "connections" there. Between 40% and 70% have been helped by kin or acquaintances sojourning abroad as temporary indocumentado workers or residing there permanently<sup>7</sup> (The latter resource is used to advantage particularly by Poles and also Hungarians, Czechs, and Lithuanians whose national groups participated en masse in turn-of-the-twentieth-century westbound economic migrations and then in political exoduses during the post-World War II era). The travels of cross-border "ants" or back-and-forth tourist-traders, and less numerous but as effective longer-distance transnational operators have also been embedded in carefully prearranged networks of information and assistance, in this case "weak ties" (Granovetter 1973) with trusted acquaintances rather than close relations with kin and personal friends on both sides of the border.

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7 As studies show, there are local areas in East Central Europe traditionally sending income-seeking migrants to particular destinations in the West: in Poland, for example, the Podhalans have traveled to Lower Austria and to Chicago, the Polesians to Belgium and France, those from the Poznan province to Berlin in Germany. In contrast, the poor Swietokrzyskie voivodship or the Ciechanow and Ostroleka counties which suffer high unemployment but do not have "their own" well-travelled paths of transnational movement do not send many migrants abroad. (Data from Jazwinska and Okolski 1996, Okolski 1998c; Cieslinska 1996; Karpiuk 1997; Siewiera 1995; Poplawski 1995; Mydel and Fassmann 1997; this author's ongoing study of the Polish colony in Berlin; for a similar differentiation in Hungary, see Hars 1998; in the Czech Republic, see *EU Regional Development Studies* 1996; Fassmann and Hintermann 1997 discuss subregional differences in migratory flows in all three countries).



The contexts of cross-border migrations of ECEs in the 1990s outlined above have, ironically, rendered, as I have argued elsewhere (Morawska 2000), some features of the accustomed *homo sovieticus* syndrome into effective strategies of these migrants' economic action which, in turn, have sustained their transnational income-seeking travels disguised as tourist excursions. Centralized political management combined with the notorious inefficiency of the state-socialist economies in providing and distributing consumer goods fostered in the citizenry entrepreneurial spirit of the opportunistic-debrouillard (rather than modern-rational) kind, forcing it to use "unofficial" (informal/extra-legal) means to make everyday life possible and turning this behavior into the social norm. Two coping resources in particular have become the integrative elements of popular culture across the region: deeply habituated beat-the-system/bend-the-rules (rather than legal-institutional) modes of operation in the pursuit of desired purposes and, closely related to the above, accustomed reliance on patronage and informal networks or *dojscia* (ins) and *kombinacje* (unofficial or shady arrangements as in wheeling and dealing) rather than on individual skills and formal infrastructure<sup>8</sup> (See Los 1990; Grossman 1989; Gabor 1994; Sik 1994a, 1994b, 1994c; for excellent ethnographic studies of the state-socialist "shadow economy" see Kenedi 1985; Wedel 1986; Pawlik 1992).

As a number of observers of post-communist East Europe's affairs have argued, several features of the transformation processes have actually made for widespread persistence or even reinforcement in the post-communist era of the habituated beat-the-system/bend-the-law orientations and practices that during the previous regime had constituted the basic "survival kit" of the citizenry across the region: a weak legal-institutional infrastructure and, in particular, absent or frequently changing and ineffectively executed regulations and the unavailability of adequate information and financial assistance for registered private business combined with the unsettling of old economic structures and significantly increased consumer appetites modelled after Western images, on the one hand, and, on the other, the "informalization" of East European economies as the result of decentralization, subcontracting and cost-cutting in production and labor (Bak 1996; Bak and Kulawczuk 1996a; Sik 1994a, 1994b; *Entrepreneurship in Transition Economies* 1996; Holmes 1999; Ledeneva 1998; *Hidden Economy in Hungary* 1998; see also Sztompka 1995). Even new highly skilled managers and

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<sup>8</sup> For example, blending tourism with illicit trading in Eastern Europe dates back to the early 1970s when communist welfare state-sponsored international vacation travels inside the Soviet bloc became a mass phenomenon. In an innovative adjustment to Soviet-style shortage economies intrabloc tourism was used as an opportunity for a huge-scale unofficial, in fact illegal, commercial traffic between the vacationing member nationals of Soviet-bloc countries. (The volume of this exchange was estimated in the 1980s at 20%-25% of the entire COMECON trade; see Los 1990; Irek 1998; Bak and Kulawczuk 1996a).

businessmen have been reported to rely on informal "crony" rather than available legal-institutional avenues to manage their professional affairs; see Frieske 1997; also Wedel 1992; Stark and Kemeny 1998).

The major macro- and microlevel mechanisms identified above that have sustained income-seeking transnational migrations of East Central Europeans in the 1990s, such as the long-dure, push-and-pull economic processes on the sender and receiver sides of the migration circuit, and well-established networks of assistance along the accustomed paths of cross-border migration, will persist into the next century. Let us consider more closely first the sustaining forces of these migrations and, then, the developments likely to constrain its further growth during the decade after the formal accession in 2005 of the three ECE countries to the European Union.

Should ECE economies grow at steady 6 per cent rate annually, the GNPs of ECE states would need twelve to thirteen years, or until 2011-12, to reach the present levels of national output in Portugal or Greece, the poorest EU member countries that still regularly send their migrant workers abroad. Nineteen to twenty years, or until 2018-19, would be required to reach those of Austria or Great Britain. If, however, these countries develop at their median rate of 1996-98, it will take the three new ECE member states of the European Union thirty years, or until 2029, to catch up if they maintain a 5-6 percent annual growth rate. Economists opine that even with increased financial assistance from the European Union for the new members, maintaining such a high growth rate is rather unlikely in view of the rapidly growing deficit of foreign trade, too low shares of investment in the GNPs, and too slow increments in productivity in all three ECE countries. (The GNP growth rates are compiled from Weidenfeld 1997; *Export Marketing* 1998; *EU Regional Development: Central and Eastern Europe* 1996; the unlikely maintenance of the high rate is from Black 1997; Turnock 1997; *European Economy* 1996; Filer 1998; Gora 1998). Although with the growth of ECE economies a dramatic ECE-W wage discrepancy will gradually diminish, the latter will remain wide and, thus, function as a push/pull factor throughout the transitional period.

The steadily growing foreign investment in ECE (between 1992 and 1997 Eu member states invested 6.75 mld ecu in Poland, 7.45 in Hungary, and 6.31 in the Czech Republic, and continued expansion is nearly certain) brings into the region sought-after services and consumer goods and very much needed modern technologies and management know-how. But thus far it has not resulted in the creation of a large pool of new jobs and is not expected to contribute significantly to it during the coming decade. In 1998 foreign-investment companies in East Central Europe employed no more than 3.5%-4.5% of the national work force in



each of the three countries considered here. As indicated in studies, most foreign investors are interested in funding small-to-middle-size enterprises employing 5 to 50 people in localities with low unemployment, preferably large urban centers.

The majority (about two-thirds for the three ECE countries combined) of those who purchase or inquire about the existing larger establishments list "rationalization" or "modernization", that is, reduction/restructuring of employment, as one of their major on site tasks for the future (the initial joint-venture or takeover agreements usually guarantee the existing employment level for 3 to 6 years). The labor demand by foreign capital-(co)owned firms in ECE has thusfar been, and, according to their managers will remain so in the near future, primarily for skilled employees. (Information compiled from *Foreign Investment in East Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; Jarosz 1997; Black 1997; Turnock 1997; Paliwoda 1998; Bak and Kulawczuk 1996b; *EU Regional Development: Central and Eastern Europe* 1996; Hunya 1997; Bobeva 1997; Garson, Redor, and Lemaitre 1997; Dyker and Kubiela 1997).<sup>9</sup> The sociodemographic profile of the majority of turn-of-the-twenty-first-century ECE-W income-seeking migrants: their primarily elementary and middle-level education (80%-85%), small-to-middle-size city origin (60-65%); and a considerable proportion (20%-35%) of unemployment at the time of migration and as the reason for it among respondents contemplating transnational income-seeking travels, does not make them most likely choices for foreign-owned firms in the near future (information compiled from survey and ethnographic studies of ECE current and potential migrants, marked with asterisks in the bibliography).

Locally owned private firms in ECE multiply very quickly, but most of them are small (up to 10 employees), and the turnover is rapid. In the assessment of students of ECE economic transformation, the quickest growth of employment opportunities in these firms has occurred in the rapidly expanding informal sector. In Poland, for example, 25% to 30% of wages in a representative sample of private firms in 1995 were paid "informally" (outside the state fiscal/welfare system), and their owners predicted this number would increase in the future. The "informalization" of business was, in the opinion of the majority of the respondents, a rational survival strategy in response to the excessive state taxes; it was also viewed as low-risk because of obscure, often contradictory trade regulations and the effective ways to circumvent them. (Bak 1995; *Szara Gospodarka w Polsce* 1996; Los 1998; Bak, Kulawczuk, and Hampel 1997; on large and growing informal sectors in other postcommunist economies in the region see Juhasz 1998b; Sik 1994a, 1994b; Kovacs 1994).

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<sup>9</sup> Also my personal correspondence and interviews with Polish and Hungarian economists - authors of the studies cited here.



Although jobs in the expanding informal sectors of privatized ECE economies can be expected to become increasingly available with time, they are usually seasonal or temporal and, thus, do not constitute a stable source of income (Bak, Kulawczuk, and Hampel 1997; Juhasz 1998b). Experienced migrants holding such jobs will, therefore, be likely to treat them not a replacement for but as a supplement to their accustomed short-term income-seeking sojourns abroad. Conversely, the great majority of Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians who in recent surveys of ECE migratory intentions admitted they contemplated possibilities of future short-term migration to the West to earn money, think of it as a supplement to (not the replacement of) their home-country earnings (*Migration Potential in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; Fassmann and Hintermann 1997; Hars 1998; Sik 1998).

One more economic factor likely to sustain current ECE-W undocumented income-seeking migrations should be noted. As indicated in studies, among present-day income-seeking transnational ECE tourists whose sojourns abroad have been motivated by the desire to raise the economic status of their households (rather than the necessity to “make ends meet”) and who return home with savings, the great majority (80%-85%) spends it on consumer goods such as houses/ apartments and their furnishings, garden furniture, cars, color TVs (with satellite dishes) and stereo systems, computers, electronic kitchen equipment, fashionable clothing, and so on. To satisfy status requirements as measures of success for the new middle-class in post-communist ECE these possessions should be Western-made and, in accord with the “cultural logic” of postindustrial capitalism (Jameson 1984), regularly expanded, “improved” and “updated” which sends the migrants back across borders to earn the capital necessary for this purpose (information from survey and ethnographic studies marked with asterisks in the bibliography).

Investigations of future migration plans of East Central Europeans show the expectations of much higher Western earnings, available material goods, and opportunities to improve life situations at home as the persistent primary motives for contemplated international travels, but they provide no information about how respondents intend to use the savings accumulated abroad (see *Potential Migration in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; Fassmann and Hintermann 1997). As ECE economies continue to transform to resemble their postindustrial “core” capitalist models, including their large informal sectors, more returnee migrants may want to invest their savings in formal/informal businesses rather than spend them on consumer goods. The experience of other developing world regions with large income-seeking external migrations indicates, however, that regardless of the tempo of sender countries’ economic growth, most migrants continue to expend their remittances on (expanding) consumer needs rather than

contribute them to the modernization of home-country economies through business investments (see Appleyard 1992; Papademetriou and Martin 1991; Hammar et al. 1997).

The continued informalization and internationalization of Western economies confronted with intensified global competition in deregulated markets and the resulting contraction of the influence of the states on national economies, and the rapid aging of the working age population in the EU should sustain rather than temper SE-NW income-seeking migrations from abroad into the next century. (This discussion focuses on the developments in the European Union, especially on Germany and Austria as the main destinations of ECE income-seeking migrants).

As a step toward the greater economic integration of the European Union in the 21st century, the Freedom of Services (Employee Posting) Act was passed in 1993. As a result, highly developed member countries such as Germany and Austria opened to employers from the much cheaper labor markets of Greece, Portugal, and Spain. Subcontracted by German and Austrian firms, workers from these countries accept "informal wages" one-half of the local standard and, because they receive social benefits at home, require no such contributions from host employers. Between 1992 and 1996 the number of such low-wage EU workers in the German construction industry more than doubled. To augment further the competitive advantage derived from employing subcontracted foreign workers, management often has put them in degrading working conditions.

In response to the protests against these *indocumentados* by native formal-sector workers in Germany, who view them as unfair competitors, and modeled on the regulations introduced in other EU countries to deal with the same problem, the collective wage agreements law was passed in 1996; it includes a minimum wage and applies also to the employees posted from abroad. It has been, however, notoriously violated by employers, and effective enforcement by state agencies has been almost impossible, if only because of the number of potential culprits to investigate and prove guilty. In Berlin, for example, there were in 1997 about 100,000 construction sites (with a 50% annual turnover rate) and even more household repair and food service establishments, small suppliers and retailers of articles of everyday use, and transport companies - all renowned for informally employing low-wage foreign workers. In this situation East Central European *Arbeitstouristen*, who accept even lower remuneration than do workers from the poorest EU member states (and who will continue to do so until their home countries' development reaches the level of these poorest states) and very bad working conditions to accumulate as much savings as possible in a short time, should remain in demand by native employers (information from Hunger



1998, Wilpert 1998; Cyrus 1995; Bauer and Zimmermann 1997; Van Tulder and Ruigrok 1997; see also Munz et al. 1997).

In addition to West European employers' interest in reducing production costs and increasing the competitiveness of their firms, and ineffective, poorly enforced state controls of the growing informal economy, the demand for personal services in West European countries has been sustained by the rapid aging of the EU population combined with greatly increased full-time participation in the labor market of women who have traditionally performed "nurturing labor" for their families, health care, and office maintenance and custodial staff that is not met by native workers. Both the aging process (in the year 2010 close to one-third of EU population will be 65 years of age or over) and the demand for inexpensive and flexible personal services in West European countries will continue in the future. Undocumented migrants, predominantly women (about 40% of ECE tourist-workers in the 1990s) and students seeking seasonal employment satisfy these labor demands and considerably reduce native middle-class expenses for home maintenance, care of children and the elderly, and the like (see Coleman 1993; *Trends in International Migration* 1998; Black 1997; also Honekopp 1997; Bommers and Halfmann 1998; Banting 1998).

Forty percent of East Central Europeans (Poles ranking the highest and Hungarians the lowest) who contemplate future westbound income-seeking migrations expect help from relatives and friends at home or in the destination country to realize these plans (*Migration Potential in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; see also Fassmann and Hintermann 1997). When the informal economic sector in the receiver societies remains the main opportunity for ECE migrant workers to earn sought-after income in the West (owing to high structural unemployment in Western Europe, the current, limited quotas of contract workers from ECE are unlikely to be increased in the near future; see below), reliance on the existing personal networks of assistance or the well-tested *dojscia* and *kombinacje* informed by the beat-the-system/bend-the-law entrepreneurial spirit of Soviet-era provenance should continue as the important resource in arranging for jobs and lodging abroad. The previously noted informalization of ECE economies as they adopt the Western model of postindustrial capitalism will provide the supporting environment for this embedded popular orientation-cum-practice of "working the system" by relying on personal connections and using roundabout or outright illegitimate means to achieve one's purposes.

Whereas the volume of ECE-W *Arbeitstourismus* is likely to remain similar to the size of current such migrations, the other most common type of post-1989/90 westbound population movement in the region, namely, *Handelstourismus*, will diminish (but not disappear) in the transitional period

considered here. Several projects are already under way along Polish-German, Czech-German and -Austrian, and Hungarian-Austrian borderlands to turn these underdeveloped areas into microregions (and, in a more distant future, into mezzoregions of up to 400 km on each side of the border) with dense commercial and service infrastructures to serve the populations on both sides of the border. As they progress, these projects will undercut business conducted by individual tourist-traders, especially ants or cross-border peddler marketeers who shuttle back-and-forth trading in consumer items priced differently on two (sometimes three) sides of borders. But they will generate jobs servicing these commercial centers and, thus, increase the presently small number of cross-border commuters, and further stimulate cross-border shopping trips by residents of neighboring areas. (Border- area shopping by Germans and Austrians in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic already brings multimillion dollar revenues to these countries).

Informalization of ECE and WE economies and growing competition between these border regions for investments and sales markets, render it likely, however, that a considerable number of the “legitimate” borderland businesses and the foreign trade firms servicing them will engage in some kinds of unreported dealings, such as transporting goods undeclared for customs clearance or assigned lower than actual customs values, unrecorded sales, under the table commissions to foreign state officials, fictitious imports, transfer prices as a tool for tax avoidance, and the like. (On the emerging borderland microregions in ECE see *EU Regional Development: Central and Eastern Europe* 1996; Winter-Ebmer and Zimmermann 1998; Turnock 1997; Sik 1998; on control avoidance tactics by ECE and Western firms see Bak and Kulawczuk 1996b; Sik 1994a, 1994b; Wilpert 1998). Although the ants can be expected to become a less-common kind of *Handelstouristen* during the first decade of the next century, longer-distance and larger-scale ECE tourist-traders will probably remain in business in undiminished numbers because of persistent push (home-) and pull (host-country) economic conditions, ineffective state control systems in both sender and receiver societies resulting from insufficient financial means, bad organization, the corruptibility of responsible officials, and the resourcefulness of migrants in evading capture or securing officials’ cooperation through bribery.

*Jumacze* (a new Polish term for cross-border thieves<sup>10</sup>) who represent a criminal (rather than “gray”) variety of cross-border traders and operate on longer

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10 The origin of new Polish colloquialisms for things stolen abroad and migrant-thieves: *juma* and *jumacze*, is not really known - they may have derived from the American western “15.10 to Yuma” depicting a lawless town and its normless residents - cf. Kurzepa (1997). Kurzepa, the author of a sociological study of young *jumacze* in a borderland town in western Poland, ascribes their illegal activities to the generalized sense of deprivation.



distances and a larger financial scale, likely will persist. These primarily young men steal better-quality bulk merchandise in host-country department stores, homes, and cars, and move it across the border. Another common type of ECE *Handelstouristen* likely to persist are cross-border prostitutes (they could also be classified as tourist-workers) - young and middle-aged (often married) women primarily from the border regions. Working twelve hours per day on "busy" weekends in Berlin or Vienna, they can double their monthly salaries at home without interrupting their regular employment (information about ECE migrant prostitution from Cyrus 1997; Hummel 1993; Schenk 1993)<sup>11</sup>. The third type of quasi-tourists engaged in illicit cross-border traffic, which is unlikely to diminish in number (and may actually increase if fierce competition permits) are organized gangs of international smugglers who transport contraband merchandise in huge quantities, drugs, and, increasingly, people. Because East Central Europe is mainly used as a transit zone for this traffic from East Eastern Europe and farther east to the West, it will be discussed in the next section.

Thus far I have focused on the circumstances likely to uphold the present volume, destinations, and major characteristics of ECE-W migrations during the transitional period after the formal accession to the European Union of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic (the expected reduction of cross-border movement of peddlers has been an exception). It is, then, legitimate to ask what will prevent these migrations from swelling above their current volume if so many forces combine to sustain them. What factors are likely to impede such growth? A few studies of future migration plans of East Central Europeans investigated as well the reasons of those (the majority) who did not consider such travels. The three most common reasons (with no country differences) have been (in this order): family obligations, unwillingness to take risks and face difficulties connected with such undertakings, and already having a secure job or one promising better rewards in the future. Interestingly, a high, 50%-60% of respondents mentioned "lack of respect" for foreigners in West European countries as the reason for remaining at home (*Migration Potential in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; Fassmann and Hintermann 1997). (In a recent ranking of (im)migrant groups by citizens of different EU member states, East Europeans scored least desirable in Germany, the main destination country of present-day ECE-W travelers, whereas in the Mediterranean countries they were ranked among the most acceptable; see Lahav 1997).

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11 Also from series of reportages on cross-border prostitution in East Central Europe in *Wprost*, April-July, 1997, and this author's interviews with women's counselors at the Polisher Sozialrat, Berlin. During my research in Berlin in the summer of 1997 I was told, and my inspection of the site confirmed what I heard, that there "camp" at the Berlin Banhoff Zoo underage boys from western Poland who come there - it takes a few hours by train - to prostitute themselves in order to earn monies for consumer goods.



Other factors are likely to restrain further growth of ECE-W income-seeking migrations in the time framework considered here. The competition in the informal sector of host economies accessible to these tourist-workers, especially with (im)migrants from Third-World countries where living standards are considerably lower than those in East Central Europe will keep wages down. As the transformation progresses, wages in ECE migrants' own countries will increase, reducing the discrepancy between home and host societies and, thus, the motivation of people without migration experience to invest considerable energy in organizing the trips. (Even if by 2010 it reaches the current ratio between Portuguese or Greek and German wages, the disparity will still be a wide 1:3-4, a sufficient motivation to travel for many an experienced migrant with established contacts in occupational niches abroad).

Exploitative working conditions in WE informal economies related by those who experienced them should be an additional disincentive to many who are unwilling to subject themselves to the stresses of undocumented sojourns and informal work. (One-third of those uninterested in migrating who mentioned "bad experience of others" as a disincentive probably had this aspect in mind; see *Migration Potential in Central and East Europe* 1998; Bauer et al. 1998).

Obtaining these competitive and exploitative jobs in the informal sector of the destination country will require, as it does now, reliance on personal assistance networks. Because they are by nature locally confined and already serve a very large number of migrants, they are likely to reach saturation sooner rather than later. Considering that occupational niches carved out by ECE tourist-workers in the informal economies of WE receiver countries have been unstable and shallow and that personal *dojscia* and *kombinacje* are a sine qua non condition of accessing this informal job market, the inability of the assistance networks effectively to process, as it were, new clients should put a ceiling on further growth of these migration (see Okolski and Stola 1998).

Finally, a universal impediment to (voluntary) migrations everywhere and at any time is the social-cultural value of remaining in one's familiar place. Considering the widespread misery in the world or mere dissatisfaction with one's station in life, most people should set themselves - and remain - in motion in search of a better life elsewhere. In fact, only a minority of the disaffected decides to move. Most people are risk averse and, thus, reluctant to move to another location even if they expect their quality of life would improve there, but they are aware of the (real or imagined) risk involved. They also have important vested interests, emotional and instrumental, in their own habitats: the experience-near familiarity with the language, cultural rules and regulations patterning social life and the practical know-how of their applications, material

and occupational advantages derived from the insider position, social acceptance and respect, the loyalty of long-time friends, a sense of security. (For an excellent discussion of different rewards from immobility see Hammar et al. 1997). East Central Europeans are, of course, no different in this regard from their fellow-humans everywhere else, and, like everywhere else, the attachment to place and its many rewards have kept and will continue to keep most of them at home even in the context of open borders, push-and-pull economic pressures, and increased aspirations to a Western-style standard of living.

One more category of transnational travelers: "documented" or legal migrants, requires comment. It is composed of two groups: temporary industrial and seasonal agricultural contract workers, and highly skilled professional migrants. As I suggested earlier, the former group is likely to retain its current volume, whereas the latter will grow in numbers. Because of high structural unemployment in the country, Germany, the host to the great majority of ECE contract workers, decided in the mid-1990s to reduce the number of this contracted work force. As the result of bilateral negotiations with each of the affected countries, however, for political (rather than economic) reasons these quotas were again increased to their current number of about 260,000 from the entire ECE region. Considering Germany's long-term economic problems, it is unlikely this allocation will increase any further in the near future; rather, the German government prefers financially to subsidize job-generating projects in the East Central European countries themselves (see Rudolph 1998; Honnekopp 1997). For similar reasons of high domestic unemployment further increases in ECE contract-worker quotas in other West European countries seem also unlikely (they currently total about 40,000).

Continued increase in this type of work-related migration can be expected however, between the three East Central European countries themselves. In each of these countries in 1996 there were 10,000-15,000 (total) contract/seasonal workers from the remaining two, not a large number, but it has more than tripled since the early 1990s and further growth is expected (the data and prognosis from *Trends in International Migration* 1998; Turnock 1997; Okolski 1999).

Highly skilled international travelers, the second group considered here, by the mid-1990s constituted about 12%-14% of the total number of post 1989/90 westbound migrants from each of the three ECE countries (estimates compiled from Berencsi and Sik 1995; Juhasz 1996; Cermak 1997, Uhlírova 1997; Slany 1997). These are predominantly young (most are under 35) professional managers of successful private businesses, service and production centers, including those owned by East-West joint-venture and multinational companies that employ increasing numbers of highly skilled native ECEs competent in foreign



languages; also scientists and researchers, including graduate and postgraduate students on Western fellowships (see Redor 1994; Redei 1995; Hillmann and Rudolph 1997; Cermak 1997).

The progressive incorporation of East Central European economies into the global capitalist system and several EU and individual-country policies in Western Europe and North America to facilitate the flows of highly skilled migrants and various exchange programs for researchers and students will, expectedly, facilitate further growth of this movement. Although it has significantly diminished since 1989/90, some “brain drain” from East Central Europe still exists and is likely to continue in the near future, depleting especially members of the youngest cohorts among highly skilled international migrants, namely, graduate and postgraduate students, who leave on Western fellowships and upon graduation there search for - and often find - jobs in the West that offer greater professional opportunities and much higher salaries than those available at home (see Hryniewicz, Jalowiecki and Mync 1994; Rhode 1993; Dusan 1996; Juhasz 1996; Cermak 1997; Slany 1997; *Trends in International Migration* 1998; *Activities of the Council of Europe in the Migration Field* 1998)<sup>12</sup>.

### **Transnational Movement into and through ECE of EEE and Third-World (Im)migrants**

(Im)migration into East Central Europe from increasingly remote parts of the world has been a growing new phenomenon since the early 1990s and information about this movement has been more limited and less systematic than for westward migrations of ECEs. In comparison with the latter, the recent migrations into ECE have been more differentiated in kinds and more complex in characteristics. They are composed of five major categories<sup>13</sup>. Temporary (short-term and *pendel*) cross-border migrations include (1) short-term undocumented income-seeking *Handels-* and *Arbeits*touristen, mainly from Ukraine, Russia, and Lithuania, and primarily in Poland, and from Ukraine and Romania to Hungary and the Czech Republic; and (2) individual and organized (trafficked) illegal transit migrants, that is, persons “ineligible to enter the West in the customary

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12 According to a recent study of future migration plans of East Central Europeans, 12% among those considering such a move (8% Poles, 9% Czechs, and 19% Hungarians) have university education. Because the study does not distinguish between plans for permanent and temporary migration, we can only generally conclude that these percentages include also a number of potential permanent *émigrés* (Fassmann and Hintermann 1997).

13 Jewish emigrants from the former Soviet Union the majority of whom leave for the United States, Israel, and, increasingly in the last decade, Germany, have been excluded from this discussion.



way (because of the general rules introduced by the destination countries or due to a specific individual cause, and [wishing] to execute an ultimate journey to a western country from one of ECE countries" (Okolski 1998a: 19), from territories of the former Soviet Union, Southern Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. A considerable proportion of the detained transit migrants request political asylum only to disappear soon after they apply.

Long-term and permanent (im)migration has included (3)ethnic resettlers, primarily in Hungary (from Romania, ex-SFR Yugoslavia, and the former USSR) and Poland (primarily from the former USSR) (repatriates from the West are discussed in the next section); and, partially overlapping with each other and with transit migrants, (4)refugees and asylum-seekers from the neighboring regions and more remote parts of the world, originally (early 1990s) mainly in Hungary and more recently in all three ECE countries; and (5)permanent and long-term settlers, legal and undocumented, from the neighboring eastern and southern countries and, increasingly, from as far east as Asia.

An estimated 9 to 10 million crossings of EEE-ECE *Handels-* (the majority) and *Arbeits-tourismus* occurred in 1996 (a fivefold increase since 1990). As with ECE-W migrations of these two kinds, multiple cross-border travels have been common, on the average 4-5 times a year (information compiled from Iglicka 1999, Sword 1999; see also Pyrozkhov et al, 1995; Stola 1997; Harsanyi 1997; Drbohlav and Sykora 1997; Sik 1995; Sipaviciene 1997; Vishnevsky and Zayontchkovskaya 1994; specifically on Roumanian trader- and worker-tourists in Hungary, treated here jointly with EEEs see Benatig and Brachet 1998; Dorel 1997). In recent study these migrants from (the European part) of the former Soviet Union are, like their ECE-W equivalents, predominantly young (in the age group 25-35), but they tend to be better educated in that the proportion of college educated migrants is considerably higher than among ECE-W travelers in these two categories (Iglicka 1999).

Like ECE quasi-tourists in the West, these EEE migrants have found employment in the informal economies of ECE societies. In growing demand by new capitalist enterprises in the receiver countries, EEE tourist-workers find jobs mainly in agriculture, and also in handicrafts, services, and (primarily women) in small garment-manufacturing shops. The largest numbers of them, currently estimated at 600,000-700,000 each year, come to Poland. (In recent study [Bak 1995] of the informal operations of Polish private firms foreigners constituted 20%-25% of the employees of these businesses). EEE *Arbeits-touristen* work for about one-half of the wages received by natives for comparable work and are unprotected by union agreements or any other social coverage. Tourist-traders either work in border areas (*chelnochniki* or ants) or travel to more centrally

located big international bazaars in ECE countries that primarily service informal *Handel* with the Eastern and Southern Europe. These unrecorded exports-imports operations have been very sizable. For example, border and bazaar commerce combined in 1996 constituted more than 25% of Poland's entire trade with all its eastern neighbors, and the value of goods purchased by Ukrainian tourist-traders alone represented nearly 50% of the value of Poland's official exports to this country<sub>s</sub> (Bak and Kulawczuk 1996; Sword 1999; Kozłowski 1999).

Between 1996 and 1998 ECE states tightened controls of their eastern and southern borders in compliance with the "security" and "home affairs" *acquis communautaire* of the European Union. Specifically, stricter visa requirements (issued only upon the procurement of formally registered invitations) for short-term tourist visits have been instituted along with the requirement for foreign visitors to demonstrate adequate per diem funds for their sojourns. As the result, undocumented trade in the borderland areas has reportedly decreased (accompanied by protests from citizens on both sides of the borders who had drawn from it considerable profits). The number of worker-tourists has probably also diminished (although I have not found any reliable information to this effect)<sup>14</sup>. Both are likely, however, to gradually rebound.

Several factors combine to weaken the long-term effectiveness of these increased controls. The corruption of ECE state officials on one side of the borders is ubiquitous and it is quite entrenched (although comparatively less pervasive) on the ECE side as well (see Hars 1998; Los 1998; specifically on corruption of border officers, see Jerczynski 1999). Second, the genuine desire of ECE countries to join the European Union and to comply with its *acquis* notwithstanding, their important political and economic interests dictate that they maintain good relations with their eastern or southern neighbors that are supportive of the processes of demoralization there and the increasing economic exchange with these countries. Regulations prohibiting the free movement of people across borders, particularly international tourism, thus far the least politicized kind of transnational migration, do not serve either of these two purposes and are likely to be contested in the negotiations with the EU, especially

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<sup>12</sup> On the basis of a longitudinal survey of "comecons" (international street bazaars) and "slave" markets (well-known places in the cities where informal labor is hired) in Hungary, Endre Sik (1998) has concluded that the number of undocumented *Handels* and *Arbeitstouristen* has decreased between 1995 and 1998. Because the survey consisted of self-administered questionnaire (with the response rate of 28%-32%) filled out by local authorities - the host-country representatives undocumented tourist-workers/traders and their local partners try to stay out of sight of at all costs - and, in addition, comecons and slave markets in the capital city of Budapest with the largest informal sector were not included in the sample, I am not convinced that these findings are indeed representative.



by Poland, which borders three EEE nation-states and draws significant, transformation-enhancing profits from hosting EEE informal-sector worker- and trader-migrants. (In spite of the disapproval of the EU officials supervising the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* by ECE countries, Poland has maintained non-visa bilateral agreements with both Ukraine and Lithuania, which testifies to her determination to remain on “open terms” with her eastern neighbors).

Set against each other, all these factors generate multiple tensions that, in turn, will create gaps and loopholes in the ECE countries’ immigration policies (just as they do in the policies of the current member states of the European Union). Most likely, these openings will be appropriated and, whenever possible, innovatively extended by resourceful cross-border EEE income-seeking migrants as they cope with the structural relocations and material hardships caused by the severe economic crises in their countries with the crony/ debrouillard beat-the-system spirit “let loose” and energized by the continued political instability (For example, to avoid the new entry requirement of adequate per diem funds Ukrainian quasi-tourists already are circulating a given amount of money back-and-forth from one cross-border traveler to another)<sup>15</sup>. The deepening economic crisis in the countries from which most EEE-ECE *Arbeits* and *Handelstouristen* originate: Russia, Belarus, and also Ukraine (Lithuania has been an exception) has been reflected in declining production figures, diminishing taxes paid to state treasuries, rapidly declining exports, high instability in financial markets, and, not least, the pervasive criminalization of the economy. “In a 1995 survey of Russian businessmen approximately one in four admitted making regular payments to criminal organizations. In the same year mobsters killed some 600 Russian entrepreneurs and attacked the offices of 700 companies in Moscow alone” (cited after Zuzowski 1998: 55; see also Ries 1998; Vogel 1995; Handelman 1995; Ulrich 1994). In view of these trends, observers of the transformation processes in the former Soviet block agree that during the next decade or even longer the developmental disparity between East Central and East Eastern parts of the region will most likely increase (see, e.g., Black 1997; Done 1998).

Commentators on the political situation in Russia (the most volatile at the present time), Belarus, and Ukraine tend to agree also that because the newly enriched ruling classes there (largely composed of the former communist *nomenklatura*) have strong vested interests in the maintenance of the present “mafia capitalism”, these countries are more likely to “muddle through” with weak states and rising but not erupting popular discontent in the near future than

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15 Personal communication to this author by a Ukrainian colleague, Taras Nikolaenko, December 4, 1998.

to experience either a left- or right-wing putsch. (For the assessment of the economic and political situation and prognoses for EEE countries see Reddaway 1997; Ericson 1997; Black 1997; Gregory 1996, 1997; also Durka 1998).

The continued malfunctioning of EEE state apparatuses, and, of specific concern here, irregularly paid wages in state-owned companies (still the largest employer) will keep the population busy earning income from *shabashka* or “kick-off” jobs in their home-country informal economies (on these activities of Russians and Ukrainians in the 1990s see Buslayeva 1998; Pumpianski 1999; Ledeneva 1998). If the economic decline continues or even gradually reverses, profits from the earnings accrued by EEE *Handels-* and *Arbeitstouristen* from illicit work in ECE countries, presently four-to-twelve times higher than the monthly remuneration they receive at home, will become even larger. The “pull” of such opportunities in the neighboring ECE countries, further strengthened by growing consumer appetites fed by the Western advertisements and entertainment programs watched avidly by residents of East Eastern Europe since the fall of communism and the subsequent spread of cable networks (see Korzhov 1998 on new Russian and Ukrainian entrepreneurs as the role models for ostentatious consumption), will most likely attract more migrants. In a recent ethnographic study of EEE illicit income-seeking quasi-tourists in Poland (Iglicka 1999) a large proportion of these migrants described themselves as “unemployed by choice” and stated cross-border income-seeking travels as their main occupation. In view of the circumstances described above it can be expected that the number of EEE-ECE migrants who make “work in motion” into their occupation (Salt 1997a), having perfected their professional skills in minimizing job-related risks such as host-country controls of illegal entrants, will increase in the future.

Like their ECE neighbors, in preparation for and during their cross-border income-seeking sojourns present-day EEE-ECE trader- and worker-tourists have used the well-tested resources of *blat* or an exchange of personal “favors of access”, relying on their fellow ethnics in receiver societies, friends and neighbors who have traveled before or are currently abroad, or direct contacts with ECE employers eager to increase their profits by hiring undocumented, cheap foreign labor (information about widespread use of personal networks by EEE income-seekers in ECE from Bak 1996; *Szara Gospodarka w Polsce* 1996; *Praca Nierejestrowana* 1996; Grabowski 1994; *Biuro Kontroli Legalnosci Zatrudnienia* 1997; Pyrozkhov et al. 1996; Sipaviciene 1997; Mizerski 1997; Buslayeva 1998). Unlike the support networks of westbound ECE migrants, however, much more recent “connections” of EEE-ECE travelers are far from saturation and are capable of expanding on both sides of the border so as to “channel” more people in the future.



The her recent study of illicit income-seeking EEE quasi-tourists in Poland Iglicka (1999) found a considerable number of those travelers -especially among the most highly educated "professional" migrants with a knowledge of foreign languages- for whom, according to their own statements, work in East Central Europe was merely a training ground, as it were, in preparation for a move to the informal economic sectors in the West. Undoubtedly, many of them will not realize their plans getting caught at some point in their journeys and being sent back (and back again) to their home countries, but more than a few of them will probably succeed.

Illegal "transit travelers" from SE parts of the world heading to Western Europe (and further on to North America) have constituted the second major category of present-day temporary migrants into East Central Europe in the 1990s. It is estimated that 25,000-30,000 of these transit migrants detained annually at the borders or inside each of the three ECE countries (the figures are for 1996-98) represent no more than 25%-30% of the total number in the region (information compiled from Okolski 1998b; Juhasz 1998a; Benattig and Brachet 1998; Dorel 1997; *Recent Developments and Policies Relating to Migration and Migrants* 1998; Salt 1997b; Diminescu 1998; Rees et al. 1996; see also Bort 1998).

About 15%-30% of these westbound migrants, according to current estimates of ECE border guards, arrive in ECE in organized groups. Transnational trafficking in human beings -the criminal avenue of the SE-NW compass movement of the population- has during the last decade become a booming business worldwide, and the opened-up East Central Europe is viewed by the traffickers as a convenient corridor. When detained at the entry borders, transit migrants usually request asylum (and destroy personal documents, if they have any, to avoid deportation to their home countries) after which they disappear within the receiver ECE country where they await passage to the West. (In Poland, for example, processing of nearly 50% of the asylum cases was discontinued in 1996 because applicants had disappeared; it is estimated that more than 30,000 transit migrants annually succeed in moving from Poland to Germany). (On worldwide human trafficking see Sterling 1994; Kyle 1998; Walsh 1998; Salt and Schmid 1998; *Organized Crime Moves Into Migrant Trafficking* 1996; also Britt and Meister 1996; Calvi 1993; on asylum requests and discontinuations in Poland see Pruchniak et al. 1997; Okolski 1998b; Kozlowski 1999; in other ECE countries, Juhasz 1998a; *Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe*, 1998).

In view of the steady increase in human trafficking across East Central Europe to the West, the evaluations by the EU enlargement agencies of the capacity of ECE candidate countries to meet membership obligations in the areas of "security" and "transnational movement of persons" focus specifically on "frontier controls [and] the fight against transnational organized crime" (cf. *European Commission Opinion on the Applications for Membership in the European Union: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic* 1997). None of the three countries has thus far been found in satisfactory compliance with the *acquis communautaire* and more efforts certainly will be made in the future to make frontier controls more effective. While they are likely to result in decreased individual transit migration (there are actually indicators that a decline has already begun), these efforts will probably prove less effective in the reduction of organized transit.

First, the pool of motivated potential SE-NW migrants worldwide is very large and, as the swelling compass population flows everywhere indicate, when some of their kin or neighbors succeed in making the trip, others tend to follow regardless of the failure of others. Second, criminal courier networks that operate this transnational transit are very well organized and have the professional know-how to evade, get ahead of, or, when caught, deal with the controls of the countries they move through. In addition, the rewards for these operations are very high: a single passage from Asia to East Central Europe costs \$5,000-10,000 and from South Europe, \$2,000-\$5,000, which, considering that transit migrants are convoyed in groups of 15 to 25-40 people, means a profit (to be shared among the traffickers) of between \$75,000 and \$400,000 for an "Asian" and between \$30,000 and \$200,000 for a "South European" transfer of each group (estimates calculated from Salt 1998; Okolski 1998b; Juhasz 1998a). The third factor that will undermine the effectiveness of strengthened controls is the already mentioned corruption of EEE and, if to a lesser extent, of ECE officials responsible for controlling cross-border movement. It is unlikely to be eliminated in the near future and is especially susceptible to high monetary rewards (and not-to-be-dismissed threats) from the organized crime world.

The (im)migration of political refugees and asylum seekers into East Central Europe during the 1990s can be considered in-between temporary and permanent types of migration because of its "unfinished" character (should the situation in their countries improve, those involuntary or semi-voluntary migrants might decide to return home). As indicated by the considerable porportion of asylum applicants who vanished, this category has overlapped in "human content" with the illegal transit movement. From the end of the 1980s until the mid-1990s Hungary was the recipient of the largest numbers of refugees (between 1988 and 1990 more than 50,000 ethnic Hungarians fled Ceausescu's policy



against minorities, and between 1991 and 1995 nearly 80,000 war refugees came from the former SFR-Yugoslavia). From 1996 to the present the numbers of asylum seekers in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland have been more or less equal, and the main sender regions have diversified: besides refugees from Kosovo who represent now the largest group from the former SFR-Yugoslavia, the most numerous are Afghans, Tchetchens, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, and, increasingly Africans from different parts of the Continent (information compiled from *Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; *Trends in International Migration* 1998; Okolski 1998a; Fullerton, Sik, and Toth 1997; Pruchniak et al. 1997; Pavlik and Maresova 1994 Kozlowski 1999; Juhasz 1998b; Salt 1998).

As they have tightened controls of their borders in an effort to comply with the frontier security *acquis* of the European Union, especially in view of the expanding illegal transit migration through East Central Europe to the West, in the last few years all three ECE states have significantly reduced, by one- to two-thirds in comparison with the early 1990s or to 5%-6% of the total volume of applicants, the number of asylums granted (calculated from *Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; *Trends in International Migration* 1998). The refugee and asylum policies in ECE at present seem to be the most problematic among the (im)migration-related laws and regulations implemented in the preparation for EU accession.

The basic problem inheres in the *acquis* itself and, specifically, in its apparently contradictory requirements for the implementation of policies promoting the humanitarian standards such as the hospitality to people in need of international protection, on the one hand, and, on the other, compliance with mainly restrictive measures for fighting undocumented and unwanted immigration by imposing strict visa requirements (impossible for refugees on the run to fulfill), the "safe third country" rule, and readmission agreements (allowing the immediate return of asylum seekers at the border). The NGOs (especially UNHCR and the Helsinki Committee) in ECE countries have already been protesting the unlawful, according to the international human rights agreements, handling of asylum procedures while local liberal opinion has voiced concern about the danger from such restrictive policies on the fundamental issue of human rights for the barely begun processes of democratization of sociopolitical institutions and cultures in the region. (See Lavenex 1998; *Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; also Nagy 1997; Latowski 1999; Lodzinski 1999).

Neither the contradictions within the *acquis* nor the disagreements among the organized interests and public opinion shaping ECE country immigration policies and generating “gaps” in their execution can be expected to disappear or even significantly diminish in the near future; they have certainly persisted in the European Union despite systematic efforts to construct one common and effective policy for the region. At the same time, in East Eastern Europe and Southern Europe actual and potential ethnoreligious and national conflicts and political instabilities exist, especially, in addition to the areas already mentioned, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Azerbaijan, or Tajikistan (see *The World in 1997*) that are likely to continue to send out refugees. There is also, of course, the rest of the world with many volatile places and many potential fugitives for whom Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, already recognized as feasible destination or transit countries, will become “migration targets” should these potential (e)migrants decide or be forced to move. With increased controls still offering loopholes, the influx into ECE of refugees and asylum seekers from increasingly remote regions of the world, is not likely to diminish and will probably continue to grow.

The major trends in the (im)migration of permanent and long-term settlers during the 1990s have been, first, a rapid increase after the collapse of communist regimes in the region and, since the mid-1990s, a decline in ethnic resettlements into ECE from neighboring eastern and southern countries, primarily into Hungary (about 65,000 immigrants from Romania, ex SFR Yugoslavia, and the former USSR) and Poland (about 8,000 from the former USSR), and second, the accelerating increase in permanent and long-term settlement in Poland and the Czech Republic of residents of the former Soviet Union (primarily Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Armenia), whose total numbers trippled between 1993 and 1997, and in all three ECE countries from Asia (primarily Vietnam and mainland China), whose numbers more than doubled in the same period. The Czech Republic has received the largest influx of all these settlers: by 1997 more than 80,000 officially recorded EEE and Third World (im)migrants (and 125,000 with Slovaks treated as foreigners since 1993) resided there, more than 50% of whom were Ukrainians and about 20% Vietnamese. Nearly one-half of those settlers have concentrated in Prague, about 10% of whose residents (including Western sojourners) are now foreign-born. In Poland legal EEE and Third World long-term and permanent residents, mainly Ukrainians, Russians, Vietnamese, and Armenians, in 1997 numbered more than 40,000, and in Hungary (excluding ethnic Hungarian immigrants) 25,000-30,000, consisting primarily of long-term residents<sup>16</sup> from the former SFR Yugoslavia, China, Ukraine, and Russia (data

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16 Hungary's new (1996) immigration law sets the annual quota of 2,000 permanent residence permits for immigrants (ethnic Hungarians are not subject to this restriction), but imposes no limitation on long-term permits. In practice, however, nearly all applications for permanent



compiled from *European Committee on Migration* 1997; *Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe* 1998; *Trends in International Migration* 1998; Drbohlav 1997; Drbohlav and Sykora 1997; Okolski 1998b; Nyiri 1997; Maresova 1996; Juhasz 1996).

Short-term contract workers have constituted another category of legal EEE and Third World residents in East Central Europe. Following intermission after the demise of communist regimes in ECE and the subsequent invalidation of preexisting labor contracts with Soviet block and other socialist countries, since the mid-1990s, their numbers have been on the increase again. Like long-term and permanent settlers, most of them come from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Vietnam and (mainland) China, and, in Hungary, from Romania and Yugoslavia (mainly ethnic Hungarians). In 1997 there were more than 25,000 of those contract workers in the Czech Republic, about 15,000 in Hungary (excluding refugees who also receive short-term work permits), and 12,000 in Poland, which represented a general increase of 25%-30% since 1994. I have included short-term EEE/Third World-ECE workers here rather than in a category of temporary migrants because of their considerable interpenetration with long-term and permanent settlers. (Im)migrants in these groups often originate from the same hometowns and maintain contacts in the host countries, helping each other and their families arrange sojourns abroad. A similar interfacing occurs between legal and undocumented settlers, whose numbers have been estimated to equal or surpass those of their officially registered fellow nationals. (The figures on contract workers are compiled from *Trends in International Migration* 1998; *European Committee on Migration* 1997; information on undocumented settlers and the interchange between this and officially registered groups from Drbohlav 1997; Nyiri 1997; Okolski 1998b).

Present trends in permanent and long-term (im)migration to East Central Europe from Eastern and Southern Europe and Asia, that is, a decline in ethnic resettlements and, after a period of stabilization owing to stricter immigration policies of ECE states, a redeveloping immigration of foreign settlers can be expected to continue into the next century. Both processes are, of course, contingent on the political stability in sender societies/regions; intensification there of ethnic conflicts and political turmoil would likely reverse the decline in ethnic resettlements and accelerate immigration of foreign settlers. The attraction of ECE growing economies (and the informal sectors therein) and the much higher earnings than those available at home will exert a stronger "resettlement pressure" or bring more foreign than ethnic immigrants because the more entrepreneurial, mobile members of the latter group have either already emigrated

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residence submitted during the last two years have been approved (after *Trends in International Migration* 1998, 117-18).

or (like ethnic Hungarians from Romania and the former SFR Yugoslavia) have the opportunity to make short-term income-earning sojourns in ECE countries without leaving their homes for good (Poor "civilizational" adaptation in Poland of ethnic (Polish-origin) immigrants from the former Asian republics of the Soviet Union has been reported to discourage others from following the pioneers)<sup>17</sup>. The already established but not yet saturated information and assistance networks should attract more migrants and facilitate their movement through and around the gaps and loopholes in ECE countries' immigration policies.

Excluding major natural or political disasters in the former Soviet Union that would force hundreds of thousands of people to flee, none of the types of transnational movement whose future increase I have evaluated as probable is likely, however, to generate a multimillion-strong influx of (im)migrants into East Central Europe and, further west, in to the European Union. Although they will remain, as I have argued, sufficiently porous to allow for the continuation and even some expansion of present undocumented migrations, technologically modernized and tightened controls of the future eastern borders of the enlarged European Union implemented with the cooperation of WE and ECE governments should be effective enough to stop an avalanche of undocumented migrants in any of the main categories considered. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, large numbers of its former citizens, especially Russians and Ukrainians - the two largest EEE-ECE traveling groups - have been migrating in search of (formal- and informal-sector) work across the borders of new independent nation-states that replaced the USSR. In fact, the total volume of internal migrations within the former Soviet Union has been considerably larger than that of westbound flows into East Central Europe, and it is expected to increase further, especially to Western Siberia and the Central Chernozyem region (see Kirillova 1997; Buslayeva 1998; cf also Bodrova and Regent 1994; Zayonchkovskaya 1999), siphoning off part of the potential westward movement of income-seeking EEEs. Although still unsaturated, support networks "carrying" EEE undocumented income-seeking migrants to ECE (and further to the West) will not be able to assist millions. The recent increase of anti-foreign sentiments among ECE nationals (Hungarians more than either Poles or Czechs; see Sik 1998; Slany 1999) accompanying the growing presence of East and South European and Third-World (im)migrants in their countries and, in particular, tightened border controls by ECE states may dissuade some of potential travelers.

Finally, attachments to family, friends, and familiar surroundings, unwillingness to take risks, fear of the unknown - the same reasons that, as I argued earlier, prevent most ECEs from moving and thus limit the scope of

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17 Information from Polish press reportages.



international migrations, have similar effects on their eastern neighbors. Risk aversion and fear of the unknown may actually constrain more forcefully transnational migrations in search of better fortunes from turning into an overwhelming flow of East Eastern than East Central Europeans. They have been sustained by long traditions of quietism and what Vladimir Shlapentokh (1995) calls the “extraordinary patience” of the majority of Russian and eastern (Orthodox and more Russified) Ukrainian populations in putting up with adversities rather than reaching for new, radical means of countering them. (At issue here, let me reemphasize, are factors likely to constrain a swelling wave of westbound cross-border migrations of EEEs; as part of post-Soviet *habitus*, the crony/debrouillard coping strategies are scarcely new or radical, and they have been applied by EEEs at home and, as I demonstrated, also by resourceful migrants seeking undocumented income in East Central Europe).

### Transnational West-East Migration

During the 1990s East Central Europe experienced of temporary and permanent (re-)expatriates from the West. Most of them come from Germany, Austria, the United States, Great Britain, and France. They are composed about equally of returned and, more commonly shuttling back and forth between their home and adopted countries ECE emigres from the communist era<sup>18</sup> and non-ECE Western expatriates. Unlike westbound East European migrants, most of whom have elementary or high school educations, the great majority of W-ECE (im)migrants are college-educated people with professional skills. Interestingly, growing numbers of them have been employed in recent years in ECE informal economies as undocumented workers.

In 1996 Western residents in East Central Europe officially registered after 1989-90 numbered about 120,000, or nearly three times more than three years earlier. About half of them had lived in the Czech Republic and the remainder in about equal proportions in Hungary and in Poland (calculated from *Trends in International Migration* 1998, 1994; *Eurostat Yearbook* 1997; *Council of Europe Report on Europeans Living Abroad* 1996; Hillmann and Rudolph 1996; Dusan 1994; Dusan and Sykora 1997; Redei 1995; Maresova 1996). They have been

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18 A total of more than 3 million citizens of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia combined (Poles making up more than a half of that number) either stayed on in the West as so-called displaced persons (DPs) after the conclusion of World War II and the imposition of communist rule in East Central Europe or left during the fifty years it endured. Since 1989-90, encouraged by postcommunist governments in their native countries eager to establish links with potential political allies to help negotiate reintegration with the Western world and hoped for investors in the transforming ECE economies, considerable numbers of those highly skilled *émigrés* have either repatriated, come to their native countries on professional longer sojourns.

employed in a variety of positions in multinational companies and other foreign production and service firms, international organizations (most commonly OECD, GATT, IMF, World Bank, UN Development Program, American Agency for International Development, and NGOs), EU representative, funding, and consulting agencies, and as specialists, consultants, and teachers of the market economy and effective management to ECE businessmen, international lawyers, political scientists, and organizational sociologists (see Pridham and Vanhanen 1994; Kennedy and Gianoplus 1994; Hillmann and Rudolph 1997; Cermak 1997). As the economic transformation of East Central European societies and their legal-political cooperation with the European Union progress over time, more Western specialists in various fields can be expected to migrate to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland for shorter and longer sojourns.

The undocumented Western “work force” in East Central Europe has only recently begun to attract attention from receiver country law enforcement agencies and the media. Current estimates by Poland’s National Bureau of Labor of illegally employed Western migrants in that country put their numbers at more than 50,000 (after Ornacka and Szczesna 1998); about 40,000 has been reported for the Czech Republic<sup>19</sup>. (I have not been able to obtain the information for Hungary). Among the illegally employed foreigners uncovered by Polish police in the 1998, Westerners - primarily Germans, Austrians, and the British - constituted 15% (Ornacka and Szczesna 1998).

The W-E migration of highly skilled undocumented migrant-workers has been instigated by both the sending and the receiving sides of this transnational movement. The structure of unemployment in Western Europe, already well advanced in postindustrial capitalism, has been different from that in the eastern parts of the Continent where deindustrialization has begun only recently in that highly skilled employees have been more affected than low-skill manual workers. Formal and, of concern here, informal-sector work-seeking migrations of highly skilled West Europeans have been a common phenomenon within the European Union, and their recent appearance in East Central Europe can be viewed as a reflection of that region’s progressive incorporation into the European and larger, global system of internationalized, two-prong economies.

In transforming ECE receiver societies highly skilled Western experts are very much in demand. Undocumented Western specialists have been especially welcome as consultants, managers, advertisement and PR specialists, “contacts” for Western markets, and so on, in small-scale foreign and joint-venture companies and also in newly founded ECE-owned enterprises, and as

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19 The figure cited by Drbohlav Dusan in personal communication to Marek Okolski.



private foreign language tutors to native businessmen and managers. In addition to needed skills, they bring their employers, who are unable to compete with large (especially multinational) companies, significant savings on salaries (lower than those paid to their officially employed compatriots with comparable skills) and social benefits (received in their home countries). As long as the above inducements are present and the immigration controls remain “gappy” - and these conditions can be reasonably expected to last into the next century on both sides of the W-E migration circuit - informal employment of Western migrant specialists in ECE is also likely to increase.

## Conclusion

I have evaluated future trends in transnational migrations from and into Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic during the transitional ten-year period after the presumed formal admission of these countries into the European Union in 2005 during which the right of free cross-border settlement and employment of citizens of the newly admitted and old member-states would be suspended. The question that begs consideration is what next, after the termination of this transitional period?

Two possible scenarios for this post-2015 future from the viewpoint of present-day *Realpolitik* represent, respectively, the “best feasible” and “the more probable” development. (Superstitiously I leave out worst-case developments such as a deep economic decline and/or destabilization of democracy in East Central Europe by domestic or external forces that would lead to the stalling or the reversal of the multitrack transformation in that region, or, on the EU side, a severe economic recession in Western Europe or a profound political crisis within the European Union that would undermine or interrupt the enlargement process).

The first scenario is the best-feasible (for ECE candidate-countries) version of a “multi-speed Europe” as Bert Kerremans has called the situation postulated by different WE politicians in which “a core group of [old-member] countries integrate further and leave the others in the current EU structures” (1997:44)<sup>20</sup>. Continued growth and effective restructuring of ECE economies during the “catch-up” decade, and a conclusion of the negotiations between EU authorities

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20 The idea of a multi-speed Europe has its origins in the so-called Schauble-Lamers paper, an unofficial 1994 report on the EU by two German CDU leaders, Wolfgang Schauble and Jan Lamers, in which they propose the formation of a European “nucleus” (consisting of Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg) in order to avoid the dilution of the EU structures. A similar idea of Europe of “concentric circles” was also proposed in the same year by the then French Prime Minister, Eduard Balladur - after Kerremans 1997: 51.

and ECE countries satisfactory to both sides (perhaps with the input of human-rights NGOs and Western public opinion opposed to a “fortress Europe”) regarding candidates’ compliance with the *acquis communautaire*, lead to the acquisition in 2015 or shortly thereafter by Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic of the “horizontal-integration” rights and obligations accorded full members of the European Union, including the freedom of EU member-country citizens to move, work, or settle anywhere within EU boundaries. As a result, the new eastern EU frontiers gain and the old western ECE borders lose importance as the political and economic dividers. At the same time, the “vertical-integration” rights of decision making in EU institutional bodies and EU monetary and foreign policy remain temporarily (but without a delimited schedule) confined, or partially confined, to all or a nucleus group of the most powerful old member-states.

In this scenario, an enlarged Europe experiences so-called hunchback migration (see Martin and Taylor 1996; Hammar et al 1997; Hermele 1997), that is, an immediate increase in international ECE-W flows triggered by the lifting of free movement restrictions followed by a reduction in migration volume. Transnational movement continues, however, prompted by densified ECE-EW integration, or interconnectedness, to which it itself contributes.

Business/employment-related E-W and W-E transnational travels of highly skilled migrants actually increase, and because ECE workers in this category remain less costly to employ than their WE counterparts, the competition and, possibly, national/regional conflicts intensify in the EU highly skilled labor market. Restructured ECE economies generate postindustrial jobs in formal and informal sectors, and housing shortages (notorious under the communist regime and still persistent through the first decades after its collapse) are finally overcome, and the internal and intraregional employment-related mobility within East Central Europe considerably increase. The growth of economic mezzoregions that integrate expanded borderlands, up to 400 km on each side of the neighboring ECE and WE countries, creates employment opportunities for local populations that increase cross-border job commutes.

Diminished in numbers in comparison with the earlier period because of expanded internal and intraregional employment opportunities, subcontracted ECE migrant-workers employed in WE informal economies replace *Arbeitstouristen* not only in name but also in socioeconomic composition as they are now drawn primarily from among the new impoverished social groups and underdeveloped regions of ECE postindustrial societies. (On the emergence of “new poverty” in capitalist ECE in 1990s see Golinowska 1996; Bastyr and Kotynkova 1996; Sik 1996; Hoos 1997; Habich and Speder 1999; Forster,



Szivos, and Toth 1999). They now travel not only to neighboring Germany and Austria (where service workers are needed because of the rapidly aging populations but where they must compete with still cheaper Third-World (im)migrant labor), but increasingly to Italy, Greece, Spain, and Portugal. Employed in these countries at lower than domestic wages, they generate complaints from natives similar to those voiced today by German and Austrian workers about informally subcontracted Greek and Portugese migrants.

In the situation of the free movement within the enlarged European Union the eastern and southern (Hungary) borders of new EU member-states, already tightened in the transitional period, are guarded with redoubled efforts particularly against at organized traffic of undocumented EEE and Third-World migrants heading toward the western parts of the Continent. This results in increased detentions of such travelers but does not eliminate the transit. Short-term contract and undocumented EEE-ECE migrant workers and refugees settling in East Central Europe are viewed with concern by first-rank member-countries of a multi-speed Europe as ever-potential encroachers but are left alone as long as they remain in its eastern parts.

In ECE countries EEE/Third World (im)migrants constitute a considerable presence. First-generation settlers are bringing in their relatives in accordance with EU family reunion policies, from different parts of the world come (and come) asylum seekers whose requests must be processed according to international laws and Eu regulations, and undocumented migrants sneak in through still leaky eastern/southern borders. The (im)migration issue divides interests and opinions in ECE societies along lines similar to those that have divided West Europeans. Generally supportive of this presence are informal-sector employers, economists who see these (im)migrants as contributing to their countries' growth, and liberal political and intellectual circles, whereas "Hungary for Hungarians" and "Poland for Poles" nationalists advocate strict immigration controls and deportations of illegal foreign residents.

More probable is a post-2015 scenario in which the extension to ECE countries of the "horizontal" rights and obligations such as the free transnational movement of persons and trade is delayed beyond the repeatedly postponed timetables. (Flowing primarily west to east, capital would most likely be excluded from these restrictions). Three (likely intertwined) problems would cause this situation. First, one or more ECE countries may fail to comply to the satisfaction of the responsible EU institutions with either part of the "parallel principle" introduced at the 1999 EU summit in Helsinki as the basis for evaluation of candidates' readiness for membership: implementation of the specific parts of the *acquis* and -a new requirement more difficult to meet outside of the EU structures

-demonstration of minimum acceptable levels of environmental protection, transportation infrastructure, food production regulatory codes etc. (Since the EU *Agenda 2000* [1997] envisions subsequent enlargements not individually but as groups-of-countries, such an evaluation of one country would most likely hinder acceptance of the remaining two). Second, repeated delays may result from a prolonged impasse in intra-Union negotiations of the pending reform of the EU budget, specifically, the redistribution of structural-reform funds assigned to lesser developed EU members (to include, besides long-term SE, also new ECE recipients) and of the contributions toward this purpose by richer countries. Third, opposition by particular EU member-states or ECE countries to specific items/aspects of the free movement *acquis* (e.g., free trade in some agricultural products) perceived as detrimental to the interests of their national economies or occupational strata may remain unresolved.

The prolonged delay scenario would not change the basic mechanisms and directions of international migrations from and to East Central Europe, and East-West borders would remain transnational against the restrictions. But the overall costs of persistent constraints would surpass the advantages. To the disadvantage of both sender and receiver countries it would, of course, limit the exchange of highly skilled migrants and make the control of E-W international “migrant crime” less effective or Europe’s eastern borders more porous to organized trafficking in human beings, drugs, and stolen merchandise. As in the first scenario, however, assuming continued economic growth in the region, internal and intra- and mezzo-regional migrations of ECEs would increase significantly, while ECE *Arbeitstouristen*, probably in reduced numbers, would continue their income-seeking migrations in search of income in the informal sectors of Western economies. As in the first scenario, too, the presence of EEE and Third World settlers and refugees in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic would grow larger and become a divisive issue in immigration policy making and public opinion in each of these ECE countries.

In both cases, whether integrated as lower-rank members into a multi-speed European Union or kept *nit ahin nit aher* (neither here nor there) at its threshold, East Central European countries would remain poor cousins to their Western partners. The latter situation, however, would be not only more “wasteful” economically but also more harmful politically for both eastern and western parts of Europe. Even with vertical-integration constraints, the free movement of persons within the enlarged European Union would stimulate professional and social contacts among students, civil servants, local- and regional-level organizational leaders, and professionals from eastern and western parts of the Continent. Such sustained exchanges would create dense institutional and informal networks of support for the consolidation of democratic societies and cultures in East Central Europe. These networks could also be used to lobby



for gradual elimination of vertical inequality within the EU structures. With increased contacts between ECE countries and their eastern and southern neighbors, these contacts would also extend farther east and south, strengthening there the democratic ideas and the know-how of their implementation. In the prolonged suspension of the rights of free movement scenario, all these contacts would be considerably sparser and less systematic and their effects much more limited.

More and importantly, an indeterminate delay of the integration would be strongly demoralizing and alienating to ECE political parties and public opinion supportive of the accession. (Although they would occupy a lower-rank position in a multi-speed Europe, ECE countries would share their "vertical exclusion" with less powerful and poorer EU member-states). The credibility of pro-Europe political parties in ECE, sustained during the catch-up decade of economic growth assisted by EU funds in the expectation of full-rights integration at the conclusion of the transitional period, would be seriously undermined, leaving public space and disenchanting public opinion to anti-Western nationalistic groups and sentiments. Considering that in the enduring nationalist traditions in eastern parts of the Continent (Czechs possibly excepted) anti-Western has been synonymous with anti-liberal-democratic, such political reorientation brought about by the prolonged delay in the integration into the European Union of the first countries from the eastern part of the Continent, would undermine, in turn, the consolidation of democracy in that region and, thus, chances for a peaceful coexistence of all Europeans.

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