INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY OF THE EU CITIZENS IN THE VISEGRAD GROUP COUNTRIES: COMPARISON AND BILATERAL FLOWS

Eva Kačerová

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Introduction

Based on the United Nations estimation, migrants make up 3 % of the world population (about 175 million people). The number of immigrants has raised significantly in the First World countries since 1970. More then 14 million people will move there during next years, according to the World Bank forecast. This will lead to increase of 1.8 % in national income in these countries and simultaneously a 0.4 % rise in countries which are main source of immigrants.

In May 2004 the four Visegrad Group countries, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary, entered (among others) the European Union and they have become a part of the single internal market with four freedoms such as free movement of goods, services, capital and people. The movement of people between the new and old EU Member States has been a very important topic of many research studies as well as it has become a hot political issue and remained with partial restrictions of a free movement of workers until today.

However, there are also other international migration topics which, according to our opinion, deserve our interest. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the international migration and mobility of the EU citizens - from the old Member States as well as from the new Member States in four selected countries. These flows have not been restricted since the enlargement and we can evaluate whether this moment has had any effect on the immigration flows. The paper is also focused on economic integration among these Central European countries. The aim is also to compare whether the Visegrad Group countries are stronger interconnected with migration flows or with trade and capital flows.

Difficulty in monitoring of migration processes is one of the most important problems connected with research on this phenomenon in various countries. The definition of migrant is not the same in selected countries.

Table 1: Natural increase of population per 1 000 population

Country	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006
Czech Republic	1,8	0,1	-2,1	-1,8	-0,6	0,1
Hungary	0,3	-1,9	-3,2	-3,7	-3,8	-3,1
Poland	9,7	4,1	1,2	0,3	-0,1	0,1
Slovakia	8,9	4,8	1,6	0,5	0,2	0,1

Source: www.eurostat.eu

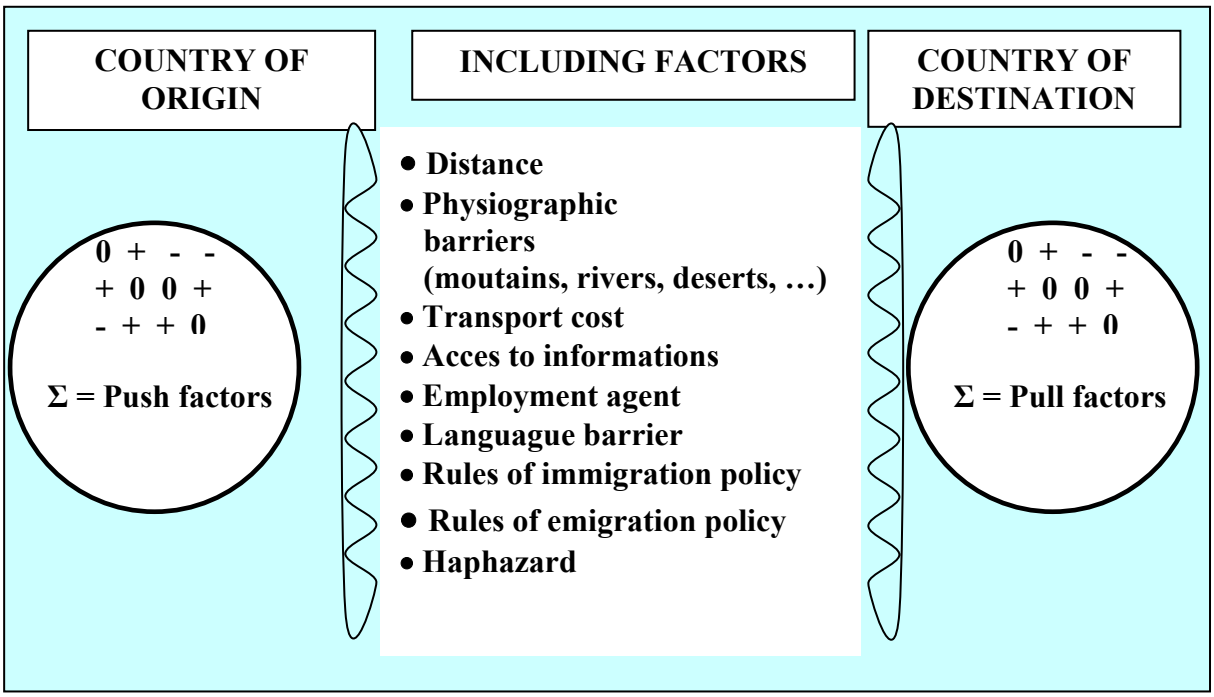


Table 2: Stocks of foreign population in selected countries (thousands)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Czech Rep.	209,8	219,8	228,9	201,0	210,8	231,6	240,4	254,3	278,3		
% of total population	2,0	2,1	2,2	1,9	2,0	2,3	2,4	2,5	2,7		
Hungary	148,3	150,2	153,1	110,0	116,4	115,9	130,1	142,2	..		
% of total population	1,4	1,4	1,5	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,3	1,4			
Poland	..	..	..	..		49,2	..		..		
% of total population	..	..	..	..	..	0,1	..	..			
Slovak Rep.	24,8	28,4	29,5	28,8	29,4	29,5	29,2	22,3	25,0		
% of total population	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,4	0,5		

Source: www.eurostat.eu

Table 3: Foreigners – employees (%)

Country of destination→ Country of origin ↓	Czech. Rep. (2005)	Slovakia (2005)	Hungary (2004)	Poland (2001)
Czech Republic	x	42,5	< 0,7	< 1,2
Slovakia	55,7	X	6,6	< 1,2
Hungary	< 0,3	< 2	x	< 1,2
Poland	6,7	2,1	0,7	x
Total (selected countries)	< 62,7	< 46,6	< 8,0	< 3,6

Source: www.eurostat.eu

Table 4: Net migration per 1 000 population

Country	1980	1990	1995	2000	2004	2005	2006
Czech Republic	-4,0	-5,7	1,0	0,6	1,8	3,5	3,4
Hungary	0,0	1,8	1,7	1,6	1,8	1,7	1,9
Poland	-0,7	-0,3	-0,5	-10,7	-0,2	-0,3	-0,9
Slovakia	-2,3	-0,4	0,5	-4,1	0,5	0,6	0,7

Source: www.eurostat.eu

Empirical observations

Most of the international migration in the Visegrad Group countries is related to their historical and geographical ties. Thus the role of migrants from the EU 15 in the total immigration flows is relatively small. Anyway, the number of EU 15 citizens has been gradually rising with the deeper economic relations of Visegrad Group countries with the European Union during the 90s. This migration shows predominantly economic motivation. The citizens of old EU Member States usually work in highly skilled positions as managers, professionals or entrepreneurs. These migration flows are related to the trade and investment flows from the source countries. For example, the regional distribution of EU 15 citizens is highly correlated with the foreign direct investment location within the regions in the Czech Republic.

The second part is devoted to the migration and mobility from the new Member States to the Visegrad Group countries and is mainly focused on the bilateral migration flows of the selected four countries. We have found out that despite their geographical proximity and former economic integration within CEFTA, the four Visegrad countries are not significantly interconnected with international migration flows except the relation between the Czech and Slovak Republic. Although there are insufficient data and difference in migration definitions we have found out that the migration from the Slovak to the Czech Republic is the strongest bilateral migration flow (approximately 97 thousand of workers in 2007), followed by number of Poles in the Czech Republic (almost 21 thousand workers in 2007) and the Czechs in the Slovakia (2 thousand workers in 2006). The rest of the bilateral flows are rather small.

For the comparison of the form and depth of regional integration we used the relative share of number of foreigners from the rest three Visegrad countries in the total number of foreigners (measured as foreign workers) for every single Visegrad country and we also counted the share of imports and exports with the three Visegrad countries in total imports and exports for every single Visegrad country. We have found out that the Czech and Slovak Republics are also significantly interconnected with labour migration. There is also relation between Slovakia and Hungary with regard to labour force. The migration relations between the Czech and Slovak republics are stronger than the trade flows although both countries are relatively more integrated in the regional trade than Hungary and Poland. For the latter countries it is typical that if they are integrated in regional economy they are more likely trade than migration flows. Poland is an important labour exporter but these workers are mainly active in the old EU member states. The strong Czech and Slovak regional participation can be explained mainly by their strong bilateral economic ties.

In this part we look at available data as seen by the end user. We investigate immigration and emigration data by organising them in a way that allows us to compare data reported by sending and receiving countries and to evaluate international comparability of data provided by individual countries. We analyse two types of information: the double entry matrix containing the flows between selected country and time series of flows between selected pairs of countries.

In order to illustrate the problems with data on international migration flows we have constructed a double entry matrix for the year 2003 and for the year 2005 (tables 5 and 6). The idea of double entry migration matrix is to present the data on immigration, reported by the receiving countries, and those on emigration, reported by the sending countries, in one table. The cells in tables 5 and 6 representing migration from country A to country B contain two entries: the upper one includes immigration (I) form country A reported by country B and the lower one includes emigration (E) to country B reported by country A. For a better understanding the data in a double entry matrix we have calculate I/E ratio and I – E differences, where I and E are the flows reported by the receiving and by the sending country.

The figures reported by the receiving country are often several times higher than those reported by the sending country. Large I/E ratio have been observed for flows from Slovakia to Czech Republic (I/E = 54 in 2003, 14 in 2005) and from Poland to Czech Republic (I/E = 36 in 2003, 25 in 2005).
The general believe is that immigration data are better than those concerning emigration. The flow from Slovakia to the Czech Republic in 2003 was according to Czech Republic 24 385 people; the value reported by Slovakia was only 448. The flow from Czech Republic to Slovakia was 18 262 according the Czech data source and 650 according to Slovakia data source. So, both countries had a positive net migration. The flow from Slovakia to the Czech Republic in 2005 was according to Slovakia 734 people; the value reported by Czech Republic was 10 133. The flow from Slovakia to the Czech Republic was 1 144 according the Czech data source and 1 950 according to Slovakia data source. So, both countries had a positive net migration.

Table 5: Migration flows between selected countries according to receiving (I) and sending (E) countries in 2003.

Sending country		Receiving country			
		Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovak Republic
Czech Republic	I	–	…	46	650
	E	–	35	1 040	18 262
Hungary	I	58	–	20	25
	E	…	–	…	…
Poland	I	1 653	…	–	36
	E	46	6	–	10
Slovak Republic	I	24 385	…	19	–
	E	448	18	10	–

Source: prepared on data from Eurostat
… data not available

Table 6: Migration flows between selected countries according to receiving (I) and sending (E) countries in 2005.

Sending country		Receiving country			
		Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovak Republic
Czech Republic	I	–	…	60	1 144
	E	–	4	138	1 935
Hungary	I	28	–	21	248
	E	…	–	…	…
Poland	I	1 246	…	–	311
	E	49	13	–	5
Slovak Republic	I	10 133	…	31	–
	E	734	28	6	–

Source: prepared on data from Eurostat
… data not available

Table 7: Ratios of flows reported by the receiving and sending countries (I/E) in 2003

Sending country	Receiving country			
	Czech republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovak Republic
Czech Republic	–	…	0.04	0.04
Hungary	…	–	…	…
Poland	35.93	…	–	3.60
Slovak Republic	54.43	…	1.90	–

… data not available

Table 8: Ratios of flows reported by the receiving and sending countries (I/E) in 2005

Sending country	Receiving country			
	Czech republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovak Republic
Czech Republic	–	…	0.43	0.59
Hungary	…	–	…	…
Poland	25.43	…	–	62.50
Slovak Republic	13.80	…	5.17	–

… data not available

Identifying and counting expatriates is not without difficulties and different methods may produce different estimates. There are three main types of estimates, each of them with it advantages and shortcomings: emigration survey in origin countries and compilation of statistics from receiving countries and population census.

Table 9: person born in selected countries and residing in another country

Country of origin	Country of residence			
	CZE	Hungary	Poland	SVK
Czech Republic	–	2 494	6 200	75 585
Hungary	6 200	–	1 344	17 293
Poland	24 707	2 685	–	3 473
Slovak Republic	285 372	37 439	1 514	–

Source: The latest population census around 2000

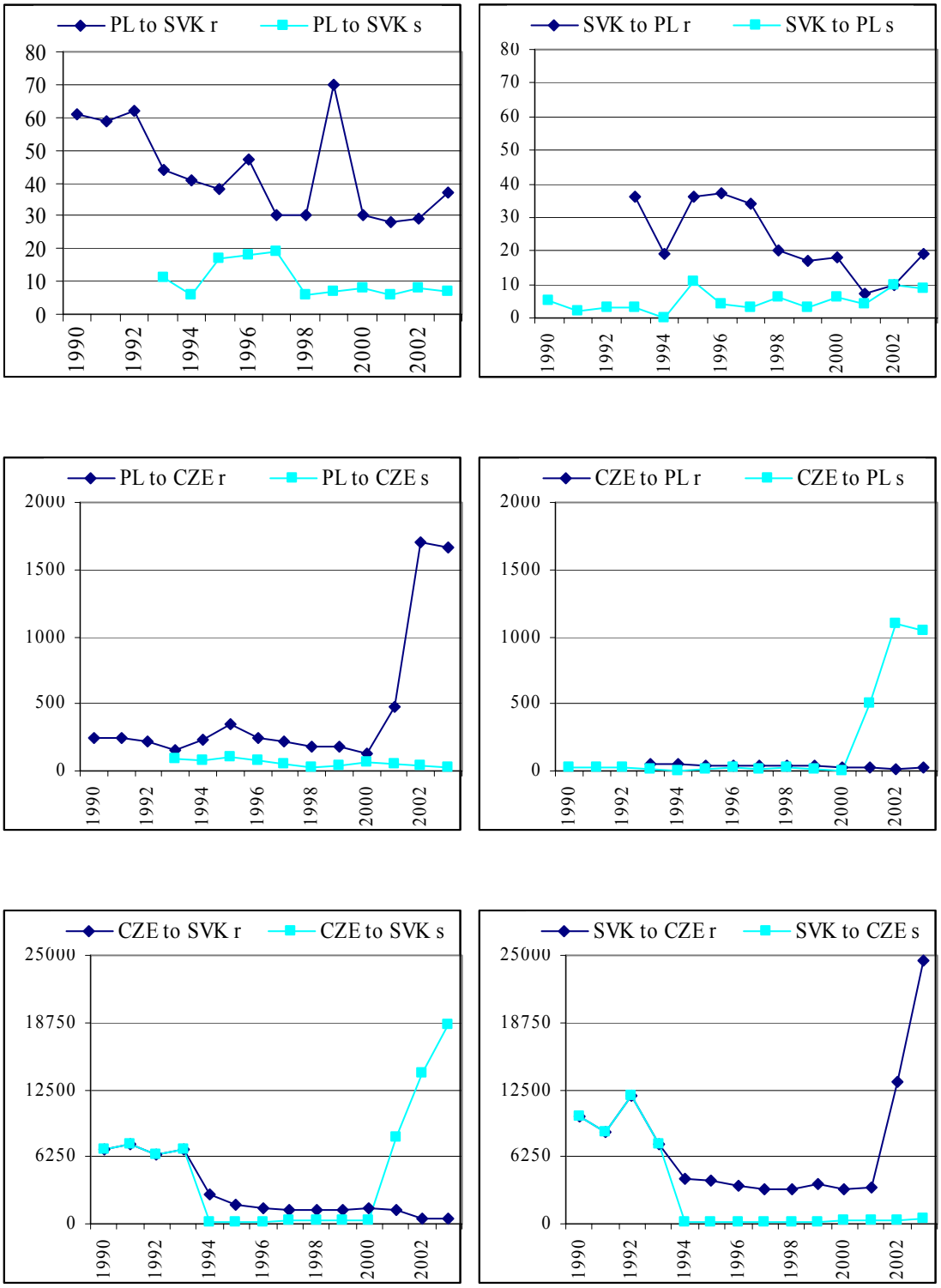
Other interesting observations can be made by looking at the figures presenting the evolution of the flows between pairs of countries over time reported by each of both countries. Such graphs are very helpful when trying to understand international migration trends and prepare a forecast (Figure 1). Dates for Hungary are not available.

The direct comparison of flows between Poland and Slovakia reported by the sending and receiving countries reveals important feature of the statistics based on the concept of permanent place of residence, namely the underestimation of emigration flows. The data reported by the receiving country are higher both for flows from Poland to Slovakia and from Slovakia to Poland.

A very low level of both immigration and emigration is reported by Slovakia and Poland during the whole period for which the data are available and it does not allow the identification of the changes in the flow magnitude observed by the partner country.

The flows among Czech Republic and Slovak Republic are the same until 1993, when former Czechoslovakia was split to two separated countries. After the dissolution of Czechoslovakia on 1 January 1993 the previously internal movements between the territories of the Czech Republic and Slovakia became international migration flows. In 2002 and 2003 flows from Slovakia and Poland are average 41 times higher than those reported by the sending countries. As concerns the sudden jumps observed in the Czech data, they might be explained by the changes in the definitions. In the Czech Republic until 2000 the statistics covered permanent migration only, as registered in the population register, similarly to Poland and Slovakia. Since 2001, data from the aliens register were used as well: immigration statistics covered persons who stayed over one year (the exact criteria varied over time) and emigration statistics included data on permits that expired, in addition to self-reported departures for permanent stay abroad.

Figure 1: Migration between Czech Republic, Poland and Slovak Republic
r – data according to the receiving countries
s – data according to the sending countries



Population of foreigners in the Czech Republic

The number of long-term or permanently residing foreigners in the CR according to the Alien and Border Police exceeded in 2006 the number of 320 thousand. Slightly over 40% of these foreigners have permanent residence in the CR. Among foreigners in total there are 40% of women (almost a 50% share of women is among foreigners with permanent residence among "others" women make only 35%). The number of permanent residences is gradually increasing since the beginning of 1990´s.

Table 10: Foreigners in the CR: by category of residence; 31 December

Citizenship	2001		2003		2004		2005		2006	
	Total	Long-term	Total	Long-term	Total	Long-term	Total	Long-term	Total	Long-term
Foreigners total	**210 794**	**140 978**	**240 421**	**159 577**	**254 294**	**154 827**	**278 312**	**167 714**	**321 456**	**182 271**
EU 25, total	**84 365**	**55 347**	**95 957**	**66 394**	**80 245**	**42 246**	**87 143**	**44 941**	**102 886**	**57 877**
Hungary	447	101	470	121	494	110	512	126	535	147
Poland	16 489	4 897	15 766	4 631	16 265	4 754	17 810	6 426	7 574	1 084
Slovakia	53 294	42 444	64 879	53 380	47 354	30 376	49 446	29 219	35 912	8 938
Other countries	**10 603**	**5 223**	**10 731**	**5 069**	**174 049**	**112 581**	**191 169**	**122 773**	**218 570**	**124 394**

Sources: www.mpsv.cz, SSZ

Age structure of foreigners with the residence permit as well as all foreigners in the Czech Republic substantially differs from the age structure of the population of the Czech Republic, which can be explained mainly by economic reasons foreigners have for coming to the Czech republic (to earn their living). Big are mainly age groups in junior productive age (20-39 years) – over 50% of foreigners belonged particularly to this age group. On the contrary, very small shares in comparison with the structure of population of the CR can be found among children and those in the post-productive age (Figures 2, 3, 4).

Foreigners cannot possibly be regarded as "homogeneous mass" of persons with the same reasons for coming and the same plans for the future. The main distinctive features are: gender (women are coming more often to join their husbands – family reunion) and, most frequently, the citizenship. The biggest share of foreigners (more than 30%) was represented as at the year end by citizens of the Ukraine followed by citizens of Slovakia (18.1%), Viet-Nam (12.6%), Russian Federation (5.9%) and Poland (5.8%). Each of the citizenships is specific by its share of persons with permanent and long-term residence as well as of women and men. Three quarters of all citizens of Viet-Nam had permanent residence in the CR and high share was recorded also for citizens of Serbia and Montenegro (slightly over 70%), 60% of permanent residencies was found among citizens of Poland and Bulgaria. On the other hand, relatively low share of permanent residencies can be found among citizens of the Ukraine (25%); as at 31 December 2006. From among applicants for citizenship higher number of women than men was reported for applicants for Mongolia (63.0%), Belarus (57%) and Russian Federation (53%), while much more men than women (almost 80%) were among citizens-applicants from Austria and Germany.

The most frequent purpose of residence of foreigners is employment which is more often registered for men (more than 45% of men stated that the purpose of residence is employment); another important purpose of residence is family reunion, which is, on the contrary, much more frequently recorded for women (more than 40% of women). Further, many foreigners state as a purpose of stay business activities (performed on the basis of a trade licence) or settlement (based on permanent residence permit).

Foreigners in general are concentrated in Prague and the Středočeský Region; further, significant numbers of foreigners are based in bigger towns and industrial areas. Differences exist also as for placing of foreigners by citizenship. Citizens of countries neighbouring with the CR are concentrated, in general, near the border of the CR with the relevant country. Citizens of the Ukraine are mainly in Prague, the Středočeský Region and the Jihomoravský Region, citizens of Viet-Nam are settled usually near – the Czech-German border and citizens of Russian Federation are mostly in Prague, the Středočeský Region and the Karlovarský Region (Figure 2, 3, 4).

Figure 2: Distribution and age distribution of foreigners in the Czech Republic (31/12/2006)

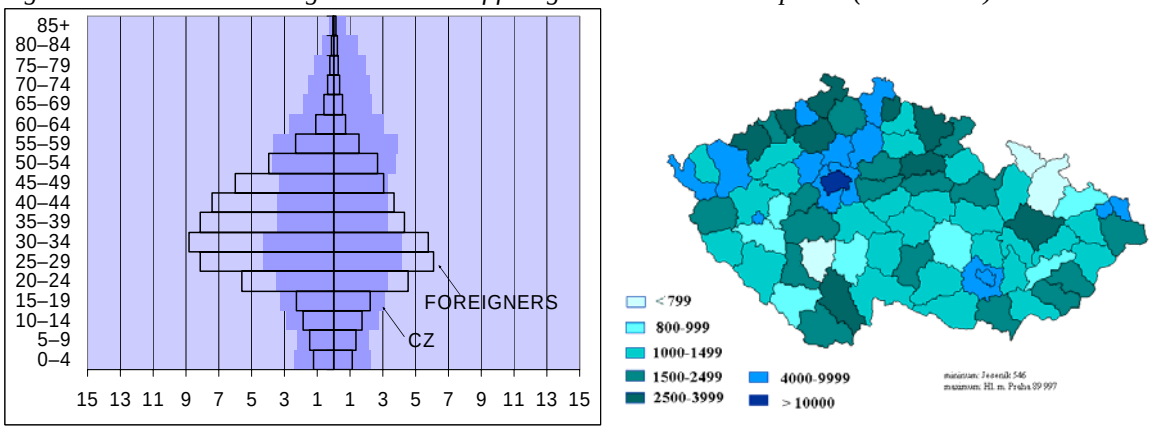


Figure 3: Distribution and age distribution of citizens of Slovakia in the Czech Republic (31/12/2006)

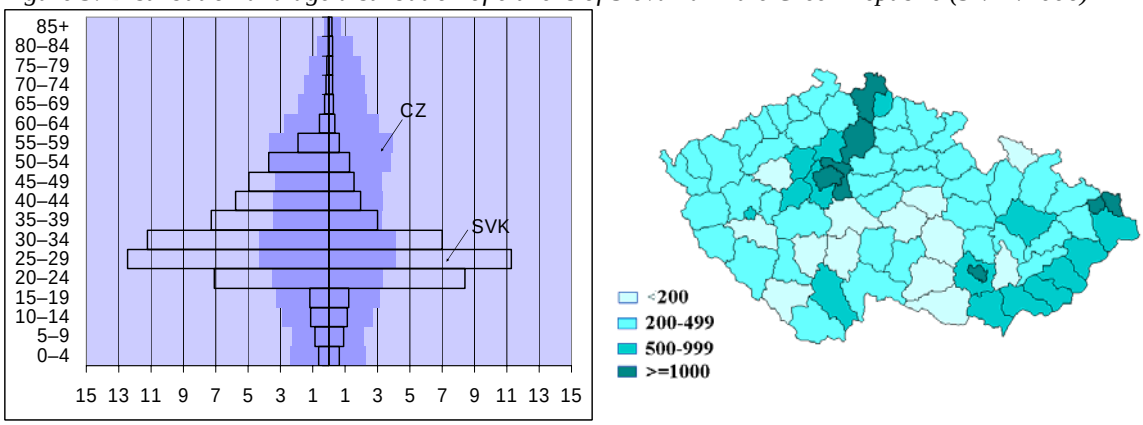
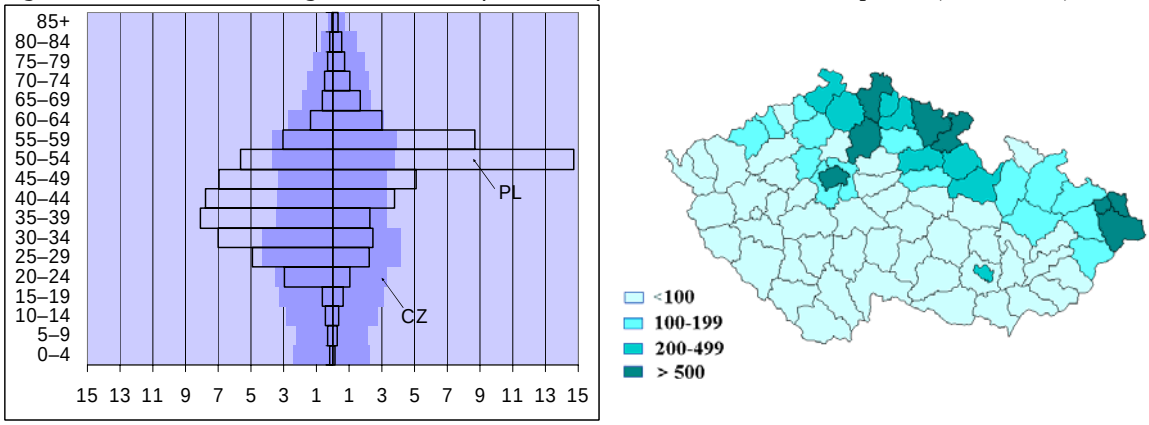


Figure 4: Distribution and age distribution of citizens of Poland in the Czech Republic (31/12/2006)



Conclusion

Migration in the region will be seen as a consequence of "interplay" of three kinds of imbalances in particular countries or between countries: demographic, economic and political.

It can be expected that after the EU enlargement and the relaxation of migration rules the number of other Visegrad countries' citizens have grown especially in border regions with differences in economic level and unemployment. This effect has probably been stronger in the Czech and Slovak Republic which are more regionally integrated than in Hungary and Poland where most of the migration flows come from neighbouring countries which are not yet the EU members.

Achieving comparability of international migration statistics is a difficult task. The legislation and administrative procedures concerning registration, which is the main source of information on migration flows in the selected countries, will continue to differ. It should be noted that the lack of comparability of statistics on international migration flows is strictly linked with the lack of comparability of statistics on population stocks, so both problems should be solved simultaneously.

And at the end some recommendations for end users of the data of international migration:

- try to find out what is the real content of the data
- do not rely on one source
- do not draw conclusion without taking the definition into account.

Eva Kačerová
University of Economics
Department of Demography
nam. W. Churchilla 4
130 67 Praha, Czech Republic
kacerova@vse.cz

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