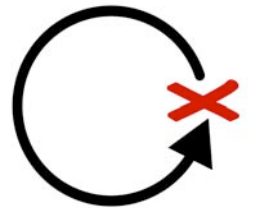




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# **METOIKOS Project**

## **Circular Migration Patterns Migration between Ukraine and Poland**

**Krystyna Iglicka and Katarzyna Gmaj  
Centre for International Relations**



**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE**  
**ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**

**Circular Migration Patterns**  
**Migration between Ukraine and Poland**

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**CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, WARSAW**

**METOIKOS PROJECT**

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## **The METOIKOS Research Project**

### **Circular migration patterns in Southern and Central Eastern Europe: Challenges and opportunities for migrants and policy makers**

The METOIKOS project looks at circular migration patterns in three European regions: southeastern Europe and the Balkans (Greece, Italy and Albania); southwestern Europe and the Maghreb (Spain, Italy and Morocco); and Central Eastern Europe (Poland, Hungary, and Ukraine). More specifically, METOIKOS studies the links between different types of circular migration and processes of integration (in the country of destination) and reintegration (in the source country). It identifies the main challenges and opportunities involved in circular migration for source countries, destination countries and migrants (and their families) and develops new conceptual instruments for the analysis of circular migration and integration. The project will develop policy recommendations (a Guide for Policy Makers, available in 10 European languages) for local, regional and national policy makers as to how to frame circular migration with appropriate (re-)integration policies. It will also organise three Regional Workshops (on Spain, Italy and Morocco; on Greece, Italy and Albania; and on Poland, Hungary and Ukraine). The project will foster online discussion on circular migration with a view to raising awareness about the challenges and advantages of circular mobility in the wider EU Neighbourhood and the Euro-Mediterranean region more generally.

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The METOIKOS project is hosted by the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies and co-ordinated by Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou ([anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu](mailto:anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu)).

The EUI and the RSCAS are not responsible for the opinion expressed by the authors.

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## **Abstract**

Until the late eighties of the previous century, international mobility of the USSR citizens was strictly regulated and scarce. Due to the restrictive policy, individual trips other than official tours were practically excluded. When Ukraine achieved its independence, and in particular when permits for going abroad were abolished in 1993, migration has become beyond the state control. The most important characteristic of the inflow of migrants into post-communist Poland in the 1990's was transience and mass spatial movement of citizens of the former USSR. This *primitive mobility* was initiated by the opportunity to freely depart from one's own country and by the differences in currency exchange rates and price relations between Poland and newly emerging eastern neighbouring countries.

Until the late nineties, trade was the main activity undertaken by Ukrainian citizens in Poland. Employment, predominantly irregular, was the less preferable option. However, most probably, as a result of the economic crisis in Russia (1998), profitability of this form of economic activity decreased. Therefore, Ukrainian immigrants started working on construction, renovation and agriculture. They also got engaged in the domestic services sector. Finally, trade was replaced by a short term employment as a main economic activity of Ukrainian citizens in Poland.

More recent research also confirmed that the strategy of short term employment and shuttle migration is the one predominating among Ukrainian citizens working in Poland. This way, they adapt to the demand on the Polish labour market. This strategy allows them to enter and survive on the Polish labour market

## **Keywords**

Labour migration, Poland , Ukraine.

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## 1. Introduction - Determinants and Consequences of Ukrainian Migration to Poland

The most important characteristic of the inflow of migrants into post-communist Poland in the 1990's was transience and mass spatial movement of citizens of the former USSR. This *primitive mobility* (Iglicka 2001, Iglicka 2001a) was initiated by the opportunity to freely depart from one's own country and by the differences in currency exchange rates and price relations between Poland and newly emerging eastern neighbouring countries. This spontaneous mobility became the harbinger of a more permanent migration movement. Advantageous differences between salaries in the sending and receiving countries, accompanied by procedural obstacles for permanent settlement enhanced circular mobility, which was preceded by an intensified penetration of the Polish labour market in the 1990's.

In the case of Central Eastern Europe, for some migrants, seasonality has become a way of life. This bivalent mobility also known as circular migration is upheld by migrants who undertake the strategy of minimizing their household risks. This movement is held between social peripheries of the sending country and peripheries of receiving countries which are wealthier and better developed economically. (Okólski 2001). In regards to Ukraine, in 2007, migratory growth in cities and towns was equal to 0.3 people per 1000 inhabitants whereas the number of dwellers in the countryside decreased by 1.7 per 1000 population due to intensive external migration. Migrants from rural areas are enticed by lack of employment opportunities, unacceptably low wages, and poor working and living conditions. The official unemployment rate in rural areas is lower than in urban ones. However, the majority of those who are considered employed are occupied in housekeeping. It can be proved by the fact that labor supply in agriculture is 25 times higher than labor demand. There is no such disparity in any other branch of economy. (Kyzyma 2007)

It is evident that Poland's labour policy, which protects local labour forces, and its liberal visa policy for Ukrainians were the main factors which encouraged this circular type of mobility. Until October 2003, Ukrainians benefited from a non-visa entrance, afterwards they had an easy access with free of charge tourist visas. As a result, up until December 2007 and the enlargement of the Schengen area, the most characteristic feature of the Ukrainian immigrant group was irregular work on the basis of legal resident visas and documents. This was possible considering that Ukrainians who are engaged in circular migration in and out of Poland do not differ appearance-wise from Poles (Iglicka, Gmaj 2010).

Immigrants originating from Ukraine are often perceived as those, whose integration into Polish society has potential to be achieved in a smoother manner. It is related to the long history of being neighbours and kinship relations that crossed the border, as well as geographical, linguistic and cultural proximity. (Koryś, 2004, Iglicka, 2007). However, one should realize that opportunities for integration are limited by the main aim of circular migrants - accumulating money and returning home. Their irregular status is another factor restraining their integration process – it is an open question what their needs are and whether they would be interested in any integration programs. This question refers to all seasonal workers, not only those employed on an irregular basis.

From the perspective of the sending country, the local community factor is an important one to be considered. In many cases, labour migration is a result of the change in the hierarchy of values: consumption aspirations are often situated higher than unity of family. Incomes from migration help supply consumption needs when the situation on people's local labour market does not allow them to achieve expected standards. As a consequence, labour migrants contribute to confirm hedonistic values in sending communities – their example encourages others to undertake jobs abroad (Romaniszyn 2003). As a result, transnational Ukrainian family migration leads to the erosion of emotional ties and kinship connections, thus fostering consumerism and alienation between family members. Migration may have positive effects on individual members of the family or on some aspects of family life, however for the family as a whole, it has a disintegrating effect (Tolstokorova 2009).



While labour migration may enhance the financial stability of the household - remittances allow to increase the family budget and to advance their material well-being - it also has a reverse negative effect by way of managerial and strategic deprivation of the family economy. Remittances are used primarily for family consumption, education of children and housing. Around 60 to 80 % of remittances are invested into real estate property. To a much lesser extent, they are invested into small family businesses, mainly because Ukraine has few economic incentives for such enterprise (Tolstokorova 2009). Regarding family relations and functions carried out across geo-cultural spaces, labour migration of Ukrainians decreases the fertility rate and thus diminishes the reproductive potential of the family. In the case of couples living together abroad, the situation is not reproductively friendly either. Ukrainian migrants are often undocumented, and therefore have no legal access to public health-care, which makes childbirth and early child-care a highly challenging endeavor (Tolstokorova 2009).

According to various estimations, about 1.3–3.25 million Ukrainian women work abroad, almost 90% of them work there illegally (Kyzyma 2007). They mainly come from rural areas and are at the most reproductive age (between 20–39 years old). They have husbands and children left in Ukraine. Mass international migration of women leads to aging of the rural population, fertility reduction, losses in rural labor potential, and prevention of further agricultural and rural development (Kyzyma 2007).

The great involvement of Ukrainian women in the “care industry” in Western Countries affects the redistribution of traditional gender roles. It is particularly visible in West Ukrainian rural families. The nature of masculinity is being transformed. It was observed that males from these regions have refused to accept available local employment even when the remuneration offered for their work had exceeded average income rates in Kyiv. Since remittances received from migrant wives by far exceed the wages offered by local employers, men are reluctant to work even for high salaries. Instead, some of them found the roles of child-minder and home-makers acceptable for themselves, although largely only for the period that their wives were missing from home (Tolstokorova 2009<sup>1</sup>).

When focusing on western Ukraine - where from the majority of Ukrainian migrants to Poland (and Hungary) originate, one can say that the border areas demarking Ukraine and Poland have traditionally been porous. The area of free travel established in the 1990s in Central Europe led not only to the development of friendly neighbor relations and cooperation between countries, but was also crucial to the survival of a certain category of Ukrainian citizens. They were primarily the population of frontier areas which were considered as regions that experienced the strongest impact of the economic crisis that followed transformation in the 1990ties. According to the study conducted in three frontier oblasts (Volyn, Zakarpattya and Lviv) in 2003, a large majority of Ukrainians living in these areas had traveled to work in either Poland or Hungary (80%)<sup>2</sup> (Malynovska 2006). While the introduction of visas did not significantly upset travel to Poland<sup>3</sup>, the population of Ukrainians living in the frontier areas was most strongly affected by this change. The new visa regime brought about administrative and bureaucratic procedures that complicated mobility. Consequently, the previous fluid movement across the border transformed into one characterized by long lines, customs, cash requirements and other ensuing difficulties.

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<sup>1</sup> The author recalls two pieces of work: Cherninska T., 2007. Zhinocha migracia: zmina gendernyh rolej [Female's migration. Change of gender roles]. *Fond suspil'noj bezpeky* [Societal Security Fund], url: <http://fsb.net.ua/articles.php?lng=ua&pg=11> and Yarova O., 2006. The migration of Ukrainian women to Italy and the impact on their family in Ukraine. *Migration Process in Central and Eastern Europe: Unpacking the Diversity*/ Eds. Szczepanikova A., Canek M., Grill J. Published by Multicultural Centre Prague, p. 38-41.

<sup>2</sup> a third of the respondents reported to cross the border (with either Poland or Hungary) 2 to 10 times per year, 14.8% travelled monthly, 17.5%- 2-3 times per month, 17.7% once per week, and 8.7% sever times per week. In 2003, before the introduction of visas, for the majority of trips to Poland and Hungary, the purpose was to buy or sell goods (57.9%) [and] 8.7% made trips for the purpose of foreign employment

<sup>3</sup> the total number of visits to Poland in 2004 remained at the previous year's level of 3.8 mln

In conclusion, within Ukraine one can observe regional preferences as to the main direction of migration. While the Western part of the country is westward oriented, and the South Eastern Region is directed towards Russia, the Central part is much more diverse and characterized by various directions. Interestingly, within the westward direction some changes between the nineties of the previous century and the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are observed. Central Europe, including Poland, has become a less preferable destination. Ukrainian immigrants are developing a tendency to move further to the West (Konieczna 2003).

## 2. Demographic Data on Ukrainian Immigration to Poland

Ukrainian citizens constitute the most numerous national group regarding those foreigners who received settlement and stay permits in Poland. Every fifth foreigner residing in Poland is Ukrainian. What is characteristic about this group is its feminization - about seventy percent of all Ukrainian residents in Poland are females. According to official data, in 2004 there were 5,382 men and 11, 014 women, Ukrainian citizens, officially residing in Poland (on the basis of settlement and stay permits) (Fihel 2008). Although the number of Ukrainian citizens staying in Poland on the basis of settlement and stay permits has increased steadily, it is still not very high. At the end of the year 2008 it was 22, 801. At the end of 2009 13,787 Ukrainians held permanent residency cards, while 11,074 held temporary residency permits (Office for Foreigners data).

Table 1. Ukrainian citizens who received:

		Positive decisions on applications for permanent settlement in Poland	positive decisions for temporary residency	positive decisions on applications for long-term EU residency permit
2006	male	361	2,482	190
	female	1,077	5,251	234
	total	1,438	7,733	424
2007	male	410	2,423	152
	female	1,199	4,958	195
	total	1,609	7,381	347
2008	male	455	2,904	139
	female	1,230	5,403	160
	total	1,685	8,307	299
2009	male			
	female			
	total	1,280	8,489	331

Source: Office for Foreigners

In regards to their education, about one third of immigrants, mentioned in the previous paragraph, graduated from a University and only a few percent has a lower or elementary level of education. In 2004, 80% of Ukrainian citizens residing in Poland were between the ages of 20-49 while only a few percent were younger. About 40 % resided in one of the following cities: Warsaw (and its surroundings), Krakow, Wroclaw, Lublin and Szczecin. Those who received a settlement permit tended to choose western parts of Poland which is, in part, explained by the presence of the

Ukrainian minority in Poland<sup>4</sup> (Fihel 2008). Ukrainians also prevail among foreigners who are granted with Polish citizenship<sup>5</sup>.

One should, however, realize that the characteristic feature of Poland is a ‘suspended immigration’. Expectations expressed yet at the turn of the century, that Poland had been smoothly becoming an immigration country, seem to be precocious. At the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Poland is still ‘caught in between sending, receiving and being a place of transit for migrants’ (Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2007). It might be said that the predominant category of arrivals constitute shuttle or circular migrants from the former Soviet Union with Ukraine in the lead. They often find employment in construction and agricultural sectors and domestic/caretaking services, therefore, in sectors showing a stable demand for unskilled or skilled low-paid workers. It refers both to immigrants who work on a regular and irregular basis. The presence of irregular migrants is tolerated by Polish society and a significant factor is the large acceptance of a shadow economy among Poles (Gardawski 2003; Gmaj 2005).

Due to relatively low economic attractiveness for foreigners, especially in comparison with other parts of the EU, Poland is not perceived as a place suitable for longer stay or settlement. Although the economic success measured by its GDP growth rates is undisputable, the remuneration levels and the living conditions are not encouraging enough to attract immigrants accompanied by their families on a large scale. For the majority of immigrants it is much more reasonable to spend money in Ukraine than to undertake an effort of settlement in Poland. According to a study published by the Ukrainian Center for Social Reform and Derzhkomstat, a state statistics agency (2008), the number of Ukrainian citizens who crossed the state border at least once in the previous 39 months in search of work amounted to nearly 1,500,000 (in other words 5.1% of Ukraine’s able-bodied adult population). Of these, 7.4 % went to Poland (Każmierkiewicz et al. 2009)<sup>6</sup>.

Immigrants often find employment in the shadow economy, however they cross borders legally on the basis of tourist visas or invitations. Visas issued by Polish Consulates for Ukrainian citizens constitute approximately half of 1, 2 million visas issued annually all over the world (<http://www.kijow.polemb.net/index.php?document=356>). Due to the entrance into the Schengen Zone the rate of refusals increased from approximately 1 % to 3 %.<sup>7</sup>

Table 2. Ukrainian citizens who received an invitation to come to Poland

2006				2007				2008				2009			
A	B	C	Total	A	B	C	Total	A	B	C	Total	A	B	C	Total
8120	178	143	8441	8329	285	268	8882	21922	1663	1231	24816	24 792	2 016	818	27 596

A - from a Polish citizen.

B- from a foreigner living legally in Poland for at least 5 years.

C - from a legal institution and organization

Source: Office for Foreigners

<sup>4</sup> After the second world war Ukrainians who did not move to the USSR and who were Polish citizens were compulsorily resettled to the areas attached to Poland as a consequence of the war.

<sup>5</sup> e.g. in 2003 – 431 Ukrainians received the Polish citizenship and the total number of foreigners granted with it was 1471, in 2004 538 of 1937; 758 of 2866; in 2006 417 of 989; in 2007 662 of 1528.

<sup>6</sup> External Labor Migration from Ukraine: Key results of selected tracking.

[http://openukraine.org/doc/migration/Brief\\_results\\_UA/Libanova.doc](http://openukraine.org/doc/migration/Brief_results_UA/Libanova.doc) . Quoted after Kaźmierkiewicz et al.

<sup>7</sup> [http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/StenoInter6.nsf/0/4CD987B8FEAC48C125746C00573E17/\\$file/16\\_aneks\\_cz2.pdf](http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/StenoInter6.nsf/0/4CD987B8FEAC48C125746C00573E17/$file/16_aneks_cz2.pdf) : 488

Table 3. Visas issued to Ukrainians by the Voivods.

2006				2007			
Working visa	Stay visa	transit	total	Working visa	Stay visa	Transit visa	total
2	3 072	-	3 074	14	4 364	-	4 378

Source: Office for Foreigners

Table 4. Ukrainian citizens who received an entry visa to Poland and a Schengen visa issued by the Voivods

	Total	an entry visa to Poland	a Schengen visa
2009	6,172	5,645	527
2008	5,934	5,440	494

Source: Office for Foreigners

According to official data<sup>8</sup>, Ukrainians were granted with approximately 3,000 – 6,000 work permits annually while the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimated that approximately 300,000 Ukrainian citizens worked in Poland (Jaroszewicz & Szerepka 2007: 90). The number of Ukrainians, which from July 20<sup>th</sup> 2007 reached access to the Polish labour market without need of a work permit, are also lower. Three ordinances of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy (issued in the years 2006–2008<sup>9</sup>) open possibilities for foreigners originating from neighbouring countries who want to work legally in Poland for a few months per year. On their basis, from July 20<sup>th</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007 around 22,000 employer declarations issued for Ukrainian citizens were registered. Following this trend, in 2008 92% of all 156,000 which makes 143,500, and in 2009 the amount grew to 96% of all 190,000 employer declarations issued for Ukrainians, which adds up to 181,000 (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy data). However, the number of Ukrainian citizens who actually reached an employer was not monitored. Similarly, data on those who abandoned their place of employment in order to work elsewhere in Poland or further west was not collected. Regarding economic sectors, the vast majority of declarations are registered in agriculture and construction.

In 2008 9, 433 ( 3, 270 females, 6,163 males) Ukrainian citizens were denied entry onto Polish territory by the chief of Border Guards. In the year 2009 there were 12,830 of such cases. Ukrainians constitute the predominant national category of foreigners who are refused entry constituting annually for approximately 50 % of such refusals.

Table 5. Ukrainian citizens who received decisions on expulsion.

2006			2007			2008			2009		
females	males	total	females	males	total	females	males	total	females	males	total
1,069	1,153	2,222	682	859	1,541	1,031	1,712	2,743			803

Source: Office for Foreigners

<sup>8</sup> 2005 – 2,897; 2006 – 3533; 2007 – 4,750; 2008 – 6,321 (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy data )

<sup>9</sup> On basis of the one dated from August 30, 2006 foreigners originating from neighbouring countries do not need a work permit do undertake three months employment (in the course of 6 months) in agriculture and, the period of employment cannot exceed six months in the course of 12 months. On basis of the one dated from June 27, 2007 foreigners originating from neighbouring countries (Ukraine, Byelorussia, Russian Federation) do not need a work permit do undertake three months employment (in the course of 6 months) in all sectors and, the period of employment cannot exceed six months in the course of 12 months. On basis of ordinance signed January 29, 2008, coming into force on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 foreigners originating from neighbouring countries (Ukraine, Byelorussia, Russian Federation) do not need a work permit do undertake six months employment (in the course of 12 months), starting with the first day of their first entrance to Poland.

Table 6. Ukrainian citizens who received orders to abandon the territory of Poland

2006	2007	2008	2009
5,823	6,216	2,700	4,528

Source: Office for Foreigners

### **3. Review of studies on circular migration**

Until the late eighties of the previous century, international mobility of the USSR citizens was strictly regulated and scarce. Due to the restrictive policy, individual trips other than official tours were practically excluded. When Ukraine achieved its independence, and in particular when permits for going abroad were abolished in 1993, migration has become beyond the state control. The Growth of unemployment, degradation of life conditions and profits forming petty trade accompanied with the presence of higher salaries in Poland led to the mass mobility of Ukrainian citizens. Until the late nineties, the main economic activity undertaken by Ukrainians was trade (Iglicka, Sword 1999).

During their short stays in Poland (usually not longer than a week) Ukrainians tried to sell commodities directly to local markets or to the agents who were familiar to them. Gradually, due to the informal contacts established during these short stays in Poland and thanks to direct international bus connections and accommodation provided especially for Eastern “tourists”, periods of their stay in Poland had extended and more distant Polish regions were explored. Types of specialization were beginning to be observed: some Ukrainians started selling goods, bought in warehouses in Poland, at local market places, while to others were involved in trans-border transport of goods. These activities were predominantly informal (Iglicka 1999). The best-known Polish bazaar, also being the biggest one in Europe, used to be situated in the center of Warsaw. It was called “Jarmark Europa” (Europe Market) and it was located on the huge stadium constructed in the 1950ties. In 2009, it was replaced by a new national stadium built especially for EURO 2012. Warsaw has regular and efficient bus and rail connections with Polish provinces and the East. It is also in the center of an extensive road network giving both suppliers and customers (including wholesalers) an easy access to the market (Sword 1999).

On the basis of data gathered within the ethno-survey conducted in the mid-nineties, four categories of Ukrainian migrants, who travel to Poland because of insufficient income in Ukraine, were distinguished. The first category consisted of poor, low skilled, older and economically inactive people trying to survive. The second one consisted of middle-aged people who were financially and professionally stable before the economic transition, however as a result of reforms they were threatened by degradation. Trips to Poland were a strategy of keeping the life standards that they got used to, including their social position. The third group was constituted by highly skilled professionals who due to the unfortunate situation, had financial problems. After overcoming them they would return to Ukraine. The last category describes entrepreneurial young people – students or University graduates – who took advantage of the difference between prices in Poland and Ukraine in order to accumulate money and start their own business. What should be stressed is that this division described above is fluent and people might have moved between categories (Okólski 1997).

This kind of mobility that is best described as shuttle-like was possible due to a non-visa entrance. As a purpose of their visit in Poland, Ukrainians usually declared a tourist one, although their real aim was trade (Iglicka, Sword 1999; Iglicka 1999, Sword 1999; Okólski 1997).

Until the late nineties, trade was the main activity undertaken by Ukrainian citizens in Poland. Employment, predominantly irregular, was the less preferable option (Okólski 1997, Konieczna 2000). However, most probably, as a result of the economic crisis in Russia (1998), profitability of this form of economic activity decreased. Therefore, Ukrainian immigrants started working on construction, renovation and agriculture. They also got engaged in the domestic services sector. That meant that the

length of their stay in Poland extended in comparison to few day trips. Finally, trade was replaced by short term employment as the main economic activity of Ukrainian citizens in Poland. Migrants situated in the less favorable segment of the labour market chose activities that were not attractive for Polish workers ( Koniczna 2000; Iglicka 2001a).

Since the beginning of the economic transformation, an ethnic division characterized the foreign labour market in Poland. Only a small part of the Eastern flow could find employment in the primary labour market. The majority of Ukrainians who found legal jobs were hired in agriculture, forestry, industry and construction. However, the predominant category was constituted by unskilled workers, who found illegal employment in the secondary labour market (Iglicka 2000).

It was observed that migrants constituted a stable seasonal labour force arriving to the same farms every year (Antoniewski 1997, 2002). More recent research also confirmed that the strategy of short term employment and shuttle migration is the one predominating among Ukrainian citizens working in Poland. This way, they adapt to the demand on the Polish labour market. This strategy allows them to enter and survive on the Polish labour market (Bieniecki, Pawlak 2009).

One can observe certain institutionalized practices that accompany the circular form of labour force mobility. They include: conveying of a living accommodation and job. Migrants are often adapted to the Polish realities but they do not stay in Poland constantly. However, as it was written above, they work for the same employer and they belong to certain social networks consisting of both Ukrainians and Poles. A crucial role is played by a “driver” who is a contact person and a mediator between potential employers and seasonal employees. Frequently, he offers complex migration services and transport to/from and within Poland, which is just a final step. Other crucial elements of the Polish labour market landscape are „employment exchanges” situated in the areas where one observes stable demand for seasonal or occasional employment (Antoniewski 1997, 2002; Adamiec 2008; Bieniecki, Pawlak 2009). What is interesting about this institution is the sometimes observed sex division of available jobs. Men are offered with work on construction, renovation, clearing up gardens, and loading/unloading or any other jobs requiring physical strength. Women are offered with the larger range of jobs: taking care of ill, elderly people and children, cleaning, picking fruits and vegetables, and working in the processing industry. In specific situations they are also hired for male jobs (Adamiec 2008). Remuneration is differentiated and depends on the duration and kind of job.

Research which was conducted on demand for domestic services (Golinowska 2004) exemplified labour market segmentation by sex and ethnicity. Female immigrants originating mainly from Ukraine (but also from Belarus and the Russian Federation) find employment in this sector, usually as part of the shadow economy. According to the survey conducted in 2001, approximately 925, 000 of Polish households employed domestic service workers. Of those, 92,500 employed foreigners. The range of jobs undertaken by foreigners - cleaning, nursing children and elderly or ill people – indicates that they substitute Polish women in their traditional roles of housewives. Foreign females are also employed by rural households and then parts of their duties refer to assisting with agricultural work undertaken by household members.

The predominance of Ukrainian females within the frames of domestic services is so significant that the label “Ukrainian lady” has become nearly a synonym of a foreign housekeeper in Poland. They are hired mainly because they are cheaper but also because they work hard and are ready to work flexible hours. It is related to the aim of their stay in Poland – quick accumulation of financial resources. Women undertaking this kind of employment have usually secondary or vocational education and they start their circular migration due to unemployment or insolvency of their Ukrainian employers (Bojar et al. 2005). However, among these female migrants one can also find women with higher education degrees. What is common for all of them is motivation – for supporting family and children especially. In particular, accumulating money for their education or responding to needs that could not have been fulfilled without additional money from migration – e.g.

reconstruction, household goods. Thanks to circular mobility they can spend a part of the year taking care of their family in Ukraine (Slany, Małek 2006)

Their dwelling-place in Poland is connected with their type of duties. Women engaged in cleaning usually share hired flats with other migrants. They usually work for several individual employers trying to clean as much flats/houses as possible. References exchanged between Poles are crucial for their economic success. And it is not just the case of the quality of their work. It is rather related to trust since they often receive keys to the flats that they clean in order to work when owners are out. This category of migrants usually stays in Poland for three months (on the basis of tourist visas). In the periods of their absence in Poland they are replaced by relatives or acquaintances. Women replace each other since they do not want to lose their job. A distinct category of female immigrants is constituted by Ukrainians looking after children and elderly or ill people. Their contacts with employers are very intensive, some of them even live with them. It is estimated that approximately 15 % of Ukrainians working in the segment of domestic services live with their Polish employers. It is observed that this type of work induces social isolation and sometimes exposes migrants to abuse from the employer's side (Bojar et al. 2005). The differences in the situations of live-in and non-live-in domestic workers might be also analyzed from the risk theory perspective. Immigration for the non-live-in workers is initially associated with greater risk, however relatively quickly, they develop social networks that lead to a sense of stabilization. Although women taking up employment with accommodation in the first phase attain a sense of security, when losing their job they also lose their home at the same time, which amounts to double the risk. What is more, living with the employer results in less well-developed networks and resources, as a result these immigrants tend to have more difficulties returning to the labour market. When utilizing the risk theory it might be concluded that Ukrainian female migrants replace the economic and other risks present in Ukraine with other risks related to irregular migration. However, they do not associate migration to Poland with a high risk, and due to geographical proximity special financial expenses are not required either (Kindler 2006).

#### **4. Integration and Reintegration Policies**

In Poland, generally, the state policy towards foreigners is the policy of “closed doors”, there is no policy directed towards these foreigners who enter Poland and towards those who want to settle here. (Boski 2008). So far, integration efforts concerning immigrants have been offered by the state only in case of immigrants seeking international protection<sup>10</sup> in Poland or repatriates. The state strategy for integration is intended to be a part of a broadly conceived migration policy of the country and Polish migration policy has been in the constant process of development. Therefore, attracting foreign seasonal workers, from countries with small cultural distances (Eastern neighbours), mainly Ukrainians, who do not cause cultural tension seems to be a state strategy.

Activation of financial support from the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals, gave NGOs the opportunity to create an offer of free of charge services directed to immigrants<sup>11</sup>. They included classes of Polish language, law and psychological assistance, vocational guidance, etc. They also organize the space for immigrant meetings. In the case of Ukrainian migration it is expected that NGOs will unburden the Ukrainian Church

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<sup>10</sup> Since May 29, 2008 a revised Act on Providing Protection to Foreigners on the Territory of the Republic of Poland came into force. The revised act introduced an institution of supplementary protection for asylum seekers. This form is accompanied by the Individual Integration Programme, which earlier was offered only to refugees. .

<sup>11</sup> E.g. Centrum Powitania w Warszawie (Welcome Center in Warsaw) , Fundacja Rozwoju „Bez Granic” (Foundation ‘No Borders’)

in some activities that were not religious services but kinds of social assistance for worshippers. Since these initiatives are relatively newly emerging, there are now studies evaluating their efficiency. However, circular migrants are at least a part of their beneficiaries.

The majority of immigrants do not treat Poland as a country for settlement. Many of them are employed in the secondary labour market. Their incomes are not sufficient enough to bring their families to Poland but still they send an important part of their family budget to their homeland. Circular migration is an often observed phenomenon. It seems, though, that a state strategy of attracting seasonal workers responds to potential supply. It should be stressed that the fundamental regulations on the employment of immigrants aims to protect the domestic labour force.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly to Poland, Ukraine still does not have a normative document that would establish the foundations of the country's migration policy, recognizing its goals, objectives, mechanisms and instruments. Its migration policy is shaped by pressure exerted by various circumstances (external factors) rather than by deep and elaborated calculations, assessments and predictions (Malynovska 2003). Although international institutions give Ukraine's legislation high marks for being one of the most evolved among CIS countries, still, migration policy and migration legislation have never been an area of priority for many of Ukraine's Governments (Każmierkiewicz et al. 2009).

So far the only group that received real support from the Ukrainian state were people deported because of their nationality (during USSR times). The programs approved at a high level (Decision of the Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine of 18 March 1996 on Realization of Measures for the solution of Socio-Economic and Humanitarian Problems in the Crimean Autonomous Republic) were implemented and fanatically ensured. Attention was also paid to integrating and adapting repatriates to Ukrainian society. Many ethnic Ukrainians (and other nationalities) and one-time emigrants from Ukraine, who left their places of residence in Transcaucasia and Central Asia wanting to return to Ukraine, immigrated to Russia instead of Ukraine because of the Russian policy supporting these immigrants (Malynovska 2003).

The search for articles documenting reintegration policies, services or opportunities for the return of migrants to Ukraine proved fruitless. We found a Caritas report on its own efforts to support migrants returning to Ukraine from Belgium. The report offers no analysis of the situation on the ground in Ukraine. Caritas reports what kind of assistance was expected by returnees.

<b>What kind of help would you like to receive?</b> (17 interviewees - more than one answer possible)	<b>Frequency of answers given</b>
Medical assistance in Ukraine	10 x
Help with finding work	3 x
Housing in Ukraine	2 x
Training and courses	3 x
Contact with social services in Ukraine and assistance	6 x
Contact with family members (from Belgium, by telephone)	5 x
Accompaniment to the Embassy, to the airport, etc.	2 x

Return migrants often request medical care not only for themselves, but also for their children (newborn babies, sick daughters at home, etc.). According to Ukrainian social legislation, only people who are registered in the district of the hospital receive free treatment, which is often a problem for

<sup>12</sup> Act on promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions of August 2004. It describes the procedure of obtaining work permit and defines which categories of foreigners have free access to the Polish Labour Market. Ministry of the Interior (19.06.2007).



returnees. Caritas Ukraine cooperates with a regional hospital in Kiev so that people who do not (yet) have official registration or proof of identity can nonetheless receive free treatment there.

## **5. Concluding Remarks**

### **- What are the most interesting questions to inquire further with policy makers and circular migrants?**

One of the main challenges for both Poland and Ukraine is a decline of population due to natural decrees and emigration. Circular migration may allow for the effective matching of supply and demand for the migrant labour force without necessarily creating higher rates of permanent migration. It seems though that circular migration is a form beneficial to both countries. For Poland it responds to a demand for seasonal workers, for Ukraine it does not occur in a permanent loss of population and provides remittances for the families left at home<sup>13</sup>. When considering the continuous opening of the Polish Labour market for seasonal workers, it seems that attracting foreign seasonal workers, from countries with small cultural distance, mainly Ukrainians, who do not cause cultural tension, seems to be a state strategy. On the other hand, the majority of immigrants do not treat Poland as a settlement country therefore the strategy responds to potential supply. **Therefore the questions to enquire further are:**

- **Whether Poland and Ukraine have different priorities with regards to circular migration or whether their priorities are matching.**
- **What kind of policies would influence this circularity (e.g. a short term visa with repeated entries for employment in specific sectors of the labour market)?**

The minor scale of immigration to Poland and other important social and political problems resulted in the situation that actual integration with the hosting society comes about as a result of a combination of non-institutional factors. In the case of circular migrants, their social contacts with Poles, that could create opportunity for integration, are rather limited by their main aim - accumulating money and returning home. Their irregular status is another factor restraining their integration process.

- **It is an open question what their needs are?**
- **Whether they would be interested in any integration programs?**

These questions refer to all seasonal workers, not only those employed on irregular basis.

Migrants are left on their own in Poland. There are no *de facto* structures in place to help people navigate employment and make sure their rights are respected, other than a handful of NGOs upon which savvy migrants sometimes stumble upon. Thus when migrants want to change jobs, there is no coordinating office for migrant workers that assists them in finding legal employment with dignity. Instead, they are often forced to result to illegal employment with no corresponding rights, all the while having the right to a legal stay in Poland (visas).

Cases of abuse from the employers' side, reported by media especially in sector of construction, proves that immigrants urgently need information regarding Polish labour law regulations and working conditions and free legal assistance (in Ukrainian and Russian). At present, migrants are left entirely to themselves to figure out employment issues. Neither Polish employers (and here for example PKPP Lewiatan, the association of Polish employers, which campaigns quite regularly to make migration policies less strict, and bemoans the lack of workers and resulting need for migrant workers) nor the Polish government organize job fairs in neither Ukraine or Poland. There is also no structure or office responsible for connecting migrant workers and employers and making

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<sup>13</sup> "Circular migration programs may be an important step in resolving a key migration paradox: there is demand for migrant labor yet often little public support for permanent migration—particularly unskilled migration—in the many European and middle-income CIS countries in demographic decline. Moreover, circular migration may have the potential to facilitate development in migration-sending countries by increasing migrants' human and financial capital, facilitating international skills transfers, building cross-border trade and investment, and preventing the long-term separation of families" (Mansoor, Ali M., Quillin, Bryce 2006: xiii).

sure that the rights and responsibilities of both are in good order. As a result, migrant workers from Ukraine are left to their own devices - and those of their network already in Poland - to find employment, contact the employer for an invitation and find housing once there. As finding a job in another country requires a degree of language and internet ability, and as no government or other organization (like PKPP Lewiatan) assistance is available, many people wanting to work in Poland are forced to result to private companies for help. Such private companies have flourished both in Ukraine and Poland. They offer complete immigration packages for workers including a work invitation, transportation to Poland and employment.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> There were cases when a worker came to Poland having been promised a job at a factory for 800 EURO per month- obviously this was not the case once he arrived here. Or how another worker ended up at a meat factory working 10 hour days with only a 15 minute break, earning 8 zloty an hour, half of which the factory was obliged to pay the middleman private company. With no employment structure for migrants, both the workers and employers lose out, with only the middleman private companies making profits. This has further recourse on migrants' lives- migrants are often left facing abuses against which they are powerless. Private companies frequently do not negotiate insurance while migrants work at high risk jobs. We heard about an immigrant, who was accused of breaking expensive equipment at his job, and as he did not speak Polish and could not appeal to an overseeing body (or union), he could not defend himself and thus could do nothing when his employer took half of his pay to compensate the supposedly broken machinery.

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