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**A Socio-Economic
Portrait of Foreign
Students in Poland
– as Exemplified by
Students from Former
CIS Studying at WSB
University in Wrocław**

1. Introduction

We have currently been witnessing increased migration flows whose significance has also been growing in terms of economic, socio-cultural and political issues. Globalization and the expansion of the “world without borders” that comes with it (For more details, see, e.g. Kołodko 2008, p. 96) is making the movements of people ever easier. This leads to the emergence of multiple threats or new forms of risk (For more details, see: Beck 2002), yet, it also represents opportunities for both the participants of migrations and the areas for which these movements are heading. What is more, return migration may represent an important determinant of development of the areas left by immigrants, who later decide to return to their home country. Migration involves various categories of people and tends to be economic in its nature. Students also play a significant role in these movements, making up a specific category of immigrants.

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The result is that these movements are becoming an extremely interesting area of interdisciplinary studies. This paper also fits within the emerging research on immigrants. It aims to provide socio-economic characteristics of foreign students coming from the former CIS. The concept of socio-economic characteristics deployed in this paper is understood as variables on the demographic profile of this community. However, what we are mainly concerned with are the motives for immigration, the way of organizing life under new conditions emerging upon the arrival in a new country, plans for life and immigrants' business activity which is of key importance from this perspective. The main focus of the discussion presented in the paper is to identify adaptation mechanisms of foreign students, being a specific category of immigrants, for functioning in a new socio-economic environment.

Besides its cognitive value, the paper is also of practical interest, since it also makes, on the basis of the problems and barriers which foreign students encounter in Poland, general recommendations as to what can be done to ensure their better functioning in the new realities.

The foreign students under discussion represent a fairly specific immigrant collectivity. Their specificity results from their motives for leaving for another country. In this respect we tend to observe a certain duality of their attitude because, on the one hand, they indicate the desire to study as the official motive for their immigration, yet the second motive - the economic one - also emerges, as can be observed in their daily life. Not infrequently it is the second motive that turns into the dominant one. This assertion is further developed based on the empirical findings cited in the paper. The empirical research was carried out on a group of foreign students who attend Wrocław School of Banking and come from former member states of the CIS, mainly from Ukraine. (In the study population they represented 98% of the respondents. The remaining two persons came from Belarus and one from Russia). In the framework of the study the country of origin was irrelevant, the important factor being whether the student came from a country of the former CIS. It should be added that at WSB University in Wrocław there are foreign students originating from ~~from~~ countries other than the former CIS, but their number is small, and in view of the research objective they were not taken into account. The conclusions drawn from this research have been presented in light of theoretical concepts pertaining to migration motives and from a broader cognitive perspective relating to social attitudes of Poles towards immigrants. Examining the category of foreign students, it is worth posing the question as to

the extent of this phenomenon in contemporary Poland and therefore the paper provides references to the statistics illustrating general statistical characteristics of immigrants living in Poland, including foreign students.

2. Migration in theories

The causes and consequences of migration can be explained within the framework of many theories with the analysis becoming interdisciplinary in its nature. The concepts pertaining to this phenomenon show different types of migration. It can be divided into migration movements which are of international dimension and those which focus on the internal, local dimension. Apart from this division, migration can further be classified as mass or individual migration and according to the length of migratory distance (Łodziński 2013; Castles, Miller 2011, pp. 39–41). Furthermore, when divided according to its causes, the following types of migration can be distinguished:

- economic migration (job migration),
- political migration,
- demographic and sociological migration,
- climate migration.

Research on migration originates with the work of E. Ravenstein, who identified a number of patterns characteristic for this phenomenon. He believes that there is a relationship between the size of migration and the level of economic development in the origin and destination areas. The bigger the difference, the greater the migration flow. Moreover, the size of the migration flow changes according to the economic situation. In times of economic prosperity of the area for which immigrants are heading there is growing disproportion between the areas of origin and destination. E. Ravenstein also suggests that the size of migration flows is also linked to political and cultural barriers or simply to the natural ones representing the so called indirect obstacles. He further argues that there are specific relationships between migration and distance. Since the vast majority of migrants decide to move only a short distance, when the migratory distance increases, the number of migrants decreases. Migrants who travel long distances tend to head for big industrial and service centres. Women outnumber men in short-distance migrations. Also, E. Ravenstein's other important findings suggest that migration occurs in stages, covering specific trails which were once blazed by the first migrants. Migration movement has the effect of populating the areas along those trails at a later time. Every big migratory flow results in re-migration.

The findings asserting that migration is selective due to individual characteristics of migrants form an important part of E. Ravenstein's theory. What follows from them is that people's reactions to migration factors relating to the area of origin and destination vary and so do their abilities to overcome indirect obstacles. Their reactions depend on their age, gender, education, resourcefulness. The selectivity observed in migration is the result of people being more predisposed to migration at certain times of their lives, i.e. when they are young and before creating a family. Also, migration is selective because more women migrate on short distances while more men on long distances, which brings about the selection based on gender. Finally, the level of selection increases along with the increase of indirect obstacles, including the increase in distance. The greater number of difficulties to overcome during migration, the more significant decrease in the number of vulnerable and less active people. Thus, people who migrate are efficient, resourceful and entrepreneurial (Compare with: Kubiciel-Lodzińska 2012; Ravenstein 1989, p. 286).

Despite the fact that E. Ravenstein formulated his principles as early as in the 1880', it can still be said that:

Most of the principles Ravenstein formulated have not lost any of their topicality with the contemporary research on migration still drawing on them. This refers particularly to his finding that undertaking migration is mainly decided by economic considerations, as they are the key factors settling the question of whether or not to migrate. Moreover, universal are also his findings distinguishing between migration from villages and towns as well as between female and male migration. The principle stating that immigration (or re-emigration) follows emigration and that there is a link between economic development (and technological development) and the tendency to migrate is still valid today (Kubiciel-Lodzińska 2012, p. 29).

Nowadays, migration analyses have been enriched by new challenges arising due to globalization processes. A. Giddens points out, "migration is not a new phenomenon, yet it appears to grow as does global integration. It would seem that migration patterns across the world reflect rapid changes in economic, political and cultural bonds between individual countries" (Giddens A., 2004, p. 282). Additionally, while investigating migration which takes into account the global context, attention is being drawn to its intensification, an increase in the number of migrants, diversity of the migration types (economic, migration for settlement, refugee, etc. which can change easily) and the feminization of migration (women are beginning to play an increasingly bigger role, also in economic migration) (Por. Koryś, Okólski 2004, p. 10-11; Castles, Miller 2011, pp. 73-105).

Geography and demographic studies take interest in migration as they explore changes in territories and population numbers and it has been the subject of research for other social sciences as well.

Migration movements continue to be a phenomenon which economics finds of interest, since the migratory behaviour, for the most part, carries the implied meaning of improving living conditions and increasing one's income; while, in broader terms, labour migration triggers economic activity of people involved in it, thus having an important economic impact. Sociology is yet another science which shows interest in migration because it occurs at a specific place and time and in a specific social context, affecting the sending and receiving societies (Łodziński 2013, p. 6).

The sociological perspective of research on people's movements points, in particular, to the functioning of specific models of this phenomenon. A. Giddens outlines four such models: classic migration model, colonial model of migration, guest worker model and illegal model (Giddens A., 2004, p. 282). Apart from them, the existing sociological concepts exploring the migration issues can be divided into two lines of research. Firstly, the concepts related to the analysis of the social determinants of the migration decision-making. Secondly, those studying the migration behaviour and the functioning of migrants in the receiving communities (Górny, Kaczmarczyk 2003, pp. 14–16; Janicki 2007, pp. 285–304; Łodziński, Lange, Maksymowicz, Wyszyński, Leszczyński 2013, p. 6). These two standpoints evinced by the sociological research on migration are further refined in such theories as: migration networks theory, institutional theory, cumulative causation theory, push-factors theory, also called intervening opportunities theory, pull-factors theory, also called intervening obstacles theory (Janicki, 2007, pp. 285–304).

The theory of migration networks is based on the presumption that migration should be conceived as a chain of events and feedback loop. In light of this theory, migration arises as if by itself and it sustains itself. The key factor in making a decision whether or not to migrate is the relationship between the former and future migrants, "with the family and community playing a critical role in the migration networks" (Castles., Miller 2011, p. 49). According to the theory of migration networks, immigrants and re-immigrants remain an important source of information about migration, not only about the benefits it brings but also the problems and dangers. Furthermore, they are a source of assistance for newly arrived immigrants, not only in financial terms but also in terms of providing social and housing help (Łodziński 2013, p. 11).

Institutional theory of migration assumes that migration waves are caused by institutional links in that special organizations, including enterprises, respond to

the demand for migration. They organize migration and reduce the risk related to immigration as seen from the perspective of migrants themselves (Łodziński 2013, p. 12).

Cumulative causation theory argues that subsequent migration waves are the direct result of the earlier flows of migrants. It goes on explaining that every subsequent migration results from the existing networks of social, not individual, relationships. In its origin, migration arises because of the emergence of certain relationships, for example, disparities in the living standards between countries and subsequently it becomes by itself the cause of further migration (Janicki 2007, pp. 285–304).

The theory of intervening opportunities assumes that the reason behind migration is the existence of the so called intervening opportunities or alternative places of destination competing against one another in order to attract more migrants. The greater number of such opportunities between the two places in question, the smaller the flow of people between those places. Making a decision about migrating to a specific place is thus the result of the analysis carried out by potential migrants of variables of sociological nature (Janicki 2007, p. 285–304).

The theory of intervening obstacles is based on the assumption that all migration determinants, that is all those related to country of origin, destination, as well as intervening obstacles and personal factors may be perceived and valued differently by different people. This causes that the determinants become subjective and their perception at the level of individual migrants acquires more importance than their actual and objective significance. A simple pros and cons analysis does not decide straight away whether or not a migration phenomenon will occur. There must be a certain impulse capable of overcoming the reluctance to undertake the journey. This reluctance inhibits migration, yet at the same time it becomes a measure of attachment to one's home place. Only with overcoming this reluctance, can a migration decision be made (Janicki 2007, pp. 285-304).

On the other hand, the research on migration from the economic perspective draws on such theories as: the neoclassical theory, New Economics theory of migration, dual labour market theory.

According to the neoclassical theory, migration is a mechanism to redistribute labour resources. It is caused by disparities in demand and supply across various countries and regions. Workers move from low-wage regions to those places (countries) where wages are higher (Castles, Miller 2011,p. 41).

The new economics of migration sees the family which is organized into an economic entity, that is a household, as a primary unit of analysis. According

to its tenets, it is necessary to consider the making of a decision on migration within the family, and not to consider only individual persons. According to the theory's presumptions, while making migration decisions it is not only income that counts. The sense of relative deprivation towards others is also of considerable significance (Castles, Miller 2011, p. 44). The assumption here is that the better the position of the household against other important households which are the reference groups (e.g. neighbours), the weaker the tendency for migration. Hence, the conclusion tends to be that societies with great disparities in terms of income and living standards are more likely to migrate (Łodziński 2013, p. 9).

Dual labour market theory assumes that there is constant shortage of labour supply in highly developed countries due to labour market segmentation. In the economic systems of those countries, two sectors coexist next to each other: capital-intensive and labour-intensive. The employees of the primary sector have permanent jobs requiring high skills, while the labour force in the secondary sector perform low-skill jobs; on top of that, losing low-skill jobs is much easier. There is a clear reluctance to apply for a job in this sector by home-grown workers and this insufficient labour supply is filled and regulated by economic migration (Górny, Kaczmarczyk 2003, pp. 29–34).

Bearing in mind the causes and consequences of migration, which tend to be linked to political conditions, a valuable research perspective from which to view this phenomenon is also the political science perspective. What contributed to the launch of thorough studies of migration in the field of political science were the events in post-war Europe which transformed it into a continent of migrants. "Owing to the massive influx of immigrants and their families and the growing problem of integration, migration began to be perceived as an issue to be dealt with. Consequently, migration became the subject of a separate and active state policy and as such found itself among the topics of special interest for political scientists" (Lesińska 2001).

Within the framework of political science perspective, migration is a process leading to a change of political affiliation of a specific group, organization or, for that matter, a state. The nature of these changes can be voluntary or they can be forced not only by internal but also external conditions. Mass migration and migration to countries whose culture is very different compared to immigrants' culture "can have serious implications for political institutions and national identity" (Castles, Miller 2011, p. 63). Political science theories argue that migration, in particular international migration, is a deviation from the norms of political and social affiliation. These norms, which are the outcome of the

impact of the legal system, are at the same time the basis for the functioning of the nation's society. "In other words, a migrant is a "distortion" of the binding order; of the legal order (a violation of the political and legal sovereignty), as well as of the social and cultural one (weakening the integrity of the nation's society)" (Łodziński 2013 p. 12).

Today, within the theories of migration, the concepts pertaining to return migration are playing an increasingly important role, mainly explaining the reasons for re-emigration. On the basis of experiences of many predominantly Western European countries these concepts suggest that the return migration is linked to the improvement of economic, social and political conditions in the country of origin. It also occurs because a worker or employer is no longer interested in prolonging the work contract, or because the immigrant had bad experiences while working abroad, where, for example, he/she faced discrimination. Another reason may be that the immigrant has saved a sufficient amount of money to return to his/her home country. The reasons may also include family factors such as illness of a member of the immediate family, thus providing the motivation for returning home; or else return migrations may in general result from the wish to return to the country of the immigrant's forefathers. Apart from this, the decision whether or not to return home becomes decidedly more imminent when a particular worker faces obstacles in legalizing his/her stay or employment. Furthermore, return migrations may be triggered by having acquired adequate education and capital, which helps fulfil the immigrant's professional aspirations in the home country. Also, ending one's professional activity can be of further significance while deciding on return migration (Łodziński 2013, pp. 13- 14).

3. Immigrants in Poland – a statistical analysis

The stay of foreigners, and in particular of citizens from countries which are outside the EU, on the territory of Poland is regulated by numerous legislative acts among which the Act 30 December 2013 on Foreigners (before that it was regulated by the Act of 13 June 2003) is of key importance. According to the said act, a foreigner may stay in Poland on the basis of a visa, temporary residence permit which is related to employment, conducting research, economic activity or attending university. Another possibility for a foreigner to stay in Poland is to be a member of the family of a citizen of the Polish Republic, as well as other circumstances such as holding a permanent residence permit or a residence permit for a long-term resident of the EU.

According to the data of the Office for Foreigners, as at the end of 2013, 121 219 foreigners had residence permit, which makes up 0,3% of Polish population. It can therefore be said that immigrants have so far been a marginal phenomenon. It is however worth noting the process of immigrants settlement accross the geographic space in Poland. In Masovian Voivodeship immigrants account for almost 1% whereas in the majority of voivodships the percentage does not exceed 0,2%. Moreover, 43% of all immigrants holding residence permit, which allows them to stay in Poland, live in Masovian Voivodeship.

The Act of 13 June 2003 on Foreigners, in particular point 5 of article 26 (1) (Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws] of 2011, No. 264, item. 1573, as amended) indicates that in the context of economic activity of immigrants, it is possible to perform work without having to obtain work permit only for citizens of Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia, Russia and Ukraine, and it suffices to have an employer's declaration of the intention to commission work to a foreigner. This is regulated by article 1 (22) of the Ordinance of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 20 July 2011 on taking up employment by foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Poland without the need to obtain work permit.

Nearly half of foreigners staying in Poland hold a residence permit for a specified period of time. This is usually connected with being employed or studying. The residence permit for a specified period of time is most frequently the status with which potential immigrants begin to develop their links with Poland. After several years of uninterrupted stay, they may apply for a different residence status on the basis of their residence permit for a specified period of time, which provides them with greater stabilization. However, one should also be aware of the fact that the information about the number of foreigners with residence permit is only a partial picture of the immigration to Poland. Many foreigners stay here on the basis of visas of which a considerable part is made up of the visas issued in connection with employment. The exact number of foreigners who live and work on the basis of a visa remains unclear. The registration of the above mentioned declaration on the intention to commission work to a foreigner does not yet mean that a foreigner has actually come to Poland and is currently working. In addition, not all visa holders can be classified as immigrants; indeed to the contrary, as most of them do not become immigrants at all.

Since 2008, the first year of Poland's membership in the Schengen area, Polish consulates abroad have steadily been issuing an increasing number of visas. It is further worth pointing out that in 2013, to give an example, 35% of the issued visas were in connection with obtaining permit to undertake work in Poland. Among those, 14% were issued to allow employment, while 21% to run one's own

business. The greatest number of visas in that illustrative period was issued in Ukraine. According to the Office for Foreigners, those visas represented almost half of all visas issued. In the second place in this respect was Belarus, followed by Russia, especially from the Kaliningrad region. We may therefore conclude that citizens of those three countries represent the majority of people who stay and work in Poland on the basis of visas.

Since 2008 the number of visa holders has been slightly increasing annually as some of the visas, in particular, those relating to running a business remain valid for a couple of years. Ukrainians, Russians and Belarusians, next to the Vietnamese, make up the most numerous group of residence permit holders in Poland. These four groups of nationals represent 62% of all people holding residence permit. Ukrainians are the most numerous, making up nearly one third of all immigrants.

The data on the dynamics of changes in the number of residence permit holders suggest that the turning point for Poland's greater attractiveness as the place of destination for immigrants was not as much the country's accession to the European Union as it was to the Schengen area. The increase in the number of immigrants does not need to be, and most likely was not, caused by merely the "pulling" factors. Also of relevance are the "pushing" factors making immigrants leave their home country, such as lack of opportunities to find a job in their place of residence, unsatisfactory income, problems in terms of fulfilling one's ambitions and realizing plans for life. The increase rate of people arriving from other countries varies depending on the country. The most rapid increase could be seen among Ukrainians (on average 2,7 thousand annually) and the Vietnamese (on average 1,1 thousand annually), while the number of Russian citizens has been stable at an almost constant level since 2009 (around 12,5 thousand). A fairly fast increase was also seen among the immigrants from Belarus and China. It should be noted that given the data on immigration to Poland, those numbers are rather small. In order to give a better picture of the scale of migration to Poland, one example might be that while accounting for Poland's low birth rate and the present rate of immigration growth, the foreigners who have already settled in Poland might make up roughly 1% of Poland's population, but not before the elapse 45 years.

The differentiated increase rates of the immigrants number depending on the country imply that in the future the ethnic structure of people holding Polish residence permit might slightly alter, although citizens of Ukraine will remain the dominant group. In particular, these changes refer to Russian citizens, whose significant portion is made up of Chechens representing a group only

slightly smaller than that of citizens of Vietnam. The dynamics of growth in the number of Russian immigrants may indicate that in the nearest future there will be fewer Russians than Belarusians. In the long term it is to be expected that the portion of Chinese newcomers will be more significant. The Chinese are in the fifth place in terms of the number of immigrants living in Poland and their number has been increasing steadily and quite rapidly, exceeding the increase rate of Armenians and Russians.

4. Students - immigrants in Poland - a statistical analysis

In light of the demographic decline resulting in a smaller number of people studying in Poland, the flow of foreign students could become one of the factors determining the survival of higher education institutions, in particular the non-public ones, and whether they will manage to remain on the education market. Simultaneously this category of immigrants has the effect of expanding the education process through, among other things, cultural diffusion.

In 2016 there are **57 119 foreign students from 157 countries** studying in Poland, that is 10 thousand more than last year (an increase of more than 23%). Polish higher education institutions have seen an increase of over 20% for the second year in a row. At present foreign students represent **4,1% of all students** in our country (eight years ago there was hardly 0,6%, and last year 3,1%) (This leads to a bigger internationalization coefficient, yet one should not forget that it results not only from the higher number of students, but also from the decline of all students in Poland. In the 2015/16 academic year there have been overall 1.405.133 people studying at Polish universities, that is over 64.254 fewer students than in the last year and over 200.000 fewer than three years ago, for more details see, e.g. http://www.studyinpoland.pl/konsorcjum/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7653:ju-ponad-57-tysicy-studentow-zagranicznych-w-polsce&catid=225:119-newsletter-2016&Itemid=100143; accessed on 16 April 2016).

As compared to the world average, there is only a small number of Asian students studying in Poland (6896). It should, however, be noted that for the first time in five years we have been able to see a growing trend. 846 Chinese students are studying in Poland (an increase of over 60 people compared to last year), 505 Taiwanese, 896 Indians (351 more than last year). Compared to the year 2015, there has been a slight increase in Vietnamese students in 2016 (234 people – an increase of 29). Nevertheless, we are also witnessing a fall in the number of students from Malaysia (182). Despite intensive promotional efforts

on the part of the Polish higher education institutions the number of students from South America remains constant (there are 173 students, including those from Brazil – 82). The number of students from North and Central America is relatively small, although the year 2016 has seen an increase compared to 2015 (there are now 1230 students, an increase of 58 people). From 2014 to 2016 we have witnessed a growing interest in what the Polish universities offer on the part of students coming from Africa (the number of African students has increased up to 1197). Moreover, the number of students from Saudi Arabia (854) and Turkey (1205) has also been growing) [http:// www. studyinpoland.pl/konsorcjum/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7653:ju-ponad-57-tysicy-studentow-zagranicznych-w-polsce&catid=225:119-newsletter-2016&Itemid=100143](http://www.studyinpoland.pl/konsorcjum/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7653:ju-ponad-57-tysicy-studentow-zagranicznych-w-polsce&catid=225:119-newsletter-2016&Itemid=100143); accessed on 17 April 2016). The table below presents the numbers of foreigners studying in Poland (the top- twenty)

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Table 1. Number of foreigners studying in Poland in 2016

Country of origin	Number of students	Country of origin	Number of students
Ukraine	30589	India	896
Belarus	4615	Saudi Arabia	854
Norway	1581	China	846
Spain	1407	Kazakhstan	773
Sweden	1291	USA	717
Turkey	1205	France	590
The Czech Republic	1119	Taiwan	505
Russia	1042	Kamerun	465
Germany	1040	Canada	428
Lithuania	917	The UK	317

Source: http://www.studyinpoland.pl/konsorcjum/images/stories/119_2016_newsletter/liczby-studentow-ze-wszystkich-krajow-2016.pdf

It is expected that globally the universities which foreign students attend generate about 100 billion dollars annually for the host countries. In Poland, it is estimated that the contribution of foreign students to the country's economy

is approximately 150 million euro annually. Across the world, over 4,5 million students study outside their home countries. The forecasts predict that before 2020 this number will double. Over half of all immigrant students are Asian (Chinese, Indians and South Koreans being the most numerous). The OECD countries host the vast majority of students, including such countries as: the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany and France. Over half of all immigrant students from all over the world go to those five countries. Recently, 7% of them have also been heading for China. Despite the increase in the number of foreign students, there are many fewer students studying in Poland percentage wise than in the most developed western countries or in China, but also fewer than in such countries as: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria. In terms of the number of foreign students, Poland, along with Croatia, has the lowest number among the EU countries (http://www.perspektywy.pl/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2899:w-polsce-studiuje-57-119-studentow-zagranicznych-ze-157-krajow&catid=22&Itemid=119; accessed on 17 April 2016).

In order to make the Polish higher education institutions more attractive for foreign students, apart from promoting universities, one should also identify problems this category of immigrants face and implement measures facilitating their functioning in the country in which they arrive to study.

5. Views on immigrants in Poland – the secondary analysis of the CBOS (*public opinion research centre*) survey results

According to the CBOS survey from June 2015, it can be observed that Italians, the Czechs, the Spanish, the English, Slovaks and Swedes belong to the nations whom Poles like the most, with half of them expressing their fondness for them (between 46% and 51% expressing fondness, depending on the country). Among the countries included in the survey, the feeling of dislike was most frequently stated towards the Roma (58% stating their dislike), followed by the dislike towards Russians (50%) and Romanians (43%). The CBOS report indicates that the attitudes of Poles towards many nations improved in 2015, compared to 2014. Comparatively, the most positive changes occurred in the attitudes towards Germans, Americans, the Japanese, the English, Swedes and Italians. Polish attitude towards Russians, however, worsened: in 2014-2015.

The attitude towards foreigners depends primarily on one's level of education. The findings based on the CBOS data analysis on social and demographic differences suggest that attitudes towards other nations are dependent to

a significant degree on the level of education. The higher the level, the more frequent declarations of fondness for other nations. Graduates from higher education institutions expressed their fondness on average for 15 countries, the respondents with secondary level of education for 12 nations, and with basic vocational education for 11, whereas with primary or lower secondary level only for 9. Based on the findings of the cited CBOS survey, we can notice that respondents with higher education less frequently than others stated their dislike towards other nations (the average number of nations disliked by them is 6, by respondents with secondary education – 7, with basic vocational education – 9, and with primary or lower secondary – 8).

The second factor, yet to some extent connected to the level of education, affecting the attitudes towards other nations is the material situation. The better the assessment of one's own well-being, the more frequent declarations of fondness for other nations. The CBOS survey also shows that the level of dislike towards other nations is comparatively independent of one's material situation, which implies that respondents who were satisfied with the material situation of their households as well as those who were not stated their dislike towards roughly 7 nations.

According to the cited CBOS survey, a certain role in declaring one's attitude is also played by respondent's age. The fondness for other nations is most frequently expressed by the surveyed aged 25-44. It is noticeable that respondents who were over 55 declared their positive feelings for other nations slightly less often than the rest. It is worth emphasizing that the oldest respondents, over 65, also stated their dislike relatively seldom, which implies that their attitude towards other nations is comparatively frequently indifferent or they do not have any specific opinion on this issue. Moreover, respondents aged 55-64 have a dislike towards other nations more frequently than the rest.

The CBOS data allow for the conclusion that the attitude towards other nations varies to some extent depending on the place of residence. Residents of the smallest towns and villages declared fondness for other nationalities less frequently, with the latter stating their dislike with above average frequency (CBOS survey, 2015).

The attitude towards foreigners can also result from the relationship with them. Based on the CBOS opinion poll from May 2015, it can be concluded that Polish people increasingly frequently have contact with foreigners living in Poland. Nearly half of the surveyed at that time (48%) said that they knew some immigrant. The place of residence was important, since contacts with immigrants occurred with greater frequency in big cities, where their large

numbers are concentrated. The survey's results confirmed a rather common sense presumption that the contact with immigrants is more frequent, the higher the education level of respondents. The aforementioned contact refers in large part to immigrants from the neighbouring countries.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the results of the discussed CBOS survey show that larger flows of immigrants did not lead to growing tension and dislike towards them. Not only did the situation in which Poles have contacts with immigrants on a more frequent basis not lead to an increase in negative attitudes towards immigrants, but the opposite might be said, since the attitude improved in particular towards the most numerous immigrants coming from Ukraine and Belarus. This was indicated by a growing number of people in 2015, expressing an opinion that the presence of immigrants is advantageous for Poland, as compared to the last year. For obvious reasons, this view was mainly concerned with economic issues, in particular, with the labour market.

The secondary analysis of the CBOS data also suggests that an interesting indicator of Polish citizens' attitude towards foreigners is also the fact that respondents clearly varied their opinion on the immigrants' impact depending on their country of origin. The immigrants' citizenship may be considered an indicator of their position and role in the Polish society. The presence of Americans was most frequently judged as something beneficial. So was the issue viewed by 52% of respondents. The Czechs were ranked as second with 51% considering their presence to be advantageous to Poland. Finally, 50% of respondents viewed the presence of Germans as a beneficial situation for Poland. In the commentary attached to the CBOS report we can find an interpretation of this finding stating that the cited nationals represent the Western world, including the EU countries, whose presence in Poland is often associated with investments. In addition, almost two thirds of Poles believed that beneficial was the presence of Ukrainians (38%), the Vietnamese (33%), Belarusians (32%) and Russians (31%), that is the immigrants whose numbers are fairly large in Poland. Every fourth respondent (26%) considered the presence of African citizens to be advantageous, every fifth (20%) assessed as positive the presence of Turks with only 14% expressing a positive attitude towards immigrants from Arab countries. On the other hand, while asking the question from which countries immigrants provide no benefits for Poland, the majority of Poles found the presence of Turks (52%) and Arabs (62%) unfavourable.

The CBOS report also reveals that in 2015 the distance towards foreigners decreased. Since the end of the 1990's, the percentage has decreased nearly by half of those respondents who are against a foreigner as their closest neighbour,

close co-worker, physician, their child's teacher, boss at work or a priest in their parish.

The findings of the CBOS survey from May 2015 further revealed that only a small number of Poles thought that there were too few immigrants. At that time people believed that the unemployment in Poland was still very high, which affected their view that promoting immigration made no sense. This survey, however, also suggests that the majority of Poles (69%) believe that it is worth accepting non-EU immigrants to work in the sectors in which there is a shortage of Polish workers willing to work. Moreover, respondents believed that in such situations undertaking work by foreigners should be made easier. Still, every fourth respondent (23%) was against such facilitations, even in the situation of a shortage of workforce. Such concerns were most frequently expressed by people with basic vocational education (36%), in particular, by unskilled workers (39%). Moreover, the worse the assessment of one's own material situation, the more frequent opposition to this kind of solution. People employed as managerial staff and experts with higher education (10%), residents of large cities (15%), and those holding a higher degree tend to express those concerns least frequently. The opinions expressed by the working population did not differ from the attitude represented by all respondents. Concluding the analysis of the cited survey, it can finally be noted that in 2015 the majority of respondents (66%) said that the presence of foreigners had a positive impact on culture and the level of tolerance (CBOS, 2015).

Attempting to provide an overview of the Polish citizens' attitudes towards immigrants one can also draw on the findings of the survey carried out for the Ministry of the Interior by the centre for social research IPSOS. The goal of the survey was to analyse:

- Poles' attitudes towards the phenomenon of the growing number of foreigners in Poland,

The awareness of and assessment of the measures undertaken by the government with the view to ensure protection of minorities (IPSOS, 2014).

Based on the survey's findings, two thirds of respondents defined their feelings towards the immigration phenomenon in Poland as decidedly or fairly positive. However, every fifth person stated that the growing number of people of foreign origin gave rise to negative emotions. The results particularizing the opinions in terms of the social and demographic profile revealed that women and people with higher education level had a slightly more positive attitude towards immigrants. What is more, the majority of respondents (70%) were of the opinion that foreigners could feel safe in Poland. Yet, every fourth expressed

a different view. Men (76%) tended to be more convinced than women (65%) that Poland was a safe environment for foreigners.

The cited secondary analyses of the surveys on the attitude of Poles towards foreigners allow for the conclusion that this attitude is moderately positive. In the views on foreigners, education level plays a significant role, quite significant are the material status, age and place of residence. Further to that, the more frequent contacts with foreigners, the more positive attitudes towards foreigners. The survey results also show a growing frequency of Poles coming into contact with foreigners.

6. Foreign students studying at WSB University in Wrocław - an empirical analysis

Under the adopted theoretical perspective on the motives for immigration, the overall figures pertaining to the extent of immigration to Poland, including the immigration for the purpose of studies, as well as social attitudes towards this phenomenon, it is worth examining the findings of the surveys carried out on foreign students coming from the former CIS countries, yet mainly from Ukraine who are studying at WSB University in Wrocław.

The survey provided insights to the following issues:

- social and economic profile of foreign students,
- immigration motive,
- main problems relating to the functioning of students and immigrants in the new environment,
- economic activity of immigrant students,
- immigrant students' expectations with respect to the actions facilitating their assimilation in the new country and at the university,
- immigrant students' social activity and plans.

In addition, the survey findings were to identify key conclusions and lines of action for improving the situation of foreign students.

The studies were conducted following the methodological rules applicable in social sciences, using qualitative and quantitative measurement techniques. They were carried out according to the sampling to exhaustion scheme (All foreign students studying at the WSB (coming from the former CIS countries) were respondents (sample population). The sampling frame for the quantitative survey was the list of students-foreigners (according to the adopted criterion, that is, coming from the former CIS). The size of the sample was N=226 persons, both undergraduate students (N=180) and

graduate students (N=46) of both modes of studying (full time and evening studies). The quantitative and qualitative surveys (FGI) were preceded by pilot in-depth interviews.

6.1. Demographic and social overview of the surveyed population

While describing the demographic profile of the foreign students, one may observe that of the entire population of 149 respondents, women represented a slight majority – 89 (59,7%). Most survey's participants – 56% (83 persons) were under 20 (including 58% of women and 52% of men). Amongst the participants, 39% (57 persons) were made up of respondents aged 20 - 24 (36% of women and 43% of men), with only several persons, accounting for 5% (8 persons), in the age category of over 24.

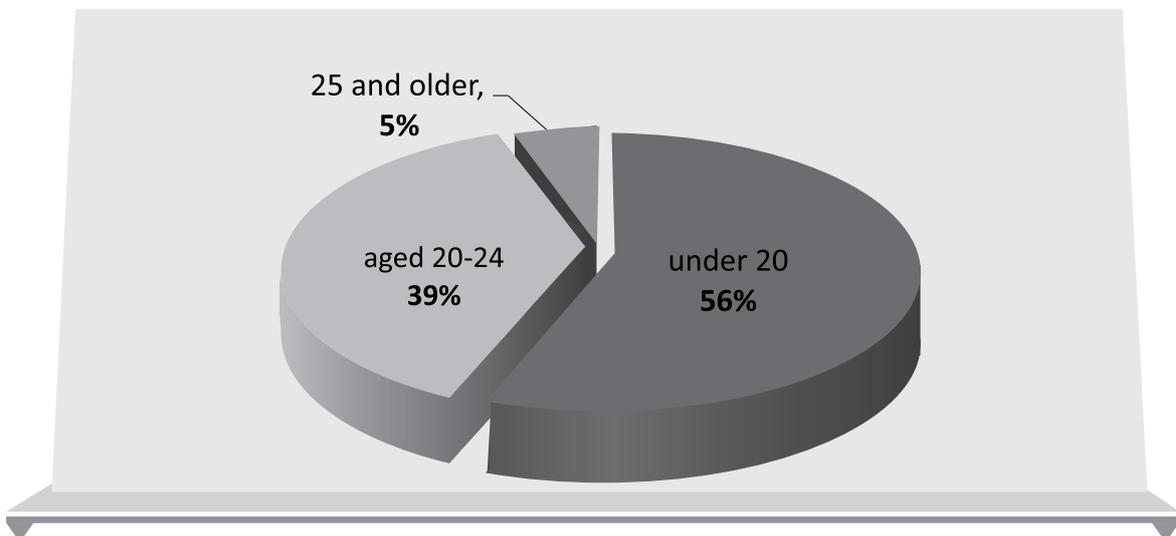


Figure 1. Students' profile by age (n=148)

Source: own study

In general we can conclude that foreign students are in the first place very young, about to cross the threshold of adulthood. The sample comprised in total of as many as 30 (20%) of those, with persons aged 20 and under accounting for 70%. This young age is not only the result of a significant proportion of the first year students, but it also comes from the fact that the education system in the territory of the former USSR allows for the youth of 17 to attend university. It may

thus affect the assessment of conditions for both studying and living in Poland, as their situation appears objectively more difficult than that of their Polish counterparts, since they are very young, inactive economically and uncertain as to their professional and personal future, and considerably dependent materially on their parents and guardians.

Providing students' characteristics in terms of the modes of their studies, we may notice that 87,3% (131 persons) studied full time, with 12,7% (19 persons) other than full time studies. Among other things, this is the consequence of the students' age structure.

Amongst the surveyed foreign students, graduate students were prevalent, accounting for over 79% (117 persons).

Asked about their learning experiences concerning possible studies before starting their education at the WSB University, respondents most frequently (46%) indicated lack of such experiences.

The vast majority of the surveyed foreign students (141 persons, 95%) were studying only at the WSB, with four persons (2,7%) studying there two fields. The remaining (8) persons, apart from the WSB, were studying at other universities too, 6 of whom were studying abroad.

6.2. Motives for immigration

Answering the question as to the main motives for the migration from their home country to study in Poland, respondents (who could provide several answers to this question) highlighted the importance of acquiring education (58%) and that the graduation and settlement in the EU (in Poland - 46% or outside Poland - 55%) would improve the quality of their lives. Slightly less than 15% of the surveyed took up the challenge of leaving their home country and attend a foreign university so that they could return home with greater prospects.

The structure of the motives indicated on the chart is relatively stable. Investigating the distribution of the responses while taking into account the length of time spent in Poland, it appears that the only factors showing a clear increase in terms of their relevance are the reasons linked to the wish to get to know interesting people and places. Persons who have lived in Poland for up to 6 months highlighted this factor in 20% of cases, between 6 months and up to 2 years - 29% of cases, and persons living here for more than 2 years - 34,4% of cases. Moreover, within the category of persons with the longest stay, acquiring a good education tended to lose on importance (44%), the importance of better

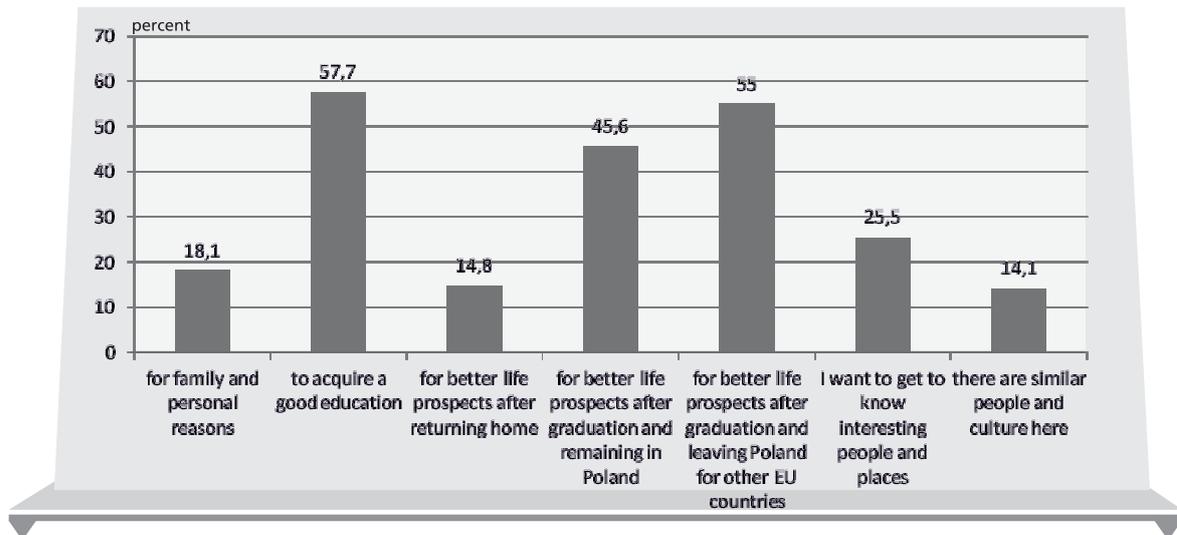


Figure 2. Motives for taking up studies in Poland (n=149)*
*Multiple responses do not total 100%

Source: own study

life prospects in Poland increased (50%), while the fraction of those declaring the wish to move on to other EU countries remained unchanged.

The overall attitude of foreign students was to stay in Poland or move on to Western Europe. The possibility of returning home was stated provided certain conditions could be met, mainly finding a well-paid and interesting job in their home country, such as, for example, in a branch office of some Western company.

The conclusion made from the answers to the question how the surveyed students found out about the university is that the most effective way to access candidate students was through:

- a programme "Teraz Wrocław" – 54% (For more details about the programme, see: <http://study-in-wroclaw.pl> (assessed on 3.06.2015),
- friends' recommendations as to the place of study – 29%,
- media advertising (particularly on the Internet) – 25%.

The general knowledge about the places and possibilities of studying in Poland is passed to young people in the former CIS countries, especially in Ukraine through:

- language schools,
- agents,
- travel agencies organizing familiarization trips.

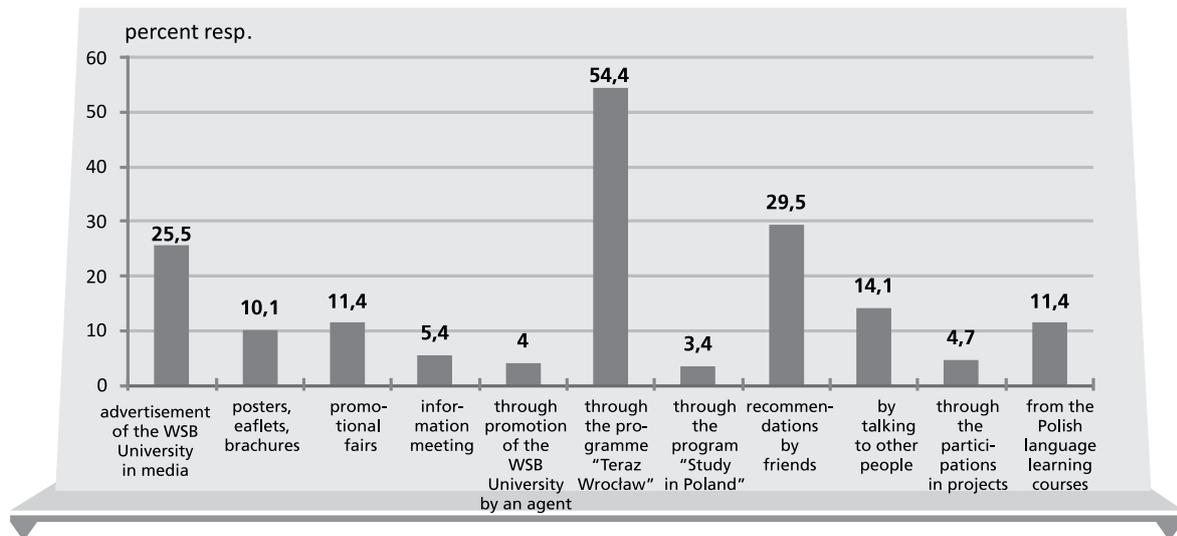


Figure 3. Sources of information about the WSB University (n=149)*
*Multiple answers do not total 100%

Source: own study

However, the most valuable source of information, as can be gleaned from the focus group interviews, is the information exchange with persons who are studying in Wrocław. Foreign students themselves admitted in the FGI that they like giving information to their peers about the possibilities of studying in Poland, including at the WSB University in Wrocław.

6.3 The main problems relating to how students and migrants function in their new environment

From the perspective of the problems and barriers encountered by foreigners undertaking studies at the WSB University in Wrocław, the information about how long they have been in Poland is important. In light of the responses given by the surveyed, it appears that nearly half of respondents (47%) have been in Poland for less than half a year. A little over 1/5 of respondents have been here for over two years, with one student holding the record of having lived in Poland for 8,5 years. The structure of the findings results from the fact that a significant portion of foreigners came here to study straight after passing their final exams.

Additional profile analyses showed that the percentage of persons staying in Poland for up to 6 months is smaller for graduate studies (39%) than for

undergraduate studies (50%). A similar disproportion could be observed for full time studies and for other than full time studies.

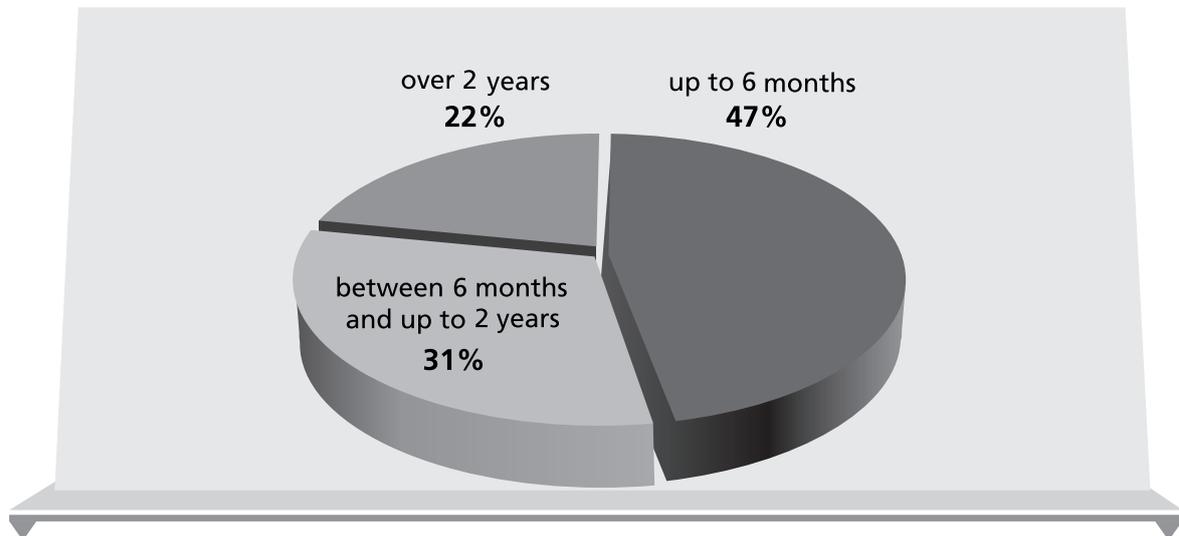


Figure 4. Foreign students' length of stay in Poland

Source: own study

The above results show that a significant portion of respondents did not feel yet much accustomed to their new surrounding. The issue of the adjustment was further developed in the focus group interviews. The participants of the focus groups drew attention to the problems arising from coming to a foreign country and relating to how to organize one's stay and how to adjust to the new environment. The first six months are generally considered to be crucial in the adaptation process. This was particularly highlighted by the youngest students (teenagers). One of the supporting measures proposed was to appoint a person who would look after foreigners, especially in the first 2-3 weeks of their stay in Poland.

During the pilot survey stage, it was found out that one of the important elements to make living and studying easier for people from the former USSR is holding the Polish Card. In the survey's participants' view, the card provides additional possibilities in terms of receiving a scholarship or getting a job. On the other hand, however, it is hedged by certain conditions, of which knowledge of the Polish language is of key relevance (http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karta_Polaka (assessed on 3.04.2015)). In the quantitative measurement, it was decided to

estimate the number of students holding the Polish Card. It appeared that nearly 90% of respondents (129 persons) said that they did not have this card. The document was held by 10% of respondents (15 persons). Such a small proportion of persons holding the PC may have three reasons:

- some people studying in Poland do not have the functional knowledge of the Polish language to the extent that is sufficient to apply for the card,
- holding the PC makes the choice of public higher education institutions as an education path a more favourable option,
- participants of the focus group interviews indicate that the Polish Card holders choose tuition free public studies and apply for a scholarship and maintenance grant, which is of extreme importance to foreigners.

Considering the fragile and worsening situation of the students from Ukraine, holding the PC seems to be an important support tool to facilitate their stay in Poland while the lack of it may be the reason why people decide not to study in Poland or to discontinue their higher education.

We can conclude from the answer distribution that in general the most onerous aspects for foreigners in the process of applying to study were:

1. formal issues (relating to documents),
2. insufficient knowledge of the Polish language,
3. finding a flat.

Those problems kept being repeated, independently of the satisfaction assessment of the application process, thus recommending the areas where the university authorities could intervene.

In a broader dimension, the focus group interviews indicated and confirmed the main problems and barriers, already pointed out in the quantitative survey, with which foreign students have to cope, not only during the application process, but particularly in the first period of their studies. Two key difficulties can be observed to emerge here:

- problems with having enough maintenance money,
- the language barrier hindering studying.

The surveys show that the language barrier and financial problems represent clearly the heaviest burden for foreign students throughout the entire studying. In particular, the financial problems appear to be dominating and enduring. The language barrier, on the other hand, gradually becomes less relevant (if we consider the proportion of undergraduate and graduate students indicating this problem).

The data imply that while financial problems occurring at the beginning after the arrival are under control (thanks to parents' support), later this support gets

indeed slightly smaller, and the problems grow because there is less support on the part of the family (In the students' view, a considerable drawback which emerges in the focus groups interviews, is the lack of incentives to study, such as scientific scholarship for foreign students).

While staying in Wrocław, dormitories play an important role for foreign students, since they function as social housing. Half of respondents live in dormitories, with 41% renting a flat.

A clear majority of respondents 90% (134 persons) were living with another person, a colleague – 70% of the surveyed (105 persons), a partner – 14% (21 persons), with their own family – 5,3% (7 persons). Only 6 persons (4%) in the entire sample were living on their own (alone).

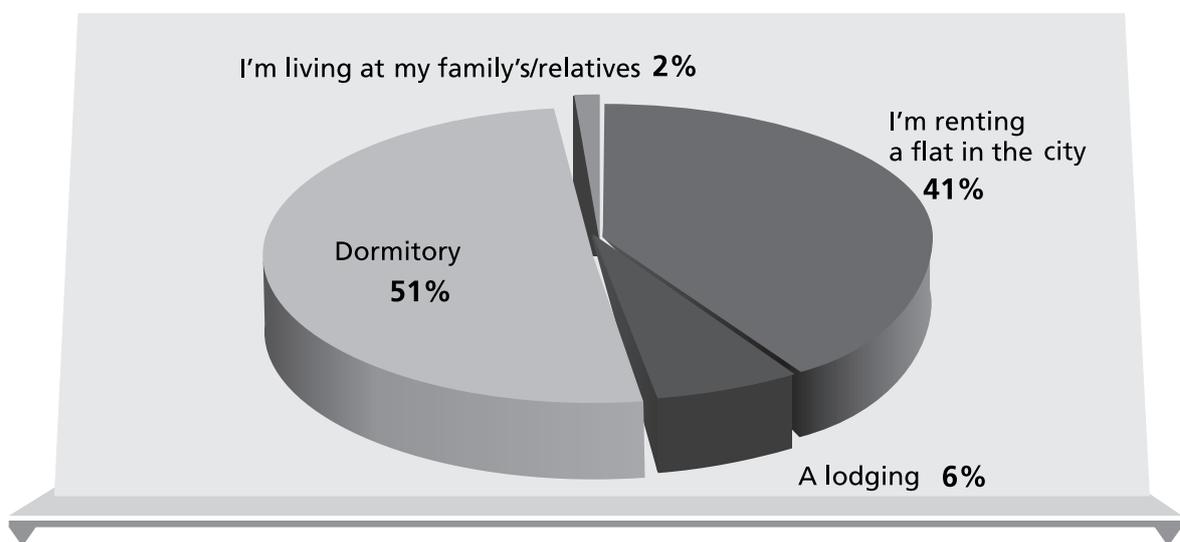


Figure 5. Place of residence in Wrocław (n=148)

Source: own study

The fact that a significant portion of foreign students has to live in dormitories gives reason to their expectations directed at the university that it will provide them with a place of living in Wrocław. As the crowning argument for those expectation, highlighted by foreign students in the focus group interviews, was that the places, other than the dormitories, demanded unfairly high prices. This is of extreme significance for this category of foreign students given that the situation in Ukraine is strewn with economic problems and the country's currency depreciated. Another reason is that the registration process offered by

the dormitories appears to be easier (The quantitative survey highlighted the difficulty relating to obtaining registration in Poland. In light of the registration provisions, it is not possible to obtain registration shortly after arriving in Poland. Participants of the focus groups pointed out that the only easy and certain way of being registered was to receive a place in a dormitory).

Table 2. Place of residence vs. length of stay in Poland

Where are you currently living?	The length of stay in Poland			Total
	up to 6 months	between 6 months and up to 2 years	over 2 years	
I'm renting a flat in the city	35,7%	40,9%	56,3%	41,8%
Lodging	5,7%	6,8%	6,3%	6,2%
Dormitory	58,6%	47,7%	34,4%	50,0%
I'm living at my family's/relatives	0%	4,5%	3,1%	2,1%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
n				146

Source: own-study

The change of living conditions occurs systematically as the stay in Poland lengthens, meaning that students gradually move out of the dormitory into flats which they rent on their own or with a partner, as well as in a group of flats on the free market.

6.4. Economic activity of foreign students

In light of the research question concerned with the assimilation mechanisms of foreign students in the new country, of extreme relevance are the issues relating to their economic activity. The findings show that slightly over 1/3 of respondents were employed. This percentage should be regarded as relatively high due to the fact that:

- a high percentage of students is not yet 20,
- there is a low percentage of students holding the Polish Card – which provides the possibility for working legally in Poland.

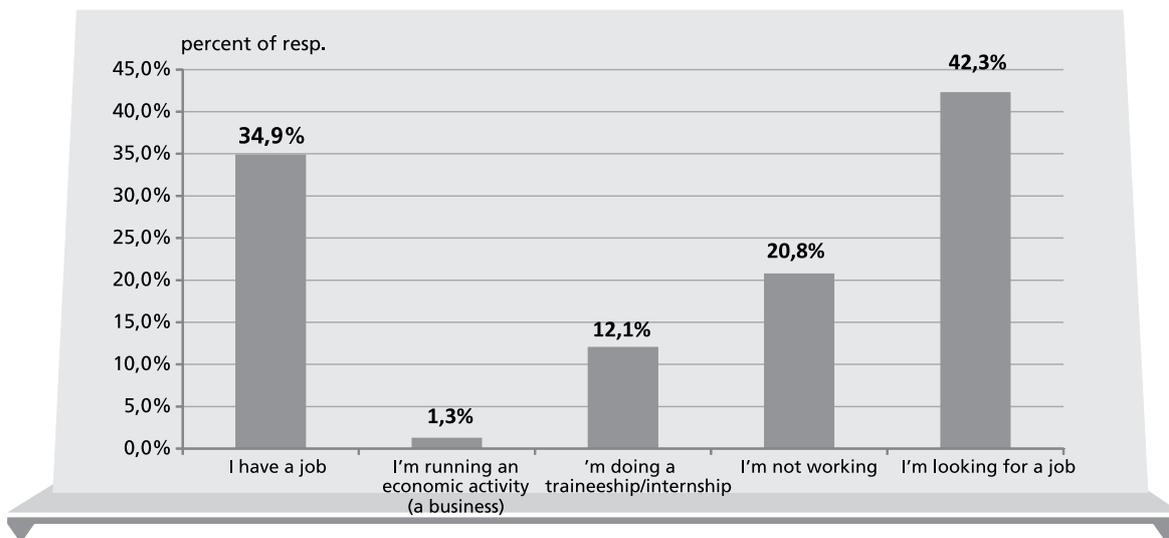


Figure 6. Economic activity of the WSB University foreign students (n=149)*

*Multiple answers do not total 100%

Source: own study

The relationship diagram between economic activity and the situation on the labour market shows clearly that as the time of stay lengthens, the students' economic activity increases.

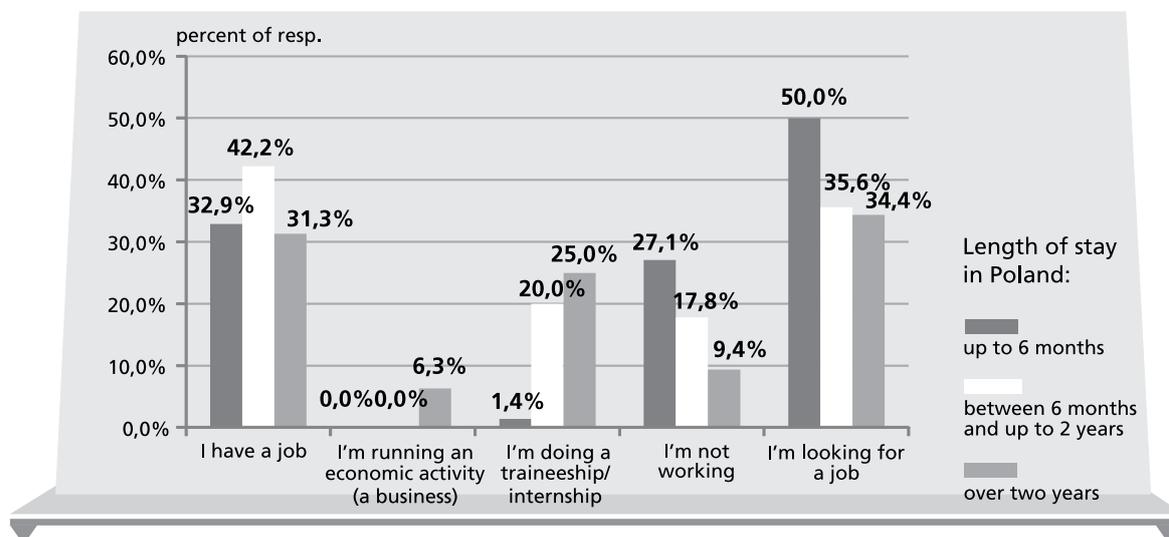


Figure 7. Economic activity of the WSB University foreign students (n=147)*

*Multiple answers do not total 100%

Source: own study

The percentage of persons who do not work regularly declined as the time of stay lengthened, from 27% of persons with the shortest stay in Poland to 9,4 % of students who have been here for over 2 years. What is important in this context, students tend to be active on the labour market almost from the very beginning, which is attested by the fact that half of the students living in Poland for less than 6 months were already in the process of seeking a job. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the model which dominates amongst students for entering the labour market indicates that doing internship – traineeship is an important element of their becoming economically active. The opportunities for this kind of work grow very significantly after the first half a year of staying in Poland.

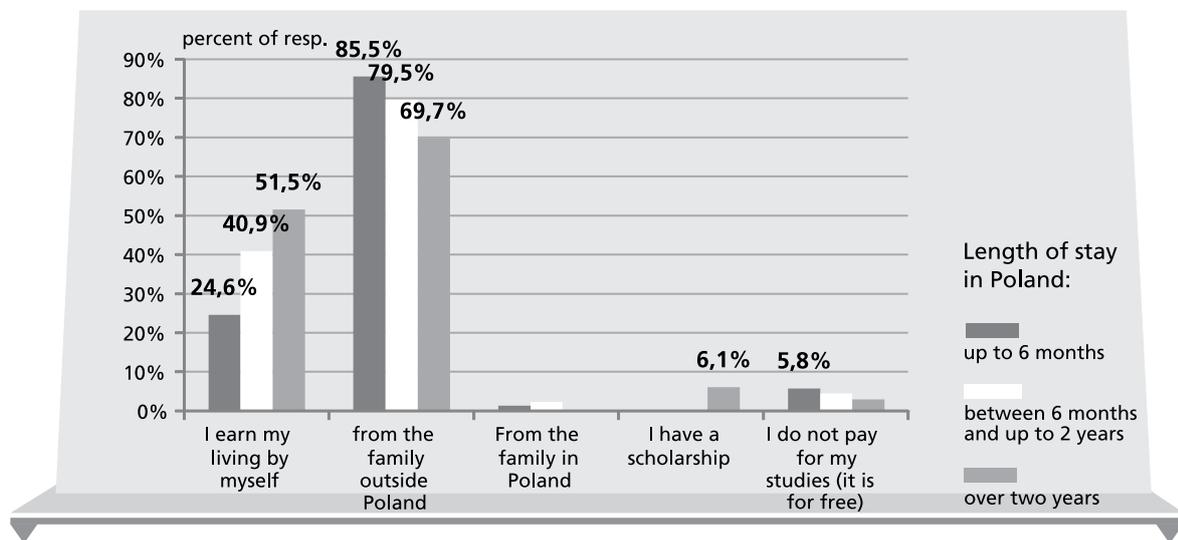


Figure 8. Sources of funding for studies vs. length of stay in Poland (n=146)

Source: own study

Objective social and economic difficulties, especially in Ukraine, have the effect that ensuring stable sources of finance in the situation when one is not yet established in the labour market is crucial. It can be concluded from the findings demonstrated in the paper that financial difficulties are a key problem for the students, while simultaneously being the factor for undertaking activity in the labour market. Moreover, the data indicate that the longer the stay in Poland, the greater the tendency to become financially independent and thus take the strain off the family.

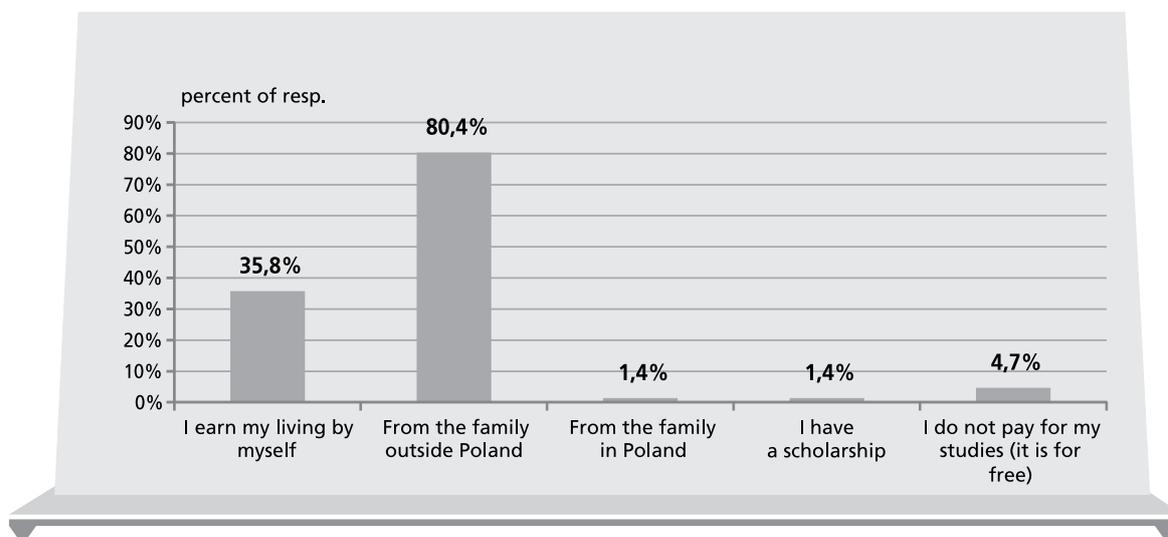


Figure 9. Sources of funding for studies (n=148)*

*Multiple answers do not total 100%

Source: own study

Given the aforementioned characteristics of the adaptation process, how do they fund their studies? The answers provided by respondents to the sources of funding for their studies indicate that for the vast majority (80% of cases) the costs of stay are covered by the family, and it is also the family which has a crucial role in paying tuition fees (The participants of the FGI drew attention to the fact that the worsening economic conditions in Ukraine led to more uncertainty, changing the situation from week to week and making it necessary to undertake more efforts to find income-earning opportunities, as well as to cut down their expenses. One of the female participants of the focus group gave an example of a fellow student friend who could not afford to share a rented apartment and to move out of her previous place because it would involve paying an extra 30 PLN).

6.5. The immigrant students' expectations with respect to the measures facilitating their assimilation in the new country and during their studies

Bearing in mind possible language difficulties, the WSB University in Wrocław organized Polish language courses. The usefulness of this measure was assessed while at the same time the search for the answer went on as to the question – what other courses, besides the language ones, the foreign students might be expecting in order to make their studying easier.

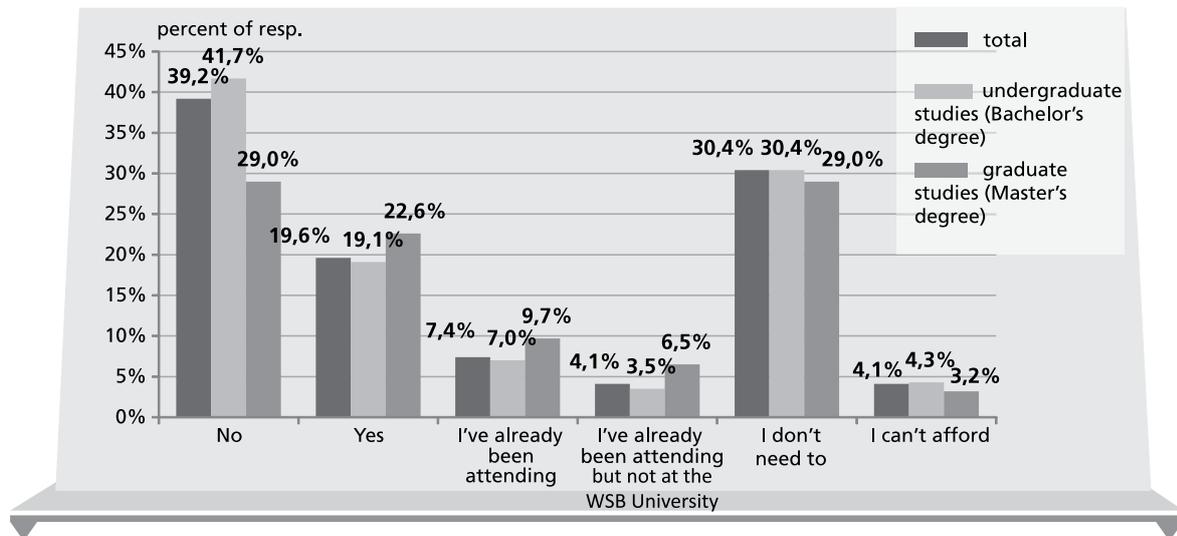


Figure 10. Demand for Polish language courses (n=148)*

*Multiple answers do not total 100%

Source: own study

The survey found that the majority of foreign students (70%) were not interested in attending Polish language classes. Nearly 1/3 do not need it, 4% think that it is too expensive, and almost 40% of respondents say that they would simply not enjoy this offer. Moreover, 26% of the surveyed said they would want to attend extra chargeable Polish language courses organized by the WSB University, including those respondents who could not afford such classes (3%).

General expectations of foreign students in terms of extra courses referred to:

- more other foreign language courses,
- more frequent meetings with employers,
- more practical classes.

Those proposals were highlighted by 1/3 of the surveyed.

While assessing the studies, foreign students expressed positive views. They said that:

- studies are consistent with their expectations,
- they represent a high level,
- the teaching staff is friendly.

One should also draw attention to the fact that foreign students did not observe any form of bias in the attitudes of the university's employees (mainly the teachers), either negative or positive, that is, foreign students believe that there is no leniency for students coming from other countries.

6.6. Immigrant students' social activity and plans

Social activity, among other things, fosters the integration with new surroundings. It also affects the process of gaining social capital associated with acquaintances and relationships between people which, for obvious reasons, may bring in the long run tangible benefits. This has been the underlying assumption for including in the research the issues of social activity and membership in the foreign students organizations at the WSB University.

Table 3. Stated membership in foreign students organizations (n=137)*

Membership of:	Percentage of students
Student government at the WSB	7,6
Scientific clubs at the WSB	5,3
Other social/cultural organization	10,6
I'm not a member of any organization	80,3

*Multiple answers do not Total 100%

Source: own study-

The surveys found that the social activity of foreign students studying at the WSB University was low, a vast majority of respondents were not a member of any organization at the time the survey was being carried out. A little over 1/5 of the surveyed stated a membership in one or another organization, of whom 7% were in the student government and 5% in scientific clubs at the WSB.

According to their preferences, leisure time activities of foreign students from the WSB University come down to travelling and doing sports. Those two forms of free time activities were most frequently indicated. Another important role plays staying in touch with friends from their home country, or in general being in contact with friends in Poland and family (e.g. through the Internet). A considerable portion of respondents simply work during the time when they do not have to attend university – which appears to be very characteristic of the specificity of the group under discussion, where having a job is crucial.

The surveys showed that “partying” was not a preferable activity for a significant number of students from the category under discussion. ¼ of respondents wish to spend their free time developing themselves.

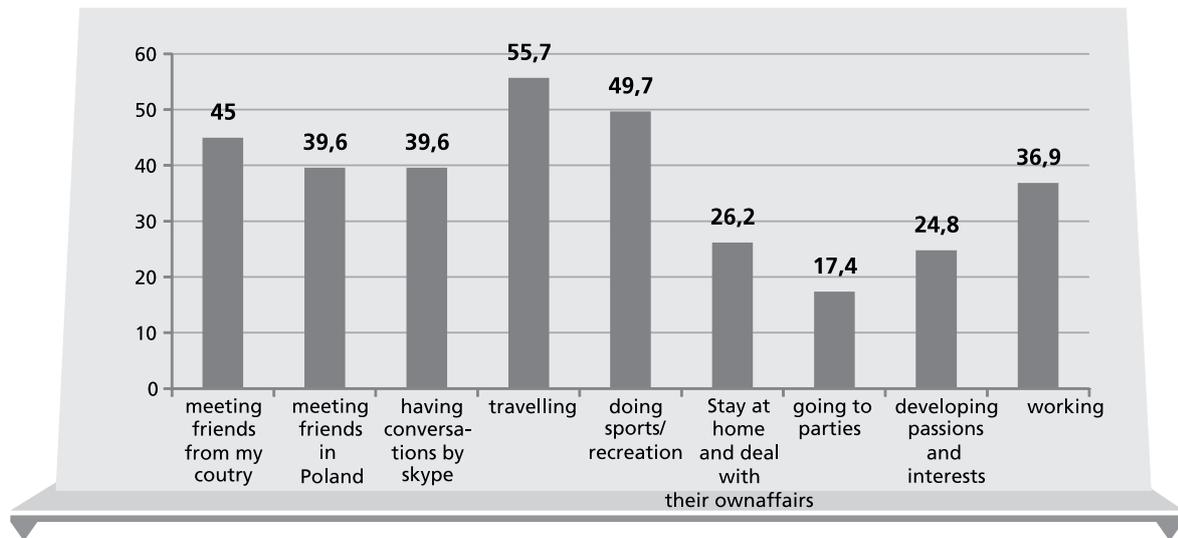


Figure 11. Preferable ways of spending free time by foreign students from the WSB University*

*Multiple answers do not total 100%

Source: own study

Finally, it is worth examining future plans of the foreign students attending the WSB University. The findings suggest that their greatest dream is to be able to live and work in one of the EU countries, outside Poland (in two cases in the USA and Canada). Overall a considerable portion, 38% of the surveyed, are planning to stay in Poland. Just 7 persons wish to return to their home country.

Table 4. The answer distribution to the question: „What would you like to do in 3-5 years (it was possible to choose more than one answer)

	Degree		Total
	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	
Live and work in Poland	35,1%	51,7%	38,0%
Live and work in a EU country	59,5%	44,8%	57,0%
Live and work in the home country	5,4%	3,4%	4,9%

Source: own study

The proportion of persons who want to stay in Poland and leave for other EU countries vary between undergraduate and graduate students; it is likely that the latter ones more often see their future in Poland because they have already entered the labour market.

Basically the surveys carried out amongst the foreign students show that the university which they chose in Poland has met their expectations and has been satisfactory in terms of studies it offers. The problems which they indicated were not critical, and their commentaries referred rather to possible ways of increasing the level of their satisfaction. Furthermore, the surveys did not identify problems relating to bias attitudes or the pressure of feeling excluded.

Summary

The research results include a case of persons studying at WSB University in Wroclaw. Although methodological limitations do not allow to generalize the results onto the entire population of foreign students, they reveal a number of characteristics of foreign students as a specific category of immigrants and their problems and expectations. They can be summarized as follows:

1. In their majority, foreign students are very young, they have no life experience and are unable to support themselves. 2/3 of them are not over 20 yet, with a significant portion being still in their teens.
2. The fact that students who come to Poland do so straight after passing their school-leaving exams is reflected in the relatively short time of their stay in Poland; at the moment of conducting the survey it was no more than half a year. From the perspective of the experiences of participants of the qualitative survey, this is a period which is particularly difficult in terms of adapting to different conditions.
3. One of the main barriers foreign students encounter are language problems, however, the studies show that the first half a year is critical in this respect. Their firm resolve to learn in Poland alleviates this problem later on; nevertheless, 1/3 of the surveyed expect language courses.
4. The surveys clearly pinpointed the crucial problems of foreign students which are the economic and social conditions of studying. While social issues such as housing tend to be of key importance after arrival (up to half a year), becoming independent financially in relation to willing to put financial strain on the family gains more relevance in the long run.
5. Foreign students represent a group for which the resolve to acquire skills and enter the labour market constitute a distinguishing characteristic. This can be

seen against the foreign students' typical expectations of having the labour market entry facilitated and teaching programmes designed in such a way as to reflect it. Furthermore, this is particularly strongly recognized in their life goals, where the prospects for the future and a good job are a condition for success and the decision to stay in Poland.

In terms of institutional support, the key measures include:

- facilitating the process of finding a place to live for students during the first months of their stay, which means providing them with dormitory apartments,
- making efforts to support and develop the programme "Teraz Wrocław",
- introducing scholarships funded for students who do not entertain the rights which the Polish Card provides, yet do well at university.

The conclusion to be made is that foreign students from the former CIS country, studying at WSB University in Wrocław, in the context of immigration motives and adaptation mechanisms to new social and economic conditions, possess characteristics linked to sociological theories: migration networks theory and institutional theory. In economic dimension, they fall, to a significant extent, under the principles indicated in neoclassical economics. Their assimilation path is especially interesting and one could describe it as an informal agreement with the parents, according to which students are supported materially by their parents during the first emigration year, yet they must be prepared to be able to support themselves after that period is over. Considering the young age of the majority of this community, this presents a considerable challenge.

Summary

A Socio-Economic Portrait of Foreign Students in Poland - as Exemplified by Students from Former CIS Studying at WSB University in Wrocław

A noticeably increased intensity of migration becomes a very important issue with regard to economic, socio-cultural and political matters. Broader flow of people results in the occurrence of numerous threats, but also provides opportunities and benefits for both the participants of migration flows, and the areas to which the flow is directed. An important role in this process is played by the students, who constitute a special category of immigrants. The article contains a socio-economic characteristics of foreign students from countries of the former CIS, with the emphasis on their reasons for immigration, organizing their new life abroad, life plans and in

particular their economic activity. The core purpose of the article is to identify the mechanisms of adaptation of foreign students as a specific category of immigrants to functioning in the new socio-economic environment. The article, in addition to its cognitive merit, also has a practical purpose. The problems and obstacles faced by foreign students in Poland form a basis for general recommendations for actions aimed at improving the conditions of functioning of foreign students in the new realities.

Keywords: *Migrations, assimilation, economic activity of immigrants.*

Streszczenie

Socjoekonomiczny portret studentów obcokrajowców w Polsce – przykład studentów z państw dawnej WNP studiujących w WSB we Wrocławiu

Współcześnie zauważane zwiększone natężenie ruchów migracyjnych staje się zagadnieniem bardzo istotnym z punktu widzenia kwestii ekonomicznych, społeczno-kulturowych i politycznych. Coraz łatwiejszy przepływ ludzi wpływa na pojawienie się licznych zagrożeń, ale także stanowi szansę i przynosi korzyści zarówno dla uczestników ruchów migracyjnych, jak także dla obszarów, do których ten ruch jest ukierunkowany. Ważną rolę w tym procesie odgrywają także studenci, którzy stanowią specyficzną kategorię imigrantów. Artykuł zawiera socjoekonomiczną charakterystykę studentów obcokrajowców pochodzących z kraju byłej WNP, w tym uwypuklone zostały motywacje imigracji, sposób organizowania życia w nowych uwarunkowaniach wynikających z faktu przyjazdu do innego kraju, plany życiowe oraz, co niezwykle ważne w tej perspektywie, aktywność ekonomiczna tych osób. Podstawowa oś rozważań w artykule sprowadza się do wskazania mechanizmów adaptacji studentów obcokrajowców, jako specyficznej kategorii imigrantów, do funkcjonowania w nowym otoczeniu społeczno-ekonomicznym. Artykuł, oprócz waloru poznawczego, ma także cel praktyczny. Na bazie ukazanych problemów i barier, z jakimi borykają się studenci obcokrajowcy w Polsce, przedstawione zostały ogólne rekomendacje działań na rzecz poprawy ich warunków funkcjonowania w nowych realiach.

Słowa

kluczowe: *Migracje, asymilacja, aktywność ekonomiczna imigrantów.*

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