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Labour Immigration to Poland from Eastern European Countries – Podlaskie Voivodship Case Study

Abstract

Nowadays Poland faces a problem of the shortage of domestic labour resources because of the population ageing and emigration of the Poles. It is essential to create a flexible flow of international labour to fulfil the needs of the economy. The principal aim of the paper is the identification of the specificity of labour immigrants from Eastern European countries. The paper is based on the hypothesis that belonging to the culturally and historically similar groups influences the similarity of the pattern of the migration behaviour. The undertaken research method was a critical analysis of literature and desk research of secondary sources. The primary research has covered the selected logistics companies from Bialystok. It was discovered that Ukraine and Belarus are the major suppliers of the international labour in Poland. Though those groups are quite similar, they differ in the selection of occupation and voivodships. To keep the most demanded groups of immigrants in Poland, it is crucial to create financial and non-economic conditions that are better than in their domestic countries and can be comparable to the countries with a higher standard of living, than in Poland. For the employers, the simplification and acceleration of procedures of hiring international employees are needed.

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JEL Classification: F22, F66, J61.

Introduction

It is common sense that liberalization of the rules and regulations for cancellation of visa regimes between countries creates opportunities for the labour migration. As gradual economic growth has been noticed in Poland which is coupled with the shortage of domestic labour resources, the employment immigration has become common. Quality of the working force is one of the key competitive advantages for the sustainable development of the country. That is why Poland requires international labour force to sustain economic development. The liberalization of regulations on the employment of foreigners introduced since 2008 has influenced both the increase in the number of applications submitted by employers and the number of work permits (Duszczyk 2014).

In most cases, the main direction of migration is towards countries with more developed economies from the countries with a lower level of development (Cieślińska 2011). Due to its history and geographical location Poland is an attractive destination for labour immigration from Eastern European countries, specifically Ukraine and Belarus (Jarecki 2017). The principal aim of this paper is the identification of the specificity of labour immigrants from Eastern European countries by analysing how labour force representatives vary according to their occupation, distribution around Poland, and other factors. The paper is based on the hypothesis that belonging to culturally and historically similar groups influences the similarity of the pattern of the migration behaviour.

As for the research methods, critical analysis of literature was undertaken as well as desk research of secondary sources such as research reports and analysis of statistical data from the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, National Bank of Poland, and local job centres in Ukraine and Belarus. The primary research covered the selected logistics companies from Białystok which employ an almost equal number of Polish and international employees.

1. Theoretical Overview of the Literature of the Labour Market Migration

Over the years, labour migration has been a relevant topic for researchers. It is so because over the previous century countries and economies became more open to international cooperation. All the levels of the world's economy turn out to be involved in the globalization processes. Due to the legal changes (such as the Single European Act), and technological changes (such as lower costs of providing parts, maintenance and customer service from abroad) capital mobility, including the human capital, has increased across the world (International Labour Organisation 2017). Currently, around 232 million people live outside their country of origin and approximately 150 million of them are immigrant workers (Dotzel 2017, 678).

Labour migration can be defined as the movement of the labour force who left their country of origin for socio-economic reasons with an intention to work in another country, naturally including a change of residence (Pichelmann 2004, 35–56). According to Ferris, migration could happen due to changes in the economy or changes in personal status (Ferris 1965, 310–311). Among the factors, influencing the decision to migrate the following groups can be distinguished: favourable (encouraging), unfavourable (discouraging), and neutral – that is true both for a country of origin and a country of destination (Sinha 2005, 403–414). Ciarniene and Kumpikaite have suggested the following clustering of the factors:

- Pull factors: higher income level, better availability of employment, political stability, lower taxation, better education facilities, better medical facilities, national prestige, better climate, better behaviour among people, religious tolerance, and family reasons.
- Push factors: war or another armed conflict, famine or drought, poverty, political corruption, disagreement with politics, religious fundamentalism or religious intolerance, lack of employment opportunities, lack of various rights, natural disasters, a goal of spreading one's own culture and religion (Ciarniene 2011, 527–533).

Migration processes have effects both on the country of origin and on the receiving country (Sinha 2005, 403–414). For instance, the negative consequence of emigration can be an outflow of the labour force and an imbalance of the young and aged population. The positive consequence can be the reduction of pressure on the

population and decreasing unemployment. And for receiving country immigration, on the one hand, it can increase production level or overcome the shortage of the labour force, but on the other hand, it can reduce employment opportunities for the local inhabitants or decrease the quality of the labour force. Governments of developed economies have faced challenges because the longevity of residents of their countries has increased. As a result of the growth of population number over the usual retirement age there is a growing demand for pensions and health services that must be supported by the dropping share of the working age population (Addison 2014, 4–11). In this case, immigration can be a solution to maintain the needed level of economic production and thus produce enough financial resources.

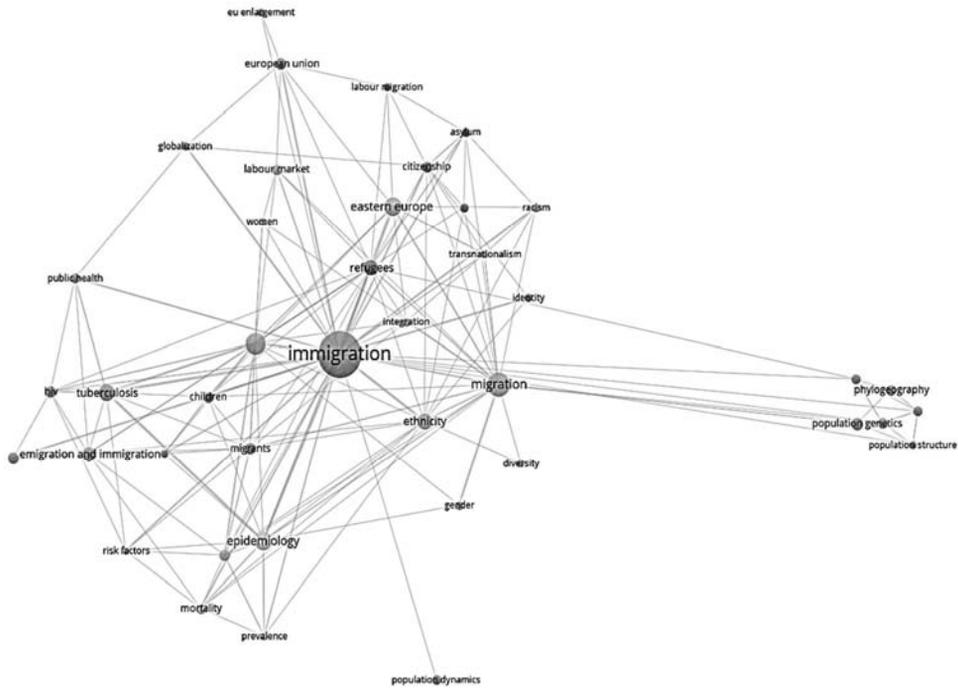
2. Methodology

The current article is based on the two-step analysis: secondary and primary research. Initially, desk research was conducted in order to analyse the key trends in the labour migration to Poland, specifically from Eastern European countries. The analysis is focused on the economic immigrants from Belarus and Ukraine because these groups are the most significant from the point of view of their size. The key objective of the research is the identification of reasons for immigration to Poland from Eastern European countries. The key sources of information for the desk-research analysis are the website of Polish Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy (MRPiPS 2018), internet-portal for immigrants in Poland – Migrant Info (Migrant Info 2017), job centres of Belarus (Mintrud 2018) and Ukraine (DCZ 2018), and others.

At the first stage of the identification of the key trends in terms of immigration from Eastern European countries, the authors used a basic technique of the bibliometric analysis of scientific literature from the Scopus database. The examined keywords were: immigration and Eastern Europe. Those phrases were identified in the articles' titles, abstracts and among keywords. As a result, the map visible in Figure 1 was generated by the VOSviewer software.

The identified research trends are connected with widely understood health issues of immigrants, population structure, diversity and ethnicity created by migration processes, geopolitical phenomena of refugees' flows as well as labour migration and identity problems. Another research trend is also the analysis of immigration from Eastern Europe as a result of globalisation and the EU enlargement.

Figure 1: Map of research trends based on the co-occurrence of the authors' keywords in publications referring to immigration from Eastern Europe from the Scopus database



Source: own elaboration based on the VOSviewer software.

Most of the reasons for migration are economic (Mihi-Ramirez 2014, 522–526), though as it is presented above other factors can be significant as well as health issues, integration, identity etc. That is why for the purpose of the current survey additionally were studied general life values and preferences in the welfare packages of Belarusians and Ukrainians. The key hypothesis of the current research is that for the selection of the region of immigration non-economic factors play an important role for the international employees.

One limitation of our desk research is the fact that statistics do not include international employees who:

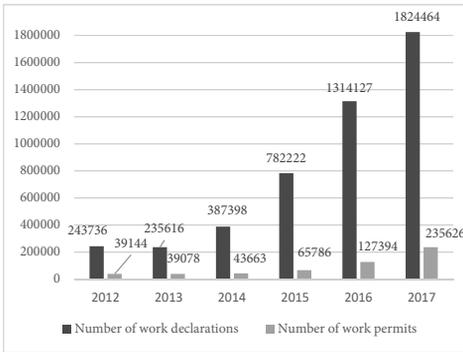
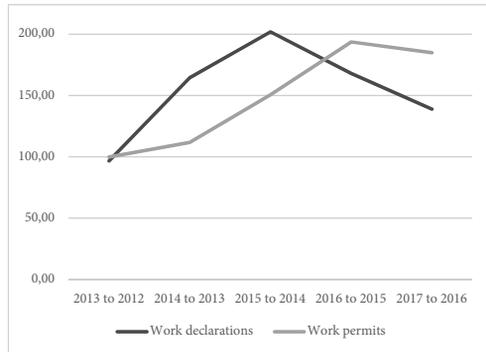
- have Polish citizenship,
- are holders of “Polish card”,
- have a permanent resident permit in Poland,
- have a long-term EU resident-permit,
- have a temporary resident permit, that was not issued by a particular employer,
- are full-time working students.

In other words, the statistical data that was analysed for the purpose of the current paper included those international workers who do not have a legal access to the Polish labour market. Such limitation arises from the fact that the representatives of the five above groups do not have to register separately in any kind of organisations that control and regulate the Polish labour market.

As the second step, a survey was conducted. It is based on three logistics companies from Bialystok, which employ both Polish and international workers from Eastern European countries. The data gathering technique was a „paper and pencil interview” and it covered 59 respondents. The survey was conducted in March–May 2018 and consisted of two parts: a survey for employees and survey for managers and business owners because there was a need to assess the situation from different perspectives.

3. Desk-research Analysis of the Labour Immigration Trends in Poland on the Example of Eastern European Countries

According to the regulations, the major legal forms of employment for international employees in Poland are work permits and work declarations. Most of the international workers work in Poland on the basis of work permits. A work permit is a document that authorizes a foreigner to work legally in Poland. It indicates the company that entrusts the execution of work to the foreigner and the position or the type of work which the foreigner is to perform (Migrant Info 2017). It means that the work is treated as legal only if the international worker does the job identified in the permit. Work permits are required for the international workers who are not from the nations of the EU Member States. The second form, that is available for the strictly limited group of countries, is called “Declaration on entrusting work to a foreigner”. Citizens of Belarus, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the Republic of Armenia may take up employment without obtaining a work permit for a period not exceeding 6 months within 12 consecutive months on the basis of a declaration of entrusting work to a foreigner (Migrant Info 2017).

Figure 2A. Dynamics of the number of work declarations and work permits in 2012–2017**Figure 2B. Index of growth of the number of work declarations and work permits in 2012–2017, %**

Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

As the figure 2A shows, both the absolute number of work declarations and work permits is constantly growing within the analysed period of time, though the number of work declarations is much higher. For both of the indicators the highest number was registered in 2017 – 1,824,464 and 235,626 consequently. At the same time, the biggest difference was registered in 2015 – the number of the work declarations was almost 12 times higher than the number of work permits, the smallest – in 2013 – when the number of work declarations was almost 6 times higher than the number of work permits. Though both of the indicators are increasing, the index of growth of the work declarations has started to decrease after 2015 and the index of growth of the number of work permits has slowed down after 2016. From 2012 to 2015 the index of growth of the work declarations was higher, though in 2016 and 2017 the index of growth of the number of work permits has changed more significantly.

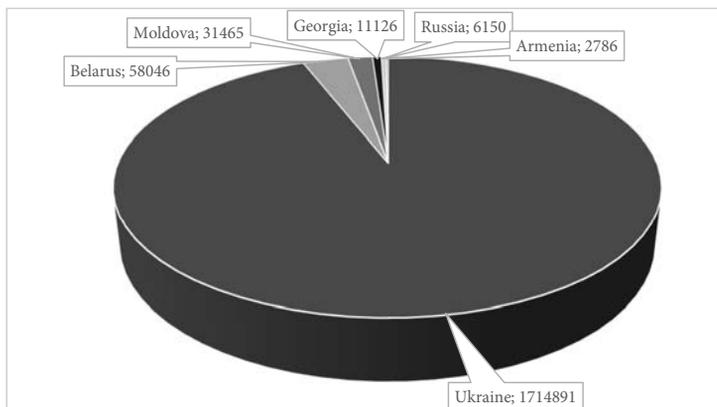
Out of total 235,626 work permits issued in 2017, 81.72% belonged to Ukrainians, 4.46% to Belarusians, 3.00% to Nepalese, 1.67% to Indians, 1.61 to Moldavians, 1.02% to Bengali (MRPiPS 2018). The most common countries of origin for labour immigration to Poland on the basis of work permits are Eastern European and former USSR countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan) and the Asian countries (Nepal, India, Bangladesh, China, Vietnam). It is interesting to observe that in the top-20 there is the USA because the level of economic development and in total living standards in this country is higher.

Table 1: Top 20 immigrant countries in 2017 according to the number of work permits

No	Citizenship	Number of work permits issued	No	Citizenship	Number of work permits issued
1	Ukraine	192,547	11	China	1,179
2	Belarus	10,518	12	Serbia	878
3	Nepal	7,075	13	Phillipenes	733
4	India	3,938	14	Vietnam	658
5	Moldova	3,792	15	Kosovo	640
6	Bangladesh	2,412	16	Pakistan	427
7	Russia	1,433	17	USA	405
8	Uzbekistan	1,409	18	Georgia	398
9	Azerbaijan	1,336	19	Brazil	354
10	Turkey	1,228	20	Tajikistan	353

Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

According to Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy data, that is represented in Figure 3, the highest number of the work declarations in 2017 was issued for Ukraine (1,714,891 or 93.33% of total number) and for Belarus (58,046 or 3.18%) (MRPiPS 2018). Both of these countries are leading in the supply of the labour immigrants. It can be suggested that the domination of Ukraine and Belarus is due to the geographical and cultural similarity with Poland, though the crisis and military conflict in Ukraine contributed to the especially high immigration inflow.

Figure 3: The structure of work declarations issued in 2017

Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

Table 2: Number of work declarations and work permits issued in 2017

Country	Number of work declarations	Number of work permits	Total number of registered working immigrants
Ukraine	1,714,891	192,547	1,907,438
Belarus	58,046	10,518	68,564
Moldova	31,465	3,792	35,257
Georgia	11,126	398	11,524
Russia	6,150	1,433	7,583
Armenia	2,786	181	2,967
Total of this group	1,824,464	208,869	2,033,333

Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

Besides the separate information about work permits and work declarations, it worth to analyse the immigration flows in common, that is represented in Table 2. To sum up, the number of the work declarations and work permits issued in 2017 for countries that are eligible for getting the work declarations, it appears that in total for those countries there were 2,033,333 allowance documents issued, and 89.72% of them were for the work declarations. In all of the groups, Ukraine and Belarus are the leaders. Though the number of the work permits for Nepal (7,075) and India (3,938) lead them to the third and fourth positions, the total number of the allowance documents for Moldova (35,257), Georgia (11,524) and Russia (7,583) exceeds that amount. Only the total number of the allowance documents for Armenia (2,967) is lower.

Figure 4: Structure of distribution of selected groups of immigrants around Polish voivodeships in 2017 according to the number of work permits

* The darker is colour, the more work permits issued.

Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

As the figures above show, most of the work permits for international employees were issued for the Mazowieckie Voivodship (31.95% of all work permits issued), 72.42% of those permits were issued for Ukrainians and 6.22% for Belarusians (MRPiPS 2018). The smallest number of work permits issued was in Podkarpackie (1.58%), Swietokrzyskie (1.38%), Podlaskie (1.28%). Speaking about Ukrainians, the biggest number of the work permits was issued for Mazowieckie Voivodship (28.31%), Slaskie (10.82%) and Wielkopolskie (9.91%), the smallest number for Swietokrzyskie (1.50%) and Podlaskie (0.78%). For Belarusians, the biggest number of the work permits was issued for Mazowieckie Voivodship (44.52%), Lubelskie (17.20%) and Podlaskie (8.69%), the smallest number for Podkarpackie (0.57%) and Opolskie (0.56%). In general, the maps in Figure 4 show that foreigners from almost all countries (including Ukraine) are more likely to select the central and wealthier regions, while Belarusians work mostly closer Belarus border.

Figure 5: Distribution of the Labour force around Polish regions on the basis of work declarations in 2017



* the darker the colour is, the more work declarations issued.

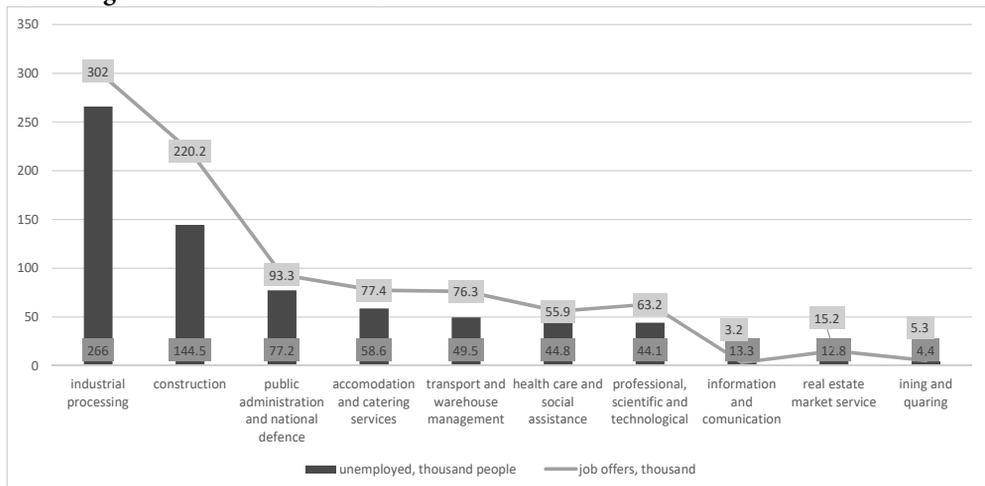
Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

As Figure 5 shows, Mazowieckie region is the main destination for the labour immigrants from the analysed groups – 22.73% of all the immigrants with the work declarations, 22.41% of Ukrainians and 30.73% of Belarusians are registered there. The second Voivodship differs: for most countries including Ukraine it is Dolnoslaskie (11.98% and 12.23% consequently), for Belarus, it is Pomorskie (12.43%). On the third position for all the analysed groups is Wielkopolskie (9.99% for all countries, 10.05% for Ukrainians and 7.96% for Belarus). The fourth position belongs for Ukrainians to Slaskie (8.51%) and for Belarusians to Podlaskie (7.37%). The least frequently selected region for immigration from most of the countries including

Ukraine is Podkarpackie (1% each), and for Belarus Swietokrzyskie (0.78%). On average, the share of the Ukrainians working on the basis of work declarations in each Voivodeship is 92.77% out of all countries of immigration. That is why the total statistics for all the countries look quite similar to the Ukrainian perspective.

The comparison of the geographical distribution of the same groups of countries shows that the most frequently selected voivodship is Mazowieckie and the least frequently selected are Podkarpackie and Swietokrzyskie. However, the second frequently selected regions differ both for the country of origin and the type of allowance document. After analysing the maps more closely it becomes evident that Ukrainians prefer to select the central and wealthier regions while Belarusians select the eastern border regions, closer to Belarus border, though those regions are poorer. Nevertheless, in the case of work declarations considerable share of Belarusian labour immigrants are registered in Pomorskie and Wielkopolskie Voivodships.

Figure 6: The inflow of the number of job-offers and unemployed according to the fields of activities in 2017

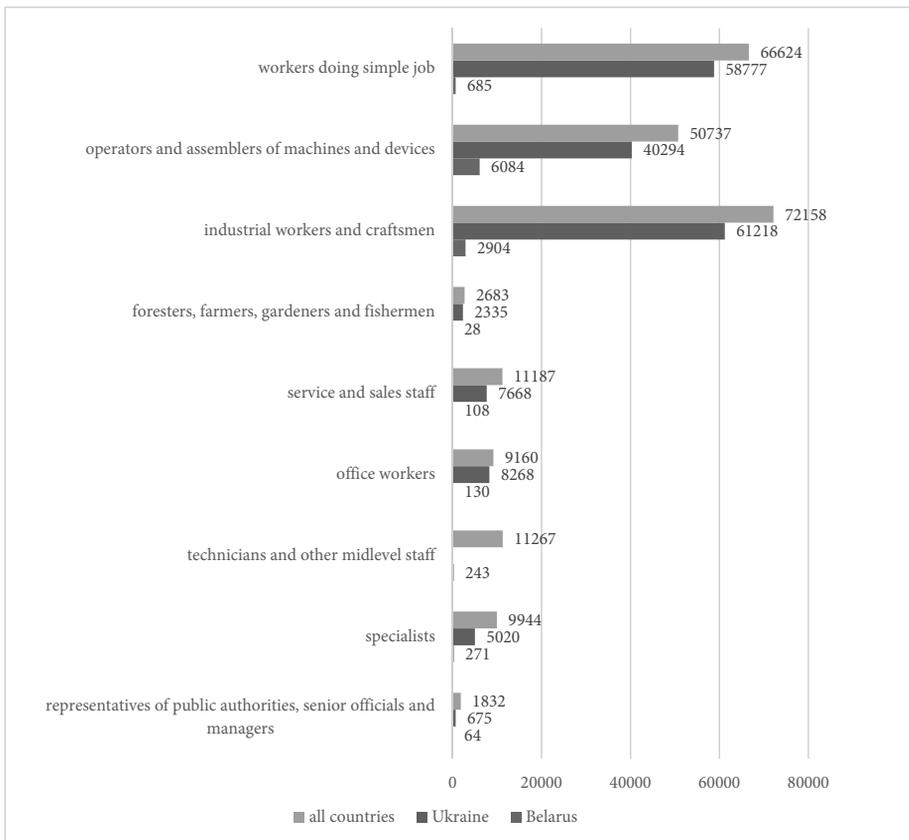


Source: Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, 2018.

Speaking about the proportion between the number of job offers and the number of the unemployed, the data shows, that among operators and assemblers of machines and devices, employees in simple jobs, office workers, industrial workers and craftsmen the influx of job offers exceeded the inflow of the unemployed. In all the other groups, the situation was less favourable. At the same time, among people without a profession, for 300.9 thousand unemployed only 10 job offers were submitted. Concerning particular fields of activities, as Figure 6 shows, the

proportion between the job offers and the number of unemployed was the worst in information and communication (as the number of job offers was 1.74 times higher than the number of unemployed), the construction sector (number of job offers was 1.52 times higher than the number of unemployed) and in the transport and warehouse management (the number of the job offers was 1.54 times higher). The best situation was in the industrial processing (the difference 1.14 times) and in the real estate market service (the difference 1.19 times) (MRPiPS 2018).

Figure 7: Number of work permits issued for the international employees in the selected groups of professions in 2017

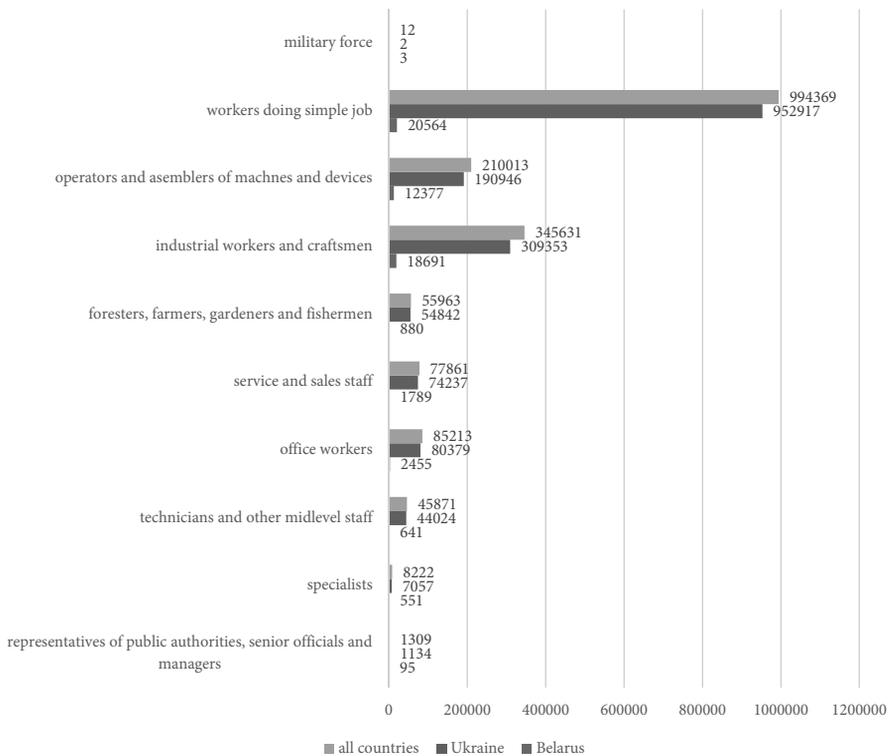


Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

The most frequent groups of professions for application for the work permits, as shown in Figure 7, are “workers doing simple jobs”, “industrial workers and craftsmen”, “operators and assemblers of machines and devices”. For all the countries and Ukraine, the most common profession is “industrial workers and craftsmen”

(30.63% and 31.8% consequently), while for Belarus it was on the second position (27.61%). For Belarus, the most essential group was “operators and assemblers of machines and devices” (57.85%), while for all countries and Ukraine it was on the third position (21.54% and 20.93% consequently). The share of the “workers doing simple jobs” was the following: 28.28% for all countries, 30.53% for Ukraine, and 6.51% for Belarus. The least frequent applications were connected with the specialists and representatives of public authorities, senior officials and managers, foresters, farmers, gardeners and fishermen.

Figure 8. Number of work declarations issued for the international employees in the selected groups of professions in 2017



Source: own elaboration on the basis of sources of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

In 2017 work declarations were issued in 21 types of activities, according to the Polish Classification of Activities, and most of them were connected with “administrative and support services activities” (39.34%), “agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing” (16.79%), “building construction” (13.01%), “manufacturing”

(12.87%) (MRPiPS 2018). Concerning the groups of professions, as it is shown in Figure 8, for all countries including Ukraine and Belarus the most frequent applications for the work declarations were connected with “workers doing simple jobs”, “industrial workers and craftsmen”, “operators and assemblers of machines and devices”, though their shares differ: for the workers doing simple jobs they are equal to 54.5% in all countries, with 55.7% in Ukraine, and 32.2% in Belarus. For the “industrial workers and craftsmen” it was 18.94% in all countries, to 18.04% in Ukraine, to 35.43% in Belarus. For the operators and assemblers of machines and devices it was 11.51% for all countries, 11.13% for Ukraine, 21.32% for Belarus. In all the countries, including Ukraine, it can be observed that there is a considerable domination of the “workers doing simple jobs”, while for Belarus the industrial workers and craftsmen make up a bigger group, though other two groups of professions have comparable shares. The least frequent applications were connected with the “specialists” and “representatives of public authorities, senior officials and managers”.

On the basis of Figures 7 and 8 it can be concluded that both for the work declarations and work permits the most frequently selected types of activities are “workers doing simple jobs”, “industrial workers and craftsmen”, “operators and assemblers of machines and devices”, while the least frequent is “representatives of public authorities, senior officials and managers”. It can be observed that all countries including Ukraine have identical structures of work job preferences. However, the same is true with the analysis of voivodship selection pattern, it can be explained by the domination of this immigrant group in the statistics (average contribution to each profession is 73.22% in the work permits and 92.48% in the work declarations).

One of the reasons why a receiving country could be interested in issuing work declarations and work permits for the international labour force can be the need to cover the lack of local employees. In this case, it turns out that immigrant workers from Belarus and Ukraine cover the lack only partially, most likely they are covering the shortage in the construction sector. Concerning the group of employees doing simple jobs, there was a lack of vacancies for the local Polish unemployed without a profession. This shows the phenomena of the openness of the Polish labour market: immigrant workers are not covering the local demand for labour.

One of the factors, that can influence the decision to migrate, is the values of an immigrant. On the basis of survey, conducted by Buhbe, for the Ukrainians, in particular those of them who are Euro-optimists, among the key values can be named “peace” (51.3%), “the value of human life” (40.1%), “personal freedom” (33.1%), “self-realization” (30.5%) (Buhbe 2017). For the Belarusians the values are “peace

and stability” (66.8%), “economic prosperity” (59.9%), “health and social protection” (54.3%), “security” (43.9%) and “human rights” (40.9%) (ODB 2013). As the data shows, for the immigrants from Eastern European countries the values that can be associated with the quality of life (the value of human life and human rights, peace and stability, and others) are important.

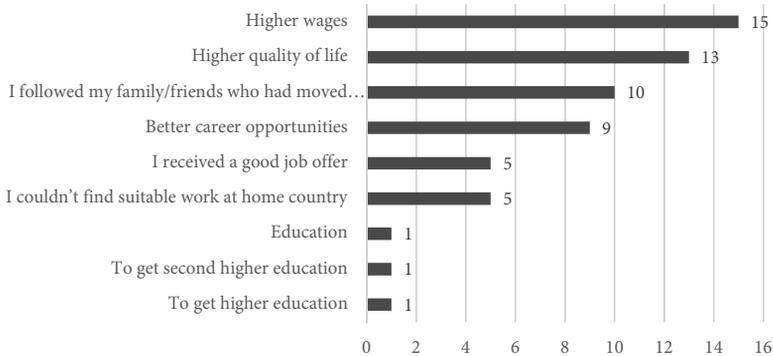
Speaking about the expectations from the employment place, for Ukrainians who took part in the survey organised by Machtakova the following factors are important: transport (81% of the respondents), corporate parties (75%), catering service (69%), payment for telephone connection (51%), and medical insurance (36%) (Machtakova 2012). For Belarusians, according to the job portal *rabota.tyt.by*, the most important elements of welfare package are voluntary health insurance (42.3%), lending for employees (29.9%), free catering (29.2%), education (28.2%), compensation of gym and sports activities (22.2%), and compensation for telephones (20.1%). Though in both cases the surveys’ respondents had to select from the different lists of welfare package options, there are some trends that can be identified: the welfare packages should include benefits from the different spheres, the most demanded benefits are insurance, catering and compensation for transport and phone calls.

4. A Case Study of Companies With International Employees

One of the branches where Poland exhibits a lack of national labour resources is transport and warehouse management (the number of the job offers is 1.54 times higher than the number of unemployed in this branch) (MRPiPS 2018). Though transport and storage industries are showing constant growth; gross value added in this industry in 2017 was up 10.9% compared with the previous year while in 2016 the increase was of 3.7% (Central Statistical Office of Poland 2018). Currently over 630 thousand people are employed in the logistics companies, and additionally, around 50–60 thousand people are self-employed in the sphere of road logistics (Czerniak 2018). As Podlaskie Voivodship Development Strategy 2020 shows, the strategic location on the eastern border of Poland is among the key strength of the region (Eurostat). The capital of Podlaskie Voivodship is Białystok, which is located close to the border with Belarus, on the crossroads for goods transfer from Eastern to Western Europe. As the main financial and economic centre of the region, Białystok

is an attractive destination for labour migration from poorer regions (Grabowiecki, Fiedorczuk 2013, 116). That is why for the case study analysis logistics companies from Bialystok were selected. The common features of the companies are the following: all of them are small enterprises with the number of employees under 49 people; they are young; the origin of the capital is absolutely or partly from the Eastern-European countries; the number of the employees is mixed with the domination of international labour force. In the survey took part 59 respondents from Poland (22 people), Ukraine and Belarus (17 people each) and Russia (3 people); 51 of them are employees and 8 are managers and owners of the business; 45 of them have completed higher education; 16 of them are below 25 years old.

Figure 9: Key reasons for immigration



Source: own elaboration on the basis of the survey's results.

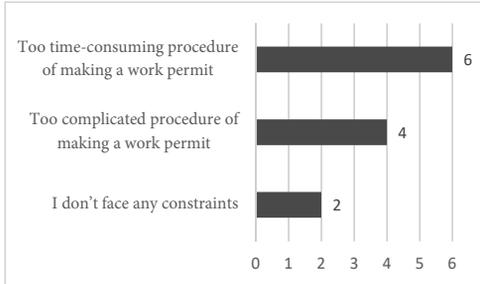
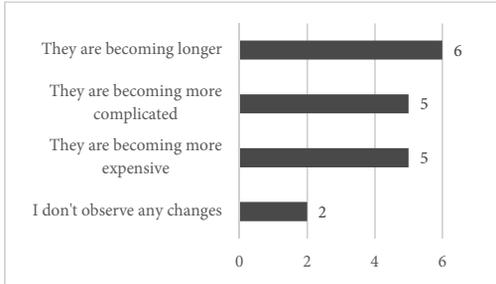
Among other, the international employees were asked about the key reasons for migration (multiple choice was possible). The options for answers included also some connected to non-economic factors: better quality of life, higher career opportunities, education. As it is visible in Figure 9, the most frequent answer was that they have moved because of the higher wages, the second most frequent one was higher quality of life, the third – to follow family and friends who have moved to Poland before. In total, out of 60 answers 25 (or 41.67%) were connected to non-economic motivation.

Table 3: Cross-analysis of reasons for immigration to Poland and intention for further migration

Reason for migration to Poland	Intention to move to another country	Number of answers	Intention to come back to home country	Number of answers
Higher wages	I didn't think about that	6	Yes	4
	Yes, if I get a good job-offer	7	Not sure	6
	No	1	No	5
	Yes, for sure	1		
Better career opportunities	I didn't think about that	2	Not sure	4
	Yes, if I get a good job-offer	4	No	3
	Yes, for sure	1		
I received a good job offer	Yes, if I get a good job-offer	2	Yes	2
	No	1	No	3
	Yes, for sure	2		
Higher quality of life	I didn't think about that	3	Yes	1
	Yes, if I get a good job-offer	8	Not sure	4
	Yes, for sure	2	No	8

Source: own elaboration on the basis of the survey's results.

For the cross-analysis represented in Table 3 the following answers about the reasons for migration were selected: higher wages, better career opportunities, good job offer, higher quality of life. They were selected because they represent the immigrants who have chosen Poland for access to vacancies or the quality of life. The majority of the responses show that the analysed group of immigrants is going to move to another country. Out of 40 answers analysed, 21 show that they would like to move to another country if they get a good job offer. Considering the intention to come back to the home country, out of 40 responses 19 has selected the option "No" and 14 the option "Not sure". This cross-analysis shows that the labour immigrants from the companies are more willing to migrate to other countries than to come back to their home countries, and better job offers play the most important role in this decision.

Figure 10a: Constraints in employment**Figure 10b. The changes in rules, regulations and procedures of employing international workers observed by the managers**

Source: own elaboration on the basis of the survey's results.

To some extent, the number of international employees in a country depends on the owners of the business, or in particular on the ease and convenience of employment of an immigrant worker. The managers and business owners in the survey were asked about the constraints they face when employing international workers (multiple choice was possible). As Figure 10a shows, the most constraints were faced because of the duration and complexity of the procedure. Another important aspect for the employers and business owners is the evolution of the rules, regulations and procedures of employing international workers. Moreover, it was noticed that in the majority of the cases the procedures are becoming longer, more complicated and expensive. Though, for two of the respondents out of 8, there are no constraints and changes observed.

On the basis of the survey, it can be concluded that one of the key reasons for the labour immigration to Poland is the level of wages, though other factors like quality of life, career opportunities and being closer to family and friends are important as well. And those immigrants who come here for the labour and quality of life reasons are ready to move to other countries in the case of better job offers. At the same time employers who to some extent can motivate the international workers to stay in Poland can themselves become demotivated by the rules, regulations and procedures. That is why an appropriate environment for business is needed; one that predominantly includes more liberal principals for immigrants' employment and the creation of the favourable conditions for settlement of foreigners.

Conclusions

The number of labour immigrants in Poland over the recent years has been constantly growing. The key types of documents that allow the international employees to work on the territory of Poland are work declarations and work permits (Migrant Info 2017). The key differences between them are the duration and countries for which they can be issued (work permits can be issued for all the countries, while the work declarations only for Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia). The number of international employees working on the basis of work permits and work declarations has grown from 282,880 people in 2012 to 2,033,333 people in 2017 (MRPiPS 2018). The major countries that provide Poland with the international labour force are Ukraine and Belarus. Moreover, because of the domination of the Ukrainians (93.81% of all labour immigrants who received work declarations and work permits) all the general statistics data follows the structure for this country.

The hypothesis of the paper, which is “belonging to the culturally and historically similar groups influences the similarity of the pattern of the migration behaviour” was partially verified. The behaviour of Belarus and Ukraine labour immigrants has both some differences and some similarities. From the point of view of geographical distribution around Poland, Ukrainians select central and wealthier regions for both types of allowance documents. Belarusian immigrant workers, however, prefer the regions that are closer to the Belarus border, though in the case with work declarations a considerable share of them is registered in the Pomorskie and Wielkopolskie Voivodships. For both groups of the immigrants, the most frequently selected voivodship is Mazowieckie and the least frequently selected are Podkarpackie and Swietokrzyskie. Besides the wages, the welfare package is crucial for the representatives from both countries.

In Poland there is an observed lack of the local labour force for particular groups of professions. Yet, it is not a guarantee that the international employees are applying for the permission documents in those fields. The biggest lack of employees is in the sector of “information and communication”, the “construction sector” and in the “transport and warehouse management”; the smallest gap was in the “industrial processing” and in the real estate market service. Both for Belarusians and Ukrainians the most frequently selected types of activities are “workers doing simple jobs”, “industrial workers and craftsmen”, “operators and assemblers of machines and

devices”, the least frequent is “representatives of public authorities, senior officials and managers”.

The survey showed that the level of wages is the most crucial factor in the selection of Poland for the immigration. However, such factors as the quality of life, career opportunities and following friends or family members are important as well. Concerning the intention for further migration, those immigrants who came because of job reasons or the higher quality of life are more likely to move to other countries in case of getting a good job offer or they would rather stay in Poland than return to the country of origin. On the basis of this it can be concluded that in order to keep the labour immigrants in Poland it is important to create conditions better than in their native countries and comparable with other developed countries. Another important factor that can make an impact on the number of international employees relates to employers/business owners. From the point of view of the respondents, the procedures to hire an immigrant in Poland are complicated and time-consuming, and they continue to become longer, more expensive and complicated. That is why in order to stimulate the employment of the international labour force, some simplification and acceleration of the procedure of employment should be considered. Moreover, according to desk research analysis, the welfare package is an important factor for employees in Ukraine and Belarus – that is why there is a need for additional support given to the companies offering good welfare package for the workers from the most demanded professions.

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