

LABOUR MOBILITY BETWEEN BELARUS AND POLAND AS A LOCAL ASPECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATION WITH THE EU

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Abstract: The main purpose of the paper is to define possibilities, advantages and disadvantages of Belarusian labour migration to Poland with particular attention to main determining factors. The research scope includes labour migrants from Belarus who received work permit in Poland through citizenship or residence permit in Poland in 2002–2011.

Keywords: Labour Migration from Belarus to Poland, Determining Factors of Labour Migration, Prediction of the Labour Migration.

МАБІЛЬНАСЦЬ РАБОЧАЙ СІЛЫ ПАМІЖ БЕЛАРУССЮ І ПОЛЬШЧАЙ У ЯКАСЦІ ЛАКАЛЬНАГА АСПЕКТУ РАЗВІЦЦЯ ІНТЭГРАЦЫІ З ЕС

Анотацыя: Асноўная мэта работы - вызначыць магчымасці, перавагі і недахопы беларускай працоўнай міграцыі з Беларусі у Польшчу, звяртаючы асаблівую ўвагу на асноўныя вызначальныя фактары. Рамкі даследавання - працоўныя мігранты з Беларусі, якія атрымалі дазвол на працу ў Польшчы праз від на жыхарства ці грамадзянства з 2002 па 2011 год.

Ключавыя словы: працоўная міграцыя з Беларусі ў Польшчу, вызначальныя фактары працоўнай міграцыі, прагназаванне працоўнай міграцыі.

1. Introduction.

Labour migration is an important part of the relationship between Poland and Belarus. It is important to understand whether labour migration will create opportunities for development of labour mobility between the countries and obtainment of new working experience or instead it will lead to substantial negative demographic consequences in the future such as reduction of Belarusian labour force.

2. Labour migration from Belarus to Poland and its position on Polish labour market

The main factors which attract labour migrants from Belarus to Poland are different socio-economic situations in the Belarus and Poland, geographical location, historical and socio-cultural relationship, similarity of languages, the existence of migration networks, the development of legal framework conditions, situations on labour markets, and migration policy of Poland with respect to neighboring countries. One of the factors which have influence on labour migration flows is the level of economic development of Poland because of which the country is becoming an attractive for migrant workers from Belarus. The ratio of the average wage in Poland and Belarus is more than 2, although this rate decreased in recent years.

Labour migration is also determined by changes in the labour market in Poland and other countries of the EU. Polish labor market is currently characterized by the outflow of the highly skilled and educated professionals to the more developed European countries. The more Poles migrate to the EU, the more labour migrants from neighboring countries including Belarus are potentially welcome to work in Poland. According to the ordinance of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Poland (form 30th of November 2009 based on Mobility Partnership), citizens of the neighboring countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Russian Federation), Moldova and Georgia have the right to work in Poland without the work permit up to 6 months (previously 3 months) during the period of 12 months. However, they must possess a working visa. Polish employers can also employ seasonal workers originating from foreign countries.

Table 1. Types of work permits for foreigners in Poland

Section	Number of work permits for foreigners
Trade (retail and wholesale)	6921
Industry processing	5088
Estate and financial agencies	4131

Section	Number of work permits for foreigners
Construction (building)	3065
Hotels and gastronomic services	2803
Others	7332

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Poland, Annual Policy Report 2009 for Poland. [1]

On the basis of Act of 7 September 2007 on the Polish Card, in 2009 Polish consuls started to issue Polish Cards. Polish Card is a document confirming belonging to the Polish nation. It authorizes to granting long-term residence visa free of charge, crossing the borders of the Republic of Poland, employment on the territory of the Republic of Poland without work permit obligations, benefiting from the education system free of charge, carrying out economic activity in Poland on the same conditions as Polish citizens.

Migrants from Belarus which work in Poland can be divided into two categories: migrants working in the fields requiring highly skilled workers such as financial services, insurance, real estate, healthcare, etc.; migrants which do unskilled job in trade, agriculture, catering, construction, home-based services (Duszczuk and Góra, 2012).

The results of sociological research in Belarus showed that 15,8% of people in Belarus tried to find a work abroad. Short term migration for a few months is more attractive for Belarusians which would like to work abroad (81%) than long term migration for years (47,8%). Only 15,4% of potential labour migrants from Belarus would like to work in Poland. The second popular motive of migration is education (20% of people with immigration attitudes) (Kaczmarczyk and Okolcki, 2008).

In Poland as much as in other countries international mobility has become a domain for well-educated people and there is considerable unemployment among highly educated people (World Economic., 2011). Migration creates 'brain overflow' due to poor employment opportunities for those deciding to migrate and for host countries. Effect of 'brain waste' means that employment of migrants appears far below their professional skills. The great outflow of specialists from Poland is a reason of many sectoral and local-scale shortages. Shortage of workers becomes particularly serious in manufacturing, trade and construction, agriculture.

Labour migration in Poland has both positive and negative aspects. On the one hand, Polish labour migration policy allows using additional labor force from neighboring countries in domestic economy. On the other hand, it may increase competition in the labour market. For Belarus, the negative

aspect of labour migration is draining labor resources from its economy, but transfer of foreign currency to Belarusian households is a positive one. For Belarusian migrants it creates an opportunity to satisfy the economic interests, the acquire new skills, knowledge and apply it. Labour mobility creates opportunities for the diffusion and exchange of knowledge and professional experience in national economies.

Table 1. GDP per capita and labour migration from Belarus to Poland

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>GDP</i> ^{Poland} per capita, current PPP, \$ US	11064,0	11741,4	12700,5	13571,6	14981,8	16372,5	17592,5	18069,2	18981,1
<i>GDP</i> ^{Belarus} per capita, current PPP, \$ US	5865,5	6445,4	7272,5	8562,4	9759,8	10938,4	12554,9	12726,9	13873,5
Foreigners from Belarus who received work permit in Poland by citizenship and period of permit's validity	880	828	664	963	704	1416	1834	2395	1958

Resources: World Economic outlook, September 2011; Demographic yearbook of Poland 2011; Soremi Report for Poland 2007 [3, 5, 7]

4. Conclusion

International labour migration for citizens of Belarus is a way of integration into the world community and receiving new experience. For Belarus it is an opportunity to develop labour mobility and to get benefits from this process. However, migration can drain labor resources from the Belarusian economy. The effect of 'brain waste' which means that highly skilled migrants are employed at low-skilled jobs is possible for Belarusians since less than a third of labour migrants can find a qualified job in Poland. The case of labour migration from Belarus to Poland is interesting because Poland is the largest among neighboring countries-members of the European Union and it is important to understand how this process can affect the development of integration with the EU. We assume that labour migration to Russia is more meaningful from integration point of view.

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