

Migration Trends

in Selected Applicant Countries

Volume II – The Czech Republic The Times They Are A-Changin



IOM International Organization for Migration
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European Commission Project:

“Sharing Experience: Migration Trends in Selected Applicant Countries and Lessons Learned from the ‘New Countries of Immigration’ in the EU and Austria”

VOLUME II – Czech Republic

“The Times They Are A-Changing”

Dušan Drbohlav
Charles University, Faculty of Science,
Department of Social Geography and Regional Development

This country report on Migration Trends in the Czech Republic forms part of a publication series of six volumes, which have evolved under the roof of the European Commission funded project “*Sharing Experience: Migration Trends in Selected Applicant Countries and Lessons Learned from the ‘New Countries of Immigration’ in the EU and Austria*” managed by the International Organization for Migration Mission with Regional Functions for Central Europe in Vienna, Austria.

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International Organization for Migration
Nibelungengasse 13/4
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel.: +43-1-5853322-0
Fax: +43-1-5853322-30
Email: mrfvienna@iom.int
Internet: <http://www.iomvienna.at>

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PREFACE

Migration to the EU

Migration to the European Union continues to be a disputed issue throughout Europe. Starting in the 1960s it began with the recruitment of migrant workers by some Western European countries and through family reunification in the 1970s, the process then continued with most Western European countries successively becoming countries of immigration. This has not necessarily been an intended process, but has become a fact in the better-off countries of the EU.

New EU members in the north and in the south have seen their immigration figures rise after accession, partly as a result of related increased economic growth. Countries like Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy or Greece – all situated on the EU periphery, where emigration had previously prevailed – had to adapt quickly to the new situation in the course of the 1990s. In terms of policy, the process suffered from a lack of experience, so the management of the flows was often not ideal and local societies were taken by surprise to a certain degree.

The surge in immigration has mainly been fed by people seeking protection from the armed conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and by the fall of the iron curtain, which has allowed citizens of Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) to move. They made use of this possibility in direction of the prospering EU. Policy developments, notably linked to freedom of movement and to irregular migration, have carefully been described and analysed in two previous publications jointly produced by IOM and ICMPD: *“Migration in Central and Eastern Europe. 1999 Review”* and *“New Challenges for Migration Policy in Central and Eastern Europe”*.

With the accession of 10 new member states to the EU in May 2004 (and two more in 2007), these countries are likely to follow the path of the previous EU accession countries and, in turn, become countries of immigration. With increased global mobility and a growing number of severe conflicts and wars, people seeking shelter from Africa and Asia have become a growing source of migrants in recent years. Their paths of migration are directed to the EU and often lead through the accession countries. In this process, in spite of fortified border protection and the “safe third countries” rule, which has become a standard in the states of the EU, accession countries are increasingly becoming target countries of migration. For their societies, this means a rapid change from countries almost without migration via strong emigration to more immigration in the future. This scenario requires preparation and careful planning. On the other hand and on the background of demographic trends, this may be a rather desirable change. According to projections of the EC, the population of all accession countries in Central and Eastern Europe has a tendency to decrease, a fact likely to pose significant problems to economy and society in the future. Compared to Western European countries, where the established migration chains will soften the population losses for a longer period, the future eastern border countries of the EU will increasingly face this problem no later than 2010.

In relation to this, one very important characteristic of globalisation, that is especially relevant when talking about migration, is that causes and effects can happen in completely different parts of the world. This simple fact is even more significant if one comes to think that the interdependency of migration to social economic or political

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factors is extremely high. The globalisation of economy and politics, the continuous merging of cultural factors and the shortening of distances by the availability of quick and cheap transportation, makes regular migration always hard to isolate as a regional phenomenon or to control by national means. We have come to understand that Migration has its own internal dynamics. These particular dynamics – sensitive of course to external factors – can be maybe best compared with what liberals would describe as a marketplace. A place, where reality is the clash product of a demand and an offer, and where intervention can only be done with observance to these mechanisms. Arbitrary intervention can and does usually lead to unwanted results.

Before we attempt to develop this concept, let us enumerate briefly three more assumptions that are relevant for these internal dynamics, when discussing the marketplace approach: 1. First of all, the quantitative (as opposed to qualitative) degree of migratory movements always depends on the extent to which restrictive actions have hindered the migration process previously. Recent history of the continent has illustrated significantly enough this statement and comparing 1980 and 1990 statistics gives you a clear picture. 2. Very much related to the above assumption, one could safely talk about fluctuating cycles in migration, with ascending lines, peaks and regressions. In Europe, most of the Candidate Countries have passed their peaks in producing migration in the mid-90s. 3. Migration, especially the one motivated economically, is more sensitive to pull than to push factors. This assumption is very much relevant in Europe today, and it radically contradicts whoever states that the European Union has little to offer to migrants. The fact is that there are jobs available in the Union today, particularly in certain areas of the labour market. Migrants will satisfy this demand within or outside a regulated framework. Further it might very well be that legislators and policy maker who want to intervene in a certain manner on this marketplace would only be able to succeed by working precisely at these pull-factors. The way some countries do it – maybe the most relevant are the US and Canada – proving that they have understood this reality by attracting qualified migrants from all over the world, becoming preferred destinations even for people who are not that dependent on push factors in their own countries. And the moment is not far when competition between European and non-European destinations for qualified migrants may have a much more decisive impact on trends than the aforementioned demographic changes. Having taken into account these assumptions and coming back to the migration marketplace, maybe the first corollary of this analogy is the fact that as long as migration happens – with no regard to the policy of the state – it is proof enough that migrants are actually needed. As long as the movements are driven by labour related issues, the interior dynamics of migration, as said earlier, will always take precedence, no matter if the destination state will restrict it or not. The difference is only in the degree of legality within which the economic activities of the migrants (usually labour) will happen. In Europe this is both true in the member states of the EU and will be progressively more and more true in the Candidate Countries as they approach accession.

As we shift towards the particular European dimension of the marketplace analogy, one would say that state intervention has to be always in agreement with the intrinsic state of the determinant factors at the moment of intervention, and should ideally be justified by an unusual imbalance of the migratory “market”. That means that when a state designs its policy on migration or other way to control migratory movements such

intervention has to be in line with current migration realities and deal with them from within. But let us develop this. It is far from our intention to say that because of such a marketplace approach the best way to go around migration is an absolute *laissez-faire*, and it is also far from our intention to say that the Candidate Countries or the European Union should open their borders to whatever waves of migrants might want to enter. Like on every marketplace in our complex times, intervention might not only be legitimate and necessary but it usually is to the overall benefit. The only care to be taken when designing state intervention is that it should be in tune with the dynamics of the phenomenon, observing migration also in the context of supply and demand. And in this sense, keeping always with the market concept, let us not un-wantingly increase illegal employment nor unnecessarily expand the market share for traffickers and smugglers. Because to forget that most markets, have a black-market, may hinder the overall result that we were aiming for in the first place. The new European common policy proposal on immigration seems to have incorporated such interventions particularly by refining its employment strategy, but also by reviewing the impact of an ageing population on security and pensions and by making training more responsive to the market needs. A communication on illegal immigration has also been released, and the Candidate Countries will have to align themselves to this common policy probably before accession.

However if one looks at the entire accession negotiations in the field of Migration, the two most striking common features in all these countries seem to be: 1. Sometimes technical negotiations for accession were underestimated in favour of the political negotiations and 2. Migration realities were too rarely regarded in perspective. First, on the technical question. Beyond the status of a formal condition for enlargement (as defined in 1993 at the European Council in Copenhagen), technical criteria are of the utmost importance for the union, but especially for the country in question. No doubt that political negotiations are important and more than that, commitment to democratic values backed up by political commitment to the enlargement process are crucial factors. But it would be a mistake to underestimate the role of technical capacity. On the long term, political-only driven efforts will prove to be counterproductive, while technical efforts, resulting in a better infrastructure tailored to cope with European challenges will prove its benefits in facing very close future situations. Higher flexibility in implementing European legislation, higher efficiency in providing security to individuals, higher response of the administrative structures to fast changes, managing migration and other challenges and not least a better understanding – at all government levels – of the way the different states in the European Union work for a common interest are just some few arguments for the technical side of negotiations for enlargement. But in the end we face political and technical interdependency anyway: Accession may be a priority political objective, but migration management should not be too far behind, not least because it is the one topic in today's Europe that the electorate does not seem to be ignoring. In what regards the second common feature, the lack of perspective in approaching migration, the most common illustration of it is a state that would not diligently try to cope with the *Acquis* in the area of migration for the apparent (and obvious) reason that there were not too many migration challenges in that particular state. In a time magnified frame, that statement is true. Most of the candidate countries are not (yet) particular destinations for migrants (especially economic migrants), and when such phenomenon occurs it is typically insignificant and anyway just a "pit-stop", a transit period in the migrant's route towards the final destination (with the exception of the Czech Republic, where the percentage of

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foreigners has already reached 2%). But upon accession this state of fact will change radically: as part of the Union the candidate countries will find themselves becoming very attractive for migrants over night, and not by accident: the membership in the Union's political processes will make these countries safer, the flow of capital and the development of the economic markets will increase the demand for labour and finally, the social welfare system will probably become more friendly.

All these changes will drive migration flows towards these countries, and this is the perspective that legislators and administrations have to keep in mind when designing their migration policy and when aligning themselves to the Migration Acquis. Moreover, adopting the Acquis alone, by a simple legislative process will never be enough, without the building of administrative capacity to enforce the EU framework legislation and to react in symphony to the challenges of the Union the process will be far from effective. What we all have to understand is that membership in the Union brings along a lot of advantages, in terms of strengthening the economy, consolidating democratic processes and providing for safety and security. But these advantages come along with huge responsibilities, because the way one single state deals with certain challenges – such as migration – is not only relevant for that state alone but for the whole union. And if the capacity of that state to face such challenges is lacking then there are high chances that completed enlargement may turn into weighty political embarrassment when the same state finds itself in the impossibility to strive for the values of the Union in undeniably visible situations.

Migration in the Candidate Countries is on its way to change in quantitative and qualitative presence, and these changes – in the good practice of globalisation trends – are both causes and effects of so many and complex other processes, of which the enlargement of the European Union is certainly the most revolutionary. In this context migration policies have to be carefully designed to lead eventually to migrants' economic and cultural integration in an extended area of freedom security and justice. An area which must consistently strive to balance rights and responsibilities of migrants. A balance that can only function when legal transposition is matched with both administrative and enforcement capacity. It is therefore high time to prepare the process, which must go beyond legislation and technical co-operation. Alongside emigration and established temporary migration to the west, the societies in the accession states have to be prepared for a new challenge to their cohesion: foreigners in their cities, often right in their neighbourhood, maybe competing for their jobs. Let us avoid emergency management and rather, in a timely fashion, strive for long term orderly migration supported by functional integration measures in tune with the host societies.

Research Methodology

What began as a classical multiple country case study, later developed in a comparative study with the aim of creating a certain typology distinguishing between those countries where there is immigration and those countries where there is emigration. What also emerged was the need to distinguish between countries where permanent emigration is prevailed upon by circulatory emigration. Additionally a great deal of attention needed to be paid to the phenomena of transit immigration, temporary immigration and permanent settlement immigration. Some countries used to regard their emigrants to the EU only as a source of remittances. In the 90s this pattern changed and now the same emigrants are looked at as the ones who can potentially build transnational

connectivity. The question of whether this trend is also spilling over to the accession countries was a further element which needed to be assessed. What also needed appropriate attention is the issue of nationality and naturalization. Where usually nationality has been closely related to ethnic background, the new realities may create revised views and policies on this matter. With more and more people wanting to be naturalized, it is clear that the relevant laws and policies, when less than adequate, will bear the strain. This point has also been analyzed.

In fact this booklet is part of a product of comprehensive research and analysis of migration trends in each of six participating EU accession countries: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria. The research project has been supported by the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, under the European Social Fund budget line *“Analysis of and research on the social situation, demography and the family”* and was managed by IOM Vienna.

Under the title **“Migration Trends in Selected EU Applicant Countries”**, the following volumes are available:

Volume I – Bulgaria. The Social Impact of Seasonal Migration.

Volume II – The Czech Republic. The Times They Are A-Changin.

Volume III – Poland. Dilemmas of a Sending and Receiving Country.

Volume IV – Romania. More ‘Out’ than ‘In’ at the Crossroads between Europe and the Balkans.

Volume V – Slovakia. An Acceleration of Challenges for Society.

Volume VI – Slovenia. The perspective of a Country on the ‘Schengen Periphery’.

Within the project, applied research enhancing the EU knowledge basis on migration in candidate countries to the Union has been sought. Although building on the acquired knowledge, it is no continuation of the previous IOM / ICMPD research, but is inscribed in a different logic. The particular interest here was to find out more about the effects of migration on the countries’ societies. For this purpose, a mixed methodology was conceived, taking into account the different levels of migration research in the participating countries. It has been applied and can be found in each of the six country reports as well as in the overview.

The research was developed with an attempt to align the research process as far as possible. This field of research being new for the participating countries, two major disadvantages had to be faced: little research and a low number of researchers to draw upon as well as scarce data availability. However statistics and literature was found to be better in those countries which have already experienced in-migration to a certain degree (the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, to a lesser degree also Slovakia), whereas Bulgaria and Romania were still greatly lacking both research and statistical apprehension of the phenomenon.

As a consequence, the methodology has been elaborated in three steps, which accompanied the entire research process: Literature analysis, interviews and recommendations. In fact data has systematically been completed by interviews with officials, experts, and migrants themselves or their associations, depending on the gaps

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in literature and statistics. Collaboration of the researchers with the respective IOM country missions has facilitated this process. For each of the countries, the interviews form the added value of the reports. Hitherto undocumented aspects of migration phenomena in the accession countries become perceivable for the first time, and besides, analysed in a systematic manner.

The research is made pertinent by analysis weighing the information against credibility and by the elaboration of conclusions to each chapter of the research. Recommendations to different stakeholders are formulated at the end of the text for optimal usability.

Through its form and result, the project *“Sharing Experience: Migration Trends in Selected Applicant Countries and Lessons Learned from the ‘New Countries of Immigration’ in the EU and Austria”* hopes to contribute to EU migration research and policy at the time of the expansion in May 2004 and beyond.

The reader may expect comprehensive information on the situation of migrants both, in and out of the countries, and the countries’ migration management approaches, with the main purpose to illustrate the impact of migration trends on the local society and the social situation in the country.

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Executive summary

This study provides a relatively complex overview of what is currently (mainly between 1997 and 2001 or 2002¹) going on in the field of international migration and investigates the various integration issues that immigrants face in the Czech Republic. Migratory trends (their materialization in reality) and their conditions, the impact of migration upon society, and questions about migration policies and practices, including policy implications/ recommendations, are presented. The study also gives a brief look at a specific issue: foreign children and their integration in Czech schools and Czech society (see Appendix I).

The results presented here are based on 1) the author's experience, 2) secondary sources ("hard data" statistics and various studies) and 3) "soft" subjective pieces of information collected from 30 interviewed experts² (specialists in migration/integration issues). Through its "added value," this method serves to either confirm/verify or refuse patterns and trends that have already been explained. This method also serves to illuminate new perspectives. Experts' opinions are always presented below in italics and marked with the abbreviation "No." and identification numbers (to connect them with particular persons – see the Appendix II). For a regional and subregional overview of the Czech Republic, please see the maps in the Appendix III.

As for some of the ascertained and presented results, let us pinpoint the following ones³:

Migration and integration reality

- Current Czech migratory trends have quickly been shifting towards those typical of the developed Western World. These parallels concern: 1) quantitative aspects (numbers of immigrants – "stocks and flows"); 2) the conditions of migration and, consequently, many "mechanisms" through which migration is materialized; and 3) the nature and the whole development of migration policies and practices. Accordingly, it has been proven that the current migratory reality in the Czech Republic might, to some extent, be explained by well-known migration theories, namely: the neoclassical economic theory, the world system theory, the dual labour market theory, the network theory and the institutional theory.

¹ A) If necessary, some patterns from the beginning of the 1990s or even from the communist era are mentioned, too

B) If not specified otherwise, the data concerns December 31 of the given year

C) In 1997, the Czech economy experienced severe problems on macro and micro levels. These problems coincided with political turmoil in the Czech Republic. In the process of searching for remedies, generally more restrictive approaches have begun to dominate all of society since then. These approaches have had important impacts on migratory reality; for example, there is less room left in the country's territory in which immigrants can operate. The restrictions have also gone hand-in-hand with the further harmonization of Czech migratory policies and practices with those in the European Union (EU)

² Experienced experts working in the migration field - representatives from the state sector, academic circles, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organisations were selected and successfully contacted (see the Appendix II)

³ For more detailed conclusions including more specific developmental trends, see the text at the end of any chapter and a chapter 7, which is devoted to overall conclusions (this section also contains recommendations as to what remedies might help solve existing problems)

- During the last 150 years, a trend of *emigration* dominated over *immigration* in the territory of the current Czech Republic.
- The Czech Republic has quickly become a transit and immigration country. Since the end of 2002, 231,608 immigrants have officially stayed in the country. 14,741 persons were caught in 2002 while illegally trying to cross the Czech state border. Permanent and long-term emigration of the republic's own population, as well as short-term cross border movements, are not large at all and it seems that they have been decreasing over time.
- Among the source countries that supply the Czech Republic with "permanent immigrants" and are closely linked with family reunion processes (flows a year), two countries dominate: Slovakia and Ukraine. Vietnamese, Poles, Slovaks and Ukrainians represent the "stock" populations and are the most important source countries of permanent immigrants into the Czech Republic.
- The predominance of "economic migrants" coming from Slovakia and Ukraine to the country is clearly evident. Out of the ten most important source countries, four are countries of the former Soviet Union.
- Compared to immigrants who stay in the Czech Republic for economic and family reasons, asylum seekers represent much smaller numbers. Ukrainian asylum seekers comprise the most important ethnic group among asylum seekers who asked for asylum between 1997 and 2002. Other important countries of origin are Afghanistan, Moldova, India, Vietnam, Romania and Russia, recently also Slovakia. Also among asylum seekers, those migrants arriving from countries of the former Soviet Union play a very important role.
- Many of the source countries of asylum seekers are among those whose citizens were caught trying illegally to cross the Czech state border. Representatives of some of those countries (mainly India, China, Vietnam, Moldova, Germany and Poland) are permanently illegally on the move through the Czech Republic.
- One could estimate the current number of irregular immigrants in the Czech Republic (as of the very end of 2000) as somewhere between 295,000 and 335,000. Of this figure, 165,000 might be irregular immigrants active on the Czech labour market, 30,000 their dependents and 100,000 – 140,000 transit migrants (now perhaps slightly less).
- Regarding the development of future migration processes in the Czech Republic, existing trends could probably be extrapolated into the future. There is no reason not to believe that, in general, the situation in the migration field (including overall scales) will develop in the same manner as the situation in many Western European democracies.
- Unambiguously, the most important reasons for immigration to the Czech Republic (excluding transit migration) are economic (work and doing business) and familial. On a more general level and from the immigrant country's perspective, three groups of factors play an important role when searching for strong "pulls" attracting migrants to the Czech Republic: 1) geographical (position), 2) political and 3) economic.
- Family and informal ties play an important "supportive" role in how to get to the country, where to stay and what to do.
- A stock of foreign students has been growing over time while new enrollments (flow) have recently been slightly diminishing. By far the most important source country sending students to the Czech Republic is Slovakia.

- Czech compatriots have not been too involved in directly transforming their mother society since the collapse of communism.
- Currently, there are no strong “push” factors that would propel mass migration movements of Czech citizens out of their mother country.
- One has to distinguish between two very different immigrant groups in the Czech Republic - the “Eastern” category versus the “Western” one. Each has different roles, different positions in the Czech labour market and dissimilar “structural characteristics.”
- When simplifying to some extent, there is an overall trend of “feminization” (the growth of female participation) of immigration to the Czech Republic.
- The immigrants’ age structure (all legally-residing foreigners) clearly differs from that typical of the host, majority population. The size of foreigners in the economically active age (15-59) is really huge (86%) whereas the youngest and oldest segments of immigrants (1-14 and 60+) are represented by rather small numbers both in absolute and relative terms.
- The capital city of Prague is a very important migratory destination and large numbers of immigrants of different types concentrate here.
- There is a clear East-West gradient. The more westward one moves within the territory of the Czech Republic, the more intense the influence of immigration.
- Immigrant ethnic groups representing neighboring countries (Slovaks, Poles, Germans and Austrians) have, besides Prague and the Central Bohemia region, a higher concentration in Czech/Moravian/Silesian districts bordering on their mother countries.
- The index of dissimilarity shows that Vietnamese and Slovaks have spatial distribution patterns most similar to the Czech majority population (by district), whereas patterns for Chinese, Russians and Americans, especially due to their huge concentrations in Prague, are very different.
- As in other developed immigrant countries, a presence of economic immigrants in the Czech Republic brings with it both pros and cons for the country and for the immigrants themselves (i.e., their omnipresent exploitation). What is obvious is that economically motivated foreign immigration helps propel transformation processes mainly in the urban poles of development, and this is the most important impact of immigrants upon Czech society. In relation to economic migrants, it was also confirmed that “compatriots’ nets” (with their supportive role) have been important factors in attracting immigrants to and within the Czech Republic.
- Ethnic immigrant groups, in accordance with their own strategies and their specific spatial concentration patterns, have found specific niches in the Czech labour market, thereby reshaping its previous contours. Three ethnic immigrant groups are involved in this process above all – Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Chinese.
- Concerning immigration vis-à-vis cultural contributions, demographic changes, changes in the social structure and the like in the Czech Republic, there is no nation-wide immigrants’ influence on these issues; it is exhibited only in some places on the local level.

The Czech population is rather xenophobic. However, the relationship is not “linear” in its character. When comparing the beginning of the 1990s with the beginning of the

2000s, the public's perception of selected individual ethnic immigrant groups has become more positive (except in the case of citizens of the Balkans).

- Whereas Slovaks are, out of the selected ethnic groups, by far the most popular for the Czech majority, followed by Poles, Vietnamese and citizens of the former Soviet Union, citizens of the Balkans and especially Roma belong to the most unpopular ones.
- Prejudice against the Roma ethnic group is a persistently recurring attitude.
- Nevertheless, the manifestation of right wing extremism, associated mainly with young people, has been limited to small groups and has not spread through the population in a way that could destabilise public safety in any of the Czech regions.

There is a sort of competition and even grudge inside some of the ethnic groups that is manifested in bad relationships between associations ("old" communities, regardless of having citizenship in the Czech Republic, versus those who "newly" immigrated – namely, Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Arabs or Kurds).

Migration/integration policies and practices

Czech legislation on international migration almost fully corresponds to that proposed in the EU Directives. In the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, more active, systematic, and coherent approaches toward migration issues were implemented. State integration programmes (designed mainly for refugees and compatriots) and a newly-launched programme for recruiting educated/skilled foreign labour force are good examples of successful and useful activities. However, there are weaknesses. These include a too vague definition of basic principles of migration policy; inconsistencies in approaches to building a multicultural society and combating illegal/irregular migration; problems with the decentralization of migratory responsibilities (especially delegating power to newly-established regions); inadequate cooperation among (and within) state bodies, NGOs and international organisations; insufficient publication of migration issues among the public; gaps in migration statistics; and suspicions of corruption in the state sector (the police).

1. Brief Historical Overview (1945 – 1989)

International migration movements during the communist era of the Czech Republic/Czechoslovakia were very specific. Under a regime that in many ways isolated pro-Soviet bloc countries vis-à-vis other worlds⁴, movements were far from “natural” (i.e. natural migration activities and trends were deformed) and were, according to legislation at the time, limited mostly to illegal emigration. The country’s trend of emigration (rather than immigration), so typical of the previous 150 years⁵, continued. However, one important change occurred: whereas economic motives (together with the related family reunification processes) for emigration had dominated in the past (except for a short period just before the start of the Second World War – see Cure 1994), political (“push”) motives for emigration also became important factors under communism. However, it does not mean that immigration did not exist. It did occur, but mainly in the wake of the Second World War and in the form of temporary workers who arrived as a result of intergovernmental agreements between Czechoslovakia and other socialist countries (called “international aid cooperation” - see Boušková 1998; Drbohlav 2003b). “Permanent immigration” to the Czech Republic was rather marginal, except for the inflow of Slovaks (which was actually considered an internal migration movement at the time).

For many reasons, migration data sources covering the socialist/communist epoch are poor, because official records heavily underestimated irregular movements. Therefore, very often one has to only rely on qualified estimates. The international migration of the whole era may be divided into two periods.

The Aftermath of the Second World War

First there are migration movements which occurred as an aftermath of the Second World War. Between 1945 and 1947, some 2,820,000 Germans were transferred and expelled (in three organised and unorganised waves) from Czechoslovakia to Germany. Thus, the number of Germans in the Czech Republic alone shrank from 3,000,000 (as of May 1, 1945) to 180,000 (as of May 22, 1947 – Stěhování 1995). In this context, Chesnais (1992) states, 1,570,000 Germans left the country in 1946. This exodus was only partly compensated by immigration. During the two-year period after the war, between 80,000 and 100,000 people came back from abroad. Brouček (1998) maintains that, between 1945 and 1950, “approximately 220,000 Czechs and Slovaks returned to Czechoslovakia. They were settled mostly in places which had belonged to the transferred Germans⁶”. They were those people who had left just before or during the war and those members of Czech compatriot families who had left their mother country earlier and had been living abroad for a long time (e.g., reemigrants from the USSR – Volhynia above all, but also Austria, France, Poland, Germany, Yugoslavia, etc. – Kučera 1994; Brouček 1998).

⁴ Inter alia, a strict regulation and control of their own citizens’ international movements

⁵ Between 1850 and 1914 the territory of the current Czech Republic lost about 1,600,000 inhabitants (measured via net migration). Emigration highly dominates over immigration during the First Republic (Czechoslovakia) as well. Between 1920 and 1939, the Czech Republic lost some 90,000 inhabitants (measured via net migration – see Stěhování 1995)

⁶ Nevertheless, most of the 72,000 reemigrants from Hungary and 21,000 from Romania were Slovaks (Brouček 1998) who settled in Slovakia

Brouček (1998) also points out that reemigration took place in two forms, either individually or collectively according to institutional law. It must be stressed that despite the state's endeavor to bring new people from within the country to border zone areas that were particularly hit by the expulsion of Germans (perhaps about 1,500,000 came there by 1949, partly also from Slovakia), these attempts failed. The border zone as a whole has never reached former population numbers. Nevertheless, the migration experience was significant, and brought about negative social and economic consequences there. These consequences have persisted into the present period.

Emigration during socialism/communism

The second period consists of the years 1948-1989, when two important political events took place (1948 – the communists came to power, and 1968 – occupation by the Soviet army). One has to rely on migration estimates for this period because most of the movements were illegal according to given legislation; however, the data suggest that Czechoslovakia lost about 500,000 inhabitants through illegal migration and 65,000 through officially registered international migration movements (Kučera 1994). Kučera (1994) estimates that out of this 565,000, at least three quarters emigrated from the Czech Republic alone.⁷ Therefore, this information shows a loss of some 420,000 – 440,000 inhabitants; more than 10,000 a year⁸.

When distinguishing two sub-periods, then, the losses via illegal emigration for all of Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1967 represent some 255,000 (some 60,000 just shortly after February 1948), and some 245,000 between 1968 and 1989 (some 104,000 just after the occupation – Kučera 1994).

In the 1970s and 80s, the migration loss for the Czech Republic was an estimated 30,000 – 40,000 for each decade⁹ (based on Kučera 1994 and Srb 1990). Reasons for this emigration were mostly political, but there were also some economic roots. Some people could no longer bear an anti-democratic and totalitarian regime, while others were not pleased with their standard of living as a whole. Very often there were a lot of factors involved in the decision-making process, which resulted in emigration for living, working, travelling and environmental reasons, as well as others. In other words, there existed a total disillusionment with the political climate. Emigration itself was a grave act that often involved breaking all family ties and social networks. There was practically no way back because emigration was a criminal offence, and could involve confiscation of one's possessions and sometimes persecution of relatives. Furthermore, hope for a democratic and "prosperous" future in the country was out of sight (Drbohlav 1993).

By looking at official statistics, it is possible to deduce some basic personal characteristics of all emigrants (Srb 1990). One can assume that most of them (about

⁷ It is perhaps worth mentioning the difference between an intensity of people leaving the country illegally from the Czech Republic on the one hand, and from the Slovak Republic on the other hand. While the ratio of the population between the two republics was more or less 2:1, the ratio of illegal emigration was about 4:1 in 1968-1980, and something between 2 and 3:1 in favour of the Czech Republic in 1981-1989 (estimated according to the internal data sources of the former Federal Ministry of the Interior)

⁸ It was about one third of the natural increase (Kučera 1994). However, as Kučera (1994) also states, between 1980 and 1989, losses through illegal emigration represented as much as 63% of the natural increase in the Czech Republic. In fact, since 1979 the country as a whole has lost population due to international migration. Nevertheless, it was not reflected in official statistics

⁹ One can show here how official statistics differed from reality. Whereas unofficial expert estimates put the number of emigrants from Czechoslovakia during the 1980s at about 50,000, there were officially only 25,746 emigrants (77% for Europe) between 1981 and 1989 (Marešová 1991)

80%) were economically active (with an average age of 35), and had often left the country with their families (Kučera 1994). Most of them were skilled, i.e., both blue-collar workers and professionals. The ratio of men compared to women seemed to be about 2:1.¹⁰ During the 1980s, it was clearly indicated that the metropolitan and urban population was the main driving force behind emigration.¹¹ For example, Prague alone had the highest levels of illegal emigration during the 1980s (its share represented 23-29% of all emigration movements between 1984 and 1988; in relative terms it was 64-93 emigrants per 100,000 inhabitants of the given unit). Geographical position was also an important factor; the populations of districts close to, or bordering on, the East-West border zone (e.g., Karlovy Vary, Cheb and Sokolov) emigrated much more often than others did. Western European countries, especially Germany, but also traditional immigrant regions such as the USA, Canada and Australia, were targets for emigrants from the Czech Republic/Czechoslovakia. However, one cannot uncover the truth behind these movements simply by looking at a regional picture of official emigration.

Instead, a very specific type of emigration from the country was represented by the outflow of ethnic Germans ("Aussiedler"). For example, between 1980 and 1989, 12,727 of them left Czechoslovakia and went back to Germany (Uhlíř 1993).

All in all, the high intensity of emigration from the Czech Republic/Czechoslovakia fits a trend that was typical of Central/Eastern Europe in general. It is estimated that the former socialist/communist „Eastern Europe“ lost more than 14,000,000 people to the Western world as a result of international migration between 1950 and 1993 (Fassmann / Münz 1995).

Immigration during socialism/communism

One important migratory phenomenon, the mutual movement of people between the Czech Republic and Slovakia, did not become international until 1993, when the two independent states were established. As far as these movements are concerned, in the first half of the 1950s there were rather huge flows from Slovakia to the Czech Republic, altogether about 33,000 people a year (the counter flows were about 21,000 – Häufler 1984). The numbers were 16,000 and 10,300 a year for the period of 1965-1969 (Häufler 1984). Over time, this migration has been diminishing and in the 1970s and 1980s the net migration loss for Slovakia was approximately only about 3,500 (Dzúrová / Rychtaříková / Drbohlav 1992).

Two waves of permanent immigrants (settlement migration) should be mentioned in particular. As Brouček (1998) states, between 1946-1947, 12,000 Bulgarian peasants settled in the frontier regions after the evacuation of Germans, and "in 1957 there were

¹⁰ When having a look at registered illegal emigrants from the Czech Republic between 1972 and 1989, of the total number of emigrants, 54% were children younger than 15, 41% were 16-30 years old, 26% were 31-40 years old and 9% were older than 40; 42% were blue-collar workers, 26% had finished high school, and 16% represented highly educated intelligentsi

¹¹ The relationship was investigated between illegal emigration from the Czech Republic and various geographical, economic, social and demographical characteristics by means of a stepwise regression analysis in Czech districts in the period of 1981-1983. The resulting model, based on all 17 independent variables, accounted for a substantial amount of variance ($R^2 = 0.78$, $p=0.05$). Thus, it explained the causality and conditional aspects of the emigration fairly well while confirming a close relationship to the emigration to highly urbanized areas. The variables, such as the share of those working in agriculture (the standard regression coefficient $SRC = -0.339$), the share of people living in urbanized areas ($SRC = 0.406$), the divorce rate ($SRC = 0.445$), the environmental („natural“) quality ($SRC = -0.451$), and the „centrality“ ($SRC = 0.174$), were put into the equation (Drbohlav 1993)

about 4,000 construction workers settled in Most and Chomutov districts.” The second immigrant ethnic group to settle in the country was Greek. They left Greece because of the civil war conflict in the second half of the 1940s. “At the end of this war children and young people were evacuated from distressed areas and some of them were transported to Czechoslovakia” (Brouček 1998). As this author further continues, between 1949 and 1950, Czechoslovakia accepted about 12,000 Greeks as political refugees. They were initially located in frontier regions in northern Moravia, however they moved out of this region (while remaining within the country) continuously (see also Uherek 2003).

Besides those newcomers who settled in the country, there were also temporary foreign workers in the Czech Republic/Czechoslovakia. While only very limited numbers of Czechs worked abroad during the communist era, relatively significant numbers of foreigners worked in Czech Republic – mainly during the 1970s and 1980s. These temporary workers arrived primarily from Poland, Vietnam¹², Hungary, Cuba, Mongolia, Angola and Korea. They gained skills and work experience in Czechoslovakia and filled gaps in the Czech labour market (e.g. in food-processing, textiles, shoe and glass industries, machinery, mining, metallurgy and agriculture). The system of recruiting students, apprentices, and workers functioned via intergovernmental agreements and, to a much smaller extent, through individual contracts (mainly with workers from Poland and Yugoslavia). This immigration, as many other issues within the communist era, was very specific. Very often the immigrants were segregated and „ghettoized.” They were not very visible and were confined to operating only within individual plants, factories or localities. After the Velvet Revolution, the agreements were terminated relatively quickly and the number of foreign workers legally employed within the old schemes diminished sharply - as of April 1993, only 1,330 were allowed to stay in the country (Boušková 1998). Most of the former workers returned to their mother countries, however, some started using the new economic opportunities and established entrepreneurial ethnic enclaves.

1.1. Conclusions

- From the middle of the 19th century (the time we start with in this analysis) until the Velvet Revolution in 1989, the territory of the current Czech Republic underwent a very specific migratory experience. Emigration dominated over immigration under communism and its very restrictive migration policy. Additionally, emigration was mostly - according to legislation of that time - illegal in its character. Economic reasons for migration, as well as political reasons during the communist era, clearly exceeded all other incentives.
- Though there was a strong German minority in Czech lands (about one third of the whole population) during the inter-war period (the First Republic), multiculturalism has not spread or been a common experience throughout the country, except in the capital city of Prague. Furthermore, the temporary foreign labour forces that came to the Czech Republic under the “international aid” programme of the 1970s and 1980s were not the typical migrants one is familiar with outside the communist world. Hence, the experience of normal, lively co-existence of Czechs with other ethnic groups in

¹² Poles and Vietnamese represented the most numerous immigrant communities, reaching up to ten thousand people depending on what particular period is taken into account (see more in Boušková 1998). During the 1980s, a maximum of 60,000 foreign workers (converted to “one migrant and one day unit”) were resident altogether in the country

their country is rather limited¹³. Thus, a new experience with international migrants who are arriving and often settling in the country brings with it fears of the “unknown” and may sometimes lead to xenophobia or even racism.

- Despite the emigration tradition, or perhaps because of it, Czechs seem to be deeply rooted in their own country. The reasons for the low incidence of Czech emigration include: subjugation of their personal activities during the communist period, an overall cultural mentality that discourages them from solving a situation directly and drastically (migration is considered a drastic step), and strong emotional ties to their property, place and social networks.

¹³ Of course, with the exception of Slovaks who, due to a long common life in one state – Czechoslovakia – and due to very similar culture have until now never been considered by Czechs strangers and, consequently, real foreigners

2. Overall Migration Scales

The analysis below is burdened with some important shortcomings. One of them seems to be very important. So far, the collection, processing, and publication of Czech migratory statistics by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and, finally, the Czech Statistical Office has not been absolutely perfect.¹⁴ One can pinpoint, for example, inadequate cooperation among ministries and other institutions responsible for dealing with migration issues¹⁵ and thus far databases lack depth, dispersion and compatibility. There are some problems with international migration data classification (e.g. a lack of detailed and structured “spatial data”) and with the manner in which data are collected in the field and disseminated. Some important pieces of information are not collected at all or are of poor quality (e.g. reasons for migration), while others are not easily available to the public and to academics (Drbohlav 2003b). Nevertheless, the latest development and activities are rather positive and two sorts of specific yearbooks became essential bases of knowledge for this study (see e.g. Cizinci 2001, 2002; Zpráva 2001b, 2002).

This chapter provides a basic overview of the most important “stock and flow” migration data from 1997 and 2001 or 2002. It is organised into several subchapters, which concentrate on the main direction of migration movements, migrants’ countries of origin, motivation issues, the legal status of migrants, age groups, duration of stay and gender. While the chapter focuses on the whole country, the special role of Prague was, to some extent, respected, and the capital city is dealt with separately. Some issues are analysed individually while others are described together. This overview suffers from some problems, because we had some data prior to the year 2000, but they were insufficient, and only since then have we been able to obtain reliable and detailed information (see especially Cizinci 2001, 2002).

2.1. Direction and size of movements – basic parameters

The 196 million foreigners registered as having crossed the Czech state border in both directions (and staying not longer than 180 days – see table 1, graph 1 – Appendix III) in 2002 demonstrate the country’s openness in terms of population movements¹⁶.

Table 1. Foreigners crossing a state border of the Czech Republic, 1997–2002
(in million) (flow)

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
213	204	199	205	204	196

Source: Zpráva 2003

Note: Those registered as crossing the Czech state border (“flow”) in both directions (and usually staying not longer than 180 days).

¹⁴ However, especially as compared to other Central/Eastern European countries (CEEC), “the statistics collected in the Czech Republic are of a high quality” – as one of the official EU materials mentions (Migration 2002)

¹⁵ For example, one can notice that sometimes and, to some extent, the “same data” in this text provided by different sources slightly differ from each other

¹⁶ This openness sharply contrasts with the state of isolation under the communist regime, when, for example, the number of all persons (foreigners and citizens of the state) registered as crossing the border of Czechoslovakia was only slightly above 50,000,000 in the middle of the 1980s (Informace 1995, see Drbohlav 1993)

Table 2 shows us the basic parameters of permanent migration (“settlement” and, at least currently, “long-term”) – see below. From the establishment of the Czech Republic in 1993 until 2000, some 85,800 immigrants have arrived in the country while its emigration has been about 13,400 (hence, the net migration plus was slightly more than 72,000 – Populační 2002). However, as the authors of the same source mention, these emigration figures seem to be rather significantly undervalued. Based on data from some neighbouring countries (Slovakia, Germany) one can deduce that a more realistic emigration outflow probably revolves between 4,000 and 6,000 thousand a year¹⁷ (Populační 2002). Since 2000, there has been another problem. At that time a new registration system for immigrants was launched. Owners of visas exceeding a period of 90 days and immigrants who remained within the Czech Republic for more than a year were included in the same category as owners of permanent residence permits. As a corollary, by 2001 the inflows, but even more so the outflows, increased and the net migration dropped to “negative figures” (see 2001 in table 2, graph 2 – Appendix III). Apparently, not only the “name” of the migratory category as such has been changed (“long-term migration” vis-à-vis “a visa issued for a period exceeding more than 90 days”¹⁸), but some “internal shifts” within the recategorization have been made as well¹⁹. Obviously, the given numbers before and after 2000 are not compatible. Anyway, respecting the newly applied statistical practice in 2001, except Vietnam, the Czech Republic lost migrants to its main countries of origin (Slovakia, Ukraine, Russia and Germany – Populační 2002). However, in 2002 immigration significantly increased and the net migration reached its “traditional positive size” around 10,000 (12,290).

Table 2. Registered “permanent migration” in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flow)

Migration/Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Immigration	12,880	10,729	9,910	7,802	12,918	44,679
Emigration	805	1,241	1,136	1,263	21,469	32,389
Net migration	12,075	9,488	8,774	6,539	-8,551	12,290

Source: Pohyb 1998-2002, Populační 2002, Stav 2003

Note: The emigration statistics are far from complete.

Since 2001, a statistical practice has significantly been changed: persons who received a visa issued for a period exceeding 90 days and stayed in the country for more than a year were included in the same category as immigrants with permanent residence permits. Also, note (see below) that numbers coming from the Czech Statistical Office, to some extent, differ from those provided by the Ministry of the Interior (two different databases).

It is very difficult to get any precise overall data on Czechs working abroad. Data on official temporary migration to Germany, by far the most important destination of Czechs, indicated a decreasing number of Czechs working in that country between 1992

¹⁷ The reason is that by far not all of the emigrants, although it is mandatory, officially deregister themselves before leaving the country

¹⁸ See the newly passed Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) No. 326/1999 Coll., which came into force on January 1, 2000

¹⁹ There is, for example, another problem springing from the fact that some data are included into statistics only after a one-year period. Hence, there is a sort of a time gap between emigration and immigration data

and 1998, whereas for 1999 and 2001 the numbers went up slightly. However, in 2002 it dropped again (see table 3). According to the best estimates available, about 50,000 Czechs (including irregulars and commuters within the border zone) worked in Germany in 1992 (for time periods, see Horáková / Drbohlav 1998 and Horáková 1993, 1996, 1998). In 1995, the number was estimated at some 30,000 - 35,000.²⁰ Germany imposed an important limitation on some of these programmes in 1996 and 1997. Currently, their number is probably much smaller.²¹ To summarize, outflow of Czechs to the West because of work peaked between 1991 and 1993 (nevertheless, one can deduce that it mostly concerned temporary stays with possible future returns to the mother country). Since then, it has been decreasing (see also Marešová / Drbohlav / Lhotská 1996) and recently more or less stabilizing. The reason is that Western European countries have introduced more restrictive measures (mainly because of high unemployment rates in their countries and a growing xenophobic atmosphere among their populations²²). But more importantly, working in Western Europe for Czechs became less attractive than earlier. First of all, those who wanted to leave for the West had already left. Also, the fascination with the West, which was evident in the very beginning of the 1990s, has dissipated. Further, the Czechs went relatively successfully through transformation and their living standard has improved. There are many opportunities to start a business or make a good living at home, particularly in light of the indirect revaluation of the Czech crown vis-à-vis western currencies.

Labour migration of Czechs to other regions of Eastern Europe has so far been negligible.

²⁰ Regarding temporary commuters (mainly commuting daily or weekly), there is no reliable and centralized information at one's disposal in the Czech Republic. Despite collecting some limited information about Czech citizens who asked for an acknowledgement at job centres confirming that they do not receive social support in unemployment (their would-be German employers asks for it), there is no registration systematized since it is not clear at all whether an applicant will finally commute or not.

²¹ Now it might be perhaps smaller than 10,000. This estimate is derived from a study of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs from 2001 (Internal data 2001) in which commuting in two groups of Czech districts (those bordering on Bavaria and Saxony and those from which the commuting of Czechs abroad is one of the most frequent and intensive) were analysed. Regarding the former group, it was estimated that 4,338 persons commuted (mainly in construction, services, forestry and some industrial branches), concerning the latter one, the figure was 1,159 (particularly in services, agriculture, and partly in construction and forestry) (Internal data 2001).

There are some other figures coming from an expert who works for the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs - No. 6: *"Some 8,000 citizens of Czechia work in Austria (we cannot separate commuters from those who stay and work there), some 5,000 persons commute to Germany (officially). As of now, between 30,000 and 40,000 Czechs work legally abroad"*

²² On the other hand, for example, Hönnekop (1997) points out that: "In agriculture, production would have decreased had Eastern European workers not been available". Also, due to the lack of labour force mainly in some specific branches, which has been, in part, the consequence of an aging process (e.g. Lutz 1999), some of the Western European countries started implementing recruitment programmes for foreigners (e.g., the search for computer science experts in Germany, or initiatives in Ireland and the United Kingdom, among others)

Table 3. Citizens of the Czech Republic officially employed in Germany, 1997–2002 (stock)

Type of stay / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
18 months¹	530	319	441	649	783	639
3 months²	2,266	2,078	2,229	3,156	3,136	2,958
“Green cards”³	-	-	-	-	249	305
Total	2,796	2,397	2,670	3,805	4,168	3,902

Source: Horáková-Macounová 2003

Note: ¹ Work contracts of Czech citizens for 18 months as a maximum during one's life (for improving one's qualification). (For example, in 1993, it was 1,292 - Marešová 1999).

² Work contracts of Czech citizens for 3 months as a maximum during one year. (In 1993, it was 10,964 - Marešová 1999).

³ Czech information technology specialists employed through so-called “green cards”.

Table 4 informs us about issued permanent residence permits, long-term residence permits (until 1999), and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (since 2000). As it has been mentioned, new legislative steps heavily influence these inflows. Therefore, the figures before and after 2000 are not compatible. According to the Act No. 326/1999, Coll., as amended, on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act - entered into force in January 2000), a new complex visa regime that contains provisions for the issuing, validity and types of visas was installed. Those third-country nationals who intend to come to the Czech Republic for a specific purpose, such as employment, must first obtain a corresponding visa in their country of origin through Czech embassies or consular offices. Accordingly, new formal statuses for a stay in the country have been created and it is mandatory for anyone who wishes to operate in the country under the umbrella of a long-term visa to simultaneously get a work permit or a trade license. In sum, just as in the EU countries, external controls have been strengthened. Nevertheless, what is clear is that since 2000, there is an increasing number of foreigners who are interested in legally staying in the country over time.

Table 4. Issued permanent residence permits and long-term residence permits/visas for a period exceeding 90 days (per year), the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flow)

Type of permit / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
PRP	13,559	9,867	8,191	5,451	6,425	8,019
LRP/Visa90+	85,299	87,628	84,645	20,863	25,708	30,954

Source: Zpráva 2003

Note: PRP – foreigners with a permanent residence permit; LRP/Visa 90+ – foreigners with a long-term residence permit/visa for a period exceeding 90 days.

The newly passed Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) No. 326/1999 Coll. (came into effect on January 1, 2000) substituted the status of the long-term residence permit (valid in the Czech Republic between 1993 and 1999) for a new one – long-term visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days.

The table concerns newly issued permits (“flows”); In addition, renewed permits/visas have to be taken into account. For example, in 2001 and 2002, 101,079 and 103,268, respectively, visas for a period exceeding 90 days were renewed (Zpráva 2003).

These data cannot be directly related to numbers representing owners of these permits (“stock”).

The reason is that some persons can be issued a visa for a period exceeding 90 days several times a year while for others the visa can expire.

Table 5 (graph 3 – Appendix III) gives basic “stock” data on permanent residence permits (to a large extent, family migration), long-term residence permits (until 1999), and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (since 2000), which, to large extent, represent economic migration²³. While again keeping in mind that the data from the 1990s and 2000s are not compatible, several conclusions can be drawn: in 2002, the stock of legally residing immigrants in the Czech Republic was more than 231,000 – an absolute peak during a short migratory history of the country. Since 2000, when recategorization of immigrants’ statuses occurred, it has permanently been growing. Family migration (which was not hit by the legislation changes) has slowly been growing over time as well. Economic migration is not an exception; it has also been increasing since 2000.

Table 5. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and long-term residence permits/visas for a period exceeding 90 days, the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)

Type of stay / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
PRP	56,281	63,919	66,754	66,891	69,816	75,249
LRP/Visa90+	153,516	155,836	162,108	134,060	140,978	156,359
Total	210,311	220,187	228,862	200,951	210,794	231,608

Source: Zpráva 2003

Note: PRP – foreigners with a permanent residence permit; LRP/Visa 90+ – foreigners with a long-term residence permit/visa for a period exceeding 90 days.

The newly passed Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) No. 326/1999 Coll. (came into effect on January 1, 2000) substituted the status of the long-term residence permit (valid in the Czech Republic between 1993 and 1999) for a new one – long-term visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days. Nevertheless, the data sets (before and after 2000) are not directly comparable with each other.

Table 6 (graph 4 – Appendix III) shows us the number of asylum seekers in the Czech Republic over time. Although the numbers have been growing since 1997 and reached more than 18,000 in 2001²⁴, they dropped to 8,840 in 2002. The reason is that Amendment No. 2/2002 to the Act No. 325/1999 Coll. was prepared and came into effect in 2002. It brought about several significant changes in conditions under which asylum seekers can apply and, consequently, stay in the country. Perhaps the most important change is that under this Amendment, asylum seekers must wait one year after submitting their application before they can begin work. In the past, once submitting the application asylum seekers could start officially working. This was one of the very strong “pulls” being used and misused by “false economic migrants.”²⁵

²³ In 2000, out of those foreigners who held permanent residence permits, 87% came under the family reunification umbrella (both the reunification with a foreigner and with a Czech citizen). Also, out of foreigners who held visas for a period exceeding 90 days, 86% were tied to employment and entrepreneurial activity

²⁴ By the way, it was in the 9th position in Europe (for example, with more asylum seekers than in Norway, Denmark, Ireland or Italy – Zpráva 2002b)

²⁵ Some other foreigners used the „asylum seeker channel“ for illegal/irregular transit migration through the Czech Republic and/or for avoiding expulsion

Table 6. Foreigners asking for asylum in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flow)

Asylum seekers / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total	2,109	4,086	7,220	8,788	18,082	8,480

Source: Zpráva 2003

Note: In 2002 a significant change occurred when the Amendment No. 2/2002 Coll. to the Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum, as amended, came into power.

The number of persons caught while trying illegally to cross a state border of the Czech Republic over time (see table 7, graph 5 – Appendix III) reflect both the external and internal factors involved. Obviously, the political and socio-economic stability/instability of regions and countries in the broadest sense of the word come into play. In addition, one has to take into account various measurements applied by individual countries to react to “unusual situations” (strong migratory push factors). Since both factors may ebb and flow over time, it is very difficult to assess how effective a country is at controlling migration, and whether its policy (in theory and practice) to combat irregular/illegal migration has become more successful or not. What might be said is that no huge migratory wave of Afghanis has overflowed the country since 2001. In 2002, the lowest number of foreigners was caught.

Table 7. Persons caught trying to cross a state border of the Czech Republic illegally, 1997–2002

Persons / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Foreigners	27,325	42,957	30,377	30,761	21,090	12,632
Citizens of the CR	2,014	1,715	1,948	1,959	2,744	2,109
Total	29,339	44,672	32,325	32,720	23,834	14,741

Source: Zpráva 2003

Source countries

Two source countries dominate among those that supply the Czech Republic with “permanent immigrants” and are closely linked with family reunion processes (flows a year) - Slovakia and Ukraine. Unlike those from Ukraine, in 2000, out of 2,826 immigrants from Slovakia 65% were citizens of the Czech Republic. A relatively high percentage of citizens of the Czech Republic were also among those who immigrated from western developed democracies. However, such figures probably represented former Czech emigrants who had emigrated during the communist era and are, in absolute terms, rather marginal. Thus, the whole picture of source countries is relatively stable. Nevertheless, one can point out the important decrease of immigrants coming from Vietnam over time (1,707 in 1997 versus 312 in 2000 - see table 8).

Table 8. Important inflows - foreigners with permanent residence permits by individual source countries, the Czech Republic, 1997–2001 (flow)

PRP / year	1997	1998	1999	2000
Slovakia	3,088	2,887	3,235	2,826
Ukraine	1,524	1,595	1,676	1,213
Germany	859	688	560	537
Russia	759	593	701	433
USA	388	255	265	395
Vietnam	1,707	1,204	808	312
Canada	234	187	144	141
Bulgaria	236	247	171	140
Switzerland	196	153	115	117
Great Britain	102	90	68	103

Source: *Populační 2002*

Note: PRP – foreigners with permanent residence permit

Keeping in mind the rather imperfect statistics on those who emigrate from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany are the most attractive destination countries followed by Austria, Switzerland, the USA, Great Britain and Italy (table 9). However, the numbers are rather marginal and one can only deduce that those who emigrated from the Czech Republic without de-registering themselves probably fit the aforementioned regional pattern.

Table 9. Important outflows – emigration from the country (permanent migration) by individual important destination countries, the Czech Republic, 1997–2000 (flow)

PRP / year	1997	1998	1999	2000
Slovakia	260	356	336	413
Germany	237	345	361	361
Austria	59	137	92	93
Switzerland	49	45	46	69
USA	40	57	54	57
Great Britain	15	29	34	37
Italy	23	39	33	34
Canada	27	49	42	29
Netherlands	6	22	16	20
Poland	11	22	8	19

Source: *Pohyb 2001*

Note: Incomplete statistics due to the small number of people who officially de-register themselves.

As for the „stock,” Vietnam, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine represent the most important source countries of permanent immigrants to the Czech Republic. While numbers of Slovaks and Poles have been decreasing or have stabilised, the number of Vietnamese and Ukrainians have been increasing over time (1997 versus 2002). Citizens of other

„eastern and western“ countries do not achieve very high numbers (see table 10, graph 6 – Appendix III).

Table 10. Foreigners with permanent residence permits by individual important source countries, the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)

PRP / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Vietnam	5,121	6,785	7,954	8,238	9,901	13,372
Poland	11,940	12,034	11,598	11,769	11,592	11,326
Slovakia	12,689	14,127	13,018	11,129	10,850	10,996
Ukraine	4,632	6,240	7,790	8,774	9,909	10,704
Russia	2,475	2,874	3,486	3,806	4,097	4,459
Germany	2,261	2,536	2,517	2,536	2,535	2,608
Bulgaria	2,352	2,334	2,331	2,302	2,166	2,164
Romania	1,384	1,621	1,714	1,726	1,737	1,715
Yugoslavia	1,620	1,831	1,747	1,691	1,658	1,720
USA	1,880	1,938	1,826	1,647	1,506	1,467

Source: Cizinci 2002

Note: PRP – foreigners with permanent residence permit

The predominance of “economic migrants” (foreign holders of long-term residence permits – before 1999, and visas for a period exceeding 90 days – after 2000) coming from Slovakia and Ukraine to the country is clearly evident. Furthermore, it seems that this sort of polarization is growing over time (2000 versus 2002 – where comparison is possible – see table 11, graph 7 – Appendix III). Out of the ten most important source countries, four pertain to countries of the former Soviet Union.

Table 11. Foreigners with long-term residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days by individual important source countries, the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)

LRP/VISA90+ / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Slovakia	39,489	35,494	27,344	33,136	42,444	50,106
Ukraine	38,770	46,444	58,093	41,438	41,916	48,441
Vietnam	15,829	16,090	16,870	15,318	14,023	13,771
Russia	6,463	7,155	13,420	9,158	8,326	8,354
Poland	13,079	10,132	6,680	5,281	4,897	4,670
China	4,433	4,106	4,211	3,410	3,138	2,821
Germany	3,666	3,712	3,595	2,432	2,402	2,575
Moldova	2,093	3,038	2,757	1,909	2,160	2,366
Bulgaria	4,232	3,625	2,699	1,716	1,935	2,019
Belarus	3,094	3,454	3,526	2,134	1,949	2,066

Source: Cizinci 2002

Note: LRP/Visa 90+ – foreigners with a long-term residence permit/visa for a period exceeding 90 days.

The newly passed Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) No. 326/1999 (came into effect on January 1, 2000) substituted the status of the long-term residence permit (valid in the Czech Republic between 1993 and 1999) for a new one – long-term

visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days. Nevertheless, the data sets (before and after 2000) are not directly comparable with each other.

Ukrainian asylum seekers represent the most important ethnic group among asylum seekers who asked for asylum between 1997-2002 (almost 7,500). Other important source countries are Afghanistan, Moldova, India, Vietnam, Romania, and Russia (see table 12, graph 8 – Appendix III). On the other hand, significantly smaller numbers of asylum seekers came from Algeria and Pakistan. In sum, European and then Asian countries dominate whereas only one country – Algeria - represents Africa. As mentioned before, among asylum seekers those arriving from countries of the former Soviet Union play a very important role (42% out of all selected important source countries between 1997 and 2002).

Table 12. Foreigners asking for asylum in the Czech Republic by individual important source countries, 1997–2002 (flow)

Asylum seekers / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Ukraine	50	43	94	1,145	4,418	1,674
Vietnam	23	6	34	586	1,525	891
Slovakia	19	6	13	723	388	843
Moldova	30	33	98	784	2,459	724
Georgia	2	17	10	103	1,290	678
Russia	34	61	245	623	644	628
China	1	1	203	259	317	511
Armenia	42	78	34	274	1,021	452
India	13	297	887	646	1,305	364
Belarus	18	20	44	193	437	311
Iraq	283	315	346	127	296	201
Bulgaria	724	138	141	156	289	123
Romania	159	27	124	510	1,848	98
Algeria	66	91	105	112	129	73
Yugoslavia	30	711	622	165	111	36
Sri Lanka	89	368	900	355	146	32
Afghanistan	268	1,260	2,312	1,121	356	27
Pakistan	11	76	223	94	70	19
Total	2,109	4,085	7,220	8,788	18,093	8,481

Source: Based on Cizinci 2002 and internal materials of the Ministry of the Interior.

Note: The given source countries were included on the basis of having more than 400 asylum seekers during 1993-2002.

The following other countries had more than 30 asylum seekers in 2002: Uzbekistan 84, Mongolia 79, Kazakhstan 66, Kyrgyzstan 59, Azerbaijan 48, Nigeria 34, and Turkey 31.

When evaluating the development over time, it seems that internal “pull” factors within the Czech Republic rather than “disturbing push factors” in countries of origin influence the whole picture. Apparently, to a large extent, quasi-asylum seekers (false economic migrants) from Ukraine, some other countries of the former Soviet Union, Romania, Vietnam and India made use of the very liberal regime of the Czech Republic until 2001,

enabling them to work officially after submitting their asylum application. Immediately after the Amendment of the Law came into force (in 2002 – see above), the numbers dropped considerably. There are some indications that an inflow of Slovaks, which peaked in 2002, is mostly composed of Romas. Nevertheless, this inflow continues in 2003 and is closely connected with social policy changes in Slovakia (see the section on national minorities). Slovak Romas were hit by a new and restrictive social policy that significantly reduced their social subsidies and forced some of them to leave their mother country. However, this phenomenon – so far having only mapped by journalists – awaits deeper analysis.²⁶

Table 13. Foreigners caught trying to cross a state border of the Czech Republic illegally, by important source countries, 1997–2002 (flow)

Irregular migrants / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
China	784	1,055	984	926	512	2,301
India	550	1,204	1,613	2,574	2,706	1,190
Vietnam	477	1,264	893	1,826	1,300	1,074
Germany	1,780	716	502	1,052	1,764	1,022
Poland	1,514	1,011	1,051	1,604	1,193	1,019
Georgia	5	4	25	148	1,118	895
Moldova	517	1,105	1,118	3,010	1,742	875
Armenia	35	35	60	403	1,573	804
Ukraine	842	985	1,592	2,265	758	559
Russia	162	300	431	545	335	368
Bulgaria	1,929	1,691	1,967	2,323	669	294
Slovakia	213	168	108	212	280	262
Romania	3,879	4,372	5,796	4,281	3,911	255
Iraq	2,326	1,587	829	327	418	228
Yugoslavia	3,569		2,778	303	156	132
Turkey	873	602	475	350	204	88
Sri Lanka	419	917	1,992	1,833	272	76
Azerbaijan	3	0	15	26	111	73
Belarus	62	94	121	176	106	68
Afghanistan	2,311	4,959	5,242	3,734	695	42
Total	27,325	42,957	30,377	30,761	21,090	12,632

Source: Zpráva 2003

Many source countries of asylum seekers to the Czech Republic are also among those whose citizens were caught when trying illegally to cross the Czech state border (table 13, graph 9 – Appendix III). This proves that the Czech Republic functions as both an immigration and transit country. The “asylum seeker channel” is often misused and becomes an important part of the whole irregular migration chain. Indeed, in 2001 and 2002, the number of asylum seekers who disappeared from asylum centres before their cases were investigated and the final decision made, be it positive or negative, was 8,384 (out of 18,082²⁷ who submitted applications) and 7,797 (out of 8,480), respectively. The

²⁶ One of the problems complicating the analysis is that Czech statistics do not work with any sort of “ethnic category”

²⁷ Slightly different figure as compared to Cizinci 2002

corresponding figure for 1997 was 749 (out of 2,109) (Zpráva 2003). Without addressing the difficult problem of how effective the policy of combating illegal/irregular migration is (see above), the total number of foreigners who were caught when trying to illegally cross the Czech state border significantly decreased in 2002. While representatives of some countries are permanently illegally on the move (India, China, Vietnam, Moldova, Germany, Poland), others arrive in temporary waves. For example, it seems that regarding Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, the mass migration flow has subsided. On the other hand, a Georgian and Armenian increase is a recent phenomenon.

2.2. Motivation, legal status and duration of stay

Theoretically, a person's ability to migrate is limited by his/her legal migratory status and the associated restrictions for when this status was issued and for how long it is valid. Current migratory legislation in the Czech Republic defines the following migratory statuses above all:

- *A short-term stay not exceeding 180 days. This status permits foreigners to move freely as tourists, as long as they comply with the conditions for granting this visa or the conditions set forth in so-called visa-free agreements.*
- *A visa issued for a period exceeding 90 days. This status is essentially for economically based immigration, and is granted subject to one's ability to prove the purpose of stay (mainly employment and business, or, to a much lesser extent, study, therapy, etc.). It is issued for a maximum of 1 year. However, it can be renewed repeatedly if there is a well-founded purpose.*
- *A permanent residence permit for the territory of the Czech Republic is granted to an alien particularly for the purpose of family reunification – cases in which a spouse, a person of direct kin, or a sibling of an alien has been granted permanent residence in the territory of the Czech Republic. It can further be granted on humanitarian grounds or if it is in the interests of the country's foreign policy. The permit is issued for a period of 10 years with the possibility to renew it repeatedly. (After holding a permanent residence permit for five years, a foreigner is entitled to apply for Czech citizenship).*
- *A work permit enables immigrants to be employed in the Czech Republic. Trade licenses enable immigrants to create their own businesses in the Czech Republic. These statuses are linked with obtaining a visa that is valid for a period exceeding 90 days.*

However, it has been shown that theoretical presumptions are not always true in reality. In particular, asylum seekers who claim they are persecuted in their mother countries (see the Geneva Convention, on which the Czech asylum law is based) and claim that this persecution is the main reason behind their migration are often not really “political refugees” in the proper sense of the word. They are often either “only” economic immigrants or transit migrants heading further to the West (see above). Asylum seekers and refugees – those who have been granted asylum²⁸ – represent a very small percentage of the total number of immigrants. Other “humanitarian” statuses (a “tolerance stay”/“leave to remain status” and a “temporary refuge visa” - see also the

²⁸ The chance to be granted asylum in the Czech Republic is minimal. Between 1997-2002, the Czech Republic granted asylum to 96, 78, 80, 134, 83 and 98 foreigners-asylum seekers, respectively (Zpráva 2003)

section below on asylum and other forms of humanitarian protection) are used very sporadically.²⁹ Finally, migration movements for study purposes and the re-emigration of compatriots to the Czech Republic are, in terms of their size, marginal (see also table 14).

Table 14. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by purpose of their stay/residence (international taxonomy), the Czech Republic, 1997–2001 (stock)

Purpose of residence / year	2000	2001
Study and training	2,441	2,759
Business	45,767	29,295
Participation in “corporate body”	19,598	23,969
Employment	34,288	33,080
Other economic activities	138	68
Free establishment (compatriots etc.)	4,166	3,304
Settlement (permanent residence permit)	25,478	23,699
Family members, family reunification	47,227	47,096
Refugees	549	-
Asylum-seekers, humanitarian status, temporary protection	271	166
Persons without permits – waiting for repatriation	71	132
Other	267	237
Total	180,261	163,805

Source: Cizinci 2003, 2002

Note: In 2001, Out of the total number, 76.6% came from Europe, 19.8% from Asia, 2.1% from America and 1.0% from Africa. The corresponding numbers for 2000 are: 76.5% from Europe, 19.5% from Asia, 2.3% from America and 1.2% from Africa.

Table 15 tells us that a stock of foreign students has been growing over time while new enrollments (flow) have recently been slightly diminishing (2000/01 versus 2001/02). By far the most important source country sending students to the Czech Republic is Slovakia. In absolute terms their numbers represented between 1996/97–2001/02³⁰: 836, 951, 1,150, 1,771, 3,501, 4,918, respectively. (Their share was 64% of all foreign students in 2001/02). Other important source countries in 2001/02 were: Greece 297, United Kingdom 231, Russia 203 and Ukraine 192 (Cizinci 2003).

Table 15. Foreign students (measured via citizenship) studying at universities in the Czech Republic, 1996/97–2001/02 (stock and flow)

Students / year	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
Total (stock)¹	3,721	3,897	4,403	5,468	7,480	9,417
New enrolments (flow)²	949	967	1,116	1,515	2,721	2,574

Source: Cizinci 2003

Note: ¹Excluding Slovak citizens enrolled prior to 1993. Data on universities under the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of the Interior for past years are not available

²⁹ For example, 522 foreigners came to the country and were allowed to stay under the umbrella of the temporary refuge status in 2001 (Zpráva 2002b)).

³⁰ It is including private universities and universities under the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior; excluding Slovak citizens enrolled prior to 1993; only students in full-time bachelor's and master's studies are included (Cizinci 2003)

and, consequently, are not included in the time series. Excluding new private universities in 2001/02. Excluding four other private universities in 2001/02.

²Excluding Slovak citizens enrolled prior to 1993. Data on universities under the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of the Interior for the past years are not available and, consequently, are not included in the time series. Excluding new private universities in 2000.

It was estimated that slightly more than 2,000,000 Czech compatriots lived abroad in 1990 (Futurologové 1991 – see in Drbohlav 1993). Most of them settled in the United States of America, where about 1,900,000 of them live. Other important ethnic enclaves of Czech compatriots can be found in Canada, the former Soviet Union, Austria and the former Yugoslavia (see table 16). Unlike in Poland or Hungary, Czech compatriots are not very intensively involved in directly transforming their mother society after the collapse of communism. Despite the fact that some of them did come back (see figures and text above), many of them did not, and they simply circulate between the Czech Republic and their “new” destination country (where they had emigrated mostly during 1948-1989) and do not settle in the Czech Republic for ever. The reason is that many of them have successfully been integrated into new immigration countries and, in addition, they have even stronger ties to this country, because their children and grandchildren are firmly rooted there. There is one exception to this trend – a re-emigration group of Chernobyl Czechs who came with a governmental assistance in the aftermath of the Chernobyl catastrophe in 1991-1993 (see more below).

Table 16. Estimated numbers of Czech compatriots settled abroad, 1990 (stock)

Destination country	Czech nationals
USA	1,893,000
Canada	58,000
The former Soviet Union	35,000
Austria	30,000
Romania	8,000
France	5,000
Argentina	3,000

Source: Futurologové 1991

Note: The problem is that this source does not define what generation was taken into account. (How down on the generational ladder did one go?).

There are two primary reasons for immigration: economic motives and family related motives (mostly family reunification) – see table 14. For example, out of foreigners staying in the country for more than 1 year in 2001, 53% declared that economic reasons (mainly employment or entrepreneurial activities) were factors leading to their immigration in 2001 (it was 55.4% in 2000, Cizinci 2002). From another angle, of all the legally residing foreigners in the country in 2002 (those with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days), 37% stayed for family reunification purposes (Zpráva 2003). Of course, there are also undocumented migrants who have to be considered separately. As evaluated in Drbohlav (2003b), “one might estimate the current number of irregular immigrants in the Czech Republic (as of the very end of 2000) at somewhere between 295,000 – 335,000. (Of this figure - 165,000 might be

irregular migrants active on the Czech labour market, 30,000 their dependants and 100,000 – 140,000 transit migrants).” (See below.)

A more detailed breakdown of economic migration is provided in table 17 (graph 10 – Appendix III). “Trade licenses” issued to foreigners dominate over “Slovaks registered by job centres” while “work permits” issued to foreigners are less important. However, when evaluating development over time, the number of work permits have been increasing since 2000, unlike the former two categories. Generally, obtaining a trade license for doing business in the Czech Republic is much easier (“administratively”) than getting a work permit for being employed (see more text below). This has been misused by many migrants. “Independent quasi-businessmen are those workers who were provided with trade licenses, but whose working regimes in fact resemble what is typically considered that of classical employees” (Drbohlav 2003b).

Table 17. Main types of economic immigration (foreigners – holders of work permits, job licenses and Slovaks registered by job centres) in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)

Migrants / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Work permits	61,044	49,927	40,312	40,080	40,097	44,621
Trade licenses	63,529	44,962	58,386	61,340	64,000	60,532
Slovaks registered by job centres	69,723	61,320	53,154	63,567	63,555	56,558

Source: Horáková / Macounová 2003

Note: A “total” represents economically active foreigners on the Czech labour market (for example, 161,711 in 2002).

The newly passed Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) No. 326/1999 Coll. (came into effect on January 1, 2000) substituted the status of the long-term residence permit (valid in the Czech Republic between 1993 and 1999) for a new one – long-term visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days. This change affected work permits and trade licenses as well because they were/are closely linked with long-term residence permits/visas for a period exceeding 90 days. Therefore, the data sets (before and after 2000) are not directly comparable to each other.

The Czech Statistical Office provides data on migration motives of those who come under the permanent residence umbrella (flow). However, a list of reasons that are offered to foreigners to choose from is really bad. The picture does not bring clear and straightforward results at all. The reason is that the statistics do not differentiate between internal and international migration movements. In fact, the list of reasons presented for both types of movements are the same.

2.3. Gender and age

When measuring female participation in different immigration inflows according to reasons for migration, two results are worth noting. First, women comprise a smaller percentage of those who immigrate for economic reasons, whereas in cases such as

family-based immigration, immigration for study/training, and immigration for humanitarian reasons, women make up a higher percentage. (In only one case do they exceed male percentages – see table 18, graph 11, Appendix III, “family members, family reunification.”) Second, when evaluating development over time (2001 versus 2000) a trend of slight, but nevertheless clear, growth of overall female participation (regarding both the “total” and some other important subcategories) was detected.

Table 18. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by purpose of their stay/residence (international taxonomy) and by gender, the Czech Republic, 2000–2001 (stock)

Purpose of residence / year	2000	Females (%)	2001	Females (%)
Study and training	2,441	40.4	2,759	42.5
Business	45,767	27.9	29,295	28.3
Participation in “corporate bodies”	19,598	27.4	23,969	28.2
Employment	34,288	25.4	33,080	26.9
Other economic activities	138	31.2	68	22.1
Free establishment (compatriots etc.)	4,166	37.4	3,304	40.2
Settlement (permanent residence permit)	25,478	49.1	23,699	49.3
Family members, family reunification	47,227	54.8	47,096	55.4
Refugees	549	39.3	-	-
Asylum-seekers, humanitarian status, temporary protection	271	41.7	166	36.7
Persons without permits – waiting for repatriation	71	53.5	132	40.2
Other	267	29.6	237	30.0
Total	180,261	37.9	163,805	39.3

Note: As of 2001, out of the total number, the highest share of females was among immigrants who came from Europe (39.7%), then from Asia (39.4%), America (36.6%) and Africa (16.0%). The corresponding numbers for 2000 are: 38.0%, 38.9%, 36.4% and 19.1%, respectively

When examining the numbers of foreigners staying in the Czech Republic longer than 1 year under the umbrella of permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days in 2001 (table 19, graph 12 – Appendix III), males dominate over females among representatives of most of the countries of origin. Accordingly, among the two countries with the highest immigrant stock (Ukraine and Slovakia) males comprise about 60 to 70 percent of the immigrants. These statistics make sense when one considers that economic migration is the most common form of immigration in the Czech Republic (with higher numbers than even family-based migration), and economic migrants are typically individual males rather than females or complete families. Only in the case of Poland and the post-Soviet countries of Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia, the share of females is higher than the share of males (between 50% and 60%). Women make up an extremely low percentage of immigrants from Italy and the United Kingdom (see table 19). These data might indicate that these immigrants are arriving in the Czech Republic solely for business purposes, as such activities are often connected with men.

Table 19. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by individual important source countries and by gender, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Foreigners / year	Total	Females (%)	PRP	PRP Females (%)	Visa 90+	Visa 90+ Females(%)
Ukraine	44,194	37.8	8,569	66.2	35,625	30.9
Slovakia	24,538	33.1	9,658	49.1	14,880	22.7
Vietnam	22,431	37.2	8,161	40.9	14,270	35.0
Poland	16,233	57.3	11,502	74.1	4,731	16.6
Russia	11,167	52.7	3,710	60.9	7,457	48.6
Germany	4,348	30.6	2,401	40.2	1,947	18.7
Bulgaria	3,558	34.6	2,074	32.9	1,484	36.9
China	3,239	41.6	141	54.6	3,098	41.0
Yugoslavia	3,178	31.9	1,607	28.2	1,571	35.6
USA	2,532	37.3	1,397	37.1	1,135	37.5
Kazakhstan	2,067	56.5	1,280	58.2	787	53.7
Romania	2,067	41.3	1,608	45.6	459	26.4
Belarus	2,029	53.2	472	73.1	1,557	47.1
Croatia	1,765	31.6	1,125	37.8	640	20.8
Austria	1,678	24.6	781	38.7	897	12.4
Moldova	1,620	34.9	235	55.3	1,385	31.4
Bosnia and H.	1,519	40.2	1,277	41.7	242	32.2
United Kingdom	1,187	23.0	348	17.2	839	25.4
Italy	1,027	19.3	570	24.0	457	13.3
Total	163,805	39.3	63,407	51.6	100,398	31.6

Source: Cizinci 2003

Note: The given ethnic groups were included on the basis of having a “total” higher than 1,000 immigrants.

PRP – foreigners with a permanent residence permit; Visa 90+ – foreigners with a visa for a period exceeding 90 days.

Table 20 shows foreigners who are holders of valid work permits (including Slovaks registered at job centres) by individual important source countries and gender between 1997-2001. This table also illustrates the “feminization” of the immigration process in the Czech Republic. There is clear evidence of the growing importance of females over time. Regarding all the countries in question³¹ (see table 20), except Germany, the share was higher in 2001 (at times, quite significantly) than in 1997. Belarus had the highest percentage of females (almost 50%), whereas only 18% of Germans employed in the Czech Republic in 2001 were women. An interesting fact is that there is no common “Western pattern.” It seems that Western European countries differ from the USA. For example, the percentage of German women is half of that of American women in 2001.

³¹ The growth in Ukrainian females from 25% to more than 1/3 of all the employed Ukrainians is worth mentioning

Table 20. Foreigners who are holders of valid work permits (including Slovaks registered at job centres) by individual important source countries and gender, the Czech Republic, 1997–2001 (stock)

Country / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Slovakia	69,723	61,320	53,154	63,567	63,555
	14.7 ¹	15.3	16.9	19.3	22.8
Ukraine	25,166	19,255	16,646	15,753	17,473
	25.0	27.5	31.0	33.3	34.8
Poland	13,665	9,941	6,880	7,679	6,661
	10.5	10.9	14.1	14.2	16.8
Bulgaria	3,322	2,721	1,657	1,523	1,863
	26.0	23.8	30.2	30.9	30.5
Moldova	1,959	2,074	1,438	1,446	1,377
	19.0	17.7	21.6	26.3	37.3
USA	1,487	1,385	1,391	1,356	1,279
	31.9	30.1	33.1	35.1	36.4
Germany	1,536	1,545	1,466	1,452	1,218
	20.0	19.9	18.8	20.1	18.1
Belarus	2,469	2,014	1,305	1,139	1,028
	43.2	42.4	44.5	51.5	49.6
Total	130,767	111,247	93,466	103,647	103,652
	18.4	19.2	21.4	22.8	25.8

Source: Based on Cizinci 2002

Notes: ¹Share of females (in %).

The given ethnic groups were included on the basis of having a “total” higher than 1,000 in 2001.

Table 21 (graph 13 – Appendix III) supplements the information from table 20 with some other countries and also with the important characteristic of education required for a given job/work. One has to distinguish two very different immigrant groups in the Czech Republic. The first is an “Eastern” category (mostly other CEEc in transition), and is mainly composed of young males who, in contrast to their generally high educational/skill level³² (see e.g. Drbohlav 1997a), are hired for manual, unskilled and underpaid jobs.³³ The second category is “Western,” characterised by many more people with a high level of education who are mostly engaged in professional and managerial areas of work (managers, advisers, language teachers, etc. – see also Drbohlav 2003a). Russia has an interesting position just “in between the West and the East” – almost equal numbers of Russian immigrants were employed in jobs that require vocational training as university education in 2001.

³² When dealing with officials at job centres, immigrants, on purpose, often undervalue their skills to have a better chance to get work that is not intellectually demanding at all (Drbohlav 1997a). On the other hand, No. 28 (and, partly, 29) warns that one cannot generalize too much in this respect. She points out that those Ukrainians who are highly educated and skilled are also going to penetrate further into the EU countries (they are only in transit through Czech Republic), and to search within those countries for positions that would better correspond to their qualifications

³³ This trend clearly fits with the dual labour market theory

Table 21. Foreigners – holders of valid work permits by individual important source countries, education required for a given job and gender, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Country / gender and education	Total	Females (%)	Required education		
			Vocational	Secondary	University
Ukraine	17,473	34.8	17,012	184	277
Poland	6,661	16.8	5,975	237	449
Bulgaria	1,863	30.5	1,630	86	147
Moldova	1,377	37.3	1,356	8	13
USA	1,279	36.4	14	446	819
Germany	1,218	18.1	64	279	875
Belarus	1,028	49.6	912	28	88
United Kingdom	989	21.1	8	306	675
Mongolia	976	69.0	941	4	31
Russia	887	47.2	386	103	398
Romania	764	20.8	648	37	79
France	613	18.5	29	96	488
Total	40,097	30.7	30,542	2,840	6,715

Source: Cizinci 2003

Note: The given ethnic groups were included provided on the basis of having a “total” higher than 500 immigrants.

Both individual permits and permits within contracts were included.

Concerning the gender dimension, given differences between the Eastern and Western Europe (see above) disappear when analysing holders of trade licences in the Czech Republic by individual important source countries (table 22). Obviously, except for Russia, representatives of all measured countries, no matter from which region they arrived, have low percentages of women.

Table 22. Foreigners – holders of trade licenses by individual important source countries and gender, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Country / gender	Total	Females (%)
Ukraine	21,590	26.9
Vietnam	20,403	30.2
Slovakia	7,051	10.1
Russia	1,890	43.2
Yugoslavia	1,500	17.7
Bulgaria	1,123	23.1
Poland	1,051	36.7
Germany	940	23.0
USA	585	25.8
Total	64,000	25.6

Source: Based on Cizinci 2002

Notes: The given ethnic groups were included provided having a “total” higher than 500.

Obviously, the age structure of the immigrant population (those who stay legally longer than 1 year, including permanent immigrants) is quite different than that of the domestic one (table 23 and graph 14 – Appendix III). Whereas the youngest and oldest segments of immigrants (1-14 and 60+) are represented by rather small numbers both in absolute and relative terms, the size of foreigners in the economically active age (15-59) is really huge (the share reaches as much as 86%). When looking at the gender dimension, one has to point out a significantly lower share of females generally, but also in the 15-59 and 60+ age categories (vis-à-vis the structure of the Czech domestic population). This again demonstrates that particularly economic opportunities lure immigrants (and so far mainly males) to the Czech Republic.

Table 23. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by age and gender, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Age/ population	Foreigners in CR	Foreigners in CR (%)	Foreigners in CR – females (%)	Population of CR ¹ (%)	Population of CR – females (%)
1-14	12,834	7.8	48.2	16.4	48.7
15-59	141,590	86.4	37.8	65.2	49.7
60+	9,381	5.7	49.7	18.4	59.6
Total	163,805	100	39.3	100	51.3

Source: Cizinci 2002, Pohyb 2001

Note: ¹ Mid-year population 2000

Table 24 (graph 15 – Appendix III) reveals the basic parameters of immigrants' age structures by selected important source countries. When measuring the possible impact upon a host society, one has to keep in mind the absolute figures, which differ among given countries. Russia has reached a sort of migration threshold with more than 11,000 immigrants, while “neighbouring” Germany has just 4,300 immigrants. The two largest immigrant groups (Ukrainians and Slovaks) also have the greatest percentage of immigrants within the economically active population (more than 90 percent). The smallest percentage of economically active immigrants is from Bulgaria. This source country, along with Germany and the U.S.A., contributes a relatively high percentage of seniors. Regarding other countries, however, this population segment is rather marginal. It is important that among Vietnamese and Russians, children make up a large segment of immigrants. Within the Vietnamese group, the percentage of children (16.4%) is comparable to the percentage of children in Czech society (see table 24, graph 15 – Appendix III).

To sum up, a breakdown of individual immigrant groups by age shows us there is no homogeneous immigrant population. Instead, immigrants create a very colorful mosaic due to their varying ages.

Table 24. Foreigners with long-term residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by individual important source countries and by selected age groups, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Age group / country	U	S	V	P	R	G	B	CH	Y	USA
1-14	4.9	6.0	15.5	1.8	13.0	3.5	5.5	11.1	11.6	8.9
15-59	92.9	90.5	83.7	89.2	78.4	77.6	65.4	87.2	80.5	68.9
60+	2.2	3.5	0.8	9.0	8.6	18.9	26.4	1.7	7.9	22.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Based on Cizinci 2003

Note: U - Ukraine, S - Slovakia, V - Vietnam, P - Poland, R - Russia, G - Germany, B - Bulgaria, Ch - China, Y - Yugoslavia, USA - The United States of America

Absolute figures decrease from the left (Ukraine: 44,194) to the right (the USA: 2,532)

When enriching the whole picture with a gender dimension (table 25), some other patterns arise. First of all, only among Poles and Russians more females have immigrated and stayed in the country for more than 1 year (as defined in table 25). The same is true for these two groups when analysing the economically active age group. Whereas female children predominate over male children among Russians, Germans and Bulgarians, even sharper differences in this regard can be found when looking at seniors among Poles, Russians, Vietnamese and, to some extent, Ukrainians. To summarize, Russians and Poles have a very specific gender composition compared to other selected immigrant groups. In fact, their female representation is quite important across all of the age groups.

Table 25. Foreigners with long-term residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by individual important source countries, selected age groups and gender (percentage of females), the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Age group / country	U	S	V	P	R	G	B	CH	Y	USA
1-14	49.3	48.8	46.8	48.3	51.2	51.3	50.8	44.1	47.0	44.9
15-59	36.6	31.3	35.1	56.4	51.4	29.4	35.3	41.1	29.2	35.4
60+	60.4	53.0	63.7	67.9	66.9	31.6	29.3	51.8	37.2	40.1
Total	37.8	33.1	37.2	57.3	52.7	30.6	34.6	41.6	31.9	37.3

Source: Based on Cizinci 2003

Note: U - Ukraine, S - Slovakia, V - Vietnam, P - Poland, R - Russia, G - Germany, B - Bulgaria, Ch - China, Y - Yugoslavia, USA - The United States of America

Most of the foreign holders of trade licenses fall into the 25-39 age category (59%) (see table 26). The second most important age category is the one between 40-54 (about 28%). About one quarter of all businesspersons are women. However, within the youngest age group females represent about one third. When evaluating development over time (although limited to just two years, 2000 and 2001), there is again a very modest trend of increased female participation.

Table 26. Foreign holders of trade licenses by age and gender, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Age group / gender	2000		2001	
	Total (%)	Females (%)	Total (%)	Females (%)
18-24	9.6	33.5	10.2	33.7
25-39	59.0	25.1	59.2	25.5
40-54	28.4	22.3	27.7	23.0
55-64	2.5	21.8	2.4	22.5
64+	0.5	25.6	0.5	26.0
Total	100	25.1 (61,340)	100	25.6 (64,000)

Source: Cizinci 2003

Ukraine has the highest share of businessmen among those between the ages of 18-24. This statistic may indicate that these young men are actually quasi-businessmen who simply disguise their employment activities (see above). As it has been indicated above in the example of foreigners with long-term residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year), businessmen from the West (Germany and the USA) have a larger percentage of persons in senior age categories.

Table 27. Foreign holders of trade licenses by individual important source countries and age, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)

Country / age	Total	18-24 (%)	25-39 (%)	40-59 (%)	60+ (%)
Ukraine	100 (21,590)	15.3	59.6	24.6	0.5
Vietnam	100 (20,403)	8.4	64.3	26.9	0.4
Slovakia	100 (7,051)	7.1	52.3	38.8	1.8
Russia	100 (1,890)	9.4	55.1	33.5	2.0
Yugoslavia	100 (1,500)	6.2	56.9	33.9	2.9
Bulgaria	100 (1,123)	9.7	54.6	32.5	3.2
Poland	100 (1,051)	2.2	39.9	55.9	2.0
Germany	100 (940)	1.7	29.7	58.6	10.0
USA	100 (585)	1.5	50.4	41.5	6.5
Total	64,000	6,531	37,882	18,800	787
	100	10.2	59.2	29.4	1.2

Source: Cizinci 2003

Notes: The given ethnic groups were included on the basis of having a "total" higher than 500.

The percentage of foreign women who have been granted asylum as of December 31, 2001 is 39.7% (table 28, graph 16 – Appendix III). This statistic is the same as the percentage of women who have officially stayed in the country for more than 1 year (see table 19). When differentiating by individually selected ethnic groups, female representation is greater among those from Armenia, Afghanistan and Belarus. In contrast, Vietnamese who had been granted asylum had the lowest share of females. Though about 25% of refugees (on average) are in the age category 0-17, for Armenians this figure is 31%, while only 9% among those from the Soviet Union.

Table 28. Foreigners who have been granted asylum in the Czech Republic and had it valid as of December 31, 2001, by the most important source countries and by age and gender (stock)

Country / age and gender	Age 0-17		Age 18+		Total	Females (%)
	Males	Females	Males	Females		
Afghanistan	27	42	77	52	198	47.5
Romania	22	13	84	49	168	36.9
Soviet Union	5	5	61	37	108	38.9
Iraq	8	7	40	13	68	29.4
Vietnam	6	2	49	9	66	16.7
Belarus	6	11	31	19	67	45.0
Armenia	9	9	19	21	58	51.7
Total	154	158	606	343	1,261	39.7

Source: Based on Cizinci 2003

Note: The given ethnic groups were included on the basis of having a "total" higher than 50 persons.

In the following individual years (1997-2002), 96, 78, 80, 134, 83 and 98 foreigners, respectively, were granted asylum in the country.

When analysing asylum seekers who asked for asylum in 2001, several facts are worth mentioning. Among the most important source countries, Armenia sent the highest percentage of women (43%). On the other hand and surprisingly, there was no female among 1,305 asylum seekers who came from India. India is also very specific when taking into account age composition. All but two Indians were between the ages 15-49. Only Armenians (8%) and partly also Georgians (6%) have some people older than 50 among themselves. Armenians (25%) and Georgians (13%) together with Romanians (18%) also have a higher percentage of children. Other source countries show a very strong "middle age category" (15-49). Without deeply analysing the given situation, it is not possible to draw far-reaching conclusions – for example, whether asylum seekers coming alone without other family members are merely "economic migrants" who stay temporarily, if they are in transit and want to join family members of who escaped earlier, or if they are going to settle in the Czech Republic and invite their family members later. Similarly, we can only speculate about those who come together with their families.

Table 29. Foreigners who asked for asylum in the Czech Republic in 2001 by the most important source countries and by age and gender (flow)

Country / Age and gender	Age 0-14		Age 15-49		Age 50+		Total	Females (%)
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females		
Ukraine	121	102	2,860	1,216	68	51	4,418	30.9
Moldova	41	22	1,675	674	25	22	2,459	29.2
Romania	202	135	1,109	372	19	11	1,848	28.0
Vietnam	17	14	1,035	443	12	4	1,525	30.2
India	0	0	1,303	0	2	0	1,305	-
Georgia	79	94	764	278	35	40	1,290	31.9
Armenia	136	121	409	269	40	46	1,021	42.7
Total	915	778	11,819	4,066	281	234	18,093	28.1

Source: Based on Cizinci 2003

Note: The given ethnic groups were included provided on the basis of having a “total” higher than 1,000 asylum seekers.

The source countries in table 29 (characterizing asylum seekers in 2001) are, more or less, the same as those listed in table 30, which provides information about the gender, age and source country of foreigners who were caught while trying to cross a state border of the Czech Republic illegally in 2001. Therefore, it seems accurate to suggest the hypothesis that many of the asylum seekers in 2001 were only “forced” asylum-seekers who had asked for asylum, because of the unfavorable circumstances they met on their journey through the Czech Republic. It is highly likely that many of these asylum seekers have no well-founded reasons for being granted asylum, as they broke their “neutrality” by attempting to cross the state border illegally (whenever it was – be it before or after submitting the asylum application). Anyway, unlike Ukrainians and Indians (about 1%), Armenians (25%) and, to a lesser extent, Afghans (18%) had in relative terms more children with them when trying to cross the Czech state border illegally. Generally, female representation in illegal/irregular migration was approximately 10 percentage points lower than their representation among foreigners legally residing in the country (see above - those who have been granted asylum and those who have legally stayed for a period longer than 1 year). Two extremes appeared: in contrast with Indians, whose female population these supposed transit migrants was just 2%, women’s representation among Armenian migrants trying to cross the border illegally was 55%.

Table 30. Foreigners caught when trying to illegally cross a state border of the Czech Republic by important source countries, by gender and age, 2001 (flow)

Country / gender and age	Total	Females (%)	Children under 15
Romania	3,911	37.8	13.5
India	2,706	1.9	1.4
Germany	1,764	35.9	2.0
Moldova	1,742	31.5	2.4
Armenia	1,573	55.3	25.1
Vietnam	1,300	25.2	2.7
Poland	1,193	34.5	10.1
Georgia	1,118	35.3	12.4
Ukraine	758	29.8	1.1
Afghanistan	695	25.9	17.7
Bulgaria	669	30.5	5.1
China	512	26.4	3.1
Iraq	418	22.0	12.2
Russia	335	31.6	10.4
Total	21,090	29.7	8.4

Source: Cizinci 2003

2.4. The capital city of Prague – a strong pole of attractiveness for migrants

The capital city of Prague is very popular among immigrants. For example, 36.1% of the total number of foreigners holding visas for a period exceeding 90 days were registered there in 2002. At the same time, 38.4% of all work permits and 35.7%³⁴ of all trade licenses received by immigrants were issued in Prague (see table 31, graph 17 – Appendix III). Furthermore, 27.2% of Slovaks registered in job centres and 19.4% of foreign holders of permanent residence permits were registered in the capital city (table 31). In 2001/2002, out of all foreign university students in the Czech Republic (9,429), 54% studied in Prague³⁵ (Cizinci 2002).

Prague is the largest city in the Czech Republic and, consequently, the primary gateway for foreigners entering the country. Because it has benefited from the spill-over effects of globalisation and has become more westernized than any other area in the country, Prague offers better job and income opportunities; therefore, it attracts labour migrants from less developed regions. Prague is also the main destination for immigrants from Western Europe, as well as other regions of the Czech Republic and CEEc (see Drbohlav / Sýkora 1997). Importantly, it also offers more anonymity for undocumented/irregular (clandestine) immigrants than rural settlements. Besides Prague, other highly urbanized regions attract immigrants more than rural areas. Since 1997, Prague has been a very magnetic pole for migrants, except among those who have been issued “trade licenses”. However, when elongating the time horizon to include years as far back as 1993, one sees that the percentage of immigrants in Prague who had been issued trade licenses was as high as 50.1% (Drbohlav 1995). Hence, in contrast to other immigrant categories, foreign businessmen have been leaving Prague and spreading throughout the country.

³⁴ However, mainly in the case of trade licenses it does not mean that immigrants really work in Prague - in the place of their registration. It is a well-known fact that many of them operate throughout the whole country

³⁵ Students in all forms of study – bachelor's, master's, doctoral, distance and multidisciplinary

Table 31. Immigrants in Prague by individual selected immigration statuses, 1997–2002 (stock)

Immigration status/years	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
LRP/Visa 90+	32.1	26.6	32.6	33.5	34.2	36.1
Permanent residence permits	17.3	17.1	18.5	19.0	19.1	19.4
Work permits	28.8	33.3	35.4	34.7	32.6	38.4
Slovaks registered by job centers	20.0	22.4	26.8	25.5	29.2	27.2
Trade licenses	40.2	33.8	36.4	32.3	36.6	35.7

Source: Cizinci 2003, Horáková – Macounová 2002, 2003

Note: PRP – permanent residence permits, LRP/Visa 90+ – foreigners with a long-term residence permit/visa for a period exceeding 90 days. The newly passed Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) No. 326/1999 Coll. (came into force on January 1, 2000) substituted the status of the long-term residence permit (valid in Czechia between 1993 and 1999) for a new one: long-term visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days. Nevertheless, the data sets (before and after 2000) are not directly comparable with each other.

Some of the already mentioned trends are verified in table 32 from a slightly different perspective (measured via foreigners who have stayed in the country for more than 1 year); namely, this table illustrates that Prague is a more important location for economic migration than family-based migration movements. The previously mentioned trend toward “feminization was demonstrated in Prague as well (regarding “total” and in some of the “economic categories” and “study and training” in particular – table 32). On the other hand, data in table 32 weakened the argument that spatial concentration in Prague was growing. This hypothesis was not proved based on data from 2000 and 2001 showing foreigners who have stayed longer than one year.³⁶

³⁶ However, to measure development over only a two-year period is really questionable, since one cannot exclude the possibility of a “specific” migration situation in the given year

Table 32. Foreigners in Prague with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by purpose of their stay/residence (international taxonomy) and by gender, 2000–2001 (stock)

Purpose of residence/ year	2000	2000 Prague/ CR (%)	2000 Females/ males(%)	2001	2001 Prague/ CR (%)	2001 Females/ males(%)
Study and training	1,385	56.7	38.3	1,466	53.1	43.6
Business	16,683	36.5	30.6	7,424	25.3	32.8
Participation in “corporate body”	12,241	62.5	29.7	13,972	58.3	30.6
Employment	9,281	27.1	23.4	9,298	28.1	27.2
Other economic activities	80	58.0	36.3	30	44.1	30.0
Free establishment (compatriots etc.)	637	15.3	42.2	574	17.4	41.6
Settlement (permanent residence permit)	6,962	27.3	49.2	6,205	26.2	49.8
Family members, family reunification	10,244	21.7	53.8	10,277	21.8	53.4
Refugees	75	13.7	28.0	-	-	-
Asylum-seekers, humanitarian status, temporary protection	3	1.1	66.6	-	-	-
Persons without permits – waiting for repatriation	3	4.2	66.6	2	1.5	-
Other	159	59.6	28.3	124	52.3	24.2
Total	57,753	32.0	35.9	49,372	30.1	37.9

Source: Cizinci 2003, 2002

Regarding the age structure in Prague (see table 33) compared to the whole country (table 23), Prague has slightly more foreigners among the economically active age, which comes at the expense of the other two age groups (children and seniors). Of course, when juxtaposing foreigners' age structure in Prague to that of the domestic population, the predominance of people within the economically active age is much more evident. As far as the gender dimension is concerned, the percentage of women among all foreigners, foreigners in the economically-active population, and foreign seniors is smaller in Prague than in the rest of the country. The only exception to these statistics is the percentage of females among foreign children. The same is true, albeit with much sharper differences, when comparing these statistics with the age structure of the Czech population in Prague. To summarize, it seems that the economic opportunities offered in Prague have thus far been embraced by males rather than by females.

Table 33. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by age and gender, Prague, 2001 (stock)

Age/population	Foreigners in Prague	Foreigners in Prague (%)	Foreigners in Prague females (%)	Population of Prague ¹ (%)	Population of Prague females (%)
1-14	3,748	7.6	48.8	13.7	48.7
15-59	43,107	87.3	36.5	65.5	51.1
60+	2,517	5.1	45.5	20.8	60.1
Total	49,372	100	37.9	100	52.6

Source: Cizinci 2002, Pohyb 2001

Note: ¹ Mid-year population 2000

2.5. Future migration stocks and flows

Reliable predictions of future international migration trends are for well-known reasons almost impossible. To assess any concrete numbers regarding the future migration development (stocks and flows) in the Czech Republic is a very risky undertaking; moreover, it is outside the scope of this study. Therefore, only some basic ideas on future migration trends linked with foreigners coming to the Czech Republic will be sketched below (see Drbohlav 2003b).

The remarks will be devoted to a time horizon of the next 5 years, during which time one can expect that the Czech Republic will crown its endeavor to become a developed western-style democracy and will join the EU and function within it. The ideas are based on the basic assumption that the European integration process will go ahead according to plan, will proceed relatively smoothly, and will not be stopped or eroded by a catastrophic event like the socio-economic or political collapse of a country in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

On this basis, the existing trends might be extrapolated into the future. Labour immigration will continue chiefly in relation to the political, social and economic development of the Czech Republic and other CEEc. Indeed, the character of economic development in Western democracies might, to some limited extent, play some role as well. Once CEE countries are able to polarize into several different subgroups, they should, albeit with some problems, be able to approach the level of most developed democracies. One can expect that the Czech Republic might be one of those countries that will be at the head of this development. Hence, it will continue to attract significant numbers of immigrants. Despite an attempt to regulate and limit the inflow of immigrants, circular labour migrants will probably dominate the immigration mosaic while some of them will probably settle down (see the "S-shaped curve" in Martin / Taylor 1995).

Accordingly, one might also expect a continuous inflow of asylum seekers who will make use of the stable political climate and improving living standards within the country.

Intensifying contacts with the western developed world and the harmonization of economic, juridical, social and other conditions will bring about a permanent and significant, but not large, contingent of Western immigrants. Over the course of time, the passage of more transparent and compatible rules for doing business might function as a “pull” migratory factor for Western Europeans. In the meantime, further harmonization of migration policies and practices with those in the EU will continue. Logically, these changes will have important implications in relation to foreign labour migration patterns as well.

It may be expected that joining the EU might provoke a short but strong immigration wave from the East (probably mainly from ex-soviet republics) to the Czech Republic in anticipation of even more systematic and restrictive migration policies. A huge social-economic polarization between westernized, rich and fortified countries like the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and other CEEc will permanently stimulate irregular migration flows. Once in the EU, transit migration through the Czech Republic “westwards” will, to some extent, probably decrease and its role as a destination country will increase. However, this does not mean that especially before and shortly after the accession (when the living standard in the Czech Republic will remain significantly lower than in traditional Western democracies), this type of migration will not constitute substantial numbers and will not pose serious problems, as it does now.

2.6. Conclusions

The Czech Republic has quickly become a transit and immigration country. Emigration does not pose many problems: since the Revolution, the migration outflow of Czechs abroad (permanent, long-term and circulatory movements / commuting) to the West has not been enormous. On the contrary, it has been decreasing since the mid 1990s and, most recently, more or less stabilizing.

- The capital city of Prague is the main pole of migration attractiveness and draws many different types of migrants.
- Via migration, the Czech Republic is closely tied to Germany and Austria on one side, and Slovakia and the countries of the former Soviet Union (mainly Ukraine) on the other side.
- Economic immigration clearly dominates over all other migration types. Excluding transit migration, the most important reasons for immigrating to the Czech Republic are economic activities (work and doing business) as well as family-based movements. Family and informal links play an important “supportive” role in how to get to the country, where to stay and what to do. The predominance of economic migrants coming from Slovakia and Ukraine to the country is evident. As for the „permanent immigrants“ (family-based migration; “stocks“), Vietnamese, Poles, Slovaks and Ukrainians dominate in the Czech Republic.
- However, the Czech Republic also has (although it is much less frequent) immigration from the West. In a comparative perspective, one has to distinguish two very different immigrant groups in the Czech Republic – the “Eastern” category versus the “Western” one. They have different roles, different positions in the Czech labour market and dissimilar “structural characteristics”.

- Ukrainians represent the most important ethnic group among asylum seekers. Other important source countries are Afghanistan, Moldova, India, Vietnam, Romania and Russia, recently also Slovakia.
- In addition to the huge numbers of irregular migrants who operate in the Czech territory for a long period (mainly Ukrainians), citizens of some countries are permanently illegally or “quasi-legally” on the move through the Czech Republic (as transit migrants), particularly nationals of India and China. In fact, asylum seekers are often those who misuse the asylum status – they are frequently either mainly economic immigrants or transit migrants heading further toward the West.
- There is an overall trend of “feminization” (the growth of female participation) in immigration to the Czech Republic.
- The immigrants’ age structure clearly differs from that which is typical of the Czech population. The size of foreigners in the economically active age category (15-59) is really large (86%), whereas the youngest and oldest immigrants’ segments are rather marginal.
- Regarding the development of migration in the Czech Republic in the future, the existing trends could probably be extrapolated further. There are no obstacles to believe that, generally, the migration situation in the Czech Republic will develop similar to the situation in many Western European democracies.

3. Factors Contributing to Migration Movements

3.1. “Push” and “pull” factors and related labour market issues

Currently, there are no strong “push” factors that would propel mass migration movements of Czech citizens out of their mother country. The contemporary Czech Republic is a democratic, pluralistic and parliamentary society based on European democratic tradition and principles. Despite many problems, the country has been progressing through the transition period relatively successfully (as compared to many other ex-communist countries) and, for the most part, has been able to maintain reasonable living standards (e.g. Garson / Lemaitre / Redor 1996). In accordance with world trends, indeed, economic reasons are the most important when analysing motives for emigration from the Czech Republic.³⁷ In harmony with theoretical assumptions, the intensity of Czech emigration has followed the status and health of the national economy and, similarly, the domestic socio-economic situation. Thus, the most numerous migration outflows (albeit most of them only temporary in their character) occurred in the very beginning of the 1990s (1991-1993). At that time, the country was experiencing a marked economic (socio-economic) downturn. Since then, emigration has been diminishing or stabilizing (see also the more detailed picture above). What is behind such development? Working in Western Europe for Czechs became less attractive than earlier – there was a revaluation of the Czech crown vis-à-vis western currencies, there were many opportunities to start a business or make a good living at home, and the living standard as a whole improved. Furthermore, Czechs seem to be deeply rooted in their own country (a historically conditioned pattern) and, as mentioned previously, the Czech mentality does not promote solving a situation “directly and drastically.”³⁸ Furthermore, during the past forty years nearly all aspects of personal activity (a very important factor to emigration) were subjugated³⁹ (Drbohlav 1994). Western European countries have introduced more restrictive measures too.

To summarize, the decrease in inflow of foreigners who come to the country primarily for economic reasons (documented migrants) was due to: a) damping/depression of some industrial sectors or branches (in relation to migration, this issue mainly concerns construction), which naturally decreases some opportunities for employment otherwise embraced by foreigners (e.g. Ukrainians); b) the decreasing purchasing power of the Czech population which, consequently, complicates the prosperity of some firms where foreigners might work and also hurts self-employed foreigners themselves (e.g. those who have to rely directly on customers’ solvency - Chinese, Vietnamese). (On the other hand, those immigrants offering cheap consumer goods on the Czech labour market might also profit from the growing economic differentiation and possible fragmentation of the Czech consumer market as a result of on-going economic and political transformations – see Wang, 1998); c) Direct, suppressive measures such as the “ban on stay” and administrative and judicial expulsions contribute to the

³⁷ As an example for emigrants’ conscience, *interviewee No. 16* mentions that migrants whose movements are propelled by a poor economic situation are not protected by the Convention, unlike migrants who have left their country for political reasons

³⁸ To some extent, the mentality is “cemented” by firm material ties. For example, in many cases the effort (work, money, and time) required to build a house (especially during communism) may mean that people are perhaps more emotionally tied to their property and place than in other countries

³⁹ It may particularly concern older generations of society

decrease in immigrant inflow. As such, “the ban on stay” is a big deterrent; the number of people impacted by it increased from 9,525 in 1996 to 14,539 in 1999. Furthermore, altogether 2,985 foreigners were expelled from the country in 1999 (versus 1,065 in 1996) (Drbohlav 2003).

Broadly defined, three groups of factors play an important role when searching for strong “pulls” attracting migrants to the Czech Republic (currently and in the future): 1) geographical, 2) political, and 3) economic.

For example, interviewees No. 10 and No. 12 think “pushes” on the emigration countries’ side are stronger than “Czech pulls” and No. 25 states that quite frequently, several different “push factors” can be at play simultaneously; No. 14 points out the importance of “pulls” when speaking about asylum seekers, while also admitting that many of them are masked economic migrants; interviewee No. 15 highlights the capital city of Prague with all its beauties as a very strong “pull,” mainly for some specific migration categories; No. 6 suggests other sorts of reasons - the Slavic origin that contributes to having more Post-Soviet immigrants here than, for example, in Hungary).

Often, these factors function together and are mutually linked. First of all, the combination of such factors as relative political stability in the Czech Republic, its geographical position (directly bordering on the classical Western World which has no history of communism) and the strict migration policies⁴⁰ of the western developed democracies have led to the creation of a migratory “buffer zone” between the West and the East (see also Wallace / Chmuliar / Sidorenko 1995). This migratory „buffer zone“ is composed of relatively well-off countries (as compared to other CEE ones), such as the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary (see above and also see in Garson / Lemaitre / Redor 1996). This compact buffer zone creates conditions for inter alia intensive transitory movements, East-West cross-border movements, as well as massive circular (temporary) migration for labour reasons within the region.

The socio-economic climate, including the labour market situation and, in some ways, the relatively liberal legislation and liberal practices towards immigrants seem to be crucial “pull” factors for economic migrants, who arrive mostly from the Eastern world.

Despite the relatively short amount of time that has elapsed since the Revolution, four periods of different labour immigration patterns in the Czech Republic can be sketched (Drbohlav 2003b):

- 1) 1990 to 1992 - Political reform was implemented and the economic transition/transformation processes started. Migration mechanisms were designed (responsible bodies and institutions, legislation, specific programmes etc.). Immigrants were “putting out feelers” in the country.
- 2) 1993 to 1996 - The country went relatively successfully through the economic transition and stayed, in terms of many economic parameters, in the top of all CEE countries in transition. There was a huge inflow of economic migrants.
- 3) 1997 to 1999 - An economic disequilibrium occurred and, consequently, belated attempts by the Czech government to combat the unfavorable economic situation and

⁴⁰ On the other hand, *interviewees No. 13 and No. 15 state that, especially during the 1990s, a rather liberal migratory regime predominated in the Czech Republic and contributed to the arrival of many immigrants into the country (a strong “pull” factor)*

to speed up the transformation process via new economic measures led to the deterioration of the macro-economic situation, while serious problems on the micro-economic level became apparent as well. Accordingly, the living standard of the Czech population followed rather negative trends (a slight decrease in real incomes). The migration policy became more restrictive and the inflow of foreign labour (legally resident, documented) diminished⁴¹.

- 4) 2000 – to date - The turn of the century has brought some more significant indications of improvement, i.e., economic revitalization. Competent state institutions/bodies started paying more attention to the international migration issue. New migratory laws and amendments were put into effect, although immigration policy and practice continue to be more restrictive. While the inflow of foreign labour (legally resident) diminished, it has recently been on the rise again (see table 5).

When elaborating more on reasons why there is a huge inflow and pool of immigrants and why the absorption of economic immigrants into Czech society is strong and will probably be strengthened, one has to pinpoint the following:

- 1) The considerable globalisation and internationalization of the economy;
- 2) The specific demands of the Czech market to meet labour deficits. This is, and will be, differentiated by individual regions and professions, with a greater demand for highly skilled professionals as well as those who will be willing to do the most demanding and, at the same time, unattractive and dirty work.
- 3) In a system in which the minimum wage is very low and social subsidies are high, the incentives for some categories of Czech citizens to work are very low. However, this condition stimulates foreign immigration from countries with much weaker economies because they are more willing to take the worst sorts of jobs and, in turn, much lower wages. The reason is that sometimes there is no incentive to work among unqualified Czech workers, but there is a great stimulus for foreigners coming from countries with much weaker economies to take the worst sorts of jobs and, in turn, much lower wages. For this situation to change, there needs to be political support; but this may be a long-term process.
- 4) Employers' never-ending, strong desire for a cheap labour force.
- 5) The relatively low mobility of the Czech labour force (the collapse of housing construction, the absence of a real market with flats/houses, etc.) which, at least for some time, might support (together with points 2 and 3 above) immigrants' complementary rather than competitive function.

⁴¹ One of the main problems was seen in the disequilibrium between the growth of incomes and productivity of work (see e.g. Ročenka 1998, 1999). Until 1997, real incomes increased more rapidly than labour productivity, while the trend was reversed in 1998 (Ročenka 1999). Growing unemployment is one of the ways to increase productivity and restore lost equilibrium. Unemployment rates for the whole Czech Republic and Prague at the end of 1994; 1997; and for the last quarter of 1998 were 3.2 and 0.3; 5.2 and 0.9; 7.3 and 3.6, respectively. However, there are great differences by individual regions and districts; as of December 1998, in five districts the rate of unemployment officially exceeded 13% (Zaměstnanost 1999). In 1998, the inflation rate was 10.7 and economy fell down by 2.2%. Accordingly, under such conditions accommodation for foreign workers was minimal

⁴² Since January 2003 it is 6,200 Czech crowns

While summing up, it is worthwhile to pinpoint one general aspect. In fact, in harmony with many other developed immigration countries, the following tested hypothesis was also proven in the Czech Republic: 1) During periods of economic problems (recessions, crises etc.), inflows of immigrants decrease, either as a consequence of “natural reasons” (less room for immigrants to operate) or as a result of new restrictions introduced by legislation; and 2) in the case of a growing economy, immigration usually increases (e.g. Gieseck / Heilemann / von Loeffelholz 1995; Altzinger 1995; Rahman 2000 – see in Drbohlav 2002). This is one of the most important signs illustrating that the current Czech migratory trends have quickly been shifting towards those typical of the developed Western World (see more in Drbohlav 2002).

One other important pull factor should not be omitted. When taking into account numerous ethnic immigration groups, the existence of previously established ethnic enclaves (relatives, friends) plays an important role in attracting migrants, even though these ethnic populations do not concentrate in specific spatial patterns. For various reasons, these enclaves make, and will make, immigration for other compatriots easier (see the network theory – e.g., Massey et al. 1993).

Besides the above-mentioned straightforward “pull” and “push” factors, there are other significant aspects that condition one’s understanding of the Czech migratory reality (see table 34). The history of the nation (going back as far as the Habsburg Monarchy) has been transformed into “national memory”⁴³, and this memory, along with supranational dimensions linked to the Czech Republic’s geopolitical orientation, the socio-economic situation, public opinion and “migration-specific instruments”, all influence migration in the Czech Republic. Each of these factors determines what type of migration policy is applied, what integration measures are implemented to help immigrants adapt in the Czech Republic and, consequently, what the reality in the migration field is (Drbohlav 1997b, 2003a). These factors shaping migration policy both facilitate and impede migration as well as adaptation. They are mutually related and are composed of other important aspects that can have contradictory effects (see in Drbohlav 1997b).

⁴³ For example, it may be reflected in politicians’ and bureaucrats’ behaviour, or in the design of judicial documents and decisions

Table 34. Important factors determining migration/adaptation processes in the Czech Republic, beginning of the 2000s

Factors / Aspects	Aspects Facilitating Migration & Adaptation	Aspects Making Migration & Adaptation Difficult
Supranational dimension	Geopolitical obligations, accession to international accords, cooperation with international organizations in the migration field. „Global globalization“ as such.	Challenges when adjusting to the globalization processes.
Socio-economic situation	Relatively successful going through economic transition and transformation processes.	So far the country does not have a very strong economy and there is, a general lack of financial means. Collapse of housing construction, housing crisis.
Public opinion	Positive heritage of the 1920s and 1930s; traditional solidarity toward persons in need.	Very limited experience of immigration (1948-1989). Inadequate and distorted information on immigrants among the public; existing xenophobia.
„Migration-specific instruments“	Established integration scheme / programmes, namely for successful asylum seekers and the recruited foreign labour force (active selection of skilled foreign workers).	Immature stage of migration policies and practices. Unbalanced policy measurements. So far, weak co-operation between institutions. Shortcomings in monitoring of movements. Inadequate activities within scientific/research circles.

Source: Based on Drbohlav 1997 (modified).

Future migration trends in the country will be determined by, more or less, the same set of “push” and “pull” factors and closely related aspects. The reason is that many of them function permanently (e.g. the geographical position and historical heritage) or,

may take a relatively long time to change within stabilised democratic societies. What is obvious is that the “right side” of table 34 – the many aspects making adaptation/migration difficult – will take on more “positive connotations” as time progresses. Most importantly, the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU will finalise harmonization in the field of migration policy and practice. Hence, while probably maintaining some specific features, the key “pulls” and “pushes” in the Czech Republic will approach even closer to those that are well-known in the EU as a whole (or some of their countries). In fact, even though the management of the migration and integration processes in the Czech Republic will very likely become more sophisticated, straightforward, and coherent, no dramatic changes can be expected since harmonization as such has almost been fulfilled.

3.2. Asylum and other forms of protection

As already mentioned, it seems that the asylum seeker channel mirrors the “complex internal pulls” of the Czech Republic rather than external “pushes” from abroad. (One can relate numbers in table 12 over time to potential migratory waves springing from given areas “in disruption” in Europe or other parts of the world.) While the number of asylum seekers remained more or less stable until 1997, since then it has been rapidly increasing and reached its peak in 2001 (more than 18,000 – table 12). The state administration prepared Amendment No. 2/2002 to the Act No. 325/1999 Coll. that came into effect in February 2002, thereby reacting to very strong “pulls” economic and transit migrants made use or misuse of. Until that time, many foreigners used the asylum seeker channel only for legalizing their working activities,⁴⁴ making their transit migration through the Czech Republic easier and/or attempting to avoid expulsion. The measurement was successful and the number of asylum seekers dropped significantly to 8,840 in 2002. The Amendment brought about several significant changes in conditions under which asylum seekers can apply and, consequently, stay in the country. Perhaps the most important is that an asylum seeker is now allowed to work only after one year has elapsed since his/her application has been submitted. Also, besides other regulations, the possibility of submitting a new application (if it has been denied previously) has been restricted. An asylum procedure may be stopped or abated after an asylum seeker is caught while trying to cross the state border without permission. Furthermore, conditions under which social subsidies were paid have become tougher and stricter conditions govern the registration of a stay outside the refugee centres as well. In sum, it appears that the new measurements have primarily deterred Ukrainians and other “quasi”-asylum seekers from the former Soviet Union from misusing this channel. Nevertheless, it is certain that this channel is still significant.

There is another important humanitarian status labeled as “temporary refuge”. Until 1999, it was exclusively based on an extra legislative activity declared by the Government (Governmental Resolutions that typically occur on a year to year basis). Since 2000, as a part of newly developed legislation,⁴⁵ this status has been incorporated into the new Alien Act under the umbrella of a “temporary stay with a long-term visa for the purpose of temporary refuge”. It was an important instrument for humanitarian aid, particularly during the civil war in countries of the former Yugoslavia. Between 1991 and

⁴⁴ Between October 1999 and February 2002, asylum seekers could work without having a working permit

⁴⁵ See the Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic No. 326/1999 Coll.; it came into force on January 1, 2000

1996 (especially in 1992 and 1993), altogether 5,237 foreigners, mainly from Bosnia and Herzegovina (3,630), used this entrance channel in order for them to find a temporary safe haven in the Czech Republic (Žadatelé 1997). This status is tied to repatriation. Thus, after the situation calmed down, some of these “refugees” were repatriated (about 700 persons). However, handicapped persons could legally stay and be integrated into the Czech society together with their other family members (this was the case of about 120).⁴⁶ Since then, the numbers of foreigners who fall into this status have been marginal⁴⁷. Accordingly, the impact of this immigrant category upon the Czech society is minimal. For example, one of the latest activities in this field was the Governmental Resolution No. 721 of July 18, 2001, enabling 250 citizens of the Russian Federation who escaped from the war in Chechnya (and had asked for asylum in the Czech Republic) to be granted temporary protection (as of June 30, 2002) (Zpráva 2002b). Nevertheless, only 8 persons were provided with a visa for the purpose of temporary protection in 2001 (Zpráva 2002 see also text below).

3.3. Family and other informal links

Very soon after establishing a “normal migratory environment,” family and other informal links started playing an important role in immigrants’ lives in the Czech Republic. Indeed, as in other developed immigration countries (and in harmony with the network theory), “social networks” of family and friends were quickly established in the country and made the whole immigration process easier and more comfortable for those who arrived after the “pioneers.” They benefited from the earlier group’s established housing arrangements, social contacts, knowledge of the job market, and morale and psychological support. This concerns a model of behavior typical of, for example, Ukrainians, Chinese, Armenians and Georgians in the Czech Republic (see e.g. Drbohlav 1997a; Drbohlav et al. 1999; Uherek 2003; Obuchová 2002; Černík 2000; Maroušek 2000 – according to Uherek 2003).

It is also explicitly supported by interviewees No. 10, No. 13, No. 15 and No. 11 who mention a “snow-ball effect”. In this context, No. 12 also indicates a trend that (after some three years) temporary, circular migration changes into a long-term, and, consequently, permanent migration. He also calls for more intensive family reunification (for those who stay more than 1 year) since, as he further stipulates, the integration of those who have their families with them is much more successful. (More or less the same idea was expressed by No. 15.) Interviewee No. 16 points out that family reunification is closely related to migrants’ primary goals and she identifies mainly those from the former Soviet Union as, so far, rather temporary circular migrants without desires to settle at this moment. According to No. 6, the strongest communities have been created by Ukrainians and Vietnamese (see also No. 2). Correspondingly, there is a danger of involvement in organised crime (No. 6).

The empirical results of two surveys conducted among Ukrainian circular labour migrants from 1995/1996 and 1999 (Drbohlav 1997a; Drbohlav / Janská / Šelepová 1999)

⁴⁶ The temporary refuge status for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina was officially terminated on September 30, 1997

⁴⁷ One can mention the Governmental Resolution No. 378 of April 1999, according to which persons escaping from Kosovo province of Yugoslavia (1,034) could stay under the temporary refuge umbrella until the very end of 1999. 822 of them were then repatriated (Haišman 2001)

clearly show how important social networks are. (See specific information on sampling methods and other details in the section “illegal employment and exploitation.”) For example, out of 192 respondents in the 1995/1996 survey, 34% of the Ukrainians in the Czech Republic proclaimed they were going to invite their relatives from Ukraine and 18% intended to invite their children for a long time. The 1999 survey tells us that (out of 100 respondents) 22% of the surveyed Ukrainians were going to invite their wives, 24% their children, and 40% their other relatives. Of course, the most important question is whether these proclamations are materialized in reality.

3.4. Ethnic immigration

In 1989, three and half years after the Chernobyl disaster, the Soviet press released that the radioactive threat to the population even beyond the 30 km zone around Chernobyl was much higher than the official version had admitted. In such a depressing atmosphere, this information triggered out-migration from the afflicted area where (Chernobyl / Volhynian) Czechs by origin lived⁴⁸ (mostly in Mala Zubovshczina and Korosten). Based on a request for resettlement into their mother country, the Czech Government passed the Governmental Resolution No. 340/90 and the Federal Government passed Governmental Resolution No. 905/90, which permitted the resettlement of these persons. Under the Programme of Humanitarian Aid, 1,812 persons were resettled from Ukraine and Belarus to the Czech Republic between 1991 and 1993.

The criteria required to be re-settled through the programme was as follows: 1) Proving the Czech origin of at least one person in a married couple, and 2) having had permanent residence status in the region where the catastrophe occurred for at least two years. For humanitarian reasons, elderly people who wished to resettle were allowed to migrate together with their children's families, even if they were not directly hit by the catastrophe (because they lived outside the disaster area). As a part of the resettlement programme, Czechoslovakia respectively the Czech Republic provided reemigrants with free transport (people and their belongings), health services, a permanent residence permit with an opportunity to obtain Czechoslovakian citizenship, assurance of a job for at least one able-bodied member of the family, accommodation, education for children, and so on. NGOs were also involved in the re-settlement process.

This collective humanitarian programme was the only one. The reason was that it stimulated an interest for reemigration of other, relatively stable Czech communities abroad. A solution was found by launching a special reemigration programme organised by NGOs on an individual basis. Thus, further possibilities to resettle were offered to individual compatriots who lived in selected remote areas or regions in jeopardy - e.g. people of Czech origin in Romania or Kazakhstan.

⁴⁸ Their ancestors mostly came during the second half of the 19th century. At that time, they faced rather limited economic opportunities at home, while chances to get to the New World significantly shrunk. However, new spaces in the East promised a land and of hope and prosperity in agriculture (more in Janská / Drbohlav, forthcoming)

3.5. Irregular migration, including trafficking and smuggling in human beings; irregular labour immigration and the evolution of migratory legislation

Based mainly on Drbohlav (2003b), let us first elaborate on irregular economic/labour immigration. This category of migration is very important in the Czech Republic in terms of both quantitative (high numbers) and qualitative (possible important impacts upon various social structures) aspects.

The undocumented migration of aliens is a situation in which one's entry or stay does not, or has ceased, to fulfill the conditions for entry or long-term residence as stipulated by relevant intrastate laws or international agreements, to which the Czech Republic is a party. No doubt, irregular labour immigrants change the whole picture drawn by legally residing economic migrants. The estimate of these irregular immigrants is for many reasons a very complicated matter (e.g. there are many different migratory types; rather poor statistics exist even regarding legal immigrants; „shifts“ over time – both within illegal and legal statuses and from legal to illegal status – occur, as well as vice versa; there are not many objective case studies of irregular migrants from which „totals“ might be derived, etc.). One might estimate the current number of undocumented economic immigrants in the Czech Republic (as of the very end of 2000) at somewhere close to 200,000. Of this figure, 165,000 might be irregular migrants active on the Czech labour market and some 30,000 their dependents.⁴⁹ (Between 2000 and 2002, 22,355, 18,309 and 19,573, respectively, foreigners were caught violating the Law on a Stay on the territory of the Czech Republic in the interior – Zpráva 2003.)

Interviewee No. 6 states that usually the number of estimated undocumented migrants in the Czech Republic ranges between 50 and 200% compared to those who stay legally/were registered.

Prague and its surroundings provide a good example of the impact of irregular immigrants. While there should have been some 58,000 international migrants staying or registering themselves officially in Prague at the end of 2000 (the „stock“ in the given year), estimates show that as many as 80,000 could have been added to this figure in order to provide a more realistic illustration what is going on in the migration field. In the middle of the 1990s, the number of foreigners in Prague (excluding tourists) was estimated to have been more than 10% of the total population (see also Čermák et al. 1995). Table 35 provides a rough quantitative assessment regarding important communities of foreign irregular immigrants by their country or region in Prague. Based on the existing statistics and the author's own experience, it can be deduced that while North Americans, Chinese, and Western Europeans are concentrated in Prague or in its near surroundings, Ukrainians and transit migrants operate throughout the entire republic (see below). It is not difficult to conclude that in the case of Ukrainian workers, the overall number of undocumented migrants in the Czech Republic is equivalent to the number of legally registered immigrants (Drbohlav 1997a)⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ This estimate is based on interviews made with representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic and the Institute of Work and Social Affairs in June 2001 (Drbohlav 2003b). Furthermore, studies done by Drbohlav 1997a; Kroupa et al. 1997; Drbohlav et al. 1999, were also taken into account. The hypothesis is that at the end of 2000, to some 165,000 foreigners who work in the Czech Republic temporarily, but usually for more than several months (those with work permits, trade licenses and Slovaks being registered at job centres), one may add the same number (165,000) of persons in the irregular foreign labour force with perhaps some 30,000 dependants

⁵⁰ Such a number is perfectly supported by Malinovskaja's estimate. She states that at least 100,000 Ukrainians are working in the Czech Republic at present (Malinovskaja 2002)

Table 35. Estimate of selected most important communities of foreign undocumented migrants in Prague and nearby surroundings at the turn of the century

Country / Region of origin	Number
North America	10,000 – 20,000
Ukraine	some 20,000
China	10,000 – 20,000
Western Europe	5,000 – 10,000
Transit migrants	some 10,000

Source: Drbohlav 2003b) - author's assessment - based on own experience and research (e.g. Drbohlav 1997a), Drbohlav et al. 1999; Lupták / Drbohlav 1999), many secondary sources of information and various data from the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic. Also, estimates are derived from the character of the spatial and functional setting and organization of ethnic groups - see Drbohlav 2003b).

Nevertheless, three examples show us how questionable the information about irregular immigrants in the Czech Republic might be:

- 1) The information about U.S. citizens in Czechoslovakia as of May 1, 1993 (data from a 1993 survey administered by the U.S. Department of State - see Bratsberg / Terrell 1996) tells us that according to an American survey, some 10,000 Americans were residing Czechoslovakia at that time. However, official Czech statistics reported 1,621 Americans in the Czech Republic in 1993. At the same time, the number of Americans in Slovakia was much lower than in the Czech Republic.
- 2) According to official Czech statistical sources, 2,147 citizens of Moldova were residing in the Czech Republic as of the end of 2000 (Horáková / Macounová 2003), but according to the Moldovan “secrete service”, the figure was higher than 40,000 (Mošnjaga 2000).
- 3) While Czech statistics calculate that there were 24,824 legally residing Vietnamese in the Czech Republic until the end of 1999 (Horáková / Macounová 2003), representatives of the Vietnamese-Czech Association estimate that more than 70,000 Vietnamese were living in the country at the end of the last century (Haišman 2001).

Simply, one lesson should be learnt – when estimating the number of irregular immigrants, it is always better to look at sources from both the countries of destination and countries of origin.

As it has been clearly shown in the example of Ukrainians (e.g. Lupták / Drbohlav 1999), there has recently been an important shift from “work permits” to “trade licenses,” or to the black market. *(As interviewee No.16 tells us, for example, Ukrainians may use both false documents and genuine documents that originally belonged to a different person).* The strict and bureaucratic regime which deals with the employment of foreigners, as well as the application of more restrictive measures toward migrants, lead Ukrainians in the Czech Republic either to switch from “work permits” to “trade licenses,” which are easier for foreigners to obtain, or to simply enter the black market and operate as undocumented persons in the country. Ukrainian independent quasi-businessmen are those workers who were provided with trade licenses, but whose working regimes in fact resemble what is typically considered that of classical employees (these are really

„hidden employees“ - *see also interview No. 6*). They are active in the same kinds of occupation (“unqualified employees“ in various sectors of the economy) as “normal employees“. The whole system of issuing trade licenses to foreigners is a very liberal model, which is frequently misused by many foreigners (e.g. establishing public trading and limited liability companies within which foreign business persons now legally operate and function only as employees). It has been proven that this is the most advantageous way to legally penetrate the country and then legally or quasi-legally work or operate there.

The restrictive and bureaucratic measures that were applied to foreigners' employment activities (these measures used to exist in the Czech-Ukrainian agreement about mutual employment as well) did not actually contribute to a decrease in the number of Ukrainians and other immigrants in the Czech Republic. Instead, it is more likely that events happened the other way around. In contrast to official statistical data (though the numbers dropped in the very beginning of the 1990s, they started increasing again), the number of irregular immigrants has probably increased. Indeed, this situation is also reflected in the perceptions of the Czech public, which confirm a quantitative growth in the foreign labour force in the country over time - 1997 versus 1999 and 1999 versus 2001⁵¹ (see the results of the opinion poll – Veřejné 1999; O vztahu 2001).

As for transit migration,⁵² the estimate given for the Czech Republic by the UN in the beginning of 1990s was 100,000-140,000. This figure does not appear to overestimate the situation. Based on discussions with border control authorities in Western Europe, Widgren estimates that at least 4-6 times the number of people apprehended (see table 13) got through undetected (Widgren in Salt 2000, see also Widgren 1994). When applying this estimate to the number of people caught on the Czech border upon illegal border crossing, one can easily come up with more than 100,000 transit migrants, except for 2002 (see table 13). The number of migrants who were apprehended when trying to cross the Czech state border illegally in 2002 (12,632) would correspond to slightly lower numbers of unapprehended transit migrants per year. However, it is very difficult to find out what crucial factors are behind such a development (whether there are really fewer migrants trying illegally to cross the state border, or it depends on how the border is guarded).

So far, asylum seekers have played an important role in illegal migration movements across the state border (table 36). Particularly in 1999 and 2002, the number of “quasi-asylum seekers” who disappeared from a refugee centre before investigation of their case was finished (and a decision whether to grant asylum or not was made) exceeded or almost reached the number of asylum seekers who had newly arrived and asked for

⁵¹ Whereas in 1999, 60% of respondents declared that they know foreigners who work in the Czech Republic (a representative survey – see below), in 2001 this figure increased to 69%. The growth mainly concerned Ukrainians (an increase of 25% to 30%) and Vietnamese (from 9% to 14%) (O vztahu 2001)

⁵² “Transit migration in the Czech Republic might be briefly defined as a movement through the country where the migrants main intention is not to stay and live there, but only to go through and reach other countries as soon as possible. Migrants usually transit Czechia on their way to Western Europe, but for many reasons their movement is not as easy and rapid as anticipated (see e.g. Transit 1994); plans of many of them come to nothing and, at least temporarily, they are forced to stay in Czechia or to return eastward” (Drbohlav 2003 b)

asylum in the Czech Republic during the same year. Evidence of the stipulation that many asylum seekers are, in fact, only transit migrants is presented in table 36 (graph 18 – Appendix III). As a matter of fact, a significant percentage of those who disappeared from a refugee centre (27% in 2002 and 60% in 2003) were detained when illegally attempting to cross a state border of the Czech Republic. Furthermore, some of them tried it more than once (more in Zpráva 2003).

Table 36. Asylum seekers and “quasi-asylum seekers” in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flows)

Asylum seekers / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total	2,109	4,086	7,220	8,788	18,082	8,480
“Disappeared” from a refugee centre	749	1,900	7,786	4,277	8,384	7,797
Caught when trying to illegally cross the state border	403	490	3,204	2,805	5,056	2,067

Source: The Ministry of the Interior - Zpráva 2003

Note: In 2002, a significant change occurred when the Amendment No. 2/2002 Coll. to the Act No. 325/1999 Coll., on Asylum, as amended, came into effect.

“Since the establishment of the independent Czech Republic, 284,000 persons have crossed the state border or clearly have attempted do to that. Out of this number, 20,000 were citizens of the Czech Republic while 264,000 were foreigners – 242,000 citizens of countries not bordering on the Czech Republic. The development over time reflects international conditions and measurements adopted by individual countries to handle it. For example, the very high numbers of clandestine immigrants caught on the border was the result of a restrictive asylum law that Germany implemented in 1993. Furthermore, in January 1994, flows adjusted in response to a visa regime with Yugoslavia. Indeed, the civil war conflict in the former Yugoslavia had an important impact on irregular migration flows and peaked in 1998/1999. In 2001, these flows across the state border decreased and reached, more or less, the same level as in 1996. Despite expectations, no wave of irregular migrants were coming to the Czech Republic from Afghanistan after the US retaliating occurred in a fall 2001” (Zpráva 2003).

Permanently, illegal border-crossers can be apprehended when leaving the country mainly on the Czech-German border – more specifically, in the area of Ústí nad Labem / Děčín. Nevertheless, the share of this zone of the whole number of caught respective migrants has recently been decreasing - 48.3% in 2001 versus 33.5% in 2002⁵³ – Zpráva 2003. The main route of undocumented migrants through the Czech Republic leads from South Moravian districts toward districts in North Bohemia on the Czech-German border (Saxony) (measured via both numbers of apprehended persons and in relative terms when the number of persons per 1 km of a state border is taken into account). Under “cascade” arrangements, the Czech Republic must accept irregular migrants

⁵³ On the other hand, the percentage of those who were caught illegally crossing the Czech-Austrian border – in 2001:19.0% versus 23.5% in 2002, and the Czech-Polish border – in 2001:16.7% versus 23.1% in 2002, has been increasing (Zpráva 2003)

from neighbouring states if it is proven that they entered the country from the Czech Republic (as long as other requirements are met, such as time constraints); likewise, it can return irregular arrivals to other neighbouring countries if it is proven they entered the Czech Republic from these countries. In the middle of the 1990s, the Czech Republic received far more “cascaded” migrants than it transferred. Out of all foreigners who were governed by readmission agreements with neighbouring countries, the Czech had to accept many more foreigners than they were able to transfer (70-80%). However, the situation has been improving. This percentage fell to approximately 60% in 2002. Readmission agreements (signed between the Czech Republic and neighbouring countries) are an important tool for handling the whole situation on the state border. According to these agreements, altogether 6,805 persons were involved in “mutual changes” in 2002. The Czech side accepted 4,121 persons while it further “transferred” 2,684 persons. Obviously, the percentages of immigrants “accepted” by the Czech Republic compared to the number “transferred” to other states (under the stipulations of readmission agreements) have been diminishing over time (1997 – 28%, 2000 – 21% versus 2002 – 65% - based on Zpráva 2003).

Organised trafficking in (and smuggling of) human beings is an important phenomenon in the Czech Republic, too. In 2002 it was proven that 16.9% (of all the apprehended persons – 14,741) used a service of mafia-like organisers. (This share oscillated between 20% and 24% in a period of 1997-2001) – see also text below.

As interviewee No. 8 mentions, currently Chinese prevail among transit migrants in the Czech Republic (also No. 2) - some 70% head for Germany, 30% for Austria. Whereas Czech citizens are often involved in trafficking/smuggling migrants across the state border, higher positions in the whole hierarchy belong to foreigners (organised groups of Chinese, Vietnamese, Kurds or Post-Soviets - No. 5). Usually, after getting to the territory of the Czech Republic, irregular migrants have to wait for 1 – 1.5 months (hidden mainly in towns, not moving, not working, often in terrible conditions) before trying illegally to cross the state border and move further west. While Indians head mostly for the United Kingdom (and often pay for all the services – so called a “package deal” – also interview No. 16), Chinese stay or go (see also No. 5) to the Netherlands, Germany, France or the USA (often they get into debt and have to work for their “organisers” in a new country for a long time – No. 5); Vietnamese migration is rather specific – it is mostly a short-term movement for trade-related reasons; very often Vietnamese are trying to reach eastern parts of Germany where they had established contacts even under communism. Once in the EU, interviewee No. 8 believes in the need to impose heavier penalties (within the process of further harmonizing given legislation) in the Czech Republic for those who are involved in trafficking/smuggling in human beings. According to No. 5, routes of smuggling change depending on which states have gaps in legislation and thereby provide more chances for success.

⁵⁴ Communities (like Ukrainians and Vietnamese) which have already been able to create strong bases in the country do not transit too much, rather they stay in the Czech Republic (interview No. 2)

3.6. Conclusions

- Currently, there are no strong “push” factors that would propel mass migration movements of Czech citizens out of their mother country. On the other hand, three groups of factors play an important role when searching for strong “pulls” attracting migrants to the Czech Republic 1) geographical, 2) political and 3) economic. From a more specific perspective, “national memory,” along with a public opinion, supranational dimensions (linked with geopolitical orientation), the socio-economic situation and “migration-specific instruments” significantly affect the migratory situation.
- The Czech Republic takes care of its compatriots. The most important story is linked with the resettlement programme of the Czech/Czechoslovakian Governments. During the Programme of Humanitarian Aid (in the aftermath of the Chernobyl catastrophe), almost 2,000 Volhynian Czechs were successfully resettled from Ukraine and Belarus to the Czech Republic between 1991 and 1993.
- As in other developed immigration countries, irregular migrants and undocumented transit migrants have quickly become typical players on the Czech migration scene. To assess their quantity and related “qualitative parameters” is a very difficult task. Combating illegal migration is one of the priorities of the state migration policy and effective international cooperation in this field has been recognised as an inevitable must.

4. Impact of migration movements on the Czech society

4.1. Impact of labour and economic migration, its relation to other aspects

There are some studies, albeit not many of them at all, enabling one to assess the impact of labour (economic) immigration upon the Czech society (Drbohlav 1995; Šelepová 1998; Drbohlav 1999; Čermáková 2002; Čermáková / Drbohlav 2002; Drbohlav 2003b). Furthermore, these studies make it possible, to some extent, to evaluate development over time.

When trying to explain what key factors were behind economic immigration at the beginning of the 1990s (1993), several basic concluding results can be quoted from Drbohlav (1995). The characteristics of “foreigners with work permits” and foreigners with “trade licenses” were entered into a regression equation as dependent variables.⁵⁵ With regard to foreigners with work permits, the resulting multiple R-square 0.773 signifies that the model is able to explain reality quite well.⁵⁶ Obviously, the number of foreigners with work permits (analysed by Czech districts) clearly tends to be concentrated in the urban environment and atmosphere, and the variable of “realised investment” plays the most important role. Thus, for example, the higher the concentration of legally working foreigners (with work permits), the more a district is typical of an urban/suburban climate, with its favorable economic development (e.g. high investments, a low rate of unemployment) and with its “challenging environment” that copies areas where highly educated and skilled “domestic” inhabitants live as well as visitors from abroad. On the other hand, this environment is also characteristic of socio-pathological phenomena (represented, for instance, by the divorce rate – Drbohlav 1995). As far as foreigners with trade licenses are concerned, the model is not as successful when compared to the previous one⁵⁷ (R-square 0.582). Nevertheless, it was proven that the districts attractive to foreigners holding trade licenses have a higher ratio of university graduates, rate of immigration (per 10,000 inhabitants, 1992), and percentage of industrial workers.

Another important fact is worth mentioning. Districts of the Czech Republic that are attractive in terms of immigrants who come from abroad to settle down (rate of immigration in 1992) are also pulling internal migration (measured by net migration) – Drbohlav 1995.

What was the situation like in the second half of the 1990s? When doing the same exercise – juxtaposing foreigners-holders of work permits (1998) to select economic, social, demographic and geographical independent variables (using the step wise regression), to some extent, an important new pattern appears. The R-square is significantly lower (0.262 – Šelepová 1998) and three main variables explain the spatial

⁵⁵ A set of 15 potential predictors that might influence immigrants' behavior were juxtaposed as independent variables to these dependent variables – Drbohlav 1995

⁵⁶ Standardized regression coefficients inform us about how significant the variables within the model are – see Drbohlav 1995

⁵⁷ The reason might spring from the modest frequency of this activity at that time and from the lack of a “close relationship” between place of registration and actual operation within the Czech Republic

distribution by districts (a “direct relationship” is confirmed vis-à-vis the average wage, job vacancy and net internal migration). As the author points out, results have something to do with a process of “spatial hierarchical diffusion,” where not only Prague and highly urbanized areas, but also other districts start attracting foreign employees.

Another study sheds light on important mutual relationships among individual migratory variables and enriches the whole picture with correlation analysis (Drbohlav 1999). “The international migration characteristics (long-term residence permits, work permits and permanent residence permits for 1996) are relatively closely interrelated with each other with one exception: no correlation has been found between family-based migration and work permits. On the contrary, the highest correlation has been found between long-term residence permits and work permits ($r=0.605$). This is not surprising at all since there is a link between the two variables (the former should be a prerequisite for the latter). The relationship between permanent and long-term residence permits ($r=0.471$), in other words, between migration realised on economic grounds and that which is family-based, has also been detected. It has been proven that there is some „common preference“ of certain districts irrespective of migrants’ declared reasons. This relationship is obvious despite the fact that owners of long-term residence permits (including both work permits and trade licenses) are much more concentrated in Prague than those with permanent residence permits. Relationship between migration characteristics and those reflecting the economic, social, demographic and geographical milieu differ by individual migration variables. Regarding work permits (foreign employees) the relation is generally rather weak⁵⁸ (see aforementioned Šelepová 1998). On the other hand, as far as permanent and long-term residence permits are concerned, the ties have rather clear contours. Both characteristics are correlated with those that represent a rather negative social, demographic, and ecological climate (e.g. criminality, suicides, abortions, children born into incomplete families). Nevertheless, regarding the family-based migration these relationships are much stronger and, in some cases, are exhibited via other links (e.g. close relations also to mortality indicators). In regional perspective, this configuration corresponds to the - in many aspects „problematic“ - western and northern border area of Bohemia⁵⁹ and, to partly lesser extent, in some features fairly similar, the Ostrava region. On the other hand, the economically motivated migration represented by long-term residence permits is more, or exclusively, oriented towards the environment favouring the entrepreneurial climate and activities (higher wages, more entrepreneurial activities, more highly educated people). Importantly, while family-based migration is not related to unemployment, the economically motivated migration grows with a decreasing unemployment rate ($r=-0.327$). The economically motivated migration stream is also directly correlated with the most important internal migration flow (of those between 20 and 34 years). It is no wonder that these parameters are, inter alia, characteristic of the main metropolitan centre – the capital of Prague. In other words, in this perspective, the economically motivated foreign immigration helps propel motors of transformation processes in the most important „poles of development“ (Drbohlav 1999).

⁵⁸ It is hardly possible to find some typical “structural and/or zonal features/patterns” (Drbohlav 1999)

⁵⁹ This region is also typical of a high level of urbanization, a lower proportion of those claiming Czech nationality and a higher proportion of those who were not born in the given regions

The picture is completed by an analysis from the 2000s (see Čermáková 2002 and Čermáková / Drbohlav 2002). The results of the multiple stepwise regression model are presented in table 37.

Table 37. Basic characteristics of regression equations for explaining spatial distribution of foreigners – holders of visas issued for more than 90 days and holders of permanent residence permits by districts, the Czech Republic, 2000

Dependent variable	Foreigners per 1,000 inhabitants of the Czech district	Foreigners with visa for more than 90 days – per 1,000 inhabitants of a district (economic migration)	Foreigners with permanent residence permit – per 1,000 inhabitants of a district (family-based migration)
Coefficient of determination	0,723	0,641	0,547
Independent variable	Standardized regression coefficients (Beta weights)	Standardized regression coefficients (Beta weights)	Standardized regression coefficients (Beta weights)
Wages	0,553	0,631	*
Net migration	0,320	0,386	0,217
Ethnic diversity	0,275	*	0,545
Vacant jobs	0,167	0,183	*
Number of entrepreneurs	0,176	*	0,367
Economically active population in services	*	*	0,243
Economically active population in science/research	*	*	-0,200

Source: Čermáková 2002, Čermáková / Drbohlav 2002

Note: *The variable was not selected by the multiple stepwise regression as significant enough to contribute to explaining the process.

Wages - average wage/salary per district (2001).

Net migration (foreigners with a long-term residence permit - before 2000, a visa for more than 90 days - after 2000, and a permanent residence permit), per 1,000 inhabitants of a district, 1996-2001.

Ethnic diversity (number of inhabitants with other than Czech, Moravian and Silesian national/ethnic identity per 100 inhabitants of a district, as of March 2001).

Vacant jobs (per 1,000 economically active population of a district, 2001).

Number of entrepreneurs (per 1,000 inhabitants of a district, 2001).

Economically active population in services (per 1,000 inhabitants of a district, as of March 2001).
Economically active population in science/research (per 1,000 inhabitants of a district, as of March 2001).

As the values of the coefficients of determination indicate, the models are able to explain reality quite well, albeit not, by far, to an exhaustive level. Models account for 72%, 64% and 55%, respectively, of all variability. Logically, the spatial distribution of foreign immigrants (including economic and family-based migration) is better explained than the two individual migratory components. Also, it was proven that more spatially concentrated economic migration is easier to explain than more complex family-based migration. To briefly summarize results, economic immigration has been propelled by good economic opportunities, namely high wages/salaries (out of three models the highest coefficient of all), vacant jobs and an environment in which immigrants have already established themselves. Hence, in relation to economic migrants, it was confirmed that besides the already detected importance of “poles of economic development,” “compatriots’ nets” (with their supportive roles) have been important factors in attracting immigrants to and within the Czech Republic. The relationship between family-based migration and “economic parameters” is not so strong. Whereas there is a positive relationship between economic migration and the number of entrepreneurs and the size of the economically active population in services, the relationship between economic migration and the economically active population in science/research is negative. As it is in the case of economic migrants, also the family-based migration is significantly influenced by existing networks between those who newly immigrate and those who “have already been there”. In addition, another factor seems to be very important - great ethnic diversity (mainly tied to “old” national/ethnic minorities). When translating the results into geographical space, different patterns are, to some extent, linked with the two different migratory types. While rather highly urbanized zones (Prague, etc.) along with some other highly industrial centres (e.g. Mladá Boleslav with the Škoda company) attract economic migrants above all, the more heterogeneous regional picture is related to family-based migration. Besides other places, the western, northern, and also partly south-eastern border areas with a very weakly established “cultural identity” and rather problematic social, demographic and, in some places, ecological climate, have been gaining migrants under the family-based migration umbrella. This result is in harmony with the results of previous studies (e.g. Drbohlav 1999).

Čermáková (1992) further specifies the picture when searching for independent variables explaining spatial distribution patterns (by Czech districts) among individual selected ethnic immigrant groups (again the stepwise regression model was used). The models had rather weak explanatory power for the Slovak, Polish, Vietnamese and Chinese ethnic groups (coefficients of determination were lower than 0,260). Relatively good results, however, were obtained when analyzing Americans, Ukrainians, Germans, and Russians (holders of visas issued for more than 90 days and holders of permanent residence permits were together included, districts of the Czech Republic, 2000):

- Ukrainians (the coefficient of determination - CD: 0,557); independent variables: wages – standardised regression coefficient – SRC: (0.522), rate of unemployment (-0.304), economically active persons in services (0.205);

- Russians (CD: 0.455); independent variables: number of entrepreneurs (SRC: 0.427), economically active persons in services (0.407);
- Germans (CD: 0.502); independent variables: ethnic diversity (SRC: 0.418) – see table 37, completed construction of apartments (0.354), number of entrepreneurs (0.345), direct foreign investment (0.274);
- Americans (CD: 0.617); independent variables: wages (SRC: 0.490), number of entrepreneurs (0.372), completed construction of apartments (0.246).

It has been proven that different conditions and different spatial patterns are tied to economic migration on one hand, and to family-based migration on the other. However, when analysing these two types together, a more powerful and decisive role is played by economic immigration (it predetermines conditions as a whole – see table 37). While spatial aspects will further be elaborated upon below, it has been found that immigrants (and especially economically-driven ones) head for highly urbanized areas (with all the typical features and independent characteristics indicated above). Economic immigration does help propel motors of transformation processes in the most important urban poles of development and it is the most important impact of immigration upon Czech society.

On the other hand, family-based migration is more dispersed, more complex and, hence, more difficult for interpretation. Nevertheless, what seems to be clear, and in harmony with the theories as well, is that besides “poles of economic development”, the “compatriots’ nets”⁶⁰ (with their supportive role) should not be omitted when trying to explain international migration to and within the current Czech Republic.

Nevertheless, interviewee No. 1 mentions that the impact is not too important since, so far, the whole number of immigrants in the country has been rather small. This same opinion was expressed in a different context by No. 12. Interviewee No. 2 combines economic impacts foreigners have upon the Czech society rather with a microeconomic level.

Another important impact of economic immigration touches on the Czech labour market. The ethnic immigrant groups, in accordance with their own strategies, have found (in harmony with their specific spatial concentration patterns - see below) specific niches on the Czech labour market, thereby reshaping its previous contours. This situation concerns three ethnic immigrant groups most of all – Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Chinese. Although the picture of their economic activities in the Czech Republic is becoming more stratified (see table 38), one automatically combines a Ukrainian with an auxiliary worker in construction, a Vietnamese with a vendor (cheap clothes, electronics, vegetables/fruits), and a Chinese with an owner of a restaurant or an organiser of a wholesale distribution (see the same goods as regards Vietnamese).

⁶⁰ Functioning as an urban enclave where one can live or as a zone which is easily reachable

Table 38. Individual important segments of immigrant labour force in the Czech Republic - Ukrainians, Vietnamese, Chinese (documented and undocumented), at the end of the 1990s (simplified)

Ethnic group/ Region of origin	Form of stay, type of work	Social and demographic structure, social relations	Range/ Regional pattern
Ukrainians	Work permits – individual, trade licenses, illegally; manual work, auxiliary work; mainly construction but also industry (e.g. food-processing, textile), agriculture	Poor; workers, (relatively high educational level purposely undervalued), young, males; frequent trips to mother country	Throughout the whole country, especially Prague, Central Bohemia, large cities
Vietnamese	Trade licenses, illegally; small-scale market entrepreneurs/sellers; buying and selling clothes and electronics	Quasi-Middle class	Throughout the whole country, especially western border zone - near Germany and Austria, large cities
Chinese	Illegally, via trade or entrepreneurial companies; representatives of firms in China and small-businessmen; import, distribution (wholesale) and retail of apparel, shoes and light industrial goods	Strong kinship ties and regional social networks, relatively frequent trips to mother country	Prague

Source: Based on Drbohlav 2003b

Note: This characterization is not based on any representative survey research. It follows from the author's personal experience, through consulting on the issue with selected experts and through some original, primordial views on migratory and residence patterns of some immigrant communities in Prague/Czech Republic (see e.g. Wang 1998; Chan 1998; Drbohlav 1997a). The indicated facts stress only the most significant trends; omitting information does not necessarily mean that, in fact, there are no clearer trends in relation to selected aspects and given ethnic immigration groups. Rather, so far, they have not been tackled or simply detected and widely publicised. In order to understand the functioning of chain migration from the main source countries better, systematic research is needed – possibly with the indications above as a starting point.

Interviewee No. 1 and No. 13 express an idea that foreigners – small businessmen – should concentrate on matters in which they traditionally were involved and which represent their “cultural heritage” – like ethnic restaurants, ethnic food (including growing given products), hand-made products, etc.

4.2. Economic effects of migration

Regarding the availability of both primary statistical sources and secondary sources (analytical studies, research reports, papers, books, etc.), perhaps no one in the Czech Republic can find an area that is as neglected as the Czech migratory field. In fact, there are no important data at one's disposal on, for example, foreigners⁶¹ remittances, taxes, social security payments, savings, investment strategies, etc. Though one can find some indirect evidence of the activities foreigners carry out in the Czech Republic (for example, capital flows, foreign direct investments), it is often very hard to reasonably relate them to the real migration flows and to their impacts upon the host society. In this context, let us only pinpoint one pattern that can be mapped out and described. When taking into account both numbers of individual foreign companies/firms and numbers of foreigners-holders of a trade license (small entrepreneurs doing their business) in relative terms (per 100 Czech inhabitants) by Czech districts in 2002, a clear East-West gradient will appear. Whereas districts located in eastern parts of the country (in fact, the whole Moravia and some districts in eastern and southern Bohemia) have very low figures (usually between 0.1 and 0.4), Prague (3.6) and central Bohemia (Mladá Boleslav 1.7, Praha-západ 1.7, and Praha-východ 1.6), Pilsen (1.8) and some districts in the west (particularly Cheb 2.9, Karlovy Vary 2.4, and Tachov 2.1) and, to some extent, also the city of Brno (1.5) are highly influenced by direct foreign economic activities. However, one has to keep in mind that these figures say nothing about the real “qualitative and structural parameters” of such an impact.

As for this topic, interviewee No. 1 points out that foreign small businessmen do not usually contribute to new technologies, financial sources, or employment (new job opportunities) in the Czech Republic. Often, they only sell their work or goods of poor quality.

On the other hand, No. 11 reminds us that sometimes foreigners bring with them special artisan's abilities that we miss entirely, and she gives examples of well functioning foreign companies that started from scratch (e.g. STROM - TELECOM).

4.3. Non-economic effects of migration

Mainly due to the great share of “circulators” among foreigners and immigrants in the Czech Republic (short-term or long-term stays rather than a settlement), and because only a short time has elapsed since “the New Era” started, some migratory features, otherwise expected, have not yet developed: For example, ethnic minorities have not created very significant areas of concentration within cities or regions thus far (see below, with the exception of the Russian community in Karlovy Vary), and not many important ethnic social or political structures have evolved which would “unite, unify and organise” new immigrants in the country (Drbohlav 2003b). Accordingly, the cultural contributions, demographic changes, social structure changes and the like related to immigrants, and their impact upon the Czech society (counting 10,200,000

⁶¹ Foreigners as individual persons

inhabitants) is rather small. There is no nation-wide immigrants' influence over these issues; only partially on the local level. Table 39 shows some demographic parameters that prove some of the above-mentioned facts.

Table 39. Selected demographic events – foreigners in the Czech Republic, 1997–2001

Demographic events / year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Marriages					
Male foreigners -female Czech	3,131	2,873	2,793	3,092	2,672
Female foreigner -male Czech	1,927	1,666	2,060	2,160	1,691
Both foreigners	58	90	90	61	54
Divorces					
Male foreigners -female Czech	552	614	646	643	643
Female foreigner -male Czech	265	308	281	315	366
Both foreigners	43	41	38	46	24
Births	650	941	1,032	1,040	891
Deaths	312	317	267	285	252
Abortions	2,002	2,356	2,634	2,476	2,576

Source: Cizinci 2003

Despite some problems interpreting results,⁶² Seidlová (2003) introduces interesting data on immigrants' demographic behavior. The foreign population as a whole (those legally staying for more than 1 year in 2001) has higher marriage and abortion rates vis-à-vis the Czech population (in 2000), more or less the same divorce rate, and lower fertility (about one half) and mortality rates (about ten times lower – see more in Seidlová 2003). It again only reflects very different age structures of the both populations (see table 23 and graph 14 – Appendix III).

One can expect that once the Czech Republic has joined the EU (during which time more immigrants will arrive in the country, but those who are already here will begin to settle down), the impact of immigrants upon Czech society (its social, economic, political, demographic, geographical etc. structures) will become more palpable. Again, there are good reasons to suppose that the contours of such changes will follow patterns well known in the current Western Europe.

Of course, the foreigners' impact upon the Czech society is conditioned by economic aspects; namely, whether they only “produce,” or also “reproduce,” themselves in the territory of the country. The former strategy is typical of the Eastern immigrant inflow⁶³ (Ukrainians above all), while those coming from the West and the Far East live “normal lives,” and communicate with the Czech majority and their own community more intensively. This situation is also related to the living standard, which is significantly

⁶² She rightly mentions that considering immigrants' demographic structures as only “one item” is very simplified since it is composed of several internally different ethnic subpopulations

⁶³ Very often these immigrants try to save as much of the money they earn as possible, thereby supporting their families in their mother countries (e.g. Drbohlav 1997a). This sort of strategy cuts them off, to large extent, from “complex communication” with both the majority population and their other compatriots

lower in the former case than in the latter. Chinese restaurants (mainly in Prague and other cities), the firmly established North American community in Prague, and the Russian community in Karlovy Vary represent important manifestations of the new and distinctive socio-cultural milieu that was brought to the country.

Interviewee No. 10 emphasises a bunch of very positive traits through which foreigners often enrich the majority population (e.g., Kurds or Armenians). No. 11 does the same.

4.4. Illegal employment and exploitation

Below we shortly present results of a qualitative study done in 1998⁶⁴ (Lupták / Drbohlav 1998). It summarizes some of the most important impacts that foreigners (holders of work permits and trade licenses) had upon Czech society. However, many mentioned issues are general in their character and touch labour activities of irregular migrants and their impact upon society, too.⁶⁵ Despite the fact that the research was carried out in 1998, one can dare to argue that, to a large extent, its results are still valid today.

Since the “Eastern” foreign labour force significantly dominates over the “Western” one, the respondents’ evaluations implicitly relate to the former immigrant community. Ukrainians themselves play a very important role and “supply” the issues with many problems.

Foreigners as employees

Negative aspects of the issue with respect to the Czech Republic

The majority of respondents mentioned the fact that a very cheap foreign labour force decreases the price of work and salaries/wages on the Czech labour market. Thus, by having a low minimum wage, relatively high social subsidies (including when unemployed), and a minimal income level⁶⁶ for unemployed Czech persons, the Czech labour force is, by not accepting low wage jobs, being displaced from the labour market

⁶⁴ Between March and June 1998, we carried out a questionnaire survey tackling the issue of what were hot and pressing problems linked with the foreign labour force and its operation in the territory of the Czech Republic. 86 district (including the Prague district) job and trade centres were contacted via questionnaire. 54 directors of district job centres throughout the country reacted to the questionnaire and provided us with an evaluation of the situation. 20 directors of district trade centres throughout the country responded and evaluated the situation. Also, 9 representatives of local municipalities (which are responsible for issuing trade licenses to “free businesses” - in our case, mainly buying and selling goods) sent their opinions as well

The questionnaire itself, designed for officers of these “regional” institutions, was structured into three interconnected blocks. Only one key answer and respective questions are selected for this report: “How are foreigners’ work activities (those with job permits or job licenses) reflected in the territory of your district? What are the negative and positive aspects of these activities? Please, if possible, mention issues related to economic, social, cultural, psychological and other environments”.

Anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed. The questionnaire survey was supported by directors of the respective departments of both the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade

⁶⁵ Indeed, it is often very difficult to separate legal activities from those that break the law (see the chapter on irregular migration)

⁶⁶ In other words, there is no big difference between earned money and that which one gets when unemployed

in some particular occupations - mainly unqualified industrial branches.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the quality of the Czech labour environment is eroded by the willingness of foreigners to work hard, to work longer than usual (over the weekend, during night shifts), and to work under “normally” unacceptable conditions (i.e. without breaks or refreshments, under bad and un-hygienic conditions, with limited or completely absent safety measures that do not correspond to the labour code).⁶⁸ If the Czech labour force cannot or refuses to compete, the rate of unemployment of Czech citizens in some regions might increase. Also, firms that employ cheap foreigners from the „East“ are at an advantage over other firms, which employ only domestic labour when competing for various contracts.

It was stressed that there is a serious danger, stemming from the fact that relying on a foreign labour force may hinder the process of transformation of the Czech economy (delay structural changes). It may not appear so in the short-term, but over the long-term, it will be more advantageous to finance the modernization of productive technologies rather than finance labour-intensive sectors. The following negative aspects were mentioned by some of the respondents as well: employers of a foreign labour force who avoid taxes; illegal workers who avoid taxes, insurance, and other obligatory payments; the export of foreign savings abroad (i.e. not spending money in the Czech Republic); connections between foreign labour activities and some socio-pathological phenomena such as criminality, drugs, prostitution, creating mafias and corruption; furthermore, the spread of infectious diseases as a result of the poor and primitive housing conditions in which foreigners often live.

Positive Aspects of the issue with respect to the Czech Republic

Foreigners fill job occupations that lack workers among the Czech labour force – these positions include unskilled jobs in construction, textile, food, and wood industries, as well as agriculture (also in the peripheral areas with limited transport networks). Foreigners help the Czech economy by filling positions as welders, experienced seamstresses, machinists, tool and dye makers, founders, bricklayers, carpenters, metal cutters, etc. Generally, there is a lack of representatives for these occupations on the Czech labour market and, so far, a training system has not been established that could produce enough workers to fill all the positions necessary and available in the current market (at present, supply does not meet demand in some occupations). The following positive aspects were also mentioned by some respondents: increasing wages for Czech workers in firms that are owned by westerners or employ a “western” foreign labour force, limiting inflation by paying low wages to foreigners, greater productivity in firms that employ foreigners, and the enrichment of Czech society through new cultures, languages and experiences.

⁶⁷ It is important to establish the right relationship between minimum wage and social subsidies, because an extremely small difference in these two systems stimulates foreign immigration and does not provide incentives for some categories of Czech citizens to work. Thus, an imbalance in this relationship undermines restrictive immigration policies and does not protect the Czech labour market from foreign immigration

⁶⁸ Nevertheless, respondents No. 11 and No.1 also add that this might function as a stimulus for the Czech labour force to work more efficiently with higher productivity than at present

Foreigners as small businesspersons

Obviously, there are two different types of foreign businessmen that dominate in the Czech Republic, and two particular ethnic communities represent them: the Vietnamese and the Ukrainians. These two groups were mentioned most frequently by the respondents when informing us about problems they experience in their regions/districts/settlements.

- 1) Vietnamese: They are well known as small scale market entrepreneurs, buying and selling clothes and electronics throughout the country (see also above). When evaluating their role in the Czech society and the economy, negative evaluations prevailed. The provision of cheap goods that could be purchased by the lower social strata of Czech society was the only important positive aspect linked to this community and pinpointed by all respondents. The negative features were quite often specified as: breaking laws and regulations that concern taxes, insurance, the import of goods, trademarks, hygienic conditions, returns, etc. Respondents pointed out that, for many reasons, these negative aspects are very difficult to prove. The disorder and unpleasant aesthetic arrangement of Vietnamese goods was criticized. In summary, in the “administration’s eyes” (see below a chapter on public opinion), Vietnamese are seen as rather unwelcome - by using nefarious practices they undermine the competitive market and ruin the efforts of Czech small businessmen and even some Czech firms (textile producers were mentioned in this context).

- 2) Ukrainians: Ukrainian “independent” quasi-businessmen are those workers who were provided with trade licenses but whose working regime, in reality, resembles that of “classical” employees (one can also speak about “hidden employees”- see above). They are active in similar occupations (they are “unqualified employees” in various sectors of the economy) and work in groups for a Ukrainian mediator who organises their work, signs a contract with Czech partners, and, consequently, works with “his team” and a Czech employer. Despite the fact that such kinds of Ukrainian firms do not own anything, they are involved in large construction projects, textile production, machinery, locksmith’s works, etc. The firm sends employees to the workplaces of domestic companies while the Czech employer does not have to pay any taxes and insurance payments (the workers are not his employees) - he pays only the Ukrainian mediator for the work. Hence, the “bill” is cheaper and, furthermore, there are no costs for housing. Low work productivity or any small offence is solved by replacing the Ukrainian worker. The Ukrainian mediator also does not pay taxes since he follows agreements on double taxation. Therefore, it is impossible to persecute him from any angle. Everything surrounding the business activities of the Ukrainians is well camouflaged, including, for example, the provision of false information (data/addresses) when arranging documents at offices (see above). The whole process is often even more complicated since the Ukrainian firm has contracts with other Ukrainian firms, which also operate in the Czech territory. Lack of control leads to a situation where often many obligatory demands are not met and illegality is openly practiced. Ukrainian workers who usually arrive as “tourists” (with vouchers) to the Czech Republic are heavily, nevertheless, “voluntarily” exploited (poor working conditions, low wages, seizure of their documents by a mediator, etc.). Thus, a modern form of slavery is flourishing. Increasingly, other organised forms as to how to do a business in the Czech Republic are being practiced, and Ukrainians

are playing a very important role in these activities - e.g. mainly via public trading companies and limited liability companies (see more in Kroupa et al. 1997).

Regarding some other negative points in terms of the host country, the respondents repeated similar aspects as already mentioned when characterizing foreign employees (see above). Last but not least, because of the “isolationist policies” of immigrant groups that spring from the temporary, circular character of the migration itself, these foreigners have a very limited possibility to enrich Czech society with a new culture, language and experience. Nevertheless, respondents also expressed some positive attributes. Indeed, as in the case of foreign employees, foreign businessmen or “quasi-businessmen” sometimes fulfill occupations that are not attractive for Czech citizens (unqualified, unskilled jobs in agriculture, some industrial branches and services as well). Furthermore, due to the above mentioned activities, paying low wages to foreigners hampers inflation, and there is greater productivity in firms that employ foreigners.

As has already been mentioned in the chapter on irregular migration, between 2000 and 2002, 22,355, 18,309, and 19,573, respectively, foreigners were caught violating the Act on a Stay on the territory of the Czech Republic in interior – Zpráva 2003. Those foreigners apprehended by “internal controls” within the interior of the republic, or when trying illegally to cross the state border through a border crossing⁶⁹ (usually without valid documents), represent a huge percentage of the pool of irregular economic migrants. The data for 2002 proves how significant the Ukrainian immigrant community of labour migrants in the Czech Republic is (Zpráva 2003). Out of 19,573 irregular immigrants apprehended by the authorities, 78% were Ukrainians.

As in other developed host countries, labour immigrants with and without a work permit are both willing to work hard and prone to exploitation by their employers. (See also interview No. 8 where the respondent points out that foreigners are exploited by Czechs through the provision of poor, but also relatively expensive, housing.) The exploitation of Ukrainians on the Czech labour market, falling as they do within the “Eastern” category of migrants, has been documented several times. Let us quote only some examples from three following studies - Drbohlav (1997), Drbohlav et al. (1999) and Křečková / Tůmová et al. (2003).

According to a survey carried out in 1995 and 1996,⁷⁰ the type and conditions of work for Ukrainians, their workload and their earnings are significantly worse compared to the primary sector (the majority of the population). For example, 53% of respondents worked and/or stayed in the Czech Republic in an irregular situation⁷¹ at the time of the

⁶⁹ These persons are not recorded within the statistics on illegal crossing the state border (see above)

⁷⁰ A questionnaire survey successfully targeting 98 and 94 respondents, respectively, in Prague and its vicinity; the non-probability sample making use of main immigrants concentrations and, at the same time, a sort of a “snowball” method (Drbohlav 1997a)

⁷¹ Though irregular labour immigrants are the most prone to exploitation, it does not mean at all that exploitation does occur in immigrants' legal working activities

study: their activity was not registered.⁷² 73% of the respondents worked as unqualified, unskilled workers or auxiliary workers; 62% worked more than 12 hours a day; 40% evaluated their working conditions as hard and some of them even severe, below the dignity of a human being; 51% had no days off and earnings were low in relation to the number of hours they worked (80% earned 8,000 Kč a month or less); and, moreover, 85% stated that their earnings did not increase, but stagnated over time (Drbohlav 1997a).

The second survey was carried out in 1999, and in terms of the methods used (including a sampling method) it, more or less, followed the first survey (Drbohlav et al. 1999; Drbohlav / Janská / Šelepová 2001). In line with expected hypotheses, this research exercise also proved the exploitation of Ukrainian labour immigrants. For example, 31% of respondents worked and/or stayed in the Czech Republic in an irregular situation (this was significantly more typical of younger rather than older immigrants); 68% earned less than 10,000 Kč a month; and 82% worked between 8 and 12 hours a day.

Interviews provided in a survey that was carried out in 2002 among 645 respondents (a non-representative sample that was taken throughout the country among those who have stayed there for more than 1 year) also revealed the exploitation of Ukrainian workers. It was found out that 33% of respondents work between 11 and 12 hours a day, their salaries are pretty low - 49 Czech crowns per hour, and 57% of them expressed fear of losing the money they earn (due to mafia-like structures – Křečková / Tůmová et al. 2003).

4.5. Public opinion and perception of migrants and migration: discrimination, xenophobia, and other forms of violence against migrants

In addition to historical patterns, the Czech Republic's geographical and geopolitical location, and its socio-economic situation, information channels (see also table 34) also shape public opinion and perceptions of migrants/migration. If one realises that: 1) "CEE countries have been at the historical cross-roads of invasion, migrations, and the rise and fall of empires" (Castles 1995) and that 2) the Czech Republic experienced more than forty years of "overall isolation" (inter alia, a situation that drastically limited normal international migration movements and immigrants' settlement) within the communist era, then, accordingly, the Czech model of national identity is one of trying to maintain ethnic purity and cultural homogeneity rather than pluralism (as is also the case of Germany and Austria – Castles 1995). The fear of having foreigners or strong ethnic minorities in the country is omnipresent (Drbohlav 2001, Rabušic / Burjáněk forthcoming). Interviewee No. 13 emphasises that due to all the given historical circumstances, this is quite a natural phenomenon.. This fact is reflected in public as well as in official policies, but predominately under the practices of the state (see Drbohlav 2003a).

Furthermore, some of these practices are dictated by the process of harmonizing the

⁷² "It has been proven that particularly young, single, childless persons, working in industry and 'other branches' in Ukraine (except for agriculture and construction) and coming from Ukrainian towns with between 5,000 and 49,000 inhabitants tend to be among Ukrainian workers operating in Czechia more significantly linked to irregular status than others" (Drbohlav 1997a)

Czech Republic's migratory policies with EU migratory policies and practices. This xenophobia affects many different areas of life (the Czech majority are worried mostly about the possibility of increasing crime rates, conflicts between different cultures, and growing unemployment – Nedomová / Kostecký 1997; Postoje 2001). On the other hand, interviewee No. 15 evaluates the situation, even in the European context, as not very serious, because there is no important political party on the scene behind such attitudes.

Based on an international comparison, xenophobia in the Czech Republic is more apparent than in some other Central/Eastern European countries (see slightly different results in Wallace 1999; ČR 2000; Danielová 2002; Rabušic / Burjáněk forthcoming). The following examples illustrate how xenophobia is reflected in Czech society. This information springs from surveys on xenophobia and the experience of immigrants, conducted by the Centre for Opinion Polls⁷³:

- 1) Only 55% of the respondents would permit all foreigners who are in jeopardy of their life to stay in the Czech Republic (11% would not permit anyone to stay under such conditions); 28% would permit foreigners who are persecuted for political, racial or ethnic reasons to stay (21% would not enable anyone to stay under such conditions); and 11% would enable foreigners who are searching for better living conditions to stay (50% would permit nobody to stay under such conditions) (as of May 2001, O názorech 2001).
- 2) 61% of respondents think that immigrants should adjust to "our" living style as much as possible; 5% argue that they should have a chance to live entirely according to their habits and customs (as of May 2001, O vztahu 2001).
- 3) 8% proclaim that, in the long run, providing asylum seekers with asylum and a long-term stay in the country represent a threat to Czech society, but 10% think it is an asset (33% think it is neither a threat nor an asset) (as of May 2001, Postoje II 2001).
- 4) 24% are decidedly against having an asylum centre close to their house/apartment; 31% are rather against it; 3% do not mind at all; and 29% would agree to having one (as of May 2001, O názorech 2001).
- 5) 38% had good relations with only some of the foreigners who work in the Czech Republic, 21% to almost none of them. 10% declared having good relations with all of them, and 31% to having good relations with most of them. (as of May 2001, O vztahu 2001).

⁷³ Data from the Centre for Opinion Polls (CVVM within the Sociological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, the former name was the Institute for Opinion Polls which was affiliated with the Czech Statistical Office - IVVM) are used here above all. They monitor the situation in the given field from many different aspects regularly, mostly on a year-to-year basis (thus, there is often a possibility to evaluate development over time). The samples are, to large extent, "representative" (usually more than 1,000 respondents spread throughout the whole country) since a quota sampling method is applied (quota characteristics: age, sex, educational level). Besides CVVM, one can also mention other agencies dealing with the issue: e.g. STEM (Názory 2003) or AISA; see also Gabal 1998

These general results do not show differences within the population. When analyzing the given results more deeply (internal materials of the CVVM), very clear tendencies have appeared. In fact, negative attitudes towards foreigners (be it any category) were more typical of those with a basic education, auxiliary workers, unemployed persons, pensioners, those with pretty bad or very bad living standards (measured via a “subjective self-evaluation”), and sympathizers with the Communist Party. On the other hand, those with rather good and very good living standards (again, measured via a “subjective self-evaluation”), an occupation category of “other employees,” businessmen, university-educated persons, and voters for the Civic Democratic Party held much more pro-immigrant attitudes (statistically significant differences).⁷⁴ A breakdown by other variables like sex, age or regional units would call for more detailed analysis and specific comments (also in relation to attitudes towards individual ethnic groups) that would go beyond the scope of this report (see more in Danielová 2002). To summarize (in accordance with Danielová 2002), inhabitants of North Moravia and South Bohemia regions and Prague have the most positive attitudes toward ethnic minority groups. The most negative attitudes are characteristic of those who live in West, North and Central Bohemia regions⁷⁵. Worse relations are tied to smaller settlements (with less than 2,000 inhabitants) and to larger cities (with more than 100,000 inhabitants). Those between the ages of 15 and 19 have, on the whole, the worst (most negative) attitude toward ethnic minority groups. On the other hand, seniors – older than 60 – have relatively good relations. Also, believers tend to be much more tolerant toward foreigners than non-believers (Danielová 2002).

It seems that attitudes held by the majority population toward old ethnic and new immigrant ethnic minorities in their country are, to some extent, based on stereotypes, though some opinions, feelings and approaches can change over time with the changing socio-economic or political situation (especially when some of the ethnic groups play an important role in these changes - Drbohlav forthcoming). “Ethnic stereotypes” are also typical of the Czech society (see O vztahu 2001). Whereas Slovaks (as a minority living in the Czech Republic) are, out of the selected ethnic groups, by far the most popular for the Czech majority,⁷⁶ followed by Poles, Vietnamese, citizens of the former Soviet Union,⁷⁷ citizens of the Balkans, and especially Romas belong to the most unpopular ones (table 40, graph 19 – Appendix III). As a whole, the popularity of individual ethnic groups vis-à-vis the Czech population does not change too much over time. Empathy for some of the ethnic groups peaked between 1997 and 1999,⁷⁹ and since then has been slightly decreasing.

⁷⁴ When analysing individual issues (points 1-5) various combinations came out. Hence, it does not mean that all the representatives of anti-immigrant or pro-immigrant attitudes appeared within the all individual studied issues (points 1-5)

A share of respondents having bad attitude towards Romas strongly correlates with a spatial concentration of Roma ethnic group ($r=0.9$ - Danielová 2002)

No wonder if one realize how close the Czechs and Slovaks are to each other mainly because of having lived in one common state for almost 75 years

This reaction is the result of two main reasons: 1) a general negative attitude in Czech society toward all things “Soviet” as a result of the unforgettable occupation of 1968, and 2) the tendency to connect “Soviets” to specific forms of “mafia criminality” which, from time to time, have been significantly manifested in the territory of the Czech Republic. Mafia-like activities are often attributed to citizens of the Balkan states as well

⁷⁸ One of the important reasons might be that, generally, positive economic development goes against anti-immigration feelings and attitudes. Rather positive attitudes toward foreigners followed a relatively good shape during the Czech (“booming”) economy and improvements in the living standard of the domestic population at that time. Both grew significantly between 1994 and 1997 (more in Drbohlav 2002)

However, the relationship is not “linear” in its character and still shows improvement over time. When comparing the beginning of the 1990s with the beginning of the 2000s, overall perceptions of individual ethnic migrant groups have become more positive (except toward citizens of the Balkans). Although the relationship is rather complicated and complex, perceptions of immigrants in the Czech society will improve given enough time and interactions between migrants and the majority of the population (see also the same in Germany – Krätke 2003, or Austria – Hintermann 2001). *Also, interviews No. 1, No. 10, No. 11 support this analysis.* Another survey (opinion poll) measures the popularity of a different set of ethnic groups (Náš 2003). One of the latest studies reveals that besides Slovaks and Poles, citizens of France, Sweden and the United Kingdom are also very popular among the Czech majority. In contrast, Kurds, Palestinians and Afghanis are the most unpopular (in addition to Ukrainians).

Table 40. Good/bad attitude towards selected ethnicities – population of the Czech Republic, 1993–2001, in %

Relation to: / time	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Slovaks	621/82	65/7	66/5	69/5	70/4	74/4	77/2	71/3	74/3
Poles	39/12	37/11	39/8	43/7	48/5	53/5	57/3	52/3	53/4
Germans	35/21	35/20	33/22	33/19	39/18	45/13	45/14	41/16	42/16
Jews	33/7	36/7	34/6	35/5	37/5	43/5	43/5	36/6	34/8
Vietnamese	13/39	14/33	9/39	12/41	20/28	24/26	21/29	18/34	18/32
Citizens of former USSR	-	-	11/36	11/44	13/43	10/50	9/55	11/46	12/45
Citizens of Balkan	12/40	10/36	10/33	9/44	12/41	11/44	9/48	11/44	9/45
Romas	3/77	5/68	5/69	5/69	7/62	12/52	9/55	8/61	8/60

Source: *O vztahu 2001*

Note: 1Good and rather good attitudes, 2bad and rather bad attitudes.

Prejudice against the Roma ethnic group is a persistently recurring attitude. However, this is a traditional rather than new ethnic community.⁷⁹ It should be noted that the aforementioned unpopularity complicates the acceptance of migrants because, for example, many Romas are seen as “Slovak” migrants, large numbers of labour migrants come from the former Soviet Union and refugees and asylum seekers often arrive from the Balkan countries (see text and tables above). “However, we have to bear in mind that these were surveys of opinions rather than practices. In contrast to this, we can cite the examples of Czech solidarity with immigrants/ refugees in the positive relationship between local populations and settled refugees in Czech municipalities. For example, in fact, no serious antagonism by a local majority group towards settled refugees⁸⁰ in Czech municipalities has been reported so far” (Drbohlav 2001).

⁷⁹ As a rule (with Romas being the only exception), national minorities in the Czech Republic (those who perceive themselves to be of a different ethnic/national origin but have already been naturalized and gained Czech citizenship) have already been fully integrated or assimilated into the majority society. Accordingly, there have been no problems at all in the co-existence of the majority with representatives of national minorities in the Czech Republic

⁸⁰ However, this is not true when speaking about asylum seekers. Recently, some protest campaigns against them (their presence and behaviour) have occurred in some towns where asylum centers are located

Racial conflicts might become a highly dangerous phenomenon with possible serious social consequences for the Czech Republic. Indeed, unlike in other western developed democracies, there is no continuous, historic experience of long-term coexistence between racially and ethnically different communities. Until now, the manifestation of right wing extremism, associated mainly with young people, has been limited to small groups and has not spread through the population in a way that could destabilise public safety in any of the Czech regions (Drbohlav 2001)⁸¹.

The CVVM survey maps situations in which a grudge is held against other persons of a different national/ethnic and racial background (tables 41 and 42). The picture proves that numbers of those “suffering from a given national/ethnic grudge” are rather marginal. Furthermore, the picture is very stable over time. In fact, no significant changes have so far been recorded. Numbers in relation to those who felt a grudge against others based on their different racial background are slightly higher, however, they have been decreasing in a positive direction over time.

Table 41. Grudge against other persons with different national/ethnic background, the Czech Republic, 1993–2000

Grudge/ year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Often	6	3	3	3	2	2	3	1
Sometimes	16	20	19	18	14	14	15	11
Never	64	64	66	68	74	74	73	77
Does not remember	14	13	12	11	10	10	9	11

Source: *K národnostní 2001*

Table 42. Grudge against other persons with different racial background, the Czech Republic, 1993–2000

Grudge/ year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Often	10	9	7	6	5	4	6	3
Sometimes	24	25	22	25	19	19	21	18
Never	53	55	61	58	66	68	65	68
Does not remember	13	11	10	11	10	9	8	11

Source: *K národnostní 2001*

Representatives of the Roma ethnic community are the most frequent target for ethnic and racial intolerance in the Czech Republic (74% of all cases – *K národnostní 2001*; Danielová 2002) and the most frequent victims of racially motivated acts of violence (66% of all the cases – Štěchová 2001 – according to Danielová 2002).

Between 1997 and 2000 there were 187, 259, 353 and 358, respectively, criminal offences committed and, at the same time, classified as racially motivated in the Czech Republic. When combining data for the last two years (1999-2000), the propagation of racism (40%)

⁸¹ The skinhead movement - responsible for about 23% of racially motivated criminal offences (Danielová 2002) - had about 6,200 members in the Czech Republic in 2000 (Danielová 2002). This is not a negligible number

is followed by physical attacks (34%) and verbal attacks (26%) (Danielová 2002). Evaluating development over time is difficult because it is hard to tell whether criminal offences have increased or the police have begun implementing new monitoring methods and taking a more consistent approach to crime. When again working with data for 1999-2000, Prague, North Moravia and North Bohemia regions dominated in terms of racially motivated criminal offences (in absolute terms). However, when looking at relative data (per 10,000 inhabitants between the ages of 15-59), Prague, North Bohemia and Western Bohemia become the most important.

Thus, when explaining (by the Czech districts) what is behind racially motivated criminal offences (1999-2000), the following characteristics with respective correlations appeared: the divorce rate ($r = 0.42$), the urban environment (inter alia, with its anonymity) ($r = 0.37$), voters of the Association for the Republic - Republican Party of the Czech Republic⁸² ($r = 0.31$), the unemployment rate ($r = 0.29$), the criminality rate ($r = 0.27$), the share of Roma population ($r = 0.26$), gains coming from taxes ($r = 0.23$) and, in the opposite direction - the share of believers ($r = -0.34$) (see more in Danielová 2002). Danielová (2002) illustrated that a high and direct correlation between racially motivated criminal offences and the percentage of foreigners (by Czech district) does not exist at all.⁸³ Immigrants in the Czech Republic become victims of racially motivated criminal offences to a much lesser extent than “domestic” Romas. Thus, the racially driven grudge does not relate to the concentration of legal immigrants (Danielová 2002). However, when designing a new, more complex characteristic (where the support for the Association for the Republic - Republican Party of the Czech Republic and racially motivated criminal offences are combined - as a dependent variable (in relative terms - per 10,000 inhabitants in an age category between 15 and 59) and juxtaposing it with various independent variables, a correlation (albeit not a strong one) with the share of immigrants from Asia and Africa is confirmed. Thus, the importance of “cultural/ethnic distance” has been proven.

When searching for better and more objective publication of migration issues, interviewee No. 9 points out that the whole non-governmental sector working in this field is rather weak, and organizations compete rather than cooperate with each other. In this regard, No. 14 criticises journalists for their rather negative (not objective) reflections of these issues (see also No. 15, No. 18, No. 8, No. 3). However, she feels there will be some improvements in this field over time as well.

4.6. Conclusions

- Immigration, especially economically-driven, helps propel motors of transformation processes mainly in the most important urban poles of development and this is the most important impact of immigrants upon the Czech society. In regard to economic migrants, it has been confirmed that not only “poles of economic development,” but also “compatriots’ nets” (with their supportive role) have been important factors in attracting immigrants to and within the Czech Republic.

⁸² Just for this Party (it did not reach the threshold of 5% votes in the Parliamentary elections of June 1998 and, therefore, since then its representatives have not sit on the Parliament) intolerance to racially and nationally different groups is a key program principle

⁸³ However, irregular immigrants were not, and could not, be taken into account

- Ethnic immigrant groups, in accordance with their own strategies, have found specific niches on the Czech labour market, thereby reshaping its previous contours. Three immigrant groups are involved in this process above all: Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Chinese.
- As in other developed immigration countries, the presence of economic immigrants in the Czech Republic brings with it both pros and cons for the country and for the immigrants themselves (in particular, the exploitation of immigrants is omnipresent). However, due to the significant lack of data in Czech statistics, the economic impact of the immigration upon the Czech society cannot be properly identified, analysed and understood at this time. Concerning immigration vis-à-vis cultural contributions, demographic changes, changes in the social structure and the like in the Czech Republic, immigrants have no nation-wide influence on these issues, only partially on the local level.
- The Czech population is xenophobic (its intensity differs according to given “structural” parameters – mainly socio-demographic, economic and geographical). However, the relationship is not “linear” in its character; when comparing the beginning of the 1990s with the beginning of the 2000s, the overall perception of selected individual ethnic immigrant groups among the Czech public has become more positive.
- Whereas Slovaks are, out of the selected ethnic groups, by far the most popular for the Czech majority (followed by Poles, Vietnamese and citizens of the former Soviet Union), citizens of the Balkans and especially Roma belong to the most unpopular ones. On the whole, the popularity of individual ethnic groups vis-à-vis the Czech population has not changed too much over time.
- Prejudice against the Roma ethnic group is a persistently recurring attitude.
- Nevertheless, the manifestation of right wing extremism, associated mainly with young people, has been limited to small groups and has not spread throughout the population in a way that could destabilise public safety in any of the Czech regions.

5. Migration policy, legislation and procedures

– the present situation and planned migration management strategy

Until recently, Czech migration policies and practices have suffered from some weaknesses (see e.g. Drbohlav 2003a, b). First, the national immigration policy has no clear objectives, except: 1) to join western democratic structures (especially the EU) and thereby harmonize international migration policies and practices with those in the West (Nevertheless, *interviewee No. 9 mentions that the EU has not been “stabilised” and is still searching for its “absolute values;” No. 15 expressed a similar opinion. No. 6 notes that the EU common policy is to be designed by 2004, and thus far it has not been clear and agreed upon what that policy is to be*); 2) to combat illegal immigration. However, a general conception of illegal migration is lacking, as well as the willingness, ability and means to combat it.

Approaches to international migration have been implemented, with only a few exceptions,⁸⁴ from a defensive perspective; however, the Czech Republic's interest in joining western democratic structures has complicated the matter, as the country's approach to immigration is also influenced by its geopolitical interests. “At least until 1999, the policy has been mainly concerned with ad hoc measures within a more or less static model. Unambiguously, passive attitudes prevailed over active ones. No general goals were defined, let alone specific preferences made regarding economic, demographic, cultural or social diversity. For example, many economic and, in fact, all demographic, cultural and geographic aspects were ignored. In so doing, a rather negative perception of the international migration issue is obvious; its positive effects have been more or less ignored or not recognised. Discussing and publicising the migration issue in general, and that of a foreign labour force in particular, was rare, reflecting an absence of any systematic activity in this field. The Government and the Parliament - in many respects the key bodies to create and implement policy - had other priorities on the agenda. As a corollary, the existing migration legislation was not pliant. The whole process of change in this field (new laws, amendments) stagnated ...” (Drbohlav 2003b). To summarize, no coherent and mutually complementary policies with regard to immigration were practiced.

Nevertheless, since 1999 some very positive developments regarding international migration and immigrants' integration have occurred. Firstly, new migratory legislation has been adopted. This, to some extent, enabled “migratory theory and practice” to be harmonised within a domestic institutional, administrative network and toward the EU. In short, the main goal was to strengthen migration control according to the EU standards and requirements. The twin new Acts: Act No. 326/1999 Coll. on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic (Aliens Act) and Act No. 325/1999 Coll. on Asylum (Asylum Act) entered into effect in January 2000. They have in common that they represent a very detailed set of rules aimed at regulating all aspects of migration and asylum procedures for the stay of foreigners, asylum seekers and recognised refugees on the territory of the state, which have made this legislation a more

⁸⁴ See below the state integration programme above all

concentrated and unified whole. Since then, several new amendments have been adopted to make the both Acts even better (e.g. Drbohlav 2003a). It is noteworthy that the Aliens Act gives precedence to international treaties regulating the stay of third country nationals on the Czech territory over its own provisions. Further, certain issues closely related to migration itself are governed by specific laws, including, most importantly, access by third country nationals to employment and independent gainful activities⁸⁵. Recently, the relevant laws have been amended with respect to harmonizing them with the EU regulations, and they will continue to be amended in this manner. However, almost all of the obligations of the EU Acquis in the migration sphere have been fulfilled. In April 1992, it was stated within the Migration Module, “Phare Horizontal Programme Migration, Visa and external Border Control Management” – “Analysis Grid for: The Czech Republic” that “despite the encouraging progress, there are still some important gaps with regard to the legal framework, the institutional set-up and the administrative practice in the Czech Republic” (see more in Migration 2002). Between April 2002 and summer 2003, more steps toward fully harmonizing the whole Czech “migratory sphere” with that in the EU were accomplished. When taking into account all the transformation processes in the migration field that the country has successfully gone through, the situation is rather positive.

In this context, interviewee No. 11 points out that these changes pose specific problems because foreigners cannot adjust very quickly to new rules and regulations. Furthermore, No. 18 highlights that good “theoretical (legislation)” is not enough; even more important is to implement the given policies in practice. No. 5 predicts that internal controls will probably be abolished in EU states (as follows from the “Schengen Agreement”) in 2006. No. 7 states that currently, the Czech Republic negotiates at a bilateral level in order to fully harmonise with EU a list of countries with which to have a visa free regime. It will be done by the day of the accession.

Interviewee No. 4 estimates it will take between 1.5 to 3 years to harmonise EU migration policies and, consequently, to adjust the Czech one to the EU “global” one.

Other major changes and, to a large extent, improvements compared to former laws include a new complex visa regime that contains provisions for the issuance, validity and type of visas. Those third country nationals who intend to come to the Czech Republic for a specific purpose, such as employment, must first obtain a corresponding visa in their country of origin through Czech embassies or consular offices. Accordingly, new formal statuses for a stay in the country have been created and it is mandatory for anyone who is to operate in the country under the umbrella of a long-term visa to simultaneously also obtain a work permit or a trade license. In sum, just as in the EU countries, external controls have been strengthened.

There are other activities that are worth mentioning. The Ministry of the Interior, through its Department for Asylum and Migration Policy (formerly the Department for Refugees and Integration of Foreigners), took the initiative to conceptualize and systematize the whole issue of migration. For example, a new ministerial advisory

⁸⁵ See Act No. 1/1991 Coll., as amended, On Employment and No. 455/1991 Coll., as amended, Trade Licensing, above all

commission (composed of migration experts/representatives of other relevant ministries, selected state bodies, regional or local policy makers, NGOs and independent research/scientific circles) has been established. In collaboration with this Commission, the Department has worked out a "Concept of immigration integration policy." This document has become a basic policy pillar defining the policy and means through which activities in the field of international migration/immigrants' integration will be realised.⁸⁶ A slight, nevertheless quite obvious, positive shift from rather "defensive interests" (touching migrant "flows" above all) toward social and cultural aspects of migration and integration (touching mainly immigrant "stocks") is apparent. (*Interviewee No. 1 sees a positive shift in the fact that now the Czech bureaucratic networks do not create many obstacles when dealing with immigrants*). An important initiative has also come from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In line with demographic parameters and the whole situation on the Czech labour market and, indeed, with what is going on in Western Europe (e.g. German or the UK activities), they have brought in a "Proposal for Active Selection of Skilled Foreign Workers" (see below). Regarding scientific/research activities, especially since 2000, a fairly significant number of studies on international migration movements in the Czech Republic and immigrants' integration into Czech society have been implemented.

However, interviewee No. 1 points out some current shortcomings. He argues that there is still a very unhealthy "individualistic approach," hammered out by respective ministries responsible for international migration issues/sub issues. No. 16 emphasises that foreigners are generally not intensively included in designing the migration policy in a broad sense of the word - she blames the state since there are not enough public debates around the issue and the administration does not function as a "service." No. 5 calls for foreigners' immigration and integration from pragmatic reasons - to improve demographic parameters of the country. No. 2 stipulates that so far the impact of the immigration upon demographic structures in the Czech Republic has been rather marginal.

5.1. Admission

Acceptable/unacceptable travel documents

Czech legislation clearly stipulates what particular documents (including valid passports, visas, if necessary, and the like) must be ready when entering the country. Since many would-be foreign visitors (immigrants or transit migrants) to the country (or those who have already been in the country) do not meet given demands in order for them to qualify for obtaining these visas (or renewing them), changing, forging, and falsifying travel documents⁸⁷ is a common practice. Nevertheless, this is a well-known and worldwide phenomenon. For example, during 2002, out of 14,741 persons who were caught when illegally trying to cross the state border, 485 used documents that were not in order. It was the lowest number since 1994 when officials began to document the

⁸⁶ For instance, regarding research in the migration field, the concept assumes that significantly more financial support (coming from the state budget) will be devoted to migration research. Furthermore, the communication/information channels between, on one hand, the Ministry of the Interior and other Ministries, and, on the other hand, the public and state administration at a local level, have in part been improved. Also, NGOs have been invited to cooperate in the given field

⁸⁷ A really wide spectrum of possibilities as to how to falsify documents, ranging from a "simple" change of a date or a photo enable one to create an entirely new passport

misuse of travel documents (Zpráva 2003). There is no doubt that due to modern technical equipment, many more foreigners in the country used false documents without being identified and punished. It is difficult to evaluate what is behind the current decrease in relation to catching those with false documents. It may correspond to an overall decrease in illegal state border crossings, to a more peaceful situation in South-East Europe, to changing models of visa policy in the Czech Republic and the EU countries, and, last but not least, to more effective border control in Europe after September 11, 2001 (Zpráva 2003). The most frequent misuse of documents concerns travel documents for the Czech Republic (Zpráva 2002b)). Passports issued between 1993 and March 2000 are especially prone to being forged/falsified because the photo can be removed without difficulty. Because the validity of some of these documents will expire as late as the beginning of 2010, there is not very much hope that the situation will improve significantly soon (Zpráva 2002b). However, better technical equipment and more frequent and consistent controls should contribute to improvements in the situation. The Czech Republic's accession to the EU will also help combat the given issue, as it will present many new opportunities and greater harmonization (including with countries outside the territory of the EU).

Interviewee No. 12 informs us about the possibility (which is now being discussed in the Parliament) to apply pre-screening at the Czech state border, a filtering process for those who are allowed to enter the country. No. 5 pinpoints the fact that many irregular migrants come to the country legally – as tourists – and become irregular immigrants after their documents have expired.

Admission for employment and for self-employment

A person is obliged to hold a work permit or a trade license at the same time as a visa for over 90 days in order to be employed or to do business in the country⁸⁸. After meeting all the demands placed upon applicants, the two documents may be issued for a maximum of 1 year.⁸⁹ After that, they can be renewed (if the purpose is still valid) several times.

The demands placed on applicants for a work permit are very different from those required by applicants for a trade licence.

⁸⁸ Of course, other related purposes can be mentioned as well

⁸⁹ Some categories of foreigners do not need to apply for visas and permits and some special preferential treatment is granted to citizens of the EU countries (see more in Drbohlav 2003a).

A specific regime also springs from signed bilateral agreements, which govern some foreigners' activities on the Czech labour market (especially employment and short-term attachments/trainees). In terms of their impact on the Czech labour market, agreements signed with Slovakia (October 29, 1992) and Ukraine (March 21, 1996) must be mentioned. The agreement with Ukraine (No. 67/1999 Coll.) expired on February 4, 2002. However, the employment of Ukrainians was governed by the Act No. 1/1991 Coll., and the agreement itself had, more or less, a declarative role. In practical terms, the procedure for how Ukrainians get a job in the Czech Republic is now the same as it was before the agreement expired. Since January 1, 1993, a citizen of Slovakia does need to ask either for a „temporary stay permit“ (a visa for over 90 days) or for a work permit in the Czech Republic (the „presidential agreement“ with „higher legal power“ of October, 29, 1992, No. 227/1993 Coll). He/she is only required to register himself/herself (i.e., neither purpose nor length of stay is set). In contrast, such advantages cannot be used reciprocally by citizens of the Czech Republic in Slovakia (see Slovak Act No. 73/1995 Coll.)

Obtaining a work permit involves a complicated procedure. Work permits are issued depending on the current labour market situation.⁹⁰ An employer has to submit a number of documents and specify details about the relevant position when asking for a foreign worker. A work permit is issued for a maximum period of one year with the option of renewal (when asking for the permit, a valid travel document, a document proving qualification or specialization in the relevant sector and, if necessary, a health certificate are required). A work permit is only valid for the specific job, employer, and area it was granted for (if only one of these „parameters“ is changed, re-application is necessary). Foreigners who work in the Czech Republic for foreign firms/companies (if these signed an agreement with their Czech partners) also have to follow this procedure. An exception to this policy exists for asylum seekers, who are allowed to be employed after a one-year official stay in the country.

In contrast, obtaining a trade license is much easier.⁹¹ Leaving aside important details (for example, how to conduct business through a personal representative - see further information in Act No. 455/1991 Coll., as amended) and some rather specific categories (like trainees and intra-corporate transferees – see Drbohlav 2003a), the following steps are necessary in order for a foreigner to be allowed to do business in the Czech Republic. He/she must fulfill several conditions: be at least 18 years old, have full legal capacity, have no criminal record and submit a document confirming that he/she owes no tax arrears to the local tax authority. This document must be issued by the pertinent tax authority unless otherwise specified. As the Act stipulates, in some cases specialization or qualification requirements have to be fulfilled. There is also an obligation to register the business activity in a business registry. However, in contrast with many developed countries, there is, for example, no need to submit and defend a detailed business plan in the Czech Republic, and no need to show that the given activity „will have a beneficial effect on employment ... or on economic development.“ There is no need to prove financial resources, no need to prove that an applicant is able to orient him/herself in a given environment (this concerns, in particular, the juridical environment), etc. (see more in Drbohlav 2003a). Moreover, there is no clear differentiation between what is „doing business“ and what is, in fact, working as a classical employee. All in all, the conditions are very liberal (including rather rare and ineffective controls) and are, in fact, often misused by foreigners (see the section on irregular immigration and illegal employment).

Although problems linked with the very liberal regime of issuing trade licenses (regarding both legislation and procedure) have been known for a long time, there appears to be no political will to change the situation. Clearly, this very liberal regime does not at all correspond to the „overcautious regime“ regarding the arrival, stay and employment of foreigners in the territory of the Czech Republic. In this regard, probably only „mandatory adjustment“ to the EU rules will bring about change.

⁹⁰ The current practice in the Czech Republic is that a foreigner (a would-be employee) can take a vacant job provided no other citizen of the Czech Republic is willing to accept it. Job centres are responsible for granting work permits

⁹¹ Trade centres are in charge of issuing trade licenses

Admission for study purposes

Act No. 111/1998 Coll., On Colleges/Universities, governs this issue. A foreigner who comes under the umbrella of a visa for a period exceeding 90 days for the purpose of study (or can be a holder of other statuses – like a permanent residence permit, a successful asylum seeker, etc.) is allowed to study free of charge at a (state, public) university under the same conditions as a Czech citizen. There are two important prerequisites – he/she must pass an entrance exam in Czech and study in the Czech language.⁹² If he/she exceeds the number of years normally given for finishing study, if he/she wants to study in a foreign language, or if he/she chooses a private university he/she is supposed to pay for it (see more in Hronková / Hradečná 2003). There are two more important entrance channels: a scholarship made possible via governmental grants within the foreign developmental aid of the Czech Republic⁹³ and scholarships via signed international agreements between the Czech Republic and other respective countries (Hronková / Hradečná 2003).

It seems that admission mechanisms regarding foreign students, and, consequently, their study in the country, do not pose serious problems. The question is whether the strong predominance of Slovak students (64% of all the students in 2001/02 – see above), quite logical due to common history and cultural patterns, is healthy vis-à-vis growing overall (and “complex”) ethnic diversification.

5.2. Stay

Family reunification

In the Czech Republic, family reunification is regulated by two separate laws (Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on Residence of Aliens in the Territory of the Czech Republic, as amended, and Act No. 325/1999 Coll., On Asylum, as amended). In fact, three different „family channels“ come into play here.

The first law clearly defines who has a right to be provided with a permanent residence permit without waiting for 10 or 8 years.⁹⁴ The condition of a previous continuous stay in the territory does not apply if the residence permit is applied for by aliens who can meet various additional demands: these are related to family reunion processes (several different possibilities, including holding the role as a guardian), to humanitarian reasons and to the foreign policy interests of the Czech Republic (Drbohlav 2003a). As a second option, family reunification is also possible on a visa for over 90 days. Within the given act it is stipulated that: „A visa for over 90 days shall be issued by the police at the request of an alien who intends to remain in the territory (of the Czech Republic) for a purpose which requires him to remain in the territory for over 90 days ... The relevant diplomatic authority shall state the purpose of the stay in the visa. The visa ... shall be valid for 365 days... or for a shorter period - until the purpose

⁹² Specific internal rules are set by individual universities

⁹³ The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is responsible for organizing this program; between 2003 and 2007, 200 scholarships a year will be reserved for foreign students

⁹⁴ Section 67 of this Act says that: „following 10 years of continuous stay in the territory with a visa for over 90 days or a visa for the purpose of temporary protection, a residence permit may be applied for by any alien“

is achieved” (more in Drbohlav 2003a). Third, the latter Act on Asylum enables family reunification as well, while defining “family” in a very strict sense of the word (more in Drbohlav 2003a). It is worth mentioning that Czech laws do not include any specific provisions regarding family reunion and related resource requirements, waiting periods, conditions of residence, or access to education and employment.

In reality, as in many other countries, “family reunification” in the Czech Republic is one of the most important channels through which immigrants arrive in the country. Regarding “permanent” immigrants, as of December 31, 2000, of 66,891 immigrants who stayed in the country with a permanent residence permit, 87% (58,229) came under the family reunification umbrella (both reunification with a foreigner and with a Czech citizen). Among “long-term” immigrants who stayed in the country with a visa for over 90 days, 9.7% (12,982) of 134,060 immigrants came to join their family members. At the very end of 2000, 35% of all legally staying foreigners in the Czech Republic came through the family reunification channel. The numbers of those who reunify with their families after gaining asylum status in the Czech Republic are rather marginal since successful applicants do not number higher than about 100 a year (see above).

In sum, it is clear that the Czech Republic takes a positive approach toward respecting the need and right of foreigners to reunite with their families. Furthermore, the principles applied in this respect have been more or less in harmony with what is typical of the EU. Nevertheless, in order to further harmonise the issue with EU reality, designing an individual law in Czech legislation that would specifically define the conditions under which family members can reunite would be worth considering. Regarding managing the family reunification process, recently, there have only been some problems in terms of procedural matters, springing from poor cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The illegal employment of third country nationals

The situation in this field has already been described and partly explained above (see particularly the sections on irregular migration, including trafficking and smuggling in human beings, irregular labour immigration and the evasion of migratory legislation, and illegal employment and exploitation). As in many other countries in the world, the problem of immigrants’ illegal employment is not being effectively dealt with (see aforementioned sections). I dare to argue that if we keep the same “complex structural platforms” and the same “mechanisms” as they function now, the issue will never be solved.⁹⁵ The only thing that can be done is to try to mitigate all of the negative impacts upon host societies and, at the same time, upon some of the involved immigrants.

⁹⁵ In particular, the following two aspects should be addressed: a) the existing and even growing disparities between developed and developing Worlds; 2) a sort of schizophrenia or hypocrisy when, on one side, host immigrant societies combat illegal immigration while, on the other side, they, in various ways and at different levels, either hide or officially support it. The reason is that although irregular immigration as a whole is detrimental to a state, in some ways and, to some extents, it can also conform to a state’s and individual’s interests (e.g. employers’ never-ending strong desire for a cheap illegal labour force in developed countries). Lastly, there is the moral/humanitarian dimension of the issue that often goes against many strict rules and regulations

In accordance with Aktuální (2001), let us pinpoint some more general suggestions that could contribute to the alleviation of the issue and all of its related problems:

- 1) Improve mutual cooperation between the individual ministries dealing with international migration issues. Police bodies, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs,⁹⁶ municipal and regional authorities, job and trade centres, trade unions, professional chambers, etc. must play an important role in such endeavor.
- 2) Accumulate better information on this subject (exchange databanks, experience, etc.).
- 3) Create more frequent, strict, and consistent controls for those foreigners who are employed or do business in the Czech Republic and those who manage and organise these activities (employers, contractors and the like), including the preparation of additional legislation that will enable people to engage in these activities more effectively.
- 4) Regarding punishment, to make more frequent use of existing legislation and regulations.
- 5) To rework the very liberal regime of issuing trade licences (change the present legislation) and make it stricter, tighter, and closer to EU policies and practices (see above).
- 6) To speed up the whole process of investigating those who break the law.
- 7) To invest money in strengthening the respective institutional networks that deal with migration (in terms of both the quantity and quality of human capital, as well as technical equipment). However, what seems to be very important and not often remembered, (see also Aktuální 2001) is the necessity of intensive cooperation with immigrants' countries of origin (especially information campaigns about what migrants can expect in the Czech Republic and well-founded projects under the international aid support of the Government of the Czech Republic).

In this context, interviewee No. 1 stresses the extremely liberal policy (and practices) enabling foreigners to do business in the country, and notes that where there are regulations, they are easily evaded. On the other hand, No. 9 mentions that an overall more liberal regime would contribute to decreasing illegal inflows. Similarly, No. 11 emphasises that, generally, strict conditions regulating access to the country stimulate a whole spectrum of illegal activities.

Marriages of convenience

Next to usual marriages, negotiated “false marriages” are used as a tool for entering the Czech Republic easily and legally,⁹⁷ as one can obtain permanent residence status by marrying a Czech citizen. Such activities also occurred during the socialist period (see the highly-acclaimed movie, “Kolja”). However, the current situation in this regard has

⁹⁶ Just this Ministry (including an inter-ministerial commission established and working within the Ministry) is responsible for co-ordinating issues of the illegal economic immigration in the country

⁹⁷ When doing surveys on Ukrainian circular labour migrants in 1995/1996 and 1999 (see more on sampling and other details in Drbohlav 1997a and Drbohlav et al. 1999), out of the whole sample, 10% respondents and 19% respondents, respectively, were offered a false marriage with a citizen of the Czech Republic during their stay in the country in order for them to legalize it

not been extensively studied, and is limited to rather scarce attempts by journalists to publicise it (e.g. this practice among the Vietnamese community in West Bohemia in the mid-1990s). What might be expected is that this phenomenon is probably not as common now as it used to be since, to some extent, legislation has means to prevent misuse of marriage (a breakdown of the marriage during a clearly defined time period leads to losing one's stay status – see also No. 4).

Residence permits and other regularization procedures

Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on Residence of Aliens in the Territory of the Czech Republic, as amended, clearly stipulates who has the right to be provided with a permanent residence permit (a relatively more secure status) without waiting for 10 or 8 years (see above and Drbohlav 1993a). As it has already been mentioned, this act also says that: „following 10 years of continuous stay in the territory with a visa for over 90 days or a visa for the purpose of temporary protection, a residence permit may be applied for by any alien“. Generally, this is a longer time frame than the five years suggested by the common EU plan (this plan has a more secure category called, „long-term residence status“). Recently, there have been some initiatives among the public and especially NGOs to put this issue on the agenda and to shorten the present waiting period. The whole topic is being discussed at present (autumn 2003).

Despite hosting considerable numbers of quasi-documented and irregular/undocumented immigrants on its territory (see more Drbohlav 2003b), regularization as an official instrument of legalizing immigrants (as it is in many developed countries) is not on the agenda in the Czech Republic. So far, this issue has never been openly discussed and publicised.

Citizenship issues

Baršová (2003) briefly and clearly summarizes the situation in the field of citizenship and its issuance in the Czech Republic. “Since the establishment of independence, Czech legislation has permanently been dealing with problems related to the split of Czechoslovakia⁹⁸. Individuals who had Czechoslovakian citizenship and, simultaneously, had lived continuously on the territory of the Czech Republic since 1992 received Czech citizenship through an amendment of the law in 1999. However, citizenship in the Czech Republic should also be granted to those, who, since the establishment of the new state, have lived in the Czech Republic only most of the time. Some of these persons only left the country for a short time and now it is rather difficult for them to obtain a permanent residence permit in the Czech Republic. As compared to neighboring countries, the Czech demands in order to obtain Czech citizenship do not correspond to either the present-day or to the European Convention on Nationality⁹⁹ (ETS No. 166). In fact, one can ask for Czech citizenship after holding a permanent residence permit for five years, which can be normally obtained only after 10 years of holding a long-term permit/renewing a visa for a stay exceeding 90 days. This means one has to wait 15 years minimum. On the other hand, the European Convention allows

⁹⁸ See, for example, Act No. 40/1993 Coll., as amended, and Act No. 193/1999 Coll

⁹⁹ It was signed in May 1999, but so far has not yet been ratified by the Czech Republic

10 years as a maximum and, in Western Europe, the waiting period is on average about 5 years. Only holders of a permanent residence permit can ask for Czech citizenship, and one has to meet very rigid economic and social criteria. Furthermore, the Czech Republic (in contrast with other countries in transformation) has left the issuance of citizenship to immigrants of the second and third generations unfinished (a *ius soli* principle), thereby maintaining more restrictive controls over this process. Such a practice is typical of many Western European countries and is also embodied in the European Convention. Foreigners born on the territory of the Czech Republic are not even able to get a permanent residence permit. Concerning the possibility of accepting the double citizenship policy, the country is still rather reserved toward this approach. Leaving aside some of the former Czechoslovakian citizens, only foreigners who ask for double citizenship after 20 years of residence in the Czech Republic can succeed.”

Although only some EU countries require no more than five years of residence in order to obtain citizenship, one can only agree with Baršová's (2003) recommendations: the Czech Republic should follow the more liberal trend characteristic of many European countries and, at least, lower the threshold of 20 years down to 10 years at most, and, also, enable persons to keep double citizenship as citizens of the EU. The number of citizenships issued in the Czech Republic each year is low, thus corresponding to what has already been mentioned. Between 1997 and 2001, 837, 1,128, 1,031, 1,059 and 1,121¹⁰⁰, respectively, foreigners were naturalised by obtaining citizenship in the Czech Republic (Zpráva 2002b).¹⁰¹

5.3. Return, detention and expulsion

Expulsion: procedures and enforcement

Since 2000, in harmony with Act No. 326/1999 Coll., as amended, the act of administrative expulsion is being executed by the Alien and Border Police. “Under section 128 of this Act, the detained foreigner, whose residence in the Czech Republic is to be terminated pursuant to a final and conclusive decision on administrative expulsion, is transported by the police to a border crossing to be expelled from the country there” (Cizinci 2003). This does not apply, however, when a foreigner appeals the decision of administrative expulsion. If this appeal is dismissed, however, the police will transport the foreigner back to the state border. In 2002, 12,700 foreigners were sentenced to an act of administrative expulsion in the territory of the state.¹⁰² The most important reason for such expulsion was breaking one's “stay status” and the most numerous ethnic group to do so was Ukrainians (see also the text above).

In the Czech Republic, there are two types of expulsion: administrative and by court of law. “Administrative” expulsion is not as severe and is not issued for criminal offences. It is a formal end of the foreigner's stay and he/she is usually forbidden to re-enter the Czech Republic for a certain period of time. In 2001, 11,064 foreigners were sentenced to administrative expulsion (47.4% were Ukrainians). Expulsion by court of law is more severe and is usually executed in connection with a criminal offence (refer to Act No. 140/1961 Coll. (Criminal Act), imposed by courts of law in criminal proceedings, and Act

¹⁰⁰ Slovaks are not included

¹⁰¹ In 2001, there were 163 Poles, 140 Romanians, 132 Bulgarians and 173 Ukrainians among the new citizens of the country (Zpráva 2002 b)

¹⁰² Between 1997 and 2002, the number oscilated between 10,000 and 22,000 (Zpráva 2003)

No. 141/1961 Coll., on Criminal Proceedings). In 2002, 1,350 foreigners were sentenced to expulsion by the court.¹⁰³ Ukrainians again predominated, followed by Slovaks (Cizinci 2003).

There are several problems related to expulsion. Firstly, only a very limited number of those who are sentenced to administrative expulsion are really expelled from the country (12% in 2002); others are only labelled as such on their documents and, instead of leaving the country, they continue to operate there or try and illegally reach the West. Secondly, once detained, many foreigners avoid expulsion by asking for asylum. Despite the fact that their application is usually not well-founded, it must go through the whole procedure of investigating an asylum case. Through this procedure, the foreigner buys time and often disappears from the asylum centre (see also text above) after which he continues to work illegally in the country or to head for Germany or Austria. In sum, the effectiveness of the expulsion procedure is, in practice, rather small.

Interviewee No. 4 states that, for example, when an Ukrainian is sent away from the Czech Republic for over-extending his/her stay, he/she only faces one sort of punishment at the border: a fine of 5,000 Czech crowns for “exceeding a tourist visa.”

Pre-expulsion detention and other forms of detention of migrants

Foreigners who were caught on the territory of the Czech Republic for breaking their “stay status” are sentenced to an act of administrative expulsion (see above) and are placed in special detention centres for foreigners. Out of the current 5 centres, the first one began functioning in November 1998 (Bálková), while the newest one (Bělá – specializing in taking care of families – mothers with their children) was established in July 2002. As of the very end of 2002, the capacity of all the centres was 719 beds. 699 foreigners (of those, 438 were asylum seekers) were in residence there at that time. Between November 1998 and 2002, altogether 18,475 foreigners were processed through the detention centers. 17,827 of them were released, whilst, until the change of the legislation in February 2002¹⁰⁴, 10,362 left for asylum centres. 4,894 were expelled from the country and 246 others were “readmitted” under respective agreements with neighboring countries.

What are the problems? In fact, many of the foreigners, often those without any documents, enter the asylum procedure in these centres. After a period of 180 days has elapsed, during which it is mandatory to stay in detention centers, these foreigners are relocated to asylum centers or are allowed to wait for a final decision from them. Those who do not enter the asylum procedure are “labelled as unwanted” and have to leave the country. In both cases, the result is that despite clearly misusing the asylum procedure and even being punished for breaking laws, the state is not able to expulse them. Thus, many of these immigrants still stay in the country as undocumented foreigners. Furthermore, the police are not able to find out the identity of many of the asylum seekers in detention centers. Hence, they stay there for a long time, blocking the

¹⁰³ Between 1997 and 2002, the number oscilated between 700 and 1,500

¹⁰⁴ Act No. 325/1999 Coll., and 283/1991 amended and changed by Act No. 2/2002 Coll.

capacity of the centres. Logically, due to language barriers for some ethnic groups (a lack of good translators), immigrants strongly protest against the whole regime and procedures (this situation mainly concerns Chinese). Living conditions in these centers are rather harsh, which has also been mentioned by several NGOs. In this context, it is a good idea to place mothers with their children in a special center that can meet some of their specific needs.

To summarize, it is quite clear that one of the main goals for improving the whole situation in the migration field in the Czech Republic is to expel from the country those who have already been identified as unwelcome. On a very general level, one might also find a remedy through:

- 1) becoming more concerned about this situation in all political and administrative structures - and at all hierarchical levels,
- 2) becoming more cooperative - both internally and internationally,
- 3) becoming more competent, consistent - not only in "theory," but mainly "in practice" - and stern, and
- 4) investing in the necessary human capital and technical equipment.

Readmission

To some extent, one legislative solution to the problem of non permitted migrants is contained within the "cascade policy." Those migrants who are not accepted by Germany and Austria could be "cascaded" onward (often through Slovakia) to their respective countries, as it is stipulated in bilaterally signed readmission agreements. In addition to signing these agreements with all neighboring countries,¹⁰⁵ the Czech Republic has also signed them with Canada, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, France, Slovenia and Croatia. Negotiations on other agreements with Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro are under way. Currently, the design of such agreements in the Czech Republic fully corresponds to the EU model and to its respective *acquis communautaire*. However, negotiations on agreements are often a sort of a political game in which a "weaker side" conditions the signing by making some concessions in the migration field.¹⁰⁶ The readmission agreement contains three areas: accepting one's own citizens,¹⁰⁷ accepting third country citizens, and police transfers through a territory of the state (which also cover all related expenses). A migrant can be "readmitted" when caught on or near a state border without legal permission.¹⁰⁸ A person can also be readmitted from within the interior of a territory when a state officially asks for it. The given parameters (so called "key elements") can differ and depend on negotiations. However, regardless of any other conditions, it must be proven (through visas, a train ticket, evidence given by state bodies, etc.) that a person illegally stayed or transited

¹⁰⁵ Some of these agreements – like, for example, those with Austria and Poland, were signed as early as the beginning of the 1990s (in 1992 and 1993, respectively)

¹⁰⁶ For example, Ukraine and Russia condition the signing of the agreement on a free visa regime with the Czech Republic. On the other side, when signing the agreement with Germany, the Czech Republic received 60 million German marks

¹⁰⁷ Very often, it is the least problematic of all the issues

¹⁰⁸ In any agreement, spatial and time parameters are stipulated - from which zone (a distance from the border in kilometers) and until what time (in hours elapsed since detainment) a person can be readmitted. It is usually 48 hours

through the territory to which he/she is being returned.¹⁰⁹ Back to reality, readmittance is burdened with some problems, when 1) German or Austrian bodies try to readmit those who did not go through the Czech Republic; 2) troubles arise on the Czech-Slovak border - in North Moravia, springing from “human” rather than from “structural deficiencies.”

Voluntary return

Both the state (represented by bodies of the Ministries of the Interior¹¹⁰) and international organizations (namely the IOM through its Assisted Voluntary Return programme¹¹¹) organise the voluntary return of irregular migrants, rejected asylum seekers, and asylum seekers who have withdrawn their request for asylum in the Czech Republic from their countries of origin¹¹² (all the expenses are covered by the state). Such programmes are designed to alleviate the burden irregular migration poses upon the Czech authorities. Also, the IOM Office in Prague sees it as an opportunity to improve conditions for foreigners involuntarily residing in Czech territory. Thus, their programme is motivated by economic reasons as well as the desire to shorten the procedure of administrative expulsion,¹¹³ at least for foreigners who want to return back home and are willing to cooperate in this effort. The programme as such consists of counselling on voluntary return procedures, production and dissemination of information materials on voluntary return, assistance in obtaining travel documents, booking tickets, providing pocket money and assistance upon departure and, if required, upon arrival. (In reality, usually the programme's implementation can be divided into two main parts: the information campaign and the return component).

¹⁰⁹ As it has already been discussed, the statistics on persons transferred within readmission agreements reflect spatial patterns of illegal migration flows; so far, the number of “accepted persons” (from abroad) has prevailed over those who were sent back by the Czech side and accepted by another country (see above and Zpráva 2003)

¹¹⁰ The Department of Asylum and Migration Policies, The Asylum Facilities Administration, and the Directorate of the Alien and Border Police

¹¹¹ Between September 2001 and 2002, the IOM Prague assisted 648 migrants in their return to 35 countries of the world. The largest number of clients originated from countries of the former Soviet Union – such as Moldova, Armenia, or Georgia

¹¹² Many migrants were caught up in a vicious cycle of detention centers and refugee facilities without any hope of changing their status. Many of them have been denied asylum or have stopped the asylum procedure. Sometimes, they belonged to the group of so-called “stranded migrants,” or have been taken to the territory of the Czech Republic as victims of the trafficking within the labour force or other forms of organized crime. These people often express their desire to return to their country of origin. Among these people are also those who were originally heading further to the West or those who were returned within the framework of readmission agreements from neighbouring countries (see part on readmissions). Many of them failed to hold valid travel documents and, due to various technical reasons, were unable to obtain them by themselves. The technical problems often resulted from the fact that their embassies or consular offices are located outside the territory of the Czech Republic, usually in some of the EU countries (Bonn, Vienna, Paris). Furthermore, in pursuance of the Schengen Agreement, these people are not able to visit their consular offices at all. Another technical problem in terms of their independent participation in obtaining the substitute document is the fact that these people have no permanent residential address in which to direct their personal correspondence. They are in a situation in which a legal solution is difficult to find. Some try to find a solution by breaking the law (they stay in the country as undocumented migrants), participating in crimes against property, or attempting to cross an international border illegally. Finally, some of them seek asylum

¹¹³ The procedure of administrative expulsion concerns only the cases of administrative violations of law, not criminal violations

For example, during its campaign, the IOM Prague designed an information flyer (translated into 16 languages) that provided basic information about the possibility of Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) to the country of origin and the application form, which serves as the statutory declaration of the migrant's interest to return to his/her country of origin. This part of the information campaign is targeted to a migrant in order to inform him/her of the possibility to return home. At the same time, the preparation of the flyer was a preparatory phase for the AVR programme's implementation. The signed declaration is an essential condition for AVR, and every potential beneficiary of the AVR must read it through and voluntarily sign and fill it in.

Regarding problems related to voluntary repatriation, one might mention overloaded detention centers and the fact that the working relationship between the IOM and The Asylum Facilities Administration (of the Ministry of the Interior) is sometimes not cooperative, but competitive.

5.4. Other area matters

Illegal/irregular migration, including trafficking/smuggling in human beings¹¹⁴

Illegal or irregular migration, namely trafficking and smuggling in human beings (including women and children) is a well-known, worldwide and long-lasting phenomenon. Transforming CEE countries, including the Czech Republic, have been experiencing it more intensively since the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Interviewee No. 16 mentions that it is correct to understand this phenomenon in a broader context - not only women and prostitution, but also children and men - especially when taking into account forced labour and other related exploitations. (See also No. 5, who mentions the Convention on this issue that the country has signed).

In this context, the Czech Republic has been functioning as both an important source country, for trafficking in women in particular, and as a transit zone for those who go from the „East“ and head to the traditional „West.“ (This last category includes women and children active in the sex-business, as well as migrants who are „only“ eager to reach the western, rich, and democratic World as quickly as possible.)¹¹⁵ The desire for better living conditions¹¹⁶ and the possibilities that exist on the „free market“ often lure people into „mafia structures.“ These structures have proven abilities to get migrants to their destinations; however, it can cost migrants their freedom, dignity, health, and even lives (see more above in the section on irregular migration, including trafficking and smuggling in human beings).

For example, *interviewee No. 16 informs us that there are well-known illegal routes to the Czech Republic from Moscow (by plane), then in buses, trucks, and on foot across the „green line“ from the South and now through Poland. This route mainly concerns asylum-seekers from Chechnya.*

Generally, combating illegal migration is a difficult task still waiting for more significant results. Let us elaborate more on trafficking/smuggling in women in the Czech Republic,

¹¹⁴ Text below is based on an analysis done by the Ministry of the Interior; for more specific legal aspects, see e.g. Wohlgemuth 2003

¹¹⁵ See a typology: Economic migrants heading for the Czech Republic, irregular migrants transiting westward, representatives of „individual tourism,“ and female asylum seekers in the Czech Republic

¹¹⁶ In the case of prostitution, a specific gender position, the „devaluing a role of women in general“ in their mother countries and the demand for „services“ in destination countries come into play

a topic that is worth pinpointing because it is burdened significant problems. Generally, it is very difficult to analyse it and so far, we have very little information in this field.

Besides Czech women staying and/or operating illegally abroad (mainly in Western Europe), the country became a destination for many women from other states, namely from Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, China, and Vietnam. These women often work as prostitutes throughout the country, particularly in big cities and in the west, where the Czech Republic borders on Germany and Austria (along a well-known highway, E55).

In this context, interviewees No. 9 and No. 14 speak even about prostitutes among female asylum seekers in asylum centers. No. 15 mentions the existence of the whole gray economic zone in border areas (bars, casinos, brothels) that “only” reacts to the demands of clientele who arrive mainly from Germany and Austria.

The whole issue of prostitution is very complicated. Female migrants often arrive in a new and very different country not very well informed; therefore, they are vulnerable to being misused, abused, exploited, and exposed to physical and moral terrors. Trafficking/smuggling in women is very often linked with other criminal activities (regarding routes, methods, etc.), such as crossing borders illegally, smuggling guns and drugs, “modern slavery,” and forced prostitution. Once falling into the mafia’s trap, women’s human rights are permanently violated. Various criminal activities touch the country of origin, transit and destination. The most complicated situation is connected with the women themselves as soon as their position changes from „voluntary“ (when the woman had no idea what sort of job is waiting for her) to „mandatory co-operation.“¹¹⁷ Also, some women become active elements in spreading mafia and criminal activities. Russian-speaking groups and structures (including naturalised foreigners) are the most involved in organizing the sex-business in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic acknowledges its responsibility in the field of combating trafficking/smuggling in human beings. Two documents are considered to be of high priority in this regard: the general resolution adopted by the Council of the European Union on July 19, 2002, and a legislative document adopted by the European Commission on February 11, 2002.

Besides the necessity of finding new basic and strategic goals (including possible legislative changes) and improving international co-operation in this area, one could define other priorities for combating trafficking/smuggling in human beings:

- 1) The general protection of victims, even if they themselves have violated the law.
- 2) Finding ways to convince a victim that her co-operation with the Czech Police can help, rather than harm, her.
- 3) To make use of anonymous testimony much more frequently when combating organisers of trafficking activities (current laws enable this procedure).
- 4) To convince a victim that the best option for her is a voluntary return to her mother country where she can begin a new life, or to utilise the assistance of NGOs in starting

¹¹⁷ In 2001, one could get a foreign prostitute – as a new labour force – for 3,000 EUROs (internal materials of the Ministry of the Interior)

a new life in the Czech Republic (they help with housing, basic needs, etc.). In addition, short-term assistance, which can be offered by officially by police bodies to protect a victim (for at least 60 days) should be used more often.

- 5) To abolish the current situation in which prostitution is „silently tolerated.“ (*See also opinions given by interviewee No. 12.*) According to legislation, prostitution is not a criminal offence; in fact, this entire matter is not arranged clearly or very well mapped out. It is necessary to regulate, to pass new legislation on prostitution, and thus to get prostitution under control. (Czech law does not define trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. Therefore, it does not consider a woman sold in the Czech Republic as a victim of trafficking in human beings. Such a criminal offence is punished as „pandering“). One other piece of legislation should be changed: according to the current law, a company/firm cannot be punished if it is instrumental in trafficking (e.g., conducting false advertising campaigns, etc.).

Vulnerable groups: Unaccompanied minors

As Gladišová (2003) mentions, the Czech Republic is an important transit zone for migration flows in an East to West direction. About 1,200 unaccompanied minors¹¹⁸ applied for asylum in the Czech Republic between 1998 and 2001 (from 200 to 350 a year).¹¹⁹ In recent years, these minors have mainly been boys between the ages of 15 and 17 coming from countries such as India, Armenia, Georgia, China, Ukraine, Moldova, and Iraq (Novák 2003). They do not travel completely unaccompanied; they usually come in groups with other migrants from the same ethnic community, or with other children and siblings. About 75% of these unaccompanied minors disappear from the asylum centres of the Ministry of Interior or from other facilities managed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, such as children's houses or diagnostic centres for children and youth (between 1998 and 2002, Gladišová 2003, Novák 2003)¹²⁰. Children may have traveled to Europe to escape conditions of serious deprivation. Most of them come from family structures that are broken or have a significant level of internal conflict as a consequence of high unemployment, low income, social insecurity, etc. The children may be on their way to other countries as a result of fear of persecution, discrimination against minorities, or lack of protection due to human rights violations, civil or religious wars, armed conflicts or other disturbances in their own country. The Czech authorities are concerned about these affairs and there are well-founded fears that these children may be smuggled to Western European countries. Some of them could become victims of trafficking in human beings for different purposes, such as forced labour or slave-like practices, criminal activities and sexual exploitation.

¹¹⁸ “According to the Asylum Act, § 89, if the asylum seeker is under 18 years old and is on the Czech territory without parents or other legal or customary caregivers, the court must appoint a guardian for his/her stay. The rules for the guardianship are specified in the Family Act. The Department of Social-Legal Protection of Children, subordinate to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, may act as the guardian for stay in case there is no other convenient person, for example a distant relative of the unaccompanied minors. Unaccompanied minors seeking asylum are usually placed in the facilities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport diagnostic centres or a children's home (if they are under 15) on the basis of the decision of the courts” (Gladišová 2003)

¹¹⁹ The asylum seeker channel is the only one within which the unaccompanied minors are systematically dealt with in the Czech Republic. It means that there are considerable gaps in the services dedicated to other unaccompanied minors

¹²⁰ Those who stay and do not disappear can mostly be 1) repatriated, or 2) integrated into the Czech majority society as refugees (thereby also having an opportunity to enter the state integration program provided that they reach 18 years) or holders of a permanent residence permit

To sum up, besides other relevant matters,¹²¹ there are two main issues in desperate need of improvement: 1) housing, special social and psychological care, and educational activities adjusted to the specific needs of these children; 2) the prevention of child abuse while simultaneously launching a programme to record children's potential movements and activities.

As for point 1, asylum centres are not the most appropriate facilities for unaccompanied children, despite all efforts to create convenient living conditions through the establishment of special protection zones and the organization of educational and leisure-time activities, such as art workshops and cultural and sport events. According to the Czech Governmental Decision of 2001, new specialized centres for unaccompanied minors should, and will, be created. These centres will provide services more suited to their needs, such as psychosocial care, adaptation programmes that promote the healthy psychological and physical development of the child, individual programmes for children who have undergone psychological trauma, and educational courses. The staff of these centres will be trained properly and are expected to have the necessary language skills. The opening of the first centre is expected in 2003 (Gladišová 2003, Novák 2003).

As for the point 2, the main reason for children's disappearances probably cannot be solved right now. The reason is that many of these children still see the Czech Republic as a transit country. It is believed that they go into EU countries to join family members who arrived earlier (therefore, the existence of ethnic enclaves can play an important role), or that they search for better and more favorable welfare systems where they know their stay will be more convenient. However, there are also some fears that some of them may be sold to traffickers in human beings or be used for various criminal activities (children are very vulnerable to a high degree of exploitation in the hands of third parties). Regarding the latter issue, the Czech Republic should try to improve records of unaccompanied minors' movements and activities, thereby having more chances to prevent any sort of child abuse.

Asylum and other forms of humanitarian protection

The asylum issue has, in various contexts, been touched many times above. Therefore, let us mention two statuses and some problems connected with their application. Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on Residence of Aliens in the Territory of the Czech Republic, as amended, clearly stipulates two specific statuses within a temporary stay – 1) a visa for a stay exceeding 90 days for the purpose of temporary refuge and 2) a visa for a stay exceeding 90 days for the purpose of a “tolerance stay”/“leave to remain” status. The first stay is provided for a maximum of 360 days, with the opportunity to renew it many times (providing the original purpose is still valid). The “tolerance stay” can spring from both the “Act on Residence of Aliens” (an immigrant is given this status because he/she cannot be expelled back to the mother state if his/her life could be threatened there) and the Asylum Act (an immigrant can be given this status when he/she is in the final stage of the asylum procedure: appealing against the judgment of a regional court refusing his/her asylum). The key issue is that according to the current legislation, a

¹²¹ For example, some problems relating to the appointment of guardians or to the accessibility of health insurance (see Gladišová 2003)

person with “tolerance stay” status has no economic and social rights, he/she is not allowed to work while, at the same time, has no chance (with really very limited exceptions) to be financially supported through any state social programmes. Obviously, it leads to their social exclusion and complex marginalization within society (Čižinský / Pořízek 2003). It stimulates them to enter the “gray/black labour market.” In this context, the situation for holders of a temporary protection status is much better. According to the current legislation, in terms of employment and study their situation is identical to the situation of foreigners as holders of permanent residence permits (Čižinský / Pořízek 2003). However, one must say that the state is aware of these problems and they are dealing with this situation through legislative changes at present (autumn 2003).

National minorities and related issues

Analyzing the issue of national minorities is not relevant to the topic of this study. Representatives of national minorities in the Czech Republic are those citizens of the Czech Republic who identify themselves with other than Czech/Moravian/Silesian ethnicity. They, or their ancestors, came to the country a long time ago (see also the first chapter on historical patterns) and they are, to a large extent, very well adapted and integrated into the majority society (about 6% of the whole population - see more in Zpráva 2002a). However, two aspects are worth mentioning.

Firstly, the Roma ethnic group represents one exception in which one can trace a strong and direct relationship between current international migration movements and “settled compatriots”. *As interviewee No. 17 mentions, the Czech Republic has always been for Slovak Romas, at least after the Second World War, a destination rather than transit country.* According to unofficial data, some 20,000 “new Roma” immigrants of Slovak citizenship currently live in the Czech Republic, mainly with their “Czech relatives” (Lidové 2003). (Official data on migration by ethnic/national background do not exist because this information is not collected in Czech statistics¹²²). *(However, as No. 17 pinpoints, there is only one Roma community in the Czech Republic – the “Slovak one,” as the Czech one disappeared as a result of the Second World War.)* It seems that currently the Roma inflow from Slovakia to the Czech Republic is continuing,¹²³ as Slovak Romas have recently been cut off from more beneficial social subsidies in their mother country (now a maximum of 10,500 Slovak crowns per a family – see also No. 17). They think their situation in the Czech Republic will be more favorable. *Interviewee No. 17 states that the Romas’ migration to the Czech Republic is mainly economically-driven. Most of these Romas do not settle in the country, but instead go back to Slovakia after they have made some money. No. 12 also mentions that the whole problem is more*

¹²² However, even the statistics that provide such data (the census) is, in relation to Romas, not reliable at all. Whereas according to the latest census (from March 1, 2001), 11,716 Romas stayed in the country, estimates give a more realistic picture of 150,000-300,000 (Zpráva 2002a)

¹²³ There is also a rather limited migration of “Czech Romas” from the Czech Republic (particularly via the asylum seeker status) further to the West (recently mainly to the United Kingdom). Their reasons are similar to those that expel Romas from Slovakia – a mixture of the xenophobia of the local population and the desire to improve their living standard. *As interviewee No. 6 highlights, the Roma in the Czech Republic know conditions in Finland, Norway, Belgium and the United Kingdom pretty well. Their migration has been a sort of a seasonal labour/holiday stay. Those who went were representatives of the Roma “middle class,” and not the poorest (No. 5). Currently this outflow is declining. However, it may rise again in the future, No. 5 adds*

complex and, inter alia, Romas often lose housing in Slovakia (due to the privatization process) and have to escape from usury, attacks by skinheads, etc. (see No. 14 and No. 17). No. 15 adds that the integration of Romas into the Czech society is a long and time-consuming process. Interviewee No. 26 argues that the Roma question in the Czech Republic cannot be solved until the social structure of the Roma population in the country changes – now there are only mafia-like structures and there is no “normal” middle class. R 9 points out there are huge cultural differences between the Czech majority population and Romas. Their integration is made very difficult, if even possible. The same is stressed by No. 10 who also talks about the Roma issue as a totally different “story” compared to that of other ethnic groups in the Czech Republic. No. 12 mentions that there is no objective information about Romas; instead, negative information prevails. No. 17 stresses that Romas do not compete with Czechs on the labour market. What may be problematic is their huge concentration in one spot and tensions with local populations over their different cultural habits and customs. No. 6 adds that two problems burden the issue above all – the Slovak side does not cooperate too much with the Czech one, and it is mainly the Romas at the very bottom of the social ladder (the poorest) who therefore have the most problems when integrating into Czech society. Furthermore, what influences the situation is that Slovakia is considered to be a safe country (No. 2). Respondent No. 26 points out that there are two main barriers erected against successful integration attempts: the “internal one” (cultural specificities of the Roma community), and the “external one” (existing discrimination against Romas, mainly in education and employment fields).

Secondly, it seems that the relationships between some other “old” and “new” immigrants (and, as the case may be, between their associations) in the Czech Republic may be far from close, not to mention perfect. One can give an example of two: “old” versus “new” Ukrainian groups and associations. *(This example is clearly expressed by No. 10). Other respondents mention similar problems (mutual relations between “old” and “new”, regardless of whether or not the “old” have already obtained Czech citizenship, are rather antagonistic) when taking into account Vietnamese – No. 1, No. 14 – and Arabs (Kurds) – No. 10).*

5.5. Conclusions

- Until recently, Czech migration policies and practices have suffered from some weaknesses. To summarize, no coherent and mutually complementary policies with regard to immigration have been practiced. Nevertheless, since 1999 some very positive developments regarding international migration and immigrants' integration have taken place. First, new migratory legislation and related practices have been adopted. Most importantly and despite some gaps, almost all of the obligations of the EU Acquis and its implementation in the migration sphere have been fulfilled.
- There are other activities launched by the state bodies that are worth mentioning: first, the Ministry of the Interior took the initiative to conceptualize and systematize the whole migratory issue. For example, a new ministerial advisory commission has been established and a “Concept of immigration integration policy” has been worked out. An important initiative has also come from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs while bringing in a new programme: “Proposal for Active Selection of Skilled Foreign Workers”.

- It has been proven that in many spheres, the current Czech Republic has a migratory reality similar to other developed democracies and tackles the same sorts of migratory problems. Firstly, one can mention the importance involving state bodies, NGOs and international organisations on issues like the illegal employment of third country nationals, marriages of convenience, expulsion (including its procedures and enforcement), pre-expulsion detention and other forms of detention of migrants, readmission and voluntary returns, and irregular migration (including trafficking/smuggling in human beings and vulnerable groups – mainly unaccompanied minors). Secondly, as in other developed immigration countries: 1) “family reunification” in the Czech Republic is one of the most important channels through which immigrants arrive in the country; 2) the state is not able to get rid of many foreigners without a right to stay there, are not allowed to go through, stay or work there, even though they operate there; 3) generally, combating illegal/irregular migration/immigration is not very effective.

- When analysing the given state of affairs, one paradox has appeared: while there is an obvious attempt to build a sort of “multicultural approach” toward immigration/immigrants in the Czech Republic, some aspects of both legislation and practice do not coincide with this goal. One can point out the almost interminable period immigrants must wait to get permanent residence status and citizenship. On the other hand, the very liberal policy of providing trade licenses to foreigners does not correspond with the overall overcautious regime that addresses the arrival, stay, and employment of foreigners in the territory of the Czech Republic.

- Analyzing the national minority issue is not relevant to the topic of this study (current migration and immigrants’ integration issues). In fact, only two issues are related, and these issues overlap: the Romas and immigrants’ organizational structures. Regarding the former point, The Roma question as a whole in the Czech Republic is a very difficult one and its solution is a long-term process (the topic as such goes beyond the scope of this study). As for the latter, it seems that relationship between some “old” and “new” immigrants/communities of the same origin (and, as the case may be, between their associations) in the Czech Republic is far from close, not to mention, perfect. (e.g. Ukrainians, Vietnamese, Arabs and Kurds).

6. Integration policies and practices

6.1. Particular geographic/administrative concentration of migrants

Immigrants' spatial patterns have important implications in terms of their impact upon the host society. Understanding immigrants' spatial concentration/deconcentration processes is necessary in order to apply relevant policies and practices toward them. Besides the already mentioned important role of Prague and other major cities,¹²⁴ there are other features that are worthwhile to pinpoint. When analyzing immigration on a district level, two patterns appeared in particular: Firstly,¹²⁵ there is an "East-West migratory gradient" (see above in relation to foreign economic activities) indicating the more significant role of international migration (in relative terms) in western parts of the country compared to eastern ones. The more one moves toward the west in the country, the more the migration issue becomes "visible" and important. Secondly, the immigrant ethnic groups representing neighboring countries (Slovaks, Poles, Germans, Austrians) have, besides Prague and the Central Bohemia region, a higher concentration in Czech/Moravian/Silesian districts that border on their mother countries (e.g. Čermáková 2002). The percentage of foreigners in border zones vis-à-vis the interior of the Czech Republic, when contrasted with the spatial patterns of the Czech majority, reveals essential information (table 43). Results show that in major cities (mainly Prague), the concentration of immigrants is greater than the spatial pattern of the Czech majority. In districts bordering on EU countries, their concentration is approximately equal to that characteristic of the Czech majority population. In relation to other parts of the state border zone and the interior as a whole, foreigners' concentration is not too significant vis-à-vis the Czech majority population.

Table 43. Foreigners' (holders of permanent residence permits and visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days) spatial patterns by geographical position of districts, 2000 (stock)

Districts / type	Foreigners total	Population	Foreigners	Population
		Czech Republic	(%)	Czech Republic (%)
City	75,287	2,043,328	37.5	19.9
Bordering on:	68,542	4,292,437	34.1	41.7
European Union	33,127	1,736,872	16.5	16.9
Other countries	35,415	2,555,565	17.6	24.8
Other (interior)	57,122	3,956,016	28.4	38.4
Total	200,951	10,291,781	100.0	100.0

Source: Čermáková 2002; Čermáková / Drbohlav 2002

Note: Districts where foreigners registered themselves do not have to correspond to those where they actually operate (it mainly concerns small businessmen).

¹²⁴ Also Uherek (2003), based on imperfect results (regarding reporting on foreigners) of the Census of March 1, 2001, informs us how a share of foreigners of the whole population increases when climbing up the ladder of the settlement hierarchical structure (from small villages – with less than 500 inhabitants – 0.5%, to the largest cities – with more than 100,000 inhabitants – 1.9%)

¹²⁵ Excluding Prague and its close vicinity

The index of dissimilarity shows that Vietnamese and Slovaks have the most similar spatial patterns to the Czech majority population (by district), whereas patterns related to Chinese, Russians, and Americans, especially due to their huge concentration to Prague, are very different (see table 44).

Table 44. Segregation of selected ethnic immigrant groups (the index of dissimilarity by district, vis-à-vis the Czech population), foreign-holders of permanent residence permits and visas issued for a period exceeding 90 days, 2000 (stock)

Foreigners	Index of dissimilarity
Vietnam	19.7
Slovakia	24.2
Ukraine	32.5
Germany	36.0
Poland	42.8
USA	51.1
Russia	52.2
China	73.0
Total	25.4

Source: Čermáková 2002; Čermáková / Drbohlav 2002

Note: "Conceptually, the index represents the proportion (percentage) of the minority population that would have to move in order to achieve an even distribution" (Kaplan / Holloway 1998).

In searching for immigrants' spatial concentration at a local level, one can be referred to results of the census of 2001, or Uherek (2003). Respondents mentioned that several other localities often demonstrated a very good co-existence between the majority and ethnic minority groups: No. 9 pinpoints a smaller city of Blansko with its Mongolian, Ukrainian and Slovak communities; No. 10 speaks about Arabs in Teplice; No. 12 and No. 14 about Armenians in Kuřim. No. 16 highlights that so far there has been no apparent ghettoization in the Czech Republic. No. 6 summarizes by proclaiming that foreigners go where they can find work.

6.2. Available reception assistance programmes for migrants; specific reintegration programmes and integration initiatives/best practices

An important shift toward a more multifaceted approach can be identified over time. As a matter of fact, while during the 1990s only two aspects were pinpointed and, to a limited extent, discussed – harmonizing with the EU (for geopolitical reasons) and combating illegal/irregular migration movements (for defense and security reasons) – other issues have appeared on the agenda since the late 1990s. These conversations center around two points in particular: 1) meeting the social, economic, and cultural needs of immigrants who have already been in the country and are allowed to stay there, and 2) designing a programme that would bring new immigrants who could contribute to building the country's wealth - to complement the Czech domestic labour market which is suffering severely from very low fertility rates and the aging process.

Firstly, there is the state assistance programme for those foreigners who have received asylum in the Czech Republic. A consistent, albeit limited, integration programme for specific migrant groups was launched as early as 1991. On December 20, 1991, the government of the Czech Republic formulated principles and directions regarding the integration process of refugees in the Governmental Decree No. 536. Another integration scheme of state assistance programme was brought into effect in mid-1994: „Supplementary Instruction“ (Government Decree of November 17, 1993 No. 643 and the Instruction of the Ministry of the Interior of May 27, 1994, U – 1027/94 for district authorities concerning the integration of persons granted refugee status in the Czech Republic) (see more in Drbohlav 1997b). The continued development and implementation of this programme (concentrating on housing, knowledge of the Czech language, and requalification) has recently been set out in the Government Resolution of January 22, 2003, No. 86¹²⁶.

In fact, a “four-level hierarchical structure” comes into play when the Government, the Ministry of the Interior, regional authorities, and municipal authorities are involved. The scheme (state integration programme - integration scheme) is based on the premise that newly established regions are responsible for finding possible housing¹²⁷ for refugees via their “municipalities” while respecting a quota system (fulfilled by the Government). This predetermines that, for example, out of 100 refugees who are allowed to make use of the scheme in 2003, Prague is to provide 16 and the Ústí nad Labem region only 2. (Altogether, 14,000,000 Czech crowns were allocated for these purposes in 2003¹²⁸). Housing is rented from city or municipality councils by a refugee on a year-to-year basis with the possibility of extension (the price is to follow the specificities of the given place and time). After five years, an agreement between the municipality and the participating refugee is to be signed for an unspecified time period. Since 2003, regions have been provided with funds (per year) from the Ministry of Finance, with the state contribution for housing itself amounting to 150,000 Czech crowns per refugee renting the apartment (the head of the household), plus an additional 50,000 Czech crowns for each refugee sharing the apartment with the given head of household. An additional contribution is made to the municipality for the development of its infrastructure based on the number of refugees leasing apartments. This amounts to 150,000 Czech crowns per tenant (the head of the household) and 10,000 for additional tenants.

Learning the Czech language is an inevitable part of the whole integration programme. One must pass an exam proving one’s ability to communicate in Czech in order to enter the programme and be provided with housing (with some exceptions). Teaching courses are organised by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport via selected NGOs and they are free of charge (the course length is approximately 150 hours for groups and 100 hours for individuals at a minimum, and usually for no longer than 6 months). During this period, an applicant (refugee) can stay in private housing or in an integration centre. If necessary, a refugee is to be assisted with job-requalification while being registered as unemployed at a given local/regional job center. When dealing with

¹²⁶ Basic rules governing the services that successful asylum seekers are to be provided with have firmly been incorporated into the Asylum law (No. 325/1999 Coll., as amended)

¹²⁷ However, a refugee himself/herself can search for housing, too

¹²⁸ More than 75,000,000 Czech crowns were spent between 1994 and 2002

refugees, the state supports the activities of NGOs in the following fields above all:

- 1) a programme that helps solve refugees' unemployment problems,
- 2) social and juridical counseling,
- 3) organisational help when searching for housing and, consequently, accepting it,
- 4) assistance communicating with the state administration and self-governments and
- 5) monitoring the whole integration process (see Návrh 2003).

The aforementioned model has also been used for compatriots who lived in selected remote areas or regions in jeopardy (e.g., people of Czech origin in Romania or Kazakhstan - see above) and decided to return to their country of origin. However, this resettlement programme for compatriots was terminated¹²⁹ on June 31, 2002, and thus no compatriots have arrived since 2002. A new programme for compatriots' resettlement is being prepared at present. Also, Bosnians who were staying under the temporary refugee umbrella and were suffering from severe health problems were able to make use of the programme until 2000 (slightly more than 100 persons). A resettlement programme organised by the Czechoslovakian/Czech Government for Volhynian/Chernobyl Czechs in the beginning of the 1990s was successful, but really unique (see the section on ethnic migration).

In sum, the given state integration programme, tailored particularly to successful asylum seekers, is functioning and fulfills its basic goals well. However, two potential and real shortcomings have become visible. Firstly, the programme was designed and works only for very limited numbers of foreigners (altogether 648 persons between 1994 and 2002) (see also above numbers of asylum seekers who got asylum and, hence, can enter the programme). Apparently, even under these conditions there are not enough flats offered by municipalities and respective regions and the number of persons entering the programme yearly has been diminishing (between 1999 and 2002 it was 110, 78, 47 and 44, persons, respectively – Návrh 2003). Secondly, by shifting some of the responsibilities from districts to newly established regional authorities,¹³⁰ the state integration programme has been “frozen”. Thus far in 2003, no persons have been provided with housing under the given scheme. As in other social areas dealing with the issue of immigrants' integration on the regional level, without the necessary experience and human capital it will take some time to be ready for new challenges.

Secondly, an important initiative has come from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In line with demographic parameters, with the situation on the Czech labour market and with what is going on in Western Europe (e.g. in Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom), officials have passed a “Proposal for the Active Selection of Skilled Foreign Workers.” Government Resolution No. 975 of September 26, 2001, is based on this proposal. Under this resolution, the Government approved a new, active approach to migration management and defined the fundamental conceptual principles of the

¹²⁹ See the Governmental Resolution No. 120, of February 17, 2001

¹³⁰ As of January 1, 2003 district authorities were cancelled and responsibilities for immigrants' integration fell to newly established regional authorities - see Constitutional Act No. 347/1997 Coll

active selection of qualified foreign workers („The Pilot Project for the Active Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers”¹³¹ - Government Resolution No. 720 of July 10, 2002).

„One of the decisive reasons for having an active approach to migration is the impact of the demographic development and its projection. The impact of demographic ageing on the systems of social security may only be partially resolved by the arrival of new payers with different family patterns. The requirements of the labour market for more qualified specialists will be difficult to satisfy purely through migration. Nevertheless, the arrival of young, qualified specialists from abroad, who will settle and integrate into the society, can at least partially contribute to resolving the envisaged problems. The active control of migration does not represent a new discovery. However, it has only been actively applied by a few states. The objective of the concept is to use easily controllable, simple and cheap tools for the transition from a passive reaction to existing migration, to the active management of one of the segments of the economically motivated migration. The present document describes in detail the entire pilot project and determines the fundamental characteristic features of the entire system. When preparing this project, emphasis was placed on its pilot nature, which will be accentuated especially in the first year of the project implementation, when the set-up of the new system will be tested on a small quantity and range of people. The entire system has the potential for further expansion, both in terms of numbers and in terms of the range of persons involved“ (The Pilot 2002).

The system is to be tested on immigrants from Kazakhstan, Croatia and Bulgaria and on younger, highly skilled/qualified workers in preferred professions, those with some experience in the Czech Republic, and those speaking Czech and other languages. „The Pilot Project for the Active Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers“ sets quotas for those who will be accepted during the pilot project: 600¹³² persons in 2003 and 1,400 in 2004. It is likely that after finishing the pilot project and launching the programme, no other quotas will be applied.¹³³ The Project has a potential importance for immigrants' integration. Those who come and are accepted within the Project will have a chance to obtain a permanent residence permit after a two and half-year stay (whereas under normally existing conditions it would take them 10 years). It is expected that family members will also be allowed to enjoy the same, “easier” policy. In sum, a smooth integration process into Czech society and given municipalities is envisaged regarding those who come under the umbrella of the Project. After some delay in launching the Project (because of catastrophic floods in summer 2002 and, consequently, an overall lack of financial sources), it will start in July 2003.

Only time will show whether and how the Project works. Let us only point out that such immigration alone (regardless of its “quantitative and qualitative parameters”) cannot solve the aging problems and cannot stop the population in the country from shrinking (see more in Replacement 2001; Burcin / Kučera 2002). However, it is at least a good

¹³¹ It was inspired by the existing Quebecois model

¹³² However, 300 persons will be allowed to enter the system from within the Czech Republic (reserved for those foreigners who have already been staying here)

¹³³ However, it is deemed that this recruiting system will be parallel to one that was previously implemented under the 326/1999 Act on the Stay of Aliens on the Territory of the Czech Republic – providing visas for a stay exceeding 90 days and other statuses)

initiative when starting to compete - if not on the worldwide scale, then on the European one - for foreign labour force that can help fill in the gaps on the Czech labour market (advantages of “the sooner, the better” approach).

Interviewee No. 12 also appreciates this approach. No. 6 argues that if we want to adhere to the “Lisbon criteria” (the employment rate: 70%) we have to accept foreigners, and the aforementioned programme is one of the ways to reach it.

A resettlement programme (realised in 1991-1993) for Chernobyl/Volhynia Czechs who were severely hit by the Chernobyl catastrophe was a successful, albeit unique, activity (see the section on ethnic immigration above). Since 2001, there has been a programme based on a similar philosophy of using state support to address many spheres of immigrants' lives. This programme was helping Czech compatriots in some selected remote territories to get to their “historical motherland.” In 2002 there were negotiations between respective ministries about how to design a new re-settlement model. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is responsible for handling this issue, has not yet officially submitted the proposed model for a final settlement.

Interviewee No. 10 pinpoints “ethnic evenings” organised by the NGO Counseling Centre for Integration as a perfect and successful activity putting ethnic immigrant groups together with the majority population (e.g. in the city of Ústí nad Labem). She also mentions (along with No. 12) established community centers as another good example (e.g. in Ústí nad Labem, Praha, Brno). No. 14 mentions good activities coming from the job center in Prague 5 that organises an intensive Czech course for immigrants free of charge. In sum, No. 9 points out that despite successes in the integration of foreigners in the Czech Republic and despite having a good “theory”, in practice we lack a “spirit of integration.” Interviewees No. 11 and 14 cast some doubts on the integration programme for refugees while calling for improvements (more apartments need to be made available and sooner – see also No. 3, language courses should be organised in a better way, etc.). No. 12 agrees, while recommending that officials shift the responsibility of running the programme from the state to the regional level. Though admitting some problems, No. 10 evaluates the integration programme on the whole as quite functional. No. 13 supports the more intensive involvement of representatives from given ethnic communities into the whole process of integration (e.g. via policemen, translators, attorneys, judges, members of various committees, etc. of different ethnic backgrounds). Respondent No. 15 emphasises that so far the state has had more experience with those who have “great integration potential,” and there is still lack of experience with those who have to overcome many different obstacles in their integration process. No. 3 and others call for more cooperation between the state sector, NGOs, and regional and municipal administrations. Regions, instead of districts, should become the basic pillars of integration policy. In addition to foreigners, the Czech majority population should be one of the target groups of the integration programme (to strengthen positive attitudes towards foreigners). No. 3 also mentions that the wait for a permanent residence status and citizenship for foreigners is too long. Interviewees No. 2 and No. 3 notice and appreciate that when integrating into Czech society, foreigners do not have to lose their cultural specificities. No. 24 calls for a more active role on the part of the state (active migration and integration management) and for different approaches toward individual ethnic immigrant groups respecting their cultural specificities. No. 25 strongly supports shifting integration activities “from the top to

the bottom” – to the local level. No. 28 and No. 29 would support more intensive participation by ethnic immigrant communities in designing the Czech migration and integration policies. No. 30 points out that the state should also systematically take care of marginal immigrant groups – namely, independent foreign children and youths.

6.3. Education and other cultural programmes

Foreigners' access to education/study in the country is subject to the same conditions as Czech citizens. Even children who stay as undocumented immigrants must, if immigrants request, be allowed regular attendance at school.¹³⁴ To study of free of charge at high schools and universities, one must fulfill the prerequisite of knowing the Czech language. However, in contrast with some other developed countries, the Czech Republic does not take care of teaching Czech to foreigners who are rather poor in this knowledge. Accordingly, there are no mandatory courses organised at basic schools for those foreign children who do not understand Czech. One exception concerns national ethnic minorities (citizens of the Czech Republic) who can take advantage of an opportunity to be educated in their mother languages within a special “national/ethnic education system.” Regarding learning the Czech language, the state assists only two groups of foreigners in practice - those who already have asylum status (see the above state integration programme), and those who ask for it. In this latter case, NGO representatives teach Czech directly to asylum seekers in asylum centres. In addition to this activity, selected NGOs¹³⁵ (see Drbohlav 2003a) take care of a relatively wide spectrum of cultural programmes (sport, music, other arts, producing hand-made products, trips to the countryside, etc.) that are organised mainly for asylum seekers and their children in asylum centers. However, currently some of the activities also target other immigrant groups.

6.4. Access to health care and other social services

There are several points of view through which one can describe basic principles of the health care system and other issues in relation to foreigners in the Czech Republic (Dobiášová et al. 2003; Meduna 2003). First of all, those who ask for a visa are not required to automatically submit their health records (regarding applicants for a visa for a period exceeding 90 days, submitting a health record was mandatory until 2001). However, if there is suspicion of a serious illness, one can be asked to submit it by the police or an embassy. Logically, it is envisaged that an immigrant will start receiving health care services after arriving in the country. A public insurance service can be used in the Czech Republic only by foreign employees and holders of a permanent residence permit. Other foreigners, such as small businessmen (holders of a trade license), children of foreigners who stay in the country under the umbrella of a visa for a period exceeding 90 days, etc., are supposed to insure themselves by contract (Dobiášová et al 2003).¹³⁶ However, this is an expensive solution when keeping in mind many foreigners' limited financial sources. Furthermore, foreigners older than 70 are

¹³⁴ See regulation No. 21836/2000-11 (Hronková/Hradečná 2003)

¹³⁵ Let us mention, for example: The Counseling Centre for Integration, The Organization for Aid to Refugees, The Counseling Centre for Refugees, The Society of Citizens Assisting Migrants and The Czech Catholic Charity

¹³⁶ Asylum seekers' health care is covered by the state

¹³⁷ For example, a foreign woman between 48 and 50 years old has to pay 2,510 Czech crowns a month by contract (Dobiášová et al. 2003)

not allowed to insure themselves at all. To sum up, in terms of foreigners' access to health care services, foreigners are, to some extent, discriminated against. The above-mentioned reality is behind the reason why "a significant number of immigrants, mostly whose arrival in the Czech Republic is conditioned by economic reasons, have no health insurance"¹³⁸ (Dobiášová et al. 2003).

Besides health insurance, pensions, state social supports/subsidies, social aid and unemployment benefits form part of the social security system. Immigrants influence the system, while, at the same time, they remain dependent upon it. The Czech system of pension payments is "neutral" when differentiating between its own citizens and foreigners. Legislation in this field does not directly discriminate foreigners (Meduna 2003). However, there is a sort of indirect discrimination, as the current "pay-as-you-go" system (based on inter-generational solidarity) requires that one has lived in the Czech Republic for a particular number of years before he/she can enter it. Of course, for a "stable citizen" it is easier to meet such demands than for rather "mobile foreigners."

A foreigner can make use of the state social subsidy scheme in the Czech Republic when he/she has a permanent residence permit or has stayed in the country for more than 1 year. A more restrictive approach is applied toward families – a child's allowance is not paid if the parents live in the Czech Republic but the child lives abroad. This condition pertains to many economic immigrants. The social aid (and social services) scheme is based on the same principle as state social support – only those with a permanent residence permit can qualify. Nevertheless, there is some room for making exceptions to the rule as long as there are well-founded reasons to do so. In the case of social services, Czech legislation and practices go against the European Social Charta, which calls for providing social services to everybody on the territory of the state. One of the important demands in order to qualify for unemployment benefits is having worked for more than one year in the last three years (before being unemployed and asking for the benefits). A period spent abroad can be included. This stipulation means that there is no discrimination between foreigners and the domestic majority population. Conditions under which one contributes to the whole system when employed are the same for foreigners and citizens of the Czech Republic. However, in contrast with pensions, the amount paid to a foreigner (under the state employment scheme from which the unemployed are paid) when he has a job cannot be "exported." In other words, if a foreigner leaves the Czech Republic, no such payments can be returned to him/her.

To summarize, the Czech social security system is designed in a way that corresponds to social security models typical of most European countries and it does not prevent the successful integration of foreigners into the Czech society. Some of the obstacles mentioned above do not exist in practice at all, since some possible problems are solved by mutual cooperation based on international bilateral or multilateral agreements (mostly touching pensions, family allowances, unemployment benefits, maternity grants and death allowances - Meduna 2003). Furthermore, only with a limited number of exceptions, the Czech social security system is in harmony with principles formulated in the European Social Charta. Furthermore, any particular shortcomings could be amended.

¹³⁸ According to a study on Ukrainian labour immigrants (Křečková/Tůmová et al. 2003), 27% of 645 respondents who participated in a survey and have stayed in the country for more than one year were not insured

6.5. Participation of migrants in civic and political life

Generally, the Declaration of Basic Human Rights and Freedoms defines possibilities for political participation in the broadest sense of the word.¹³⁹ These declarations are further elaborated upon and embodied in given legislative documents. There are several areas where there are, in fact, no differences between Czech citizens and foreigners and, thus, no discrimination against foreigners. Let us mention, for example, the section on public discussion (including, for instance, publishing activities, radio and TV broadcasting, freedom of speech), the right to petition, the right to assemble and the right to strike. No differences exist between foreigners and Czech citizens (provided the foreigner is legally employed) in the context of associating with trade unions or churches. However, there is discrimination by law of foreigners compared to the Czech majority in several other spheres. For example, a foreigner cannot be a member of associations' committees,¹⁴⁰ unless those associations are considered beneficial.¹⁴¹ Membership is possible in professional chambers for those who obtained their education in the Czech Republic; if not, equivalent studies have to be completed. A similar sort of discrimination exists within the university sector and its administration and self-government system. The right to vote is exclusively reserved for Czech citizens. Nevertheless, laws regulating elections for the European Parliament, municipal governments, and participation in local referendums enables foreigners-holders of a permanent residence permit who are officially registered and reside in a particular municipality to participate in elections, provided there is an international agreement in effect. This possibility reflects demands for compliance with entrance into the EU. The right to associate with political parties is also reserved only for Czech citizens, in some cases only for those having a permanent residence permit in the Czech Republic. Some professions in the state sector can be taken over only by citizens of the Czech Republic like, for example, president, member of parliament, senator, judge and so forth. The same concerns army personnel. In contrast with the beginning of the 1990s, the situation in this regard is now more restrictive vis-à-vis foreigners.

All in all, the participation of migrants in the civic and political life of the Czech Republic is, more or less, in harmony with the situation in many other West European developed countries. In only one case do Czech policies not comply with what is stipulated in the European Social Charta. The globalization process has brought more people from abroad to given nation-states. This new situation is a challenge to existing systems of the Czech state administration, self-government, and public authorities and, in general, at different regional hierarchical levels. One can argue in harmony with Uhl (2003) that if society is to accept these changes in a democratic way, even more of a share of the public authority must be left to foreigners.¹⁴²

Respondent No. 24 highlights that immigrant communities in the Czech Republic are, due to given gaps in the legislation, not well organised. They function as cultural clubs rather than standard associations, and "this situation should be changed." Among experts, there is an almost unanimous call to enable immigrants to participate more fully in civic and political life.

¹³⁹ The Czech National Council (No. 2/1993 Coll.) defines the rights (and duties) of Czech citizens

¹⁴⁰ The Ministry of the Interior does not allow it

¹⁴¹ However, foreigners can enter associations that have already been established

¹⁴² See, for example, the Recommendations of the Council of Europe (2000) 15, of September 13, 2000 (Uhl 2003)

6.6. Public perceptions/opinions

There are three important factors that are at play with one another: immigrants, the public and politicians. The public's perception of immigrant issues is an important factor because, to some extent, it conditions the inflow of immigrants, shapes their behavior in the host country, and also influences politicians' behavior (whose goal, *inter alia*, is to be re-elected). As a corollary, politicians have to listen, at least partly, to the voice of the public. On the other hand, public opinion has an "internal power" to affect persons who have not decided yet about a given issue. Regarding international migration, 49%¹⁴³ (as of February 2002) admitted that their opinion is sometimes influenced by the results of opinion polls. This statistic indicates how public perceptions and opinions are composed (see Občané 2001). Obviously, this cannot be neglected when designing the right migration policy in the broadest sense of the word.

6.7. Conclusions

- An important shift toward a more multifaceted approach to immigration issues can be identified over time. Since the very end of the 1990s, the state has started taking a more systematic approach to the issue and intensively meeting the main social, economic and cultural needs of some migrant categories. The state integration programme (for refugees, compatriots and the few holders of a temporary refuge status) supports such an endeavor. Also, the state has started attracting a new foreign labour force through its programme called "Proposal for Active Selection of Skilled Foreign Workers". Under this programme, new immigrants are recruited who could contribute to building the country's wealth, as the Czech domestic labour market has suffered heavy blows by the low fertility rate and the aging process.
- Regarding the provision of education, health, and other social services, as well as the guarantee of rights in the broadest sense of the word, the Czech Republic does not differ too much from the EU in terms of its practices. However, there are still some shortcomings that deflect the Czech Republic from real "multiculturalism": inadequate attention given to improving foreigners' knowledge of the Czech language, and particular problems associated with foreigners' access to health care services and other social subsidies.
- All in all, the participation of migrants in the civic and political life of the Czech Republic is, more or less, in harmony with the situation in many other West European developed countries. There are only a few exceptions in which Czech reality does not correspond to what is considered within the bounds of "standard approaches." Let us only stress that there is a questionable policy being practiced as regards the right to vote (at all levels of regional administration), as this right is exclusively reserved to Czech citizens.
- Public perception/opinion cannot be neglected when designing a broadly-defined effective migration policy.

¹⁴³ Since 1995, the picture has been pretty stable – revolving around 50 percent (Občané 2000)

7. Conclusions¹⁴⁴ and recommendations

The most important lesson learned from analysing the current migratory reality in the Czech Republic is that current Czech migratory trends have been shifting quickly toward those typical of the developed Western World.

These parallels concern:

- 1) quantitative aspects (numbers of immigrants – “stocks and flows”);
- 2) the conditions of migration and, consequently, the many “mechanisms” through which migration is materialized;
- 3) the nature and development of the whole set of migration policies and practices (see also Drbohlav 2002).

From a more detailed perspective, one cannot ignore the manner in which Czech migratory patterns resemble those characteristic of the contemporary situation in the EU. For example, economic reasons are primarily behind migratory “pulls;” there is growing pressure for illegal/irregular migration; discrimination against migrant workers exists; highly urbanized areas and areas near the state border constitute the most significant poles of migratory attractiveness; immigration has contributed to fragmentation and specialization within the labour market; and stereotypes influence how individual ethnic immigrant groups are perceived by the public.

Accordingly, this study both indirectly and directly contributes to proving the fact that the current migratory reality in the Czech Republic might, to some extent, be explained by well-known migration theories, namely: the neoclassical economic theory, the world system theory, the dual labour market theory, the network theory, and the institutional theory (see e.g. Massey et al. 1998; Brettell / Hollifield 2000; Drbohlav 2002).

Regarding pinpointing some concrete results, the study offers several key propositions:

7.1. Overall migratory trends

7.1.1. History

- During the previous 150 years, a trend of emigration dominated over immigration on the territory of the current Czech Republic. Overall experiences with immigration were limited and rather specific (due particularly to the “isolationist policies” of the communist state vis-à-vis the developed world). Nevertheless, one trend is common across time and political regimes – Prague and the border zones in the western part of the country primarily experienced international migration. Whereas under socialism these areas were the most important *emigration* channels through which migration occurred, at present and under a democratic Czech Republic based on a labour market economy, these areas are the most important *destinations* for immigrants.

¹⁴⁴ General patterns and trends rather than concrete details and figures are pointed out here (for more information – see the text above)

7.1.2. Overall migration scales

- The Czech Republic has quickly become a transit and immigration country. As of the end of 2002, 231,608 immigrants were officially residing in the country. Despite problems regarding statistical recording (due to the “recategorization” status), it seems that these trends have been intensifying over time. Both permanent and long-term emigration of the Czech population, as well as short-term cross border movements, are not huge at all and it seems that these movements have been decreasing over time.
- Two source countries dominate among those that supply the Czech Republic with “permanent immigrants” and are closely linked with family reunion processes (flows a year) - Slovakia and Ukraine. As for the „stock“, the most important source countries of permanent immigrants are: Vietnam, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. While the number of Slovaks and Poles have been decreasing or stabilised, the number of Vietnamese and Ukrainians has been on the rise (1997 versus 2002).
- The predominance of “economic migrants” coming from Slovakia and Ukraine to the country is clearly evident. Furthermore, it seems that this sort of polarization has been growing over time (2000 versus 2002 – where comparison is possible). Out of the ten most important source countries, four pertain to countries of the former Soviet Union.
- In contrast to the number of immigrants residing in the Czech Republic for economic and family reasons, asylum seekers represent much smaller numbers. The largest number of asylum seekers between 1997 and 2002 came from Ukraine. Other important source countries are Afghanistan, Moldova, India, Vietnam, Romania and Russia, recently also Slovakia. Among asylum seekers, those arriving from countries of the former Soviet Union played a very important role (out of all selected important source countries between 1997 and 2002, they represented 42%).
- Many countries of origin of asylum seekers to the Czech Republic are also among those whose citizens are caught while trying illegally to cross the Czech state border. The total number of foreigners caught while illegally attempting to cross the border decreased significantly in 2002¹⁴⁵. Nationals of some of the countries (India, China, Vietnam, Moldova, Germany and Poland) are permanently illegally on the move through the Czech Republic.
- One could probably estimate the current number of irregular immigrants in the Czech Republic (as of the very end of 2000) at somewhere between 295,000 and 335,000. Of this figure, 165,000 might be irregular immigrants active on the Czech labour market, 30,000 their dependents, and 100,000 – 140,000 transit migrants (now perhaps slightly less). While there has been an overall trend of decreasing inflows of legal migrants, the number of illegal/irregular migrants/immigrants has been increasing (measured via perceptions of immigrants by the Czech public).
- Regarding the future migration situation in the Czech Republic, existing trends could probably be further extrapolated. There is no reason not to believe that, generally, the situation in the migration field (including overall scales) will develop in the Czech Republic very similar to the situation in Western European democracies.

¹⁴⁵ The difficult problem of interpreting this fact is left aside

7.1.3. Motivation

- Unambiguously, the most important reasons for immigration to the Czech Republic (excluding transit migration) are closely tied to economic activities (work and doing business), along with family-based movements. On a more general level and from the immigrant country's perspective, three groups of factors play an important role when searching for strong "pulls" that attract migrants to the Czech Republic: 1) geographical (position), 2) political, and 3) economic. These "pulls" often function together and are mutually linked. From a more specific perspective, "national memory," public opinion, supranational dimensions (linked to the geopolitical orientation), the socio-economic situation, and "migration-specific instruments" significantly determine the reality in the migration field.
- Family and informal links play an important "supportive" role in how to get to the country, where to stay and what to do there.
- A stock of foreign students has been growing over time, while new enrollments (flow) have recently been slightly diminishing. By far the most important source country sending students to the Czech Republic is Slovakia.
- Czech compatriots have not been too involved in directly transforming their mother society since the collapse of communism.
- Currently, there are no strong "push" factors that would propel mass migration movements of Czech citizens out of their mother country.

7.1.4. Immigrants' population structures – social role, education/qualifications, gender, age

- One has to distinguish two very different immigrant groups in the Czech Republic. The first is an "Eastern" category (mostly representatives of other CEE countries in transition) and is mainly composed of young males who, in contrast to their high educational/skill level, are hired for manual, unskilled and underpaid jobs. The second one is a "Western" category, characterised by a large percentage of immigrants with a high level of education who are mostly engaged in professional and managerial work (managers, advisers, language teachers, etc.).
- When simplifying to some extent, there is an overall trend toward "feminization" (the growth of female participation) of immigration to the Czech Republic. In general, however, percentages of female immigrants are not as high as males' (except in one category). The more "economic" the character of immigration, the smaller the number of women. In fact, the smallest percentages of female immigrants are involved in "doing business."
- The immigrants' age structure (among all legally-residing foreigners) clearly differs from the structure of the host, majority population. The percentage of foreigners in the economically active age (15-59) is really huge (86%), whereas the youngest and oldest segments of immigrants (1-14 and 60+) are represented by rather small numbers both in absolute and relative terms. This figure demonstrates again that economic opportunities particularly lure immigrants to the Czech Republic, and so far mainly men. However, a breakdown by individual immigrant ethnic groups shows that there is no single homogeneous immigrant population. In other words, while more or less following the aforementioned trend, immigrants also create a colorful mosaic as a result of their varied age compositions.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Of course, the overall trend is predetermined by the most numerous ones

7.1.5. Regional patterns and the impact of labour and economic migration (including its conditions)

- The capital city of Prague is a very important migratory destination and high percentages of immigrants of different types concentrate there. When evaluating development over time, Prague's role as an important destination country has been increasing since 1997, except among foreign recipients of trade licenses. However, the latest development (2000-2001) regarding some subcategories of immigrants who have stayed in the country longer than 1 year indicates that the Prague's attractiveness may be weakening slightly.
- There is a clear East-West gradient proving that the more westward one moves in the territory of the Czech Republic, the more intense the influence of immigration. Important locations include Prague and Central Bohemia, Pilsen and other western districts (Cheb, Karlovy Vary and Tachov) and, to some extent, also the city of Brno. These places are highly influenced by direct foreign economic activities.
- The immigrant ethnic groups representing neighboring countries (Slovaks, Poles, Germans, Austrians) have, besides Prague and the Central Bohemia region, a higher concentration in Czech/Moravian/Silesian districts that border on their mother countries.
- The index of dissimilarity shows that Vietnamese and Slovaks have the most similar spatial distribution patterns to the Czech majority population (by districts) whereas the patterns related to Chinese, Russians and Americans, especially due to their huge concentration in Prague, are very different.
- As in other developed immigration countries, the presence of economic immigrants in the Czech Republic brings with it pros and cons for both the country and the immigrants themselves (the omnipresent exploitation of immigrants is one such example). However, the economic impact of immigration upon Czech society cannot be properly analysed, identified, and understood at this moment due to insufficient data in Czech statistics. Nevertheless, it is obvious that economically motivated foreign immigration helps propel transformation processes predominately in the major poles of urban development, and it is the most important impact of immigrants upon Czech society. In regard to economic migrants, it was also confirmed that "compatriots' nets" (with their supportive roles) have been important factors in attracting immigrants to and within the Czech Republic.
- Ethnic immigrant groups, in accordance with their own strategies and their specific spatial concentration patterns, have found specific niches on the Czech labour market, thereby reshaping its hitherto contours. Three ethnic immigrant groups are involved in this process above all: Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Chinese.

7.1.6. Non-economic effects of migration

- Concerning immigration vis-à-vis cultural contributions, demographic changes, changes in social structure, and the like in the Czech Republic, there is no nation-wide influence by immigrants over these issues. However, on local or regional levels, there has been some manifestation of a new and distinctive socio-cultural milieu that was brought to the country by migrants.

7.1.7. Public opinion and perception of migrants and migration

The Czech population is rather xenophobic. However, this relationship is not “linear” in its character. When comparing the beginning of the 1990s with the beginning of the 2000s, the overall perception of selected individual ethnic immigrant groups has become more positive (except citizens of Balkan). Although the relationship is rather complex, it also seems that the public’s perception of immigrants will improve given time and increased, direct interactions between these immigrants and the public. Although it is hard to prove such a hypothesis (see Drbohlav 2002), many of the experts interviewed for this study asserted this argument (provided many examples on the local level).

- While Slovaks, of the selected ethnic groups, are by far the most popular among the Czech majority (followed by Poles, Vietnamese and citizens of the former Soviet Union), citizens of the Balkans and especially Romas belong to the most unpopular groups. On the whole, the popularity of individual ethnic groups vis-à-vis the Czech population does not change too much over time.
- Prejudice against the Roma ethnic group is a persistently recurring attitude.
- Nevertheless, the manifestation of right wing extremism, associated mainly with young people, has been limited to small groups and has not spread through the population in a way that could destabilise public safety in any of the Czech regions.

7.1.8. Cooperation within individual ethnic immigrant groups

There is a sort of competition and even grudge inside some of the ethnic groups that materializes itself in fairly bad relationships between their associations (“old” communities, regardless of having citizenship of the Czech Republic, versus those who “newly” immigrated).¹⁴⁷ This trend is not specifically tied to one community, but might have more general validity (see the examples of Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Arabs/Kurds).

7.2. The most urgent matters and recommendations for improvement

7.2.1. Migration and integration policies and practices

The most important issue in this regard is that Czech legislation on international migration almost fully corresponds to that proposed in the EU Directives (the Acquis). Although migration policies and practices are still in an immature stage in the Czech Republic, the state began to take a significantly more active stance on migration issues in the late 1990s.¹⁴⁸ Since then, approaches to migration policy have become more systematic, comprehensive, and coherent.¹⁴⁹ An important shift toward a more multifaceted approach can be identified over time. Though the state has shown the ability to handle the issue of migration and immigrants’ integration (see, for example,

¹⁴⁷ Mainly interviewed experts contributed to releasing this fact

¹⁴⁸ By the way, also a slight, nevertheless quite obvious, positive shift from rather “defensive interests” (touching migrant “flows” above all) toward social and cultural aspects of migration (touching mainly immigrant “stocks”) has been apparent

¹⁴⁹ Some of the interviewed experts emphasized that in this regard the situation is better at the top of the “state pyramid” than it is at the bottom

the state integration programme mainly for refugees, or the new programme for recruiting an educated/skilled foreign labour force), its attempts to combat illegal/irregular migration is rather unsuccessful.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, the results of this study show that in several other spheres the Czech migration regime still suffers from important weaknesses. Let us state the most important ones while also recommending some possible remedies:

7.2.1.1. State bodies

- The basic principles stated in the state's migration policy are too general and do not present much of a „strategic vision.“ The relevant bodies should work out more specific “guidelines,” but precede these actions with broad discussion and publication of the issue.

State approaches toward migration and immigrants demonstrate many inconsistencies (paradoxes; primarily - hypocrisy). The elimination of such inconsistencies will be crucial in order for the state to be more effective in implementing its migratory goals.

1) Though there is an evident endeavor to prepare and to implement migratory policy that would be closer to a “multicultural approach” than any other migratory regime - some of the official documents explicitly speak about a multicultural approach and policies -, the existing approaches toward managing the whole process sometimes do not correspond with such goals. For example, there are various problems with teaching the Czech language to foreigners and their children – what, how, and under what conditions it should be taught – if taught at all; waiting periods that are too long for immigrants to achieve a “safe” status; the requirement that immigrants demonstrate ten years of continuous stay in the country before they can ask for a permanent residence permit, and a fifteen year period – provided all demands are met, to wait for the possibility of naturalization and to obtain Czech citizenship; minimal opportunities for immigrants to participate in civic and political life, namely the lack of voting rights on any level.

Other direct actions against “theoretical multiculturalism” occur when policemen and representatives of other state institutions take fairly anti-immigrant approaches in their duties. Officers and clerks often use the state's discretionary power in a disadvantageous way for immigrants. Internal procedural rules set by individual ministries or state bodies may also play a role here. New legislation and new procedural rules for treating migrants in a more human and tolerant manner must be launched and practiced. In addition, officials on all levels of the state administration who deal with immigrants should attend courses that could objectively inform them about a wide spectrum of migration/immigration issues and related subjects.

2) Though, on one side, the country combats illegal/irregular migration/immigration, on the other side, it also (in various ways and at different levels) either hides or even officially supports it. For example, children of irregular immigrants can officially be educated at basic schools, but prostitution among many irregular female migrants is

¹⁵⁰ However, the Czech Republic is not alone in this regard – many other developed countries have similar problems

more or less tolerated by Czech society. The state is not able and probably not willing to severely punish and expel from the country those who seriously violate a law. Furthermore, controlling employers who employ irregular immigrants is ineffective, expelling those who are, by law, to leave the country is done very rarely; the protection of the state border has significant gaps, and so on. Despite the fact that these “discrepancies” probably cannot be completely solved,¹⁵¹ there might be ways to improve the situation. A crucial task will be improving people’s willingness to tackle these issues. Lastly, although important, greater financial sources are not always the inevitable means to solving the problems.

3) A very liberal regime for issuing trade licenses does not correspond at all to the „overcautious regime“ that is otherwise applied to foreigners in the territory of the Czech Republic. The whole system of issuing trade licenses to foreigners has many gaps. Consequently, it is very prone to frequent misuse.¹⁵² It has been proven that this is the most advantageous way to legally penetrate the country and then legally or quasi-legally work or operate there. Although problems linked with that approach (regarding both the legislation and procedures) have been known for a long time, there appears to be no political will to change the situation. Obviously, the law must first be changed. Then the implementation of new rules must be applied in practice (in the field).

- Public debate on migration is generally rather very limited. Thus, one of the most important “pillars” and, correspondingly, practices of migration policy (public perception/opinion) is neglected. The state should start to initiate the exchange of information and opinions on migration among experts and the public more intensively. Importantly, the public (of course, including children at schools) should be much more objectively informed about international migration and integration issues, and about all real and possible pros and cons that spring from current and future developments in this field.
- The state is struggling with the decentralization of responsibilities and duties regarding immigrants and their integration. Shifting some power toward newly established regions and selected municipalities to delegated authorities within the districts poses complex problems in the migratory field. The state should concentrate upon this issue and solve it as soon as possible. The same concerns the shift of migratory responsibilities and duties from the Ministry of the Interior to 1) other state bodies mainly the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and to 2) the NGO sector. This process takes time, nevertheless, it is well under way.
- Mutual cooperation among state bodies, NGOs, and international organizations, but also within individual groups in the field of international migration issues is still far from perfect¹⁵³. It should be enhanced and improved. Also, local and regional

¹⁵¹ The reason is that whereas irregular immigration as a whole is detrimental to the state, in some ways and to some extent it can also conform to state’s and individual’s interests (e.g. employers’ never-ending, strong desire for a cheap illegal labour force in developed countries). Furthermore, there is a moral/humanitarian dimension to the issue that often goes against many strict rules and regulations

¹⁵² To mention only one of many other examples: by establishing public trading and limited liability companies within which foreign business persons now legally operate and function only as employees

¹⁵³ To this point, interviewee No. 23 adds that GOs and NGOs are too interconnected and loyalty is required; No. 25 calls for a sort of a mediator who could operate between these two subjects and to ease tensions

administrations and self-governments should be more involved in handling the issue. It seems to be more a matter of the human side rather than any directives.

- Despite some recent improvements and a relatively good reputation in comparison with many other CEE countries, international migration statistics could be better in the Czech Republic. The problem lies in the existence of rather heterogeneous data sources, in the really poor methodical treatment of some data (namely concerning emigration of the domestic population from the country, migration motivations of permanent immigrants or “structural characteristics” pertaining to, *inter alia*, foreigners with work permits) and, last but not least, in the lack of willingness and even ignorance among some regional and local Police bodies to cooperate in collecting and recording some aspects of migration movements (see e.g. Zpráva 2003). As a result, otherwise valuable data are almost worthless. New, innovative approaches should be applied when collecting migration data, while, at the same time, trying to harmonise them with the EU as much as possible. Lack of willingness and competence regarding collecting important migratory data cannot be tolerated within the police any more.
- Though it is very difficult to prove, many of the interviewed experts (particularly, but not exclusively, representatives of NGOs) indicated a very serious problem that heavily burdens the whole field – the suspicion that there is corruption in the state sector (mainly within the police – see also Mates 2003). Only immediate steps like initiating investigations and implementing a very open policy in this regard (to keep the public informed), establishing control mechanisms and carrying out heavy punishments if guilt is proven may lead to improvements.

7.2.1.2. NGOs

- NGOs that function in the fields of migration and integration in the Czech Republic should avoid holding grudges against each other. They are, more or less, in the same position and their main goals (to help foreigners whatever status they have) are very similar. More cooperation is needed (sharing responsibilities, exchanging experiences and knowledge, creating a “stronger lobby” for negotiations with other bodies, etc).
- NGOs specializing in migration and integration issues should develop new and more numerous contacts and relations with similar organisations abroad (mainly within the EU) that are highly experienced.
- Since NGOs suffer from an enormous lack of financial sources in order to carry out their specific goals and projects (state and international organizations in the Czech Republic have been gradually withdrawing their financial support, or, similarly, the decision as to whether or not to fund a project remains uncertain for an indefinite period of time), NGOs have to learn quickly where and how to find potential sponsors (from abroad) while successfully submitting reasonable, useful projects (the whole issue of fund-raising). Their partial transformation from a “service” to “management” is a must.

7.2.1.3. The EU and international organizations

Intensive cooperation between the EU and international organisations on one side, and Czech state institutions/bodies and NGOs that work in the migration and integration fields on the other side, should continue at many different levels and be further strengthened. More official and unofficial contacts must be encouraged. Conferences,

workshops and round-tables in which participants could exchange experience and receive knowledge from western colleagues would be highly welcomed. Possibilities for Czech experts to spend several days/weeks/months in Western immigration societies and to formulate their migration and integration policies and practices on site have proven very useful and of great importance.

The EU (including international organisations), together with accession states, should continue intensive cooperation in the migration field with other European countries that have weaker economies and supply them with significant numbers of migrants. This co-operation should specifically address spreading objective information about existing migration possibilities and opportunities to be employed in more developed worlds, readmission, repatriation and reasonable, targeted attempts to improve living standards at least partly, such as investing into human capital and economic infrastructure. Political and economic isolation and building barriers in this regard would only contribute to increasing migration pressure on more developed countries.

To summarize, it is quite clear that the main goals in improving the whole situation in the migration field in the Czech Republic are to

- 1) prevent migrants from entering the country illegally;
- 2) to expel from the country those who have been identified as unwelcome;
- 3) to welcome those who stay legally for a short-time; and
- 4) to further assist immigrants who stay legally for a long time or “forever” in integrating themselves into Czech society.

On a very general level, one can find a remedy in:

- 1) being more concerned about migration across all political and administrative structures (and on all hierarchical levels);
- 2) being more cooperative (both internally and internationally);
- 3) being more competent and consistent (in “theory” but mainly “in practice”) and stern; and
- 4) investing more in human capital and technical equipment.

Let us finish with three principles proclaimed by an Austrian colleague (a specialist in public opinion issues) at one of the conferences in Vienna in 2003 and to apply them to international migration policies in the broadest sense of the word : 1) “Do not say, there are no problems, 2) design a clear, understandable, and constant attitude, and 3) do good and talk about it!”

7.3. Future research

Research/scientific circles in the Czech Republic have so far been rather reserved in addressing international migration and integration issues as the main target of their studies. Since the very beginning of the 2000s, the situation has partly improved as a result of the publication of a number of important studies. However, any other reasonable investigation into these topics must be called for and appreciated. Whereas

there have been some studies done on rather general aspects of the immigration and integration processes or on particular ethnic immigrant groups in the Czech Republic, they were more descriptive and “superficial” than explanatory and analytical in their character (e.g. see more in Drbohlav 2001). Also, very often they lacked a comparative perspective and respected, more or less, only practical (highly pragmatic) goals. Important links to “general regularities” (theories) were often omitted. Particularly needed are complex, in-depth, sophisticated analyses tackling immigrants’ real and potential impacts mainly upon geographical, political, juridical, economic, social, demographic, cultural and psychological structures and substructures of the Czech society. When implementing such investigations, one needs to research both individual ethnic immigrant groups and specific immigrant categories (such as children, mothers, handicapped people, seniors, representatives of particular occupations and the like) of people migrating into or through the country. Of course, the topic of illegal/irregular migration/immigration deserves special attention. Nevertheless, one should not forget the other side of the coin. Research activities should also concentrate more on the Czech majority population, especially their approaches to migration/immigrants and the factors behind these.

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Some other internal materials of various state bodies were used, too.

APPENDIX I: Foreign children and their integration in Czech schools and Czech society

So far, very little is known about foreign children attending schools (basic and high schools¹⁵⁴) in the Czech Republic and the level of their integration (including pluses and minuses¹⁵⁵) in the Czech majority society.¹⁵⁶ This study involves both quantitative and qualitative sorts of data. Although the state, through the Czech School Inspection, has been collecting “hard” data on some of the basic parameters since the 2001/2002 academic year (data on children such as ethnic background by a language and a citizenship, age, sex and “stay” status – whether an asylum seeker, a refugee, a successful asylum seeker, a holder of permanent residence status, or a holder of a visa for a period exceeding 90 days, the type of school, its location and results of the educational process, etc. - see also table A below), there is a gap in terms of understanding more detailed “qualitative” aspects of children’s integration processes. The main goal of this chapter is to explain the current situation in the given field and what problems have appeared. It is based on 5 interviews with selected experts and on several documents (Sledování 2002; Informace 2002) that indicate problems and, consequently, possible ways to improve or solve them. Regardless, it is quite clear that in the near future there is wide room for research/scientific activities to contribute to the analysis of this presently unrecognised area.

(As interviewee No. 19 adds to this point while supporting the research: “It is clear that there are differences among individual ethnic groups, among those who live in ethnic enclaves and those who live outside them, and among different generations – children and their parents ...”; “The question whether foreign children keep their identity or whether they are pretty well integrated/assimilated is also worth researching”). Also No. 22 contributes to this point: “What is not well-known is what the differences are among individual ethnic groups, what specific problems are tied to individual regions and cities, and what particular problems bother immigrants and their children immediately after their arrival in the Czech Republic”.

The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport is the main body responsible for educating foreign children (see the Plan of the Ministry’s Integration Policy – Informace 2002; it was designed in July 2001 in accordance with the whole Conception of immigrants’ integration in the Czech Republic – No. 18 809/01-22). Within the Plan, attention is paid particularly to the following aspects:

- Teaching Czech as a second language, including courses for those who have asylum in the country.

¹⁵⁴ There have been relatively a lot of pieces of information about foreign university students in the Czech Republic (see e.g. Cizinci 2002)

¹⁵⁵ Interviewee No. 19 states to this point: “There is no question that integrated children are an asset for the society – in terms of the multicultural dimension and also for pragmatic reasons – they create material and non-material commodities. There is no doubt that investing in the successful integration of foreigners – into such human capital - is a good investment”

¹⁵⁶ In fact, foreigners have the possibility to be educated under the same conditions as citizens of the Czech Republic. The mode of placing a foreigner into a particular regular school/class is directed by regulation No. 21836/2000 – 11 (it deals with a student’s knowledge of Czech and the whole quality of his/her educational level). For example, directors at high schools have quite a lot of room in various programmes to positively influence children’s integration

- Post and pre-graduate education of teachers in the sphere of foreigners' integration.
- Creating complex conditions for the actualization of multicultural education among the whole Czech population.
- Improving regulations and economic and organisational conditions for foreigners' education.
- Monitoring the situation in the sphere of foreigners' education at basic and high schools, as well as at higher specialized schools and universities.
- Collecting necessary data via a functional information system that would provide an overview of foreign pupils and foreign students by citizenship, mother language, and type of stay.
- Coordinating pedagogical research, supporting the creation of nation-wide and regional programmes, and preparing new textbooks, methodological materials, and special educational tools for teaching foreigners (Plán 2002).

In sum, a rather complex approach has been designed.

Let us elaborate on the first point: courses for those who have been granted asylum in the country fall under regulation No. 21 153/2000-35. In accordance with the Asylum Act, these refugees are provided Czech language courses free of charge. These classes are offered to a refugee within 30 days after he has been granted asylum. They are paid for by the state and recent numbers have oscillated between 80 and 120 per year. In practice, since 2002 the course has been organised by the NGO, "The Society of Citizens Assisting Migrants." As a matter of fact, it represents altogether 150 hours per group and 100 hours for individuals. Though the courses have been offered to everybody, by far not all of those who are supposed to take them actually attend them. There are several reasons for this: they move to another centre, they rent an apartment, they get a job, or they find an apartment to live in somewhere else.

Obligatory education for foreign children – of those who still wait for a decision or those who have been granted asylum – is governed by international conventions signed by the state. The Ministry designs internal conditions. Children of those foreigners who ask for asylum usually attend „normal schools for Czech citizens“ situated close to their asylum centres. There are several problems, mainly springing from very limited knowledge of the Czech language and a different socio-cultural background. There was a new methodological regulation adopted (No. 10 149/2002-22) on how to improve the situation. Teachers in these schools have to regularly solve problems connected to: inadequate knowledge of Czech, children breaking rules, absences, habits and customs that do not fit with the Czech culture, and variable school attendance – frequent in-and out-migration during the academic year and some other problems. These children are often not interested in learning and their parents frequently do not cooperate with the given school. Czech parents complain that the education of Czech children suffers from larger numbers of children in class (due to the inflow of foreigners). Thus, the sensitive relationship between the majority population and asylum seekers comes into play. The priority is to make teaching and learning easier by reducing class size. Hence, it is possible to divide some of the classes. However, such schools do not have enough financial sources (more textbooks are necessary – some of them are lost by immigrants and there is great demand for new technical equipment).

To summarize, despite some serious problems, the main goal has been fulfilled.

Foreigners who attend regular schools usually nearby their permanent or temporary place of living are another case. The situation was monitored by the Czech School Inspection of 2001/2002. These studies were conducted in 1,012 basic, high, and higher specialized schools and they revealed that 21% of students were educated foreigners, among which Ukrainians, Slovaks, and Vietnamese dominated; 54% came from the former Soviet Union, the smallest numbers of foreigners were in grades 8 and 9; 47% were in Prague, the lowest percentages were in the Vysočina region – 0.5%, and in other regions the share was between 2% and 7%. The numbers did not change much compared to the 2000/2001 academic year. Most of these children had lived in the country for a long time, and their knowledge of Czech was acceptable and there were no significant shortcomings in their educational level or serious problems in learning and teaching. However, there were problems regarding foreigners who had been in the country for only a short time. In these cases, an individual approach was necessary, and teachers found that children's involvement in out-school activities helped, as well as working in pairs with a Czech pupil. (*Interviewees No. 20 and 27 stress that applying an individual approach to students, regardless of ethnicity/citizenship, is crucial and should always be used.*) There were some other methods applied, too (see Sledování 2002): The longer in the country, the fewer the problems at school.

As mentioned, two different situations exist for asylum seekers and their children and for families who do not choose the Czech Republic as their destination country (see the aforementioned problems).

Based on the experiences and opinions of the interviewed experts (*interviews No. 19, 20, 21, 22, 27*) – one can formulate the following propositions, which are worth stressing:

- 1) Except for asylum seekers (see above), the state (the Czech Republic) is not obliged to take care of improving the Czech language of its pupils.
- 2) The group with the most problems among immigrants in the country are asylum seekers (including their children). Otherwise, if one generalises, foreign children have rather good or excellent results in school. (*According to No. 20 - diplomats represent a specific, rather isolated group.*)
- 3) Knowledge of the Czech language is a key issue when integrating into the Czech host society.
- 4) The period that is the most complicated and in which children have the most problems are the first months after entering the country and starting education.
- 5) There are some differences in how successful individual ethnic immigrant communities are at learning Czech and, consequently, integrating in the Czech society. (Asian groups, particularly the Vietnamese, belong to the most successful). Some other differences by basic sociodemographic characteristics were indicated (e.g. in relation to children themselves - a gender dimension; in relation to children's parents – educational level or professional position). *However, as interviewee No. 21 mentions, among the Vietnamese, a community is not homogeneous and "it is composed of several subgroups (especially due to competition based on business interests)."*

- 6) There were indications that the level of knowledge of the Czech language and the level of integration may be conditioned by some other factors, such as the openness/closeness of a community and its possible support, adhering to one's cultural heritage, the geographical position of the immigrants' country of origin, former experiences in the Czech environment, future plans, the attitude and interest of "VIPs" on both sides - within the ethnic community and within the school (the director).
- 7) There are no "standardized" tests through which the state can (comparatively) measure how successful its pupils (including foreigners) are.
- 8) There was no evidence of racism and xenophobia experienced and directed against foreign children at schools in the Czech Republic.
- 9) Regarding the „foreign children issue,“ no nation-wide sophisticated programmes were run by the state.¹⁵⁷

To summarize, the whole issue of foreign children and their integration in Czech host society is worth looking into. Despite, not having any serious problems thus far and having some basic „hard“ data, there are still important questions that await answers, and there are problems one should tackle. The most important is to adhere to a complex approach – to work not only with individual children, but also with whole families. Such research is a challenging task, but the results could help both the immigrants and the state. However, fulfilling such a task is another story indeed.

Table A. Foreign children at basic and high schools in the Czech Republic, selected characteristics, academic year 2002/2003

Foreign children / type of school	Basic Schools	High Schools
Foreigners (F) - Total	10,406	2,938
(F) from EU	243	164
(F) from other European countries	5,984	2,027
(F) from other countries and not available data	4,179	747
(F) from Slovakia	1,268	396
(F) from Russia	1,005	494
(F) from Ukraine	2,467	630
(F) from Vietnam	2,763	366

Source: Internal materials of the Institute for Information in Education

Note: Out of 10,406 foreign children who attended basic schools, 5,563 were holders of permanent residence permits, 4,497 were issued temporary visas, and 442 had been granted asylum.

Out of 2,938 foreign children who attended high schools, 1,882 were holders of permanent residence permits, 1,006 of temporary visas and 50 were those who got asylum.

At the same time, 3,083 foreign children attended kindergartens.

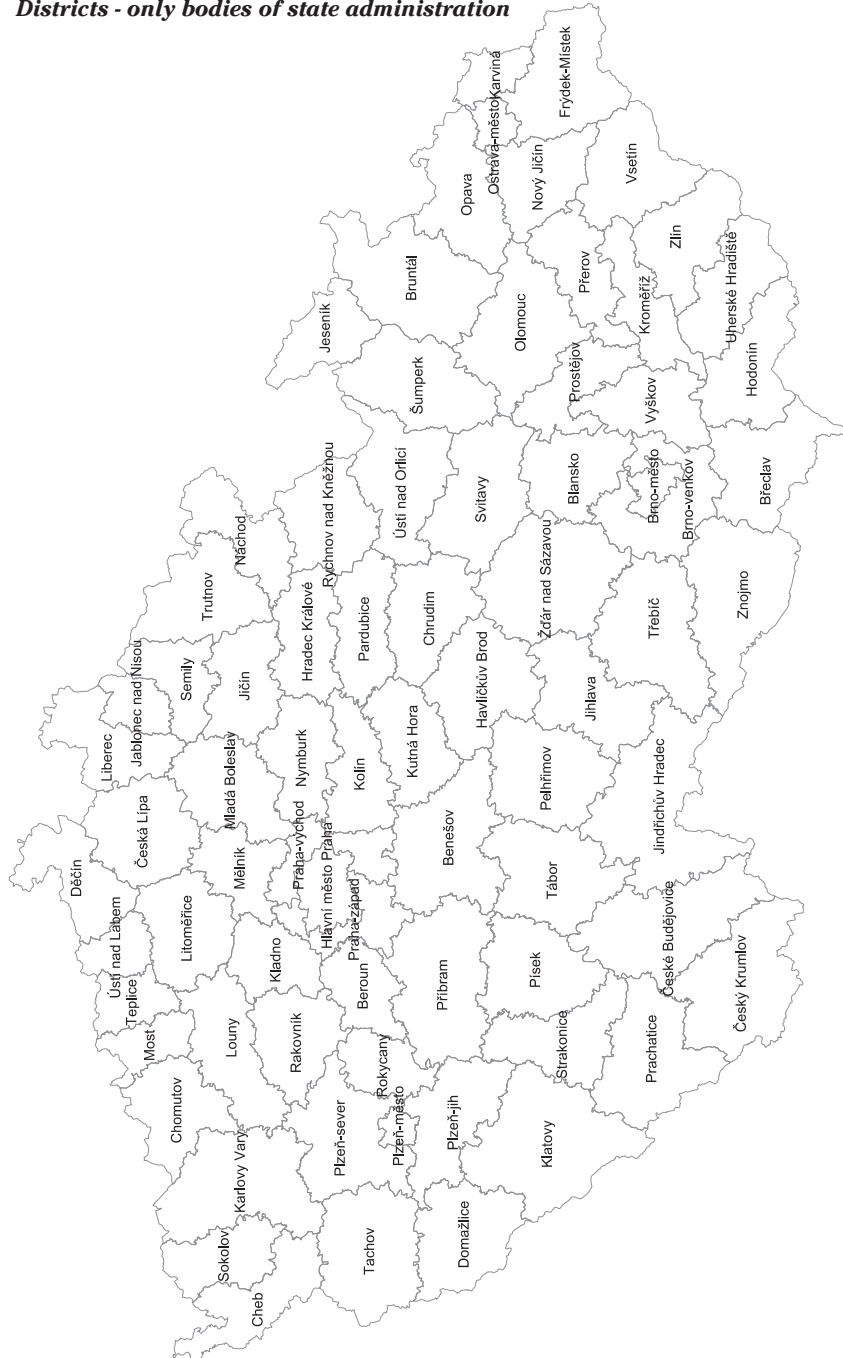
¹⁵⁷ There is "only" the programme GO that is to generally support integration in a class/school groups (interviewee No. 20). It is based on courses on three topics - adaptation to a new study environment, addiction and sex

APPENDIX II: List of interviewed experts – their employer or position - with their identification numbers

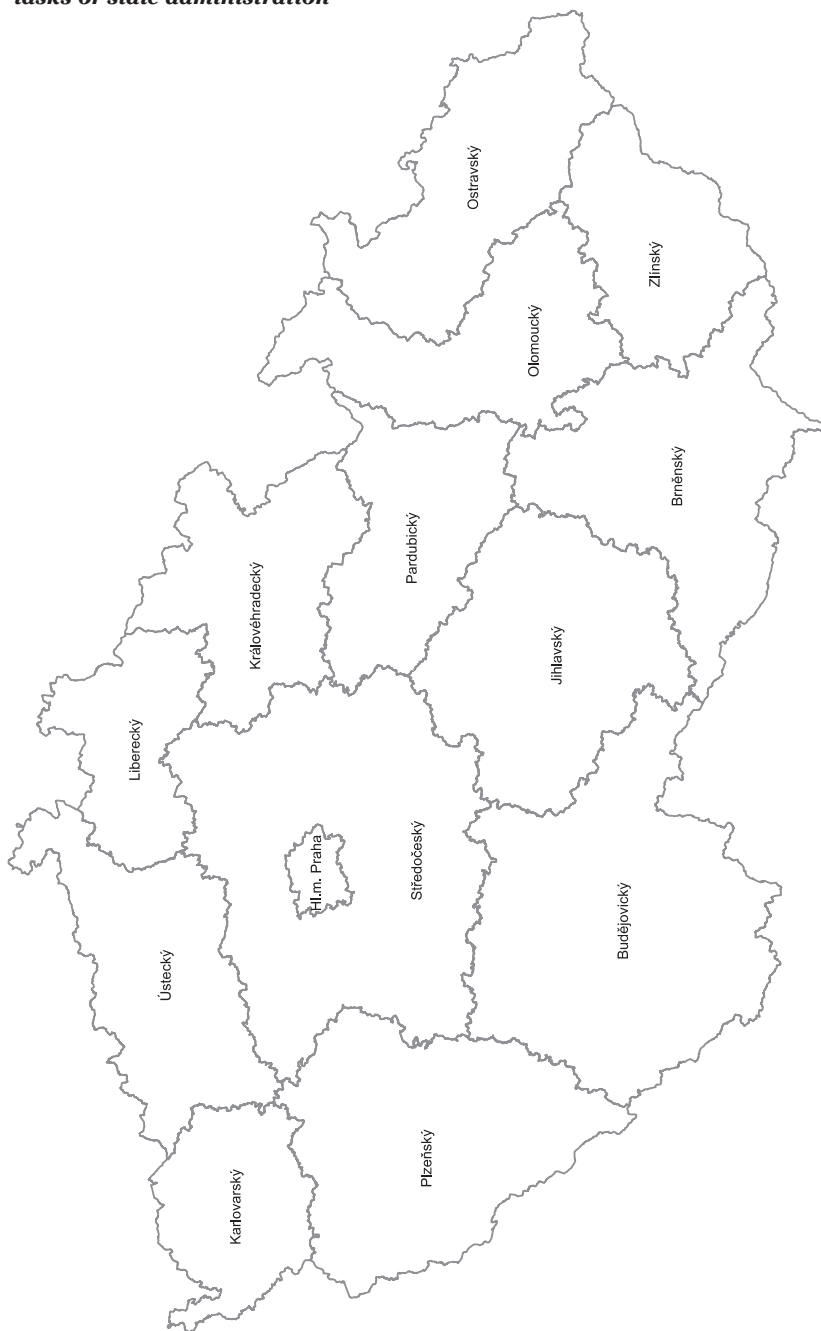
- No. 1: The Ministry of Industry and Trade
- No. 2: The Ministry of the Interior, Department for Asylum and Migration Policy
- No. 3: The Ministry of the Interior, Department for Asylum and Migration Policy
- No. 4: The Ministry of the Interior, Department for Asylum and Migration Policy
- No. 5: The Ministry of the Interior, Department of Security Policy
- No. 6: The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- No. 7: Expert (diplomatic service)
- No. 8: The Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of the Alien and Border Police
- No. 9: The Czech Catholic Charity
- No. 10: The Counseling Centre for Integration
- No. 11: The Counseling Centre for Refugees
- No. 12: The Organization for Aid to Refugees
- No. 13: The Association of Chinese Living in the Czech Republic
- No. 14: UNHCR Praha
- No. 15: The People in Need Foundation
- No. 16: IOM Praha
- No. 17: IOM Praha
- No. 18: The Word 21
- No. 19: The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
- No. 20: Jan Kepler High School, Praha
- No. 21: Basic School Meteorologická 181, Praha
- No. 22: The Czech School Inspection
- No. 23: The Multicultural centre
- No. 24: IOM Praha
- No. 25: Researcher (ethnologist)
- No. 26: The People in Need Foundation
- No. 27: Jan Kepler High School and Truhlarska High School, Praha
- No. 28: Researcher, representative of Ukrainian community in Czech Republic
- No. 29: The Ukrainian Initiative
- No. 30: Assistant for street children in Prague (streetwork project Šance)

APPENDIX III: Maps and Graphs

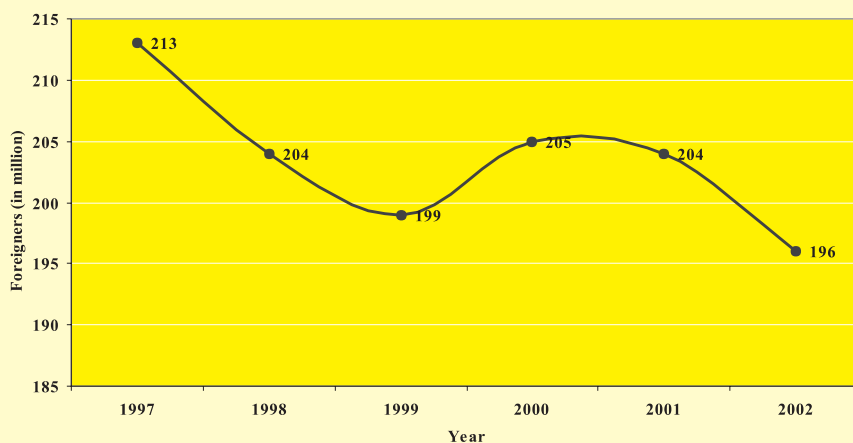
**Map 1. Former administrative divisions of the Czech Republic;
Districts - only bodies of state administration**



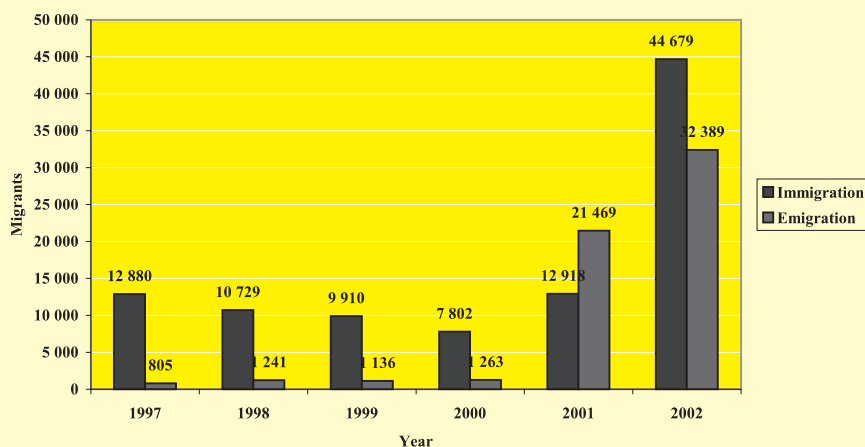
**Map 2. Contemporary administrative divisions of the Czech Republic
(as of 1 January 2000); New self-governing units with delegated
tasks of state administration**



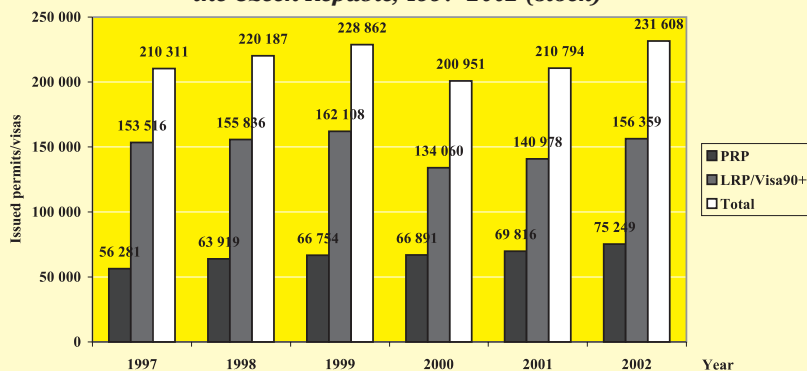
Graph 1. For important details and explanatory notes please see the text and respective tables.



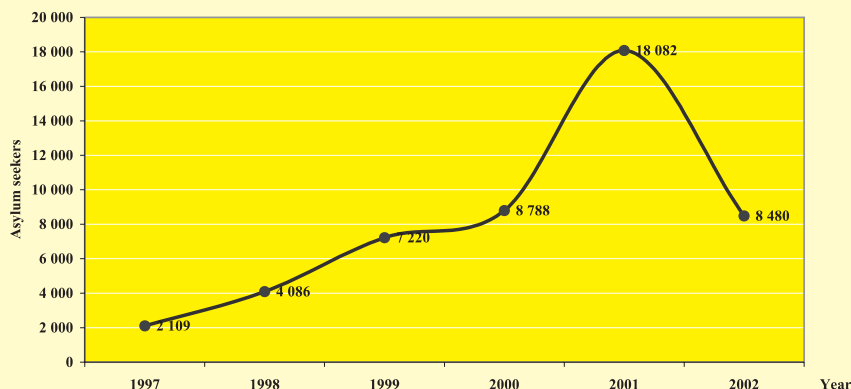
Graph 2. Registered "permanent migration" in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flow)



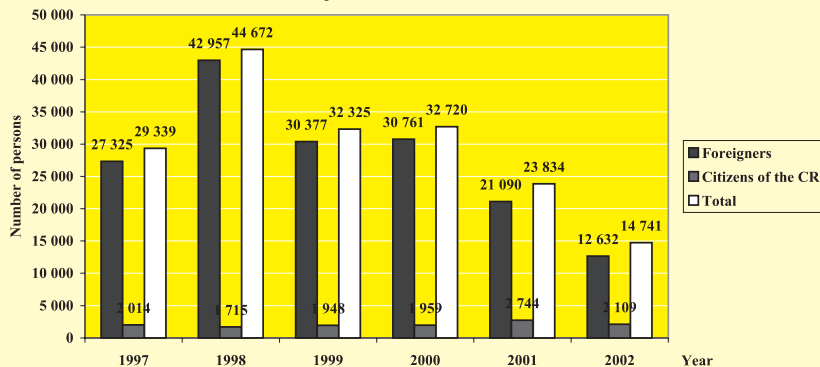
Graph 3. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and long-term residence permits/visas for a period exceeding 90 days, the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)



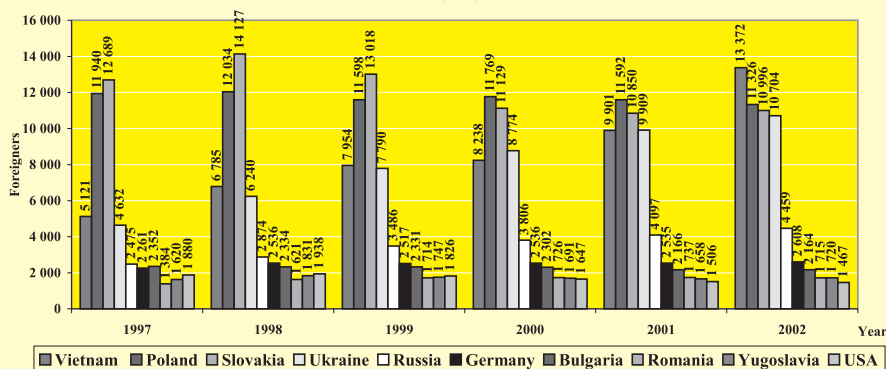
Graph 4. Foreigners asking for asylum in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flow)



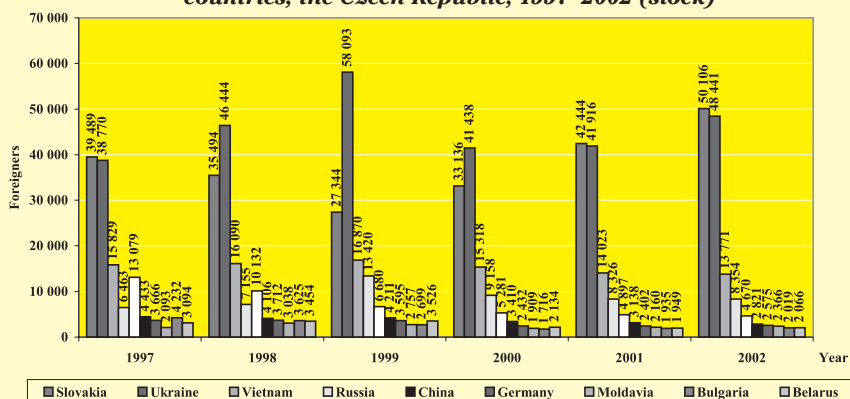
Graph 5. Persons caught when illegally trying to cross a state border of the Czech Republic, 1997–2002



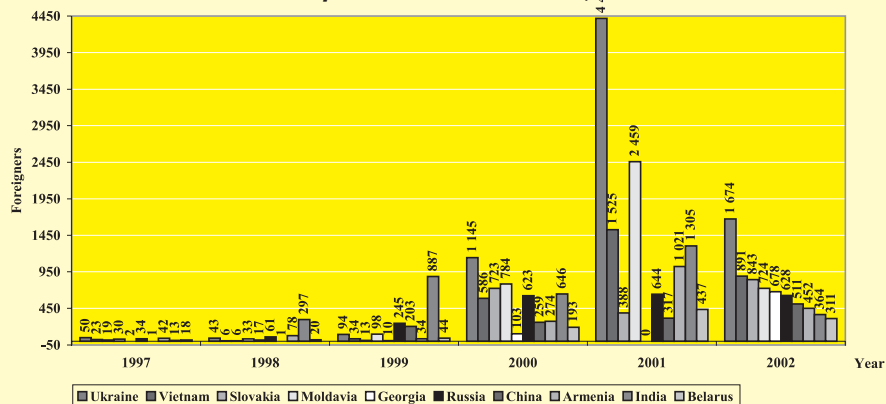
Graph 6. Foreigners with permanent residence permits by individual important source countries, the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)



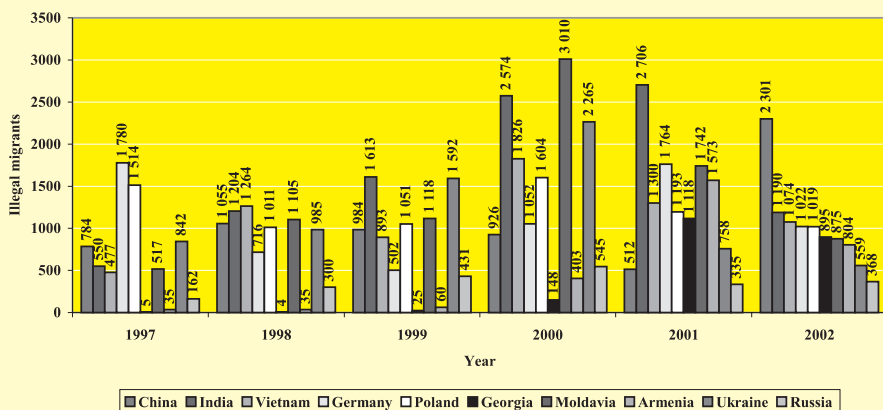
Graph 7. Foreigners with long-term residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days by individual important source countries, the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)



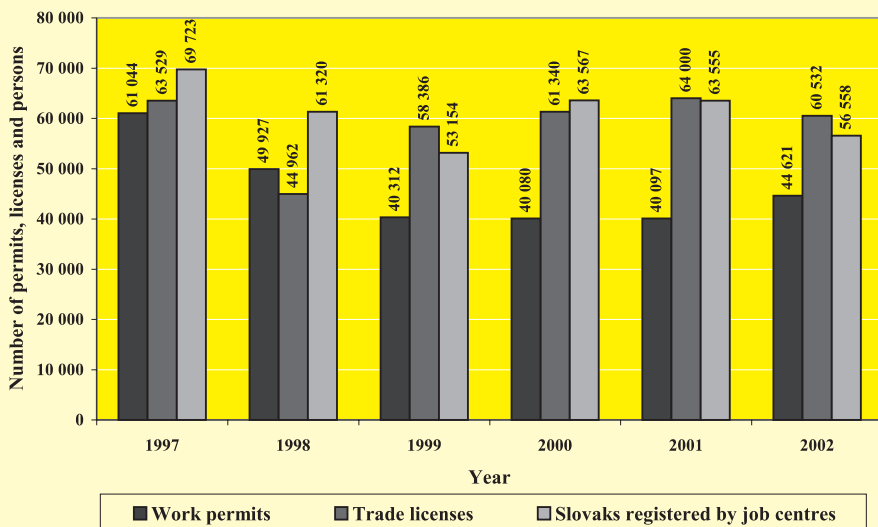
Graph 8. Foreigners asking for asylum in the Czech Republic by individual important source countries, 1997–2002



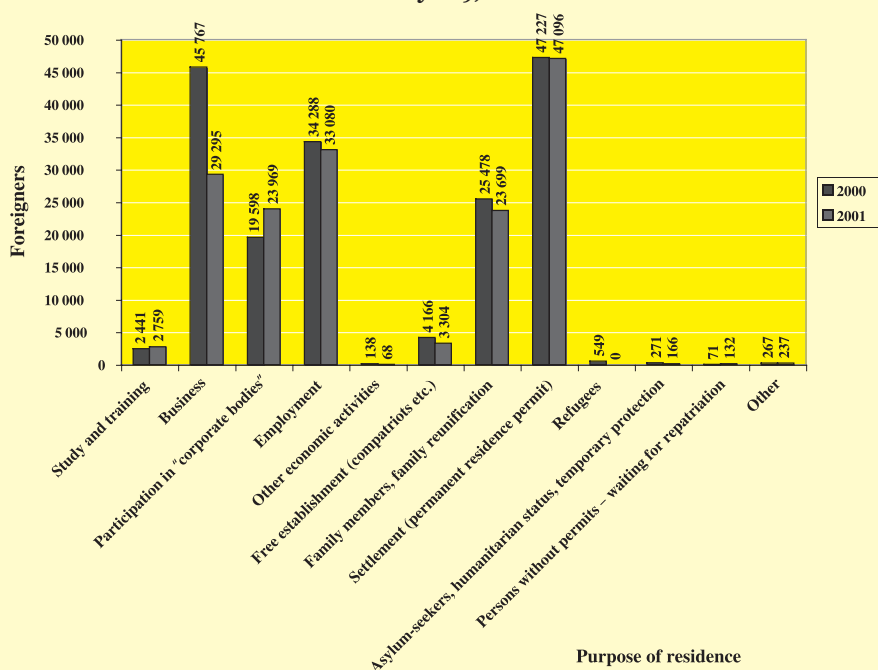
Graph 9. Foreigners caught when trying to illegally cross a state border of the Czech Republic by important source countries, 1997–2002



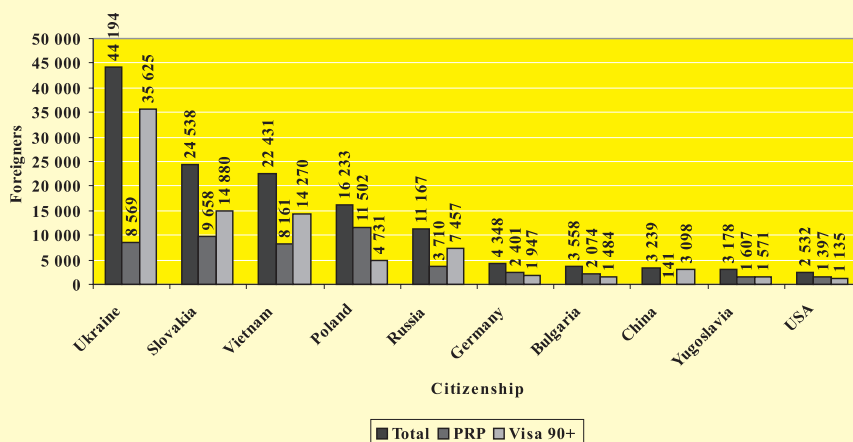
Graph 10. Main types of economic immigration (foreigners - holders of work permits, job licenses and Slovaks registered by job centres) in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (stock)



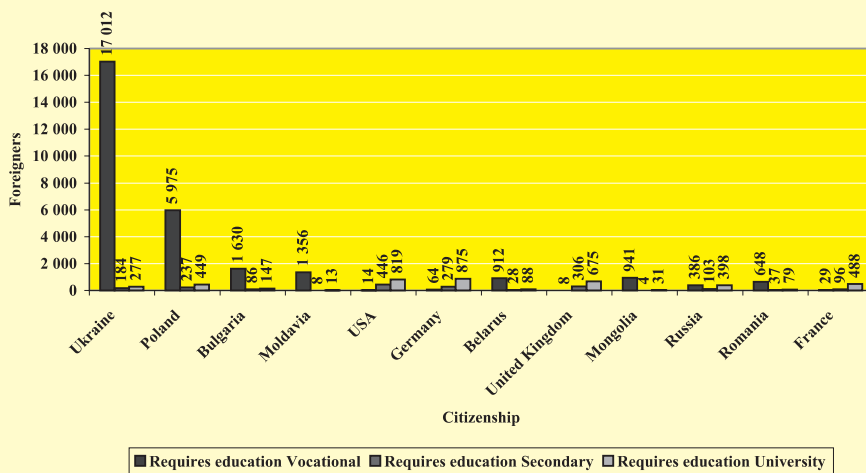
Graph 11. Foreigners in the Czech Republic by purpose of their stay/residence (international taxonomy, those with length of residence over 1 year), 2000–2001



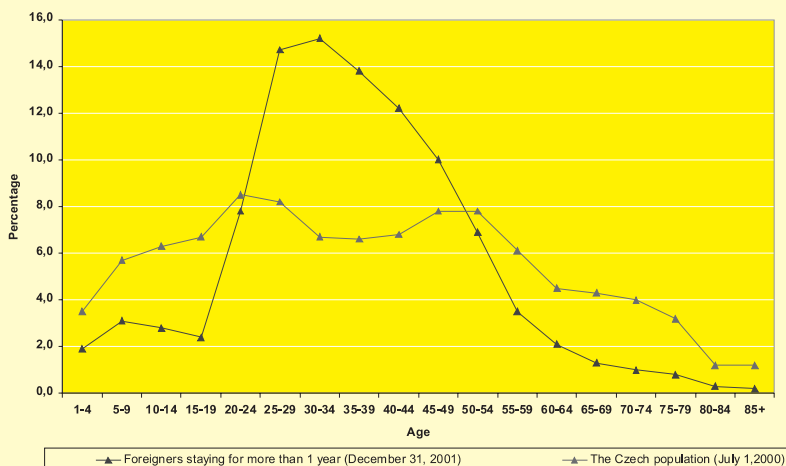
Graph 12. Foreigners with permanent residence permits and visas exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by individual important source countries, the Czech Republic, 2001



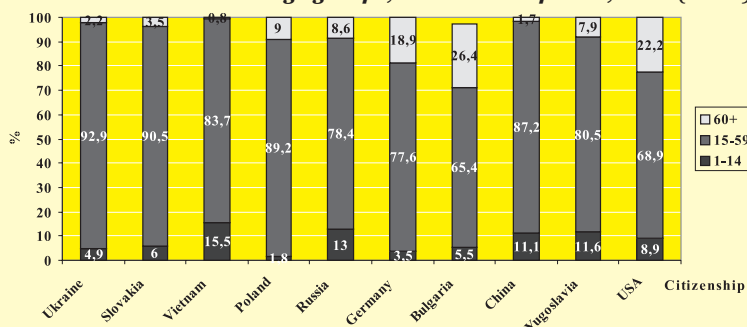
Graph 13. Foreigners - holders of valid work permits by individual important source countries, type of a permit, 2001 (stock)



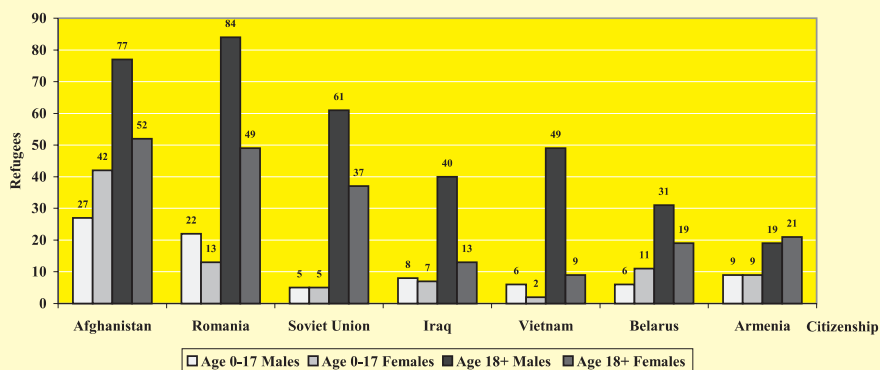
Graph 14. Age structure: the Czech population versus foreigners



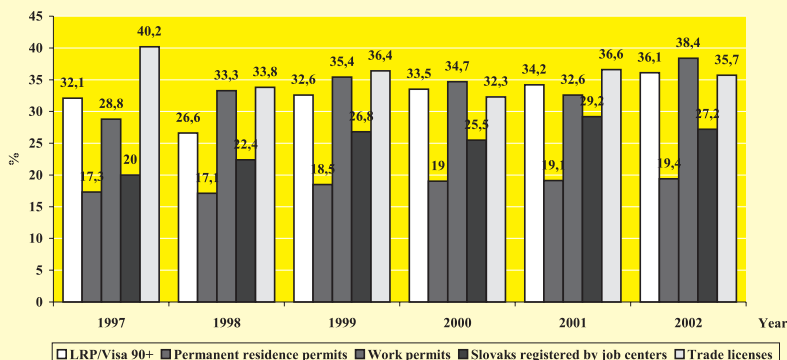
Graph 15. Foreigners with long-term residence permits and visas for a period exceeding 90 days (those with length of residence longer than 1 year) by individual important source countries and by selected age groups, the Czech Republic, 2001 (stock)



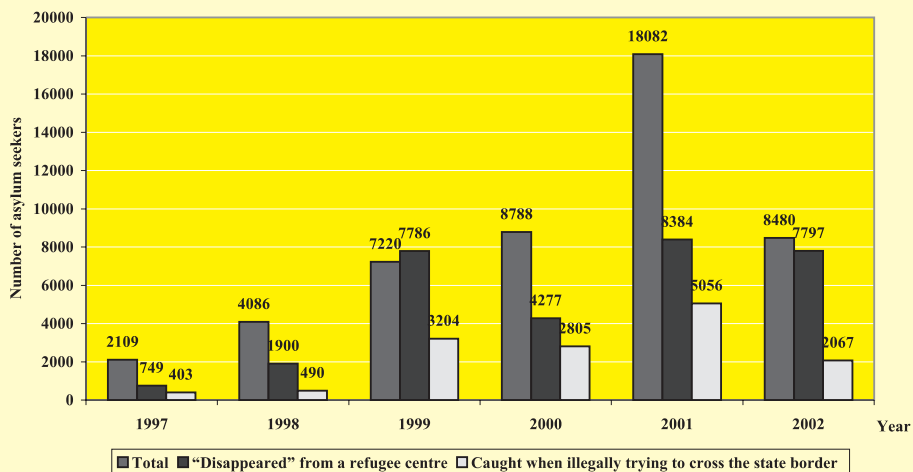
Graph 16. Foreigners who have been granted asylum and had it valid as of December 31, 2001, by the most important source countries and by age and gender (stock)



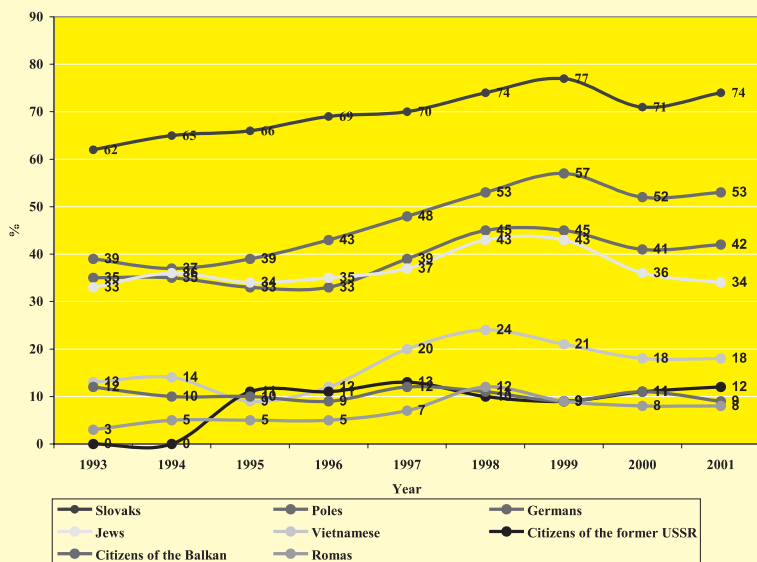
Graph 17. Share of Prague of the whole Czech Republic - individual selected immigration statuses, 1997-2002 (stock)



Graph 18. Asylum seekers and "quasi-asylum seekers" in the Czech Republic, 1997–2002 (flows)



Graph 19. Good attitude towards selected ethnicities - population of the Czech Republic, 1993–2001, in %



Sharing Experience...

Accession to the EU is expected to bring about changes in migratory routes and destinations, as well as societal changes in the future EU member states. How do new migration trends affect the local societies of these countries? How is the integration of migrants possible in societies marked mostly by emigration throughout the 1990ies? Which approaches do governments envisage in the different countries? Are they becoming countries of immigration – what can be expected after May 2004?

This booklet is part of a product of comprehensive research and analysis of migration trends in each of six participating EU accession countries. The research project has been supported by the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, under the European Social Fund budget line *“Analysis of and research on the social situation, demography and the family”* and has been managed by IOM Vienna.

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