

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF MIGRATION FOR ECONOMIC PURPOSES OF RURAL POPULATION FROM THE PODHALE REGION**

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**Abstract.** The presented study takes up the issues of migration for economic purposes experienced by rural population coming from two Podhale districts: Czarny Dunajec and Poronin and focuses on social and economic consequences of this phenomenon – both in its positive and negative aspect. The research was conducted on a 90-people sample of adult inhabitants of the districts by means of a survey questionnaire. It was addressed to people who directly (emigrated themselves) or indirectly (due to emigration of a member of the closest family) experienced migration for economic purposes. Analyzing the economic effects of migration, it is essential to pay attention to the improvement of the situation of families (increasing the standard and quality of life) and loss posed by the outflow of labour. Among the social consequences of migration in both municipalities is difficult to identify those that can provide a significant adverse change in the social structure and the functioning of migrant families – for this state of affairs is influenced mainly by regular, working abroad and short-term migrations.

**Key words:** migrations, social effects, economic effects, rural population

### **INTRODUCTION**

The phenomenon of migration is characterized by a multi-dimensional nature and consequently we are dealing with interdisciplinary research over its essence. It is an object of interest of several scientific disciplines and is analyzed at different geographical levels. In literature on the subject related to the concerned phenomena, many definitions of migration may be found. The lack of an explicit definition of the discussed process is caused mainly by a great number of theories, levels of analysis, aspects and stages as well as its classification and typology.

In the encyclopaedic outline migrations (journeys, spatial mobility) consist in “relatively permanent change of the place of residence by entities or social groups within a specific space” [Bokszański 1999, p. 244]. In the research of the National Statistical Office (GUS) [2003, p. 23] migrations of population are understood as “movement of population associated with change in place of residence for permanent or temporary residence and consisting in crossing the administrative border of the basic territorial unit”. Migration is thus a change of district of residence, and in the case of rural-urban district, moving from urban areas to rural or vice versa. Migration is also called a change of country of residence. The surveys carried out by the National Statistical Office (GUS) do not regard change of the address within the same district, regardless of its type, as migration. Migration also does not include short-term movement that lasts up to three months inclusive and movement of tourist nature and the so-called commuting, namely travel between towns of residence and work or learning [GUS 2003].

Within migration two phenomena may be distinguished, namely immigration and emigration. The first one consists in inflow of social entities or entire groups to the area of a given administrative entity in order to settle within its area, while the other one applies to outflow of population from an administratively specific area in order to settle elsewhere. Both forms, as Giddens says [2005, p. 282] “constitute global patterns of migration, connecting countries of migrants’ origin with target countries and contribute to cultural and ethnic enrichment of many societies, shape their demographic growth as well as the business and the social one”.

Owing to the subject matter adopted in this study it is worth defining the phenomenon of migration for economic purposes. It consists in “spatial movements of entities or social groups that are professionally active” [Zamojski 1997, p. 15]. Migrations for economic purposes are done to obtain financial resources necessary to maintain present forms of life and management, or to obtain funds for upgrading the standard of one’s own life and the life of the family members. In Musiał’s [2009] opinion: “the process significantly or even decisively affects on face socio-economic sub-regions, and its impact varies depending on the type of migration, its purpose and economic effects of migration in relation to the sub-region”.

The typology of migration for economic purposes is based mainly on the socio-professional status of migrants. An additional criterion is migration duration and the type of migration cycle. Occupation as well as the level of qualifications on the other hand are characteristics that clearly reflect the aforementioned status of migrants. On their basis such types of migration for economic purposes can be separated as e.g.: migrations of highly-qualified employees who are representatives of the so-called freelance professions, migrations of employees with secondary vocational education, migrations of people without a particular profession (most often young people searching for better perspectives of life beyond family areas), migrations of non-qualified people, who are looking for a paid job, as they have no possibility to do it on the domestic market, seasonal and temporary migrations of different time duration undertaken by rural population in any other time free from farm tasks and regarded as additional work, intended to maintain the previous social status [Zamojski 1997].

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The presented study deals with the issues of migration for economic purposes experienced by rural population coming from two Podhale districts: Czarny Dunajec and Poronin, and focuses mainly on social and economic consequences of this phenomenon – both in its positive and negative aspect. It is worth mentioning that the surveyed districts can be found within the Podhale, a region which, as compared to the whole Poland, is characterized by particular migration processes intensification and is famous for long traditions related to departures for economic purposes.

The research was carried out in 2011 on a 90-people sample of adult inhabitants of both districts using a survey questionnaire. It was addressed to people who directly (emigrated themselves) or indirectly (due to emigration of a member of the closest family) experienced migration for economic purposes.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Economic effects of migration for economic purposes of inhabitants of the surveyed districts**

The economic consequences for the places of workforce outflow in scientific literature and in the studies are examined both in positive and negative context. Economic benefits resulting from the concerned phenomena, to which the attention of researchers is drawn most often, are, above all: decrease in unemployment, flow of capital from abroad as well as growth in wealth in a given community. Negative consequences in the economic sphere are mainly: outflow of workforce, including highly-qualified and educated employees, structural inflation and loss of financial benefits under taxes etc. paid by emigrants [Markowski 2008].

Analyzing the economic effects of migration for economic purposes, attention should be paid to, in particular, how they influence the change of material situation of respondents and their families. As it seems from the research conducted, foreign trips of inhabitants of Czarny Dunajec and Poronin involve mainly positive economic effects. Work abroad, both by respondents and their closest family, significantly affects increasing material status of families of emigrants – in both cases more than three fourths of respondents emphasized improvement in the material situation of their family (a small percentage of the respondents did not feel improvement but nobody was certain). The problem with assessment of financial status change of a family after leaving abroad concerned similar percentage in the examined cases and in the case of persons departing, from their immediate family in both districts – 15 and 18% respectively.

In order to get to know other economic consequences resulting from migration for economic purposes among population of the surveyed districts, the most important directions of intended use of financial means originating from abroad should be examined. The largest percentage among respondents who earn money abroad spends the money earned there on current expenses. It usually involves increase in standard of living and development of local entrepreneurship and trade. One fifth of the respondents invest in purchase

of apartments or building a house, which results in development of the local real estate market and construction industry. A significant percentage of emigrants spends funds from work abroad on helping the family that frequently is in worse material situation. Almost every tenth surveyed treats, as the most important objective of intended use of the money earned abroad, education of family members and the remaining few respondents spend the mentioned means on recreation, purchase of a car or in the case of other expenses – purchase of electronic equipment.

A very similar situation may be observed in the case of most important objectives of intended use of cash received from members of the closest family who earned money outside the borders of Poland. As it results from research, almost three fourths of foreign financial streams are used for current expenses, purchase of a flat or building a house and help for the family. Also as in the previous case, the lowest percentage are expenses on recreation or purchase of a car. What is interesting, both the money received from abroad and earned there, the respondents used to start own business to a minimum extent.

Apart from benefits on economic level related to cash inflow from abroad, there are also negative effects of migration for economic purposes. In the case of the surveyed districts it applies, above all, to workforce outflow. The respondents and the closest members of their families, before starting work abroad were professionally active people – in both districts respectively 48 and 53% of the surveyed. Such a situation results in shortages on the labour market, often among qualified employees. It took place particularly after Poland's accession to the European Union and opening of new labour markets. A significant outflow of workforce, especially construction employees, forced a pretty big increase in remuneration in this sector of economy. Emigration of professionally active people also means loss of capital receipts under taxes or social insurance. A positive effect in the concerned sphere and at the same time concerning workforce is migration for economic purposes of people who remain unemployed. It has impact on decrease in unemployment level on the local labour market. This phenomenon applied to a similar percentage of respondents and members of their families starting work abroad – 15% in the first and 16% in the second analyzed case. Economic loss are also trips abroad made by pupils and students, particularly in the case of emigration for permanent residence – this situation is connected to a significant extent with the loss of capital invested in their education. This problem applied to a similar, quite significant percentage of respondents (17%) and members of their closest family who experienced migration for economic purposes (18%). Drejerska [2009] indicates that having educating and additional skills are important determinants of economic activity of the rural population. In her opinion higher education (3.6-fold) and additional qualifications (2.3-fold) reduces the probability of economic inactivity, “which confirms the theory of human capital accent more job opportunities for people with a higher level of human capital”. Unfortunately, very often young people have such an activity beyond the borders of our country.

Economic consequences of migration for economic purposes, among others from the area of the Podhale region, were analysed in an interesting research conducted by the Department of Analyses and Forecasts of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Poland [2007]. In the case of the aforementioned region attention was paid to a tough economic situation and centuries-old family traditions as the main determinants of trips

abroad for economic purposes. Investigating the economic consequences of the mentioned phenomenon for a local labour market, they focused on double consequences of capital inflow from abroad. The first is deterioration of employment rate in the country caused by treatment of foreign transfers as sufficient measures for current expenses and life (which seems to be confirmed by research conducted by the author).

On the other hand the inflow of capital results in lightening the accumulative barrier and investment increase, which, in turn, positively affects productivity and employment. In the final report it was diagnosed that regions characterized by particular concentration of the migration phenomenon, including the Podhale, are usually characterized by higher standard of life of their community. It mostly applies to better comfort of apartments and their equipment in household devices, as well as better sanitary infrastructure. The research proved that transfer of financial measures abroad is also spent, though to a definitely lower extent, on the investment sphere and not only on current expenses or increasing the standard of life. In the Podhale it becomes evident by accommodation base modernization for tourists and increase in the number of small companies operating in this industry [Department of Analyses and Forecasts 2007].

### **Social effects of migration for economic purposes of inhabitants of the surveyed districts**

Apart from economic effects of migration for economic purposes, an equally important category are their social consequences. In the research over the mentioned phenomenon they are examined mainly in negative categories. Negative, social effects of migration for economic purposes are, first of all, weakening bonds and destabilization of balance in families, disintegration of marriages or disturbances within the social structure [Kępińska 2008]. Less frequently, attention is paid to their positive consequences such as: promotion in the social hierarchy as a result of growth in wealth or development of local communities by imitating modern patterns of behaviour, taken from migration experience. The analysis below focuses on social consequences of migration for economic purposes which are experienced by the inhabitants of Czarny Dunajec and Poronin.

Analyzing social effects of migration for economic purposes, attention should be paid, in particular, to the effect and degree to which they affect family relations. As it results from the research, foreign trips in both districts in most cases do not result in changes of family relations – the situation is almost the same in the case of respondents working abroad and members of their families who emigrated for economic purposes (ca. 60% of the selected answers for the response “have not changed”). What is interesting, a part of the examined families (ca. 10%) experienced even improvement in family bonds, while almost every fifth respondent had a problem with evaluation of the degree of changes that took place in family relations.

According to the respondents family relations deterioration took place to a greater extent after emigration for economic purposes of a member of the closest family than in the case of respondents themselves. Negative effects of migration for economic purposes did not however apply to a significant percentage of the surveyed and their families (only ca. 18%). Undoubtedly a significant meaning in this case can be attributed to the development of means of communication namely common access to the Internet and cellular

telephony, low costs of calls, including video calls. All this is favourable for keeping in touch between emigrants and members of the family remaining in Poland, which, in turn, contributes to maintaining family bonds at an unchanged level and maintaining positive relations between active and passive participants of migration processes for economic purposes.

Both the respondents and the members of their closest family migrating for economic purposes in the vast majority of cases come to Poland regularly – this applies to ca. two thirds of the surveyed cases. Such a situation certainly affects the aforementioned issue of changes in family relations as a result of migration for economic purposes. Regular comebacks to Poland are favourable for maintaining good family relations and do not cause significant weakening of bonds.

The consequences of migration for economic purposes in the social sphere are significantly affected by the time of stay abroad. The longer the absence of an emigrant in the country and among relatives, the more socially unfavourable balance of this departure. Among respondents the situation does not look alarming, as their predictions with regard to the length of departure are mostly “season” or “no longer than a year” (the lowest percentage was constituted by permanent stay – on average ca. 5% of the selected answers).

The next, very important consequences of migration for economic purposes at the social level is change in the model and functioning of emigrants’ families. Departure of a family member forces taking their roles and obligations over by other people. After starting paid work by the surveyed emigrants from Czarny Dunajec and Poronin, their roles were taken over by above all: spouses – 52% and parents – 26% of all cases, and only in four percent these responsibilities were taken by their children. After departure of almost one-fifth of respondents nobody took over family, domestic or farm obligations. The situation seems to be slightly otherwise when taking over obligations after the closest members of the family of respondents who emigrated for economic purposes. Just like previously, these are mostly spouses and parents, 34 and 24% respectively, ca. 11% of them entrusted their duties to children and almost one third people did not want their duties to be taken by anybody. Hence, in the majority of cases, both respondents themselves and the leaving members of their families, someone took over responsibilities of the emigrants. Such a situation is mostly a result of the fact that 82% of the leaving among closest family members of respondents are married persons.

Considering social, positive consequences of migration for economic purposes of rural population from the surveyed districts, what can be mainly indicated is promotion in the social hierarchy. This applies to particular entities or entire families which as a result of trips abroad for economic purposes have significantly increased their material status. Social promotion being a consequence of growth in wealth is particularly visible among families with migration traditions of many generations.

To recapitulate, it may be assumed that migrations for economic purposes among rural population from the surveyed districts does not involve significant, negative consequences at the social level. Despite the general impression that persons directly experiencing separation because of starting work abroad are experiencing a kind of trouble and temporary family problems, in the eyes of the respondents these trips did not affect their families in a definitely destructive manner.

Interesting research was conducted by priest Stańkowski [2007] on the social effects of emigration for economic purposes. He focused on the effect of the mentioned phenomenon with regard to raising children and teenagers and his research covered the area of the whole Podhale. Its results confirmed the opinion that trips abroad for economic purposes are mainly the result of bad situation in the local environment, unemployment and lack of perspectives for development. It also invalidated the hypothesis that the phenomenon of migration for economic purposes in a definite and destructive manner affected functioning of the surveyed families. The above research also did not confirm the assumptions concerning educational problems among children and teenagers caused by the absence of the earning parent abroad.

## CONCLUSIONS

Migration movements in the old periods of history particularly resulted from such factors as wars, natural disasters or persecution on religious or political background. At present, these factors play a small role in generating migration and its primacy was lost for economic reasons.

The surveyed inhabitants of Czarny Dunajec and Poronin who experienced migration for economic purposes, as well as members of their closest family, pointed out as the main reasons of trips abroad mainly the desire to improve the financial situation and possibility to start a better paid work than in Poland. These premises of purely economic nature are mainly the effect of unemployment and low earnings on the local job market. Determinants beyond economy related to few cases of emigration. When analyzing the economic effects of migration for economic purposes, attention should be paid to, in particular, the fact that more than three-fourth respondents noticed improvement in the material situation of their family. Also the manner of use of independently earned money or money received from abroad is very important. In both cases these funds are mostly spent on current expenses, building a house or purchase of a flat and help for the family. It therefore mainly aids the growth in consumption in the analyzed area, and thereby development of trade and services. The aforementioned categories and ways of spending the money are used to increase the standard and comfort of living for persons experiencing migration for economic purposes.

Looking at migrations for economic purposes in terms of their negative economic consequences attention should be paid to losses related to the outflow of workforce and emigration of qualified employees often creates a problem for local companies with finding appropriate professionals.

Social effects of migration for economic purposes, to which presently special attention is paid, include negative changes in the social structure or migration families functioning, leading even to their disintegration. Referring to the surveyed districts, on the basis of the conducted research, it is difficult to state that emigration for economic purposes of its inhabitants implies significant and undesirable consequences in the concerned sphere. In the case of most respondents and emigrating members of their closest family there is the opinion that after their departure family relations have not changed (their deterioration was emphasized by insignificant percentage of those examined). Such a state of affairs is

affected by, first of all, regular comebacks of those working abroad and short-term trips. Among social consequences of migration for economic purposes in both districts it is difficult to indicate the ones that can prove significantly unfavourable changes within the social structure or the age of the local community. Undoubtedly, this situation results from high population growth [Demographic Yearbook 2012] and not frequent trips abroad for permanent residence, which, to a significant extent, balances the outflow of population.

Positive social effects of migration for economic purposes of the inhabitants of Czarny Dunajec and Poronin should be sought mostly in promotion in the social hierarchy by families that significantly increased their material status through work of its members abroad.

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## SPOŁECZNO-EKONOMICZNE SKUTKI MIGRACJI ZAROBKOWYCH LUDNOŚCI WIEJSKIEJ PODHAŁA

**Streszczenie.** Prezentowane opracowanie podejmuje problematykę zjawiska migracji zarobkowych doświadczanych przez ludność wiejską pochodzącą z dwóch gmin podhalańskich: Czarnego Dunajca oraz Poronina i skupia się na społecznych i ekonomicznych skutkach tego zjawiska, zarówno w pozytywnym, jak i negatywnym aspekcie. Badania zostały przeprowadzone na 90-osobowej próbie dorosłych mieszkańców, przy wykorzystaniu kwestionariusza ankiety. Były one skierowane do osób, które w stopniu bezpośrednim (same emigrowały) lub pośrednim (ze względu na emigrację członka najbliższej rodziny) doświadczyły migracji zarobkowych. Analizując ekonomiczne skutki migracji zarobkowych, należy przede wszystkim zwrócić uwagę na poprawę sytuacji materialnej rodzin (podwyższenie standardu i komfortu życia) oraz na straty, jakie niesie ze sobą odpływ siły roboczej.



Wśród społecznych następstw migracji zarobkowych w obu gminach trudno wskazać takie, które mogą świadczyć o znacząco niekorzystnych zmianach w strukturze społecznej czy funkcjonowaniu rodzin migracyjnych – na taki stan rzeczy mają wpływ przede wszystkim regularne powroty pracujących za granicą oraz krótkookresowe wyjazdy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** migracje, skutki społeczne, skutki ekonomiczne, ludność wiejska

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