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Migration Trends from Central and Eastern Europe to Germany

INTRODUCTION

The topic of the present article is a description and discussion of migration from Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) to Germany¹. During the last years, research interest in east west migration of the European Union (EU) candidate countries was emergent, especially from the point of view of the countries of origin (Divinský 2004; Drbohlav 2004; Guentcheva et al. 2004; Iglicka 2001; Koryś 2004; Lazaroiu 2004; Wallace 1998, 2002; Wallace, Stola 2001; Zavrtnik 2004).

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary are members of the EU since May 2004. The accession of the candidate countries Bulgaria and Romania is scheduled for 2007 (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/>; Malta and Cyprus are disregarded in the following). Along with aspects of economic integration (Gehle 2003) the expected migration potential in the CEEC towards “old” EU countries was one of the most important issues during the enlargement negotiations. In question was the right of free movement of workers within the EU boundaries, which comprises the free choice of residence for EU citizens within the EU area. Subject of the negotiations for accession were whether citizens of the candidate countries are immediately allowed to move freely or, as in the case of the EU south enlargement, after a certain transition period. Greece joined the EU in 1981 and Greeks acquired complete freedom of movement in 1988, Portugal and Spain joined the EU in 1986 and the right of free movement became effective after a 7-year transition period. A flexible transition regulation was agreed upon for the eight CEEC (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/>). According to it, the total transition period lasts 7 years. For the first years after accession, the current member states will admit workers from the future member states under national rules, rather than under EU rules on free movement. The internal state regulations for an access to the labour market must be liberalised seven years after accession.

Migration researchers hold different views and conflicting hypotheses on the consequences of free movement regulations, resulting in different transition scenarios (Brücker, Weise 2001; Fassmann, Münz 2002). Anticipating EU membership, during the last ten years there has been an increasing migration between the CEEC and Germany; Germany is one of the main countries of destination in east west migration (Wallace, Stola 2001, p. 3). Currently, Polish citizens are the fifth largest national group of foreign citizens in Germany and

most of the new immigrants originate from Poland too. Besides permanent migrants, a substantial part of the migration is seasonal respectively circular migration (see for a classification of spatial population mobility Iontsev, Ivakhniouk 2002, p. 36). The following contribution gives an overview on actual official migration figures and a description of the most important migrant types. Special emphasis is given to the cases of Poland and Bulgaria. A short review on predictions of future migration based on economic modelling and survey studies is given. Conclusions are drawn to evaluate migration trends and migration potential.

MIGRATION TRENDS UNTIL 2003

There are different sources of official data in Germany to research migration and foreign population (see for an overview Diehl, Haug 2003). The following data analysis refers to migration movements to Germany before EU east enlargement in 2004.

Data on immigrant stocks, that means the composition of the foreign population by nationality, can be found at the central registry of aliens (“Ausländerzentralregister”), which is a data set of files collected at the local aliens authorities (Statistisches Bundesamt 2002a). At the end of 2003, 629.100 residents were citizens of the 10 then EU candidate countries (Table 1).

Table 1: Citizens of 10 CEEC in Germany 2002 and 2003

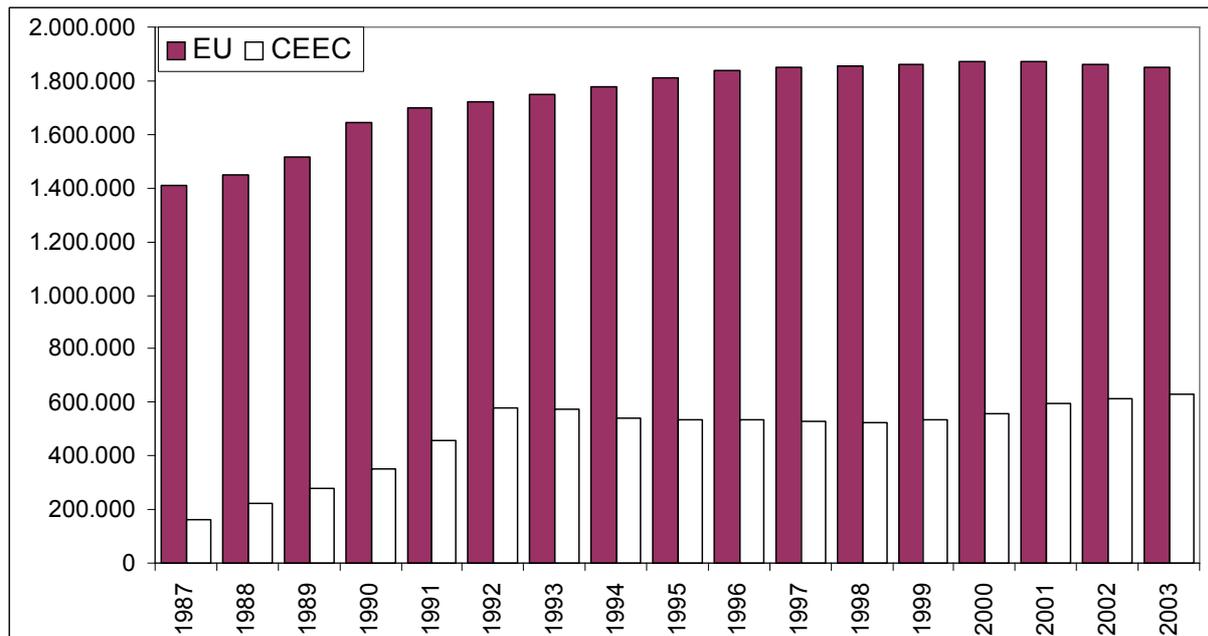
Citizenship	2002	2003
Bulgaria	42.420	44.300
Czech republic	16.863	30.186
Estonia	4.019	4.220
former Czechoslovakia	28.429	15.006
Hungary	55.953	54.714
Latvia	8.866	9.341
Lithuania	12.635	13.985
Poland	317.603	326.882
Romania	88.679	89.104
Slovakia	18.327	19.567
Slovenia	20.550	21.795
Sum CEEC	614.344	629.100
Sum 15 EU countries	1.859.811	1.847.777
Sum of all nationalities	7.335.593	9.578.288
Share of CEEC of foreign population %	8,4	8,4

Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, data of the Central Registry of Aliens.

In total, the foreign citizens count 9.578.288, the share of the foreigners in the total population is about 9%. A quarter of the foreigners in Germany are citizens of the 15 EU states (1.847.777), another quarter are Turkish citizens

(1.877.661). Within the foreign population, the citizens of Central and Eastern European EU accession countries have a share of 8,4%. Nevertheless, meanwhile the Polish citizens, amounting to 326.882 individuals, represent the fifth largest national group in Germany following those from the most sized national groups of Turkey, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece. This development of the foreign citizens of CEEC is not a particularly new. The number of CEEC nationals has scored 500.000 for almost 10 years (figure 1).

Figure 1: Citizens of the 15 EU member states and 10 CEEC in Germany 1987 - 2003

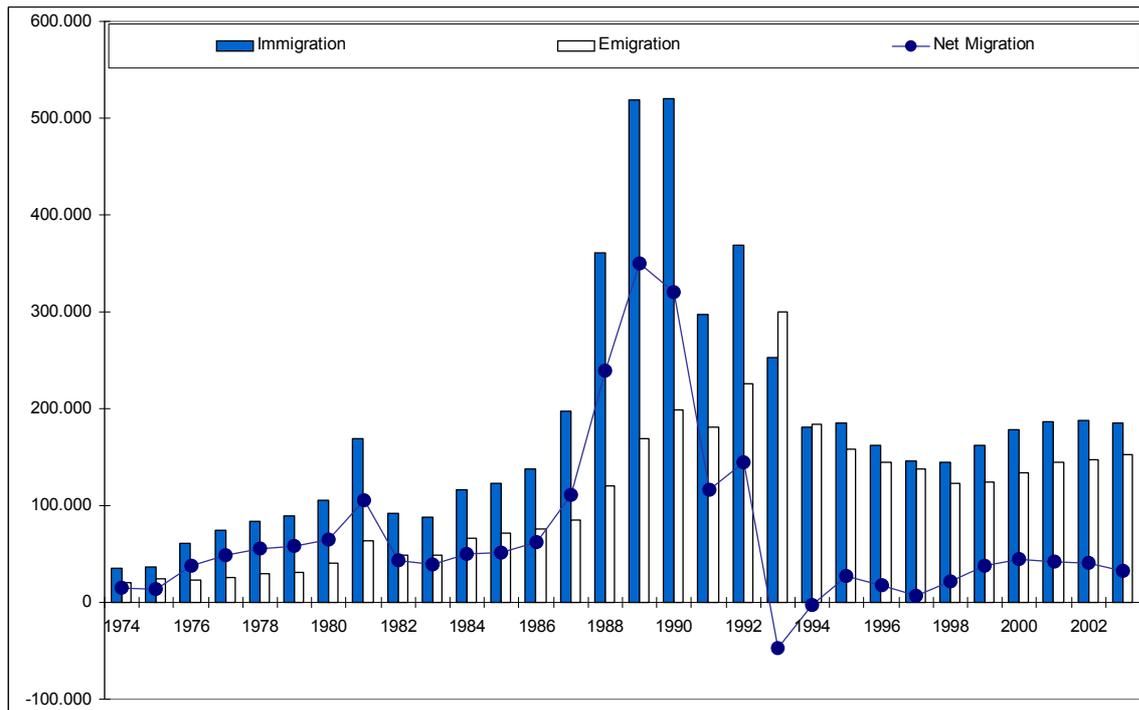


Source: Federal Statistical Office, data of the Central Registry of Aliens.

Migration flows statistics is aggregated of register data about immigration and emigration that are gathered by the local population registration offices (Statistisches Bundesamt 2000). In 2003, the migration balance between Germany and the ten CEEC was positive: a net migration of 33.085 resulted by 185.719 immigrants and 152.634 emigrants, respectively return migrants. 24% of the total sum of immigration (768.975) and 23% of the total net migration (142.645) in Germany adds up to the CEEC.

Most cases of immigration from CEEC took place between 1989 and 1990, with about 519.000. After 1993 emigration almost reached the number of the immigrants (see figure 2). The strong tendency towards return migration shows that an essential part of the migration from the CEEC is temporary. The gender distribution among immigrants from CEEC is equal up to 1988 and since then the migrants are mainly men, especially between 1991 and 1994. (Haug 2004a). In 2002, the share of women exceeded 50% among the Polish, Baltic, Czech and Slovak residents of Germany.

Figure 2: Immigration, Emigration and Net Migration between 10 CEEC and Germany 1974 - 2003



Source: Federal Statistical Office, data of population register.

In the last years Poland has come to be the most significant country of origin for migration in Germany; in 2003 104.924 immigrants and a net immigration of 22.014 was registered. The culmination point of the immigration was in 1989 and was conditioned by immigration of ethnic Germans (see below). Since 1991 the net migration was nearly zero (Haug 2004a). Germany is the most important country of destination for Polish emigrants – 71% of emigrants between 1990 and 2001 went to Germany (Currle 2004, p. 376; Iglicka 2001; p. 4; Pallaske 2002; Wallace, Stola 2001, p. 18). Most Polish immigrants stay temporarily in Germany: due to an analysis of in Poland officially registered short time migrants most of them are living in Germany (Currle 2004, p. 377), and most of the potential migrants of the 1990’s had the intention of a short term duration of stay (Okólski 1994). Romania and Hungary, and to a lesser degree the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria are relative important countries of origin. Depending on the small size of population of the Baltic countries, the absolute number of migrants is small (Haug 2004a).

TYPES OF MIGRANTS

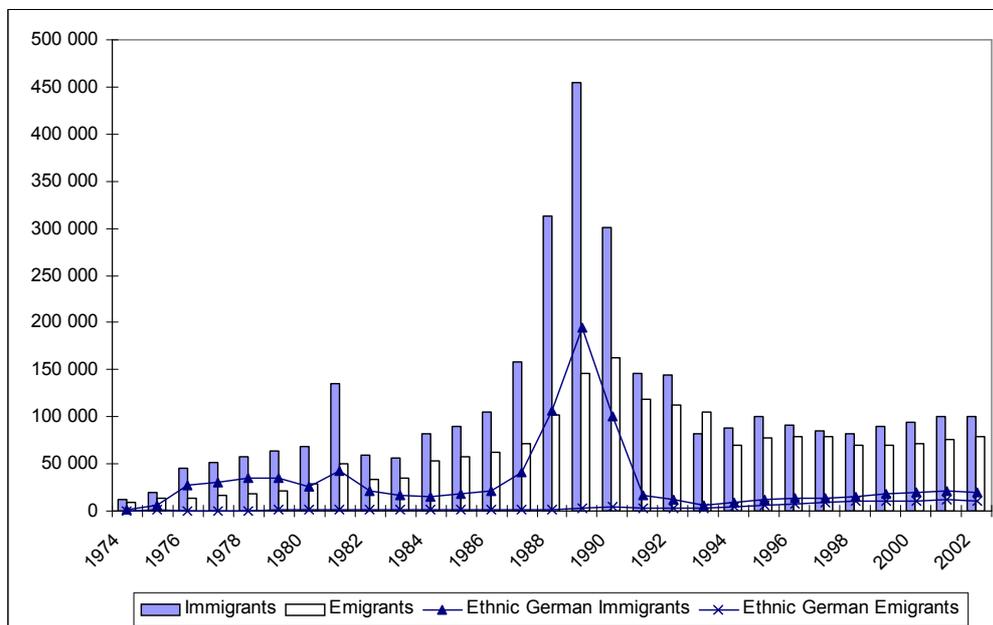
For citizens of the EU candidate countries four legal ways to immigrate are relevant and will be considered in detail. Tourist visa are not taken into account, though it can be argued that “tourists” often have in fact economic motives (Iontsev, Ivakhniouk 2002, p. 37).

1. Immigration of ethnic Germans, so-called “Aussiedler”,

2. Reunification of families of German or foreign citizenship, including marriage migration,
3. Temporary stay of seasonal workers, workers on contracts, high qualified experts,
4. Students at university.

A significant aspect regarding CEEC and Germany is migration of German citizens. Families who satisfactorily show German ethnic origin have the right to immigrate to Germany and naturalize. Especially in the period between 1988 and 1990, ethnic Germans (“Aussiedler”) dominated immigration to Germany. In 1990, 197.200 ethnic Germans from Romania and 113.300 from Poland moved in to Germany. Between 1991 and 2003, 76.545 ethnic Germans immigrated from Romania, 72.455 from Poland, former Czechoslovakia 1.782, 1.471 from Hungary (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2004, p. 57). All in all, the number of ethnic Germans having immigrated from Poland between 1950 and 2002 sums up to 1,4 Millions (Ministry of the Interior, see figure 3). Meanwhile, remaining ethnic Germans immigrate mostly from Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

Figure 3: Immigration, Emigration and Net Migration between Poland and Germany 1974 - 2002



Source: Federal Statistical Office of Germany, data of population register.

In 2001 about 20% of the immigrants from Poland and 15% of the emigrants to Poland were German citizens (figure 3). Due to the fact that German citizens circulate between Poland and Germany, Poland is the second important country of destination for emigrating Germans after the United States (Haug 2004b). Reasons for return migration may be the growth of Polish economy or

disappointment with the situation in the country of emigration (Currell 2004, p. 374). The German minority group living in Poland participates significantly in the process of migration. For a long time, German citizens fall into the largest international group having work permits or permanent stay permits (Iglińska 2000, 2001, 2002). All in all, the migration from Poland to Germany is characterised by circulation of ethnic Germans and parts of the German minority in Poland, as well as by temporary Polish labour migrants (see below).

The right of reunification of families contains possibilities of immigration of spouses and minor-aged children of Germans and foreign citizens. For the family reunion of non EU citizens, a visa is mandatory to be issued. Thus, the scope of reuniting of families can be defined from the statistics for the visas of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Families' reunion from CEEC compared to Turkey, whose citizens are issued around 30% of the visas, has a rather secondary meaning. In 2002, 7.000 visas were issued for reuniting of families in the consulates of the CEEC of which 3.100 were issued in Poland. CEEC citizens received 8% of the total number of issued visas, 12% of the visas for children under 18 years (2.600) and 12% of the visas of foreign women for reunion with German husbands (2.400). Relatively rare is the reunion of foreign wives with foreign husbands and the reunion of foreign husbands with foreign wives or German women (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, general statistics on reunion of families).

Other proof for the trend of female immigration from CEEC can be found in the marriage statistics, which covers foreign partners staying in Germany with tourist visa for marriage. At the top of the mixed marriages between German men and foreign women are Polish women, and, beneath Thailand, also from the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Romania (Federal Statistical Office of Germany). In 2001, 11.900 marriages were solemnised between German men and women from CEEC, these are 29,3% of all marriages of German men with foreign women and 3,0% of all marriages of German men. Among the rare binational marriages of German women (6.700) in 2001, only 6,8% of the partners originate from CEEC. This specific gender model reflects the development of the transnational marriage market (Müller-Schneider 2000).

Apart from the immigration of ethnic Germans and the reunion of families, the labour market plays an important role in the migration from the CEEC (Salt, Clarke 2004). In Germany, according to data of the Federal Employment Agency, 87% of the 373.800 work permits for immigrants in 2001 went to CEEC citizens. In 2002, the share of the CEEC citizens has increased up to 90,7% of the 339.247 work permits (Haug 2004a). That means, the labour market of temporary employment is dominated by migrants from CEE countries.

Most of the workers arriving for the first time came from Poland (68%). Also the workers who, after having returned, had again obtained a work permit and those who got a prolongation of their work permit were most often Polish citizens. The 267.642 work permits issued in 2002 for Polish citizens are hired mainly as seasonal workers or are hired on the basis of manufacturing contracts (Pallaske 2002). For workers applying for the second time for a work permit, in some parts the stay turned to be long term or respectively of indefinite time. Most work permits for citizens of the Czech Republic were prolongations of work permit. Therefore, Czechs citizens, and in some part also Romanians and Hungarians, have a tendency to permanent stay in Germany and long term employment. As a whole, the number of the border workers and employees is relatively insignificant. They are most important in the case of Czech citizens, but not for the Poles. This distribution is related to the unfavourable economic development of the Polish-German border areas of former GDR in comparison to the well off situation in Bavaria at the border to Czech Republic.

Although the absolute number of issued work permits in the field of information technology (special programme of immigration of IT-specialists, also known as “Green Card”) has been relatively small (12.130 between 2000 and 2004), an analysis shows a trend for immigrants of the CEEC into labour market of the highly-qualified employees (Haug 2004a). More than a quarter are to citizens of the CEEC. There are particularly many Romanian and Polish immigrants in this branch.

According to education statistics collected by the universities, in the winter semester of the academic year 2001/2002, among the foreign students studying in German universities were 26.100 citizens of the CEEC (Statistisches Bundesamt 2002b, p. 385). 7.600 of them were newly-enrolled freshmen, who had probably recently immigrated. Consequently, almost 18% of all foreign students and almost 20% of the foreign freshmen are CEEC citizens. With 30.400 students, their share was 14,7% of all international students. The share of students among the CEEC residents is approximately 5%. Thus, immigration from CEEC for the purpose of studying at universities is relatively insignificant compared to the absolute numbers of labour migrants. Nevertheless, these are mostly seasonal workers and circulating, whereas students will probably stay for a longer period in Germany. Also better opportunities to seek for an employment for foreign graduates of different professional fields as per the new immigration law of 2005 will probably increase the rate of highly qualified citizens of CEEC staying in Germany.

FUTURE MIGRATION TRENDS

In general, Germany and Austria are the most important receiving countries for emigrants from CEEC (Fassmann, Hintermann 1997, Krieger 2004). On the

second view, there are differences between the nationalities and countries of destination. For example, census as well as official data indicate that Germany, the US and Spain are the most attractive countries of destination for potential emigrants from Bulgaria (Haug, Diehl 2004, Haug 2005). In Poland, new directions of seasonal migration are Italy, Spain and Greece (Koryś 2004, p. 5). Given the rather high number of persons who display an interest in emigration, the question about the scope of potential emigration movements from CEEC arises. It can be differentiated basically by two approaches to predict migration, economic models and studies with sociological focus and based on survey research. In the case of migration from CEEC to Germany, research is concentrated on economic determinants and economic migration motives.

Econometric modelling is a common method used by economic research institutes for predicting migration flows (Alvarez-Plata et al. 2003; Brücker et al. 2000, Straubhaar 2002, Fertig 2000, Flaig 2001, Hönekopp, Werner, 2000, Sinn et al. 2000). Some economic models mainly are based on macro-economic variables such as the gross domestic product, the average wage rate, or the unemployment rate. In neo-classical micro-economic modelling, additional assumptions on human capital investments and individual utility functions like expected income, probability to get a job, opportunity costs (expected wages in the country of origin) or travel expenditures are taken into account. Most models take the development of migration processes from southern Europe to Germany after EU south enlargement as a model for migration of CEEC. In general, the expected size of migration movements to Germany is substantial but not overwhelming. Prognoses differ with regard to the time span under consideration, the dependent variables (population stock growth, net migration, immigration) as well as the specific amount of migration movements predicted (see Haug 2005).

- Population growth by migration: EU: 335.000 per year; Germany: 220.000 per year (Brücker et al. 2000)
- Immigration to Germany: 200.000-300.000 per year Sinn u.a. 2000 (ifo)
- Immigration to EU within 15 years: 199.000-419.000, Net migration EU: 63.000-157.000 (Straubhaar 2002)
- Net migration to Germany: 73.583 per year (Fertig 1999)
- Net migration to Germany: 242.000 per year, within 15 years: 66.000-167.000 (Flaig 2001)
- Immigration to Germany: 180.000 in the first year of EU-enlargement, 225.000 in the second year; potential until 2030: 2,3 Mio. (Alvarez-Plata u.a. 2004)

Despite economic models come to different conclusions, they converge with regard to some “rough” conclusions (Fassmann 2002, p. 74). Given the fact that net migration from ten Central and Eastern EU accession countries to Germany was 42.657 in 2002 (Federal Statistical Office), economic models probably overestimate future migration though. Economic prognoses highly depend on future economic development in the countries of destination. With regard to the

EU south enlargement, one might argue that it is not a suitable “role model” for the EU eastern enlargement since it is an open question if the development in the EU accession countries will show a similar dynamic. Optimistic assumptions may result in underestimation of migration. In addition, economic modelling of emigration decisions are mostly restricted to economic variables. This may lead to false estimations of potential emigration. Economic models are prone to be too narrow in scope and thus misleading since they disregard the “micro foundation” of migration decisions (Massey et al. 1993, 1994). Specifically, they tend to neglect the role of a potential migrant’s individual situation, for instance with regard to his or her family and social network. The importance of social networks and social capital in the migration process as well as the process of chain migration has been documented in several studies (Böcker 1994, Boyd 1989, Espinosa, Massey 1997, Faist 1997, Haug 2000a, Portes/Sensenbrenner 1993, Wilpert 1992). These studies show that while migration is in fact initiated by economic motives, it often becomes a rather complex self-sustaining social process over the years. Otherwise, not any economically disadvantaged individual will emigrate, because location specific social capital in the country of origin can have hindering effects (Faist 1997, Haug 2000a).

Besides economic modelling, there are more sociologically orientated research and emigration projections based on surveys on emigration intentions (Fassmann 2002, Fassmann, Hintermann 1997, Krieger 2004, Wallace 1998). They take into account that motives of potential migrants are different and migration must not mainly be determined by economic factors (see Massey et al. 1993, 1994, Haug 2000b for an overview on different migration theories). Studies of several institutes have different results with regard to the distribution of general emigration intentions in the CEEC.

- General emigration intention: Czech Rep.: 20,1%, Hungary: 20,5%, Poland: 16,6%, Slovakia: 30,3%, estimation in sum: 4.066.000, concrete intention: Czech Rep.: 11,8%, Hungary: 8,6%, Poland: 5,5%, Slovakia: 17,7%, estimation in sum: 709.000, main destinations: Germany, Austria (Fassmann, Hintermann 1997)
- Intention to go live and work in EU: Bulgaria: 17%, Czech Rep.:10,6%, Estonia: 16%, Hungary: 11,6%, Latvia: 15%, Lithuania: 15,9%, Poland: 16,4%, Rumania: 26,1%, Slovakia: 12,2%, Slovenia: 8%, Turkey: 34%; intention to move to EU the next years: Bulgaria: 4,8%, Czech Rep.:1,1%, Estonia: 1,6%, Hungary: 0,8%, Latvia: 2,0%, Lithuania: 2,5%, Poland: 1,8%, Rumania: 2,8%, Slovakia: 2,0%, Slovenia: 0,9%, Turkey: 0,8% (Krieger 2004)
- Bulgarian census 2001: 8.5% high or rather high likelihood to migrate to another country and resettle (potential long term emigrants), 6,8% emigration intention for more than a year to work or study (potential labour migrants) (Haug, Diehl 2004, Haug 2005)
- Intention to stay of polish temporary labour migrants in Germany: contract workers: 52,6%, guest workers: 56,3%, seasonal workers: 35,1% (Venema, Grimm 2001)

Specific plans to migrate which are reported to be realised in the near future are generally much more valid than general emigration intentions. General intentions to leave the country at least temporarily are fairly widespread, whereas specific intentions are relatively rare (Fassmann, Hintermann 1997, p 14). Intentions of temporary workers in Germany to stay permanently are higher for contract and guest workers than for seasonal workers which have a duration of stay under 3 months (Venema, Grimm 2001). Survey results of a study by the European Commission based on data from the Candidate Countries, Eurobarometer 2002 shows that general intentions to go live and work in the EU within the next years is much higher than the intention to emigrate. In sum, temporary labour emigration intentions are widespread, whereas intentions to emigrate and settle abroad are found rather rarely and the majority of all potential emigrants intend to stay abroad only temporarily.

Forecasts based on migration intentions are not trustworthy in any case (Kupiszewski 2002). Most problematic is the lack of theoretical background of prognoses and unsatisfactory data quality. Different causes of migration, feedback mechanisms as well as cumulative causation effects of migration have to be taken into account (Massey 1990). In general, migration is depending on different factors (Massey et al. 1993, 1994, Haug 2000a, 2000b).

1. Legal aspects: Transition period for free movement of workers, possibilities to get labour permits, and controls of illegal immigration.
2. Economic aspects: Economic development in the country of origin and country of destination, social security system, black market.
3. Demographic aspects: Age and sex structure, ageing processes influencing the need for labour migrants in the destination countries and the number of potential migrants in the sending countries, family structures and marriage markets (labour migrants are mostly young and male, female emigrants have tendency to marriage migration).
4. Families and migration networks: Networks are most important in determining direction and size of emigration movements, especially in the case of chain migration.
5. Emigration intentions: The behavioural intentions of the potential migrants must not entail such a behaviour. Duration of stay can hardly be predicted.

CONCLUSION

In face of the EU enlargement, expectations have been arising that immigration to EU and to Germany will be increasing. Studies in the countries of origin for

the intention for emigration often lead to an expectation of a considerable migration potential (Fassmann, Hintermann 1997, Wallace 1998, Krieger 2004, Kupiszewski 2002). These expectations seem not to be realistic. On the one hand, most of the economic analyses of the future development of the migration from CEEC to Germany are based on the fact that intensive increase of the immigration is not likely (Brücker et al. 2000, Hönekopp, Werner 2000, Sinn et al. 2001, Straubhaar 2002). On the other hand, potential migrants have already emigrated; when speaking about future Polish migration to the EU, one can concede that “Polish migrants are already there” (Stola 2001, p. 198). Therefore, regarding the immigration and the foreign population in Germany, CEE countries, especially Poland, are most important countries of origin and have already replaced migrants of countries of the “guest worker” labour migration period like Spaniards or Portuguese. Net migration from Spain, Portugal, Greece and Serbia has been negative for some time and only Turkish, Italian and Yugoslavian population is stable by enduring immigration. Nevertheless, immigration from CEEC is mainly based on temporary stays for work and studying at university, beneath family reunion or marriage migration. Predicting future migration from CEEC to Germany, some aspects should be taken into consideration:

1. The creation of the legal regulation of the migration: A 7-year transition period is agreed upon for freedom of movement for CEEC. Notwithstanding, prolongations of temporary work permits will probably lead to a de-facto immigration like the case of the temporary labour migrants from Southern Europe.
2. The economic development of all participant countries: If expectedly the economies of the CEEC develop positively, the expected emigration potential will drop. This is also valid if the economic situation in the receiving country Germany visibly deteriorates.
3. The demographic development: Emigration potential is generally highest in the young age cohorts. Due to the decrease and the growing average age of population in the CEEC resulting from the low fertility in the transition countries after 1990, the emigration potential will decrease in future.
4. Time dimensions of the immigration: Potential migrants prefer short term migration instead of a permanent emigration.

Consequently, the matter of the migration potential in CEEC is hard to assess. In recent future, it can be inferred that the number of the temporary stays for employment and therefore seasonal migration in Germany will be further growing and the trend of increasing labour immigration in Germany will continue (Salt, Clarke 2004, p. 11). The main trends of migration for example in

Poland, have switched from long- to short-term (Stola 2001, p. 199). It can be expected that in case of a favourable economic growth and unfavourable demographic development, the CEEC will turn from countries of emigration into countries of immigration and the emigrated population will return. This development has occurred in the former sending countries Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece. In fact Poland or Hungary are developing from sending to receiving countries (Currle 2004, Iglicka 2001, Koryś 2003, Salt/Clarke 2004, see Wallace, Stola 2001 for an analysis of the „new migration space“ of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia). Another question are the consequences for the sending countries. The also suggest that emigration from CEEC is most likely for unmarried, young, and well educated persons (Krieger 2004). The Bulgarian census 2001 shows a tendency to long term emigration and temporary labour migration among the young and well educated population (Haug 2005). Therefore some authors predict a “brain drain” and see negative consequences for labour force in the countries of origin of emigration of highly qualified potential employees (Salt, Clarke 2004, p. 27, Jordanova 2004). Other authors rather speak of a “brain gain” (Hunger 2000). Therefore further research is needed to describe and analyse ongoing migration processes between the CEEC and Germany and the former EU countries in general.

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