

UKRAINIAN IMMIGRANTS IN PORTUGUESE LABOUR MARKET¹

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Abstract: *The paper deals with the investigation of the peculiarities of labour migration to Portugal and the analysis of the place and role of Ukrainian migrants in the Portuguese labour market. The reasons for the Ukrainians' migration to Portugal, fields of migrants' work and migration character are also considered. Since the end of the 90th, migrants from Eastern Europe (especially from Ukraine) have become one of the three largest foreign communities in the country, together with Cape Verdeans and Brazilians. Besides, the paper presents the results of the survey of the Ukrainian immigrants' questionnaires (persons of different age and sex) in the region of Algarve, Portugal, in spring 2015. The research is based on the qualitative data and the conclusions on specific features of labour migration from Ukraine obtained by the authors.*

Keywords: *migration policy, labour migration, Ukrainians' migration, Portuguese labour market, immigration*

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1 Introduction

For a long time Portugal was a country from which people migrated, and only

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recently it has become a country that accepts labour force. In the middle of the 1970s, as a result of European economic crisis and political changes in Portugal (dictatorship overthrow in 1974), the emigration flows decreased. The access of Portugal to the EU had, for sure, an influence on the decrease of immigration.

Immigration became more intensive in the 1970s because of decolonization of Portugal's former PALOP (Portuguese-Speaking African Countries) states. The demand for labour in the 1980s and 1990s demonstrated the increased number of migrants from Africa, Brazil and Western Europe. Since 2000, migrants from Eastern Europe, specifically Ukraine, have formed one of the three largest foreign communities, together with Cape Verdeans and Brazilians [11].

Immigration policy of Portugal, developed in 2001, is based on three items:

- Assistance in legal immigration based on the demands of labour market in the country;
- Integration of immigrants in Portuguese society;
- Struggle with illegal immigration by controlling the arrival in the country, stay and removal of undocumented foreigners [5].

Legal immigration to Portugal is achieved in two ways, which depend on the durability of stay (short- or long-term period). In short-term period, the foreigners wanting to work temporarily in Portugal must apply for a work visa through the Portuguese Consulate. It is valid for one year. There are different types of temporary work visas. These visas may be renewed for two additional periods of one year each.

During long-term period, the foreigners who want to work and live in Portugal on a long-term basis must apply for a Residence Visa that allows them to work for a two-year period. The permit can be renewable for three-year periods. Portugal has different resident requirements for obtaining a long-term permit depending on the origin of the immigrant. Immigrants from PALOP have a five-year residence requirement while immigrants from other countries need to have been living in the country for eight years [10].

To the end of 2001, there were 232 thousand of foreign workers in Portugal; 127 thousand of whom possessed temporary permits and 105 thousand people were holders of residence permits. A majority of immigrants possessing those permits were employed in low-skilled jobs, for instance construction, consumer services, retail sales, and agriculture.

A ratio of foreign migrants to the total number of population in Portugal is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Foreign Population in Portugal, 1990 – 2013

Year	Resident foreign population	Total population	%
1990	107.8	9900.0	1.1
1995	168.3	9900.0	1.7
2000	208.0	10200.0	2.03
2003	250.0	10500.0	2.3
2008	436.0	10500.0	4.2
2013	408.0	10400.0	3.9

Source: [6, 2].

As the analysis of investigations by Esteves, A., Fonseca M., Malheiros J. in 2003 shows, the 80% growth of Portugal's population between 1991 and 2001 was caused by a net migration, not a natural increase. By 2001, 44% of immigrants came from PALOP states. The immigrants from Cape Verde accounted for 22% of the foreign born inhabitants [5]. Recently, Ukrainians have become the largest group of foreigners with "permanence" status [1]. It is difficult to get the exact number of illegal immigrants in Portugal.

2 Place of Ukrainian Migrants in the Labour Market of Portugal

For the last 10 years, Portugal has become another home for thousands of Ukrainians. They joined the country very organically and formed such a powerful community that in Lisbon one can lose the feeling of reality – and it looks like you are in Ukraine.

According to official statistics in 1999, there were only 127 legal immigrants from Ukraine in Portugal. That means that the number of Ukrainians in Portugal has increased more than in 400 times [16, 9]. In 2009 there were 53 thousand Ukrainians, not counting 3000 of those who had already got the Portuguese citizenship and also people waiting for legalization. Unofficial number was 60 thousand Ukrainians [7]. Global economic crisis caused a massive return of labour migrants to Ukraine. Foreign population living legally in Portugal and a share of Ukrainians in the country in figures is represented in Table 2.

Table 2

Foreign population living legally in Portugal, 1980 – 2006

Nationality	1980 (a)		1990 (a)		2000 (a)		2006 (b)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total	50750	100	107767	100	207587	100	437126	100
Europe	15380	30.3	31412	29.1	61678	29.7	165073	37.8
<i>EU</i>	<i>14830</i>	<i>29.2</i>	<i>29901</i>	<i>27.7</i>	<i>56850</i>	<i>27.4</i>	<i>80014</i>	<i>18.3</i>
Other Europe	550	1.1	1511	1.4	4828	2.3	85059	19.5
Moldavia					15	0.0	15991	3.7
Romania					369	0.2	12045	2.8
Ukraine					163	0.1	42765	9.8
Other					4281	2.1	14258	3.3
Africa	24788	48.8	45255	42.0	98769	47.6	154766	35.4
<i>PALOP</i>	<i>24491</i>	<i>48.3</i>	<i>43297</i>	<i>40.2</i>	<i>93506</i>	<i>45.0</i>	<i>143904</i>	<i>32.9</i>
Angola	1482	2.9	5306	4.9	20416	9.8	33705	7.7
Cape Verde	21022	41.4	28796	26.7	47093	22.7	68163	15.6
Guinea Bissau	678	1.3	3986	3.7	15941	7.7	24550	5.6
Mozambi-que	594	1.2	3175	2.9	4619	2.2	6136	1.4
São Tomé Principe	715	1.4	2034	1.9	5437	2.6	11350	2.6
<i>Other Africa</i>	<i>297</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>1958</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>5263</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>10862</i>	<i>2.5</i>
America	9405	18.5	26369	24.5	37590	18.1	91814	21.1
<i>North America</i>	<i>3826</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>8993</i>	<i>8.3</i>	<i>10195</i>	<i>4.9</i>	<i>10790</i>	<i>2.5</i>
<i>Latin America</i>	<i>5579</i>	<i>11.0</i>	<i>17376</i>	<i>16.1</i>	<i>27395</i>	<i>13.2</i>	<i>81024</i>	<i>18.5</i>
Brazil	3608	7.1	11413	10.6	22 202	10.7	73975	16.9
Venezuela	1705	3.4	5145	4.8	3494	1.7	3274	0.7
Other	266	0.5	818	0.8	1699	0.8	3775	0.9
Asia and Oceania	1053	2.1	4509	4.2	9272	4.5	25181	5.8
Other	124	0,2	222	0.2	278	0.1	292	0.1

Note: (a) Residence permits. (b) Residence permits (provisional data), extended stay permits, extended long-term visas and new long-term visas. (c) From 1980 to 2000: EU 15. In 2006: EU 25.

Source: [13].

The numerous presence of Ukrainians in Portugal has been proved by the Portuguese statistics. If previously the representatives of Portugal's former colonies, for example Cape Verde, took the first place among immigrants who came and worked in the country, now this place is occupied by Ukrainians. Ukrainians, by a diaspora size, are the second huge group of immigrants in Portugal, after Brazilians. In 2012, the Portuguese residence permit was issued to 22,951 people, with prevailing Brazilians (4,596 persons), the second large group was Ukrainians (3322 persons). Then follow Cape Verde (3,230), Moldova (2,043), Angola (1,857), and Guinea Bissau (1,753). To compare the dynamics

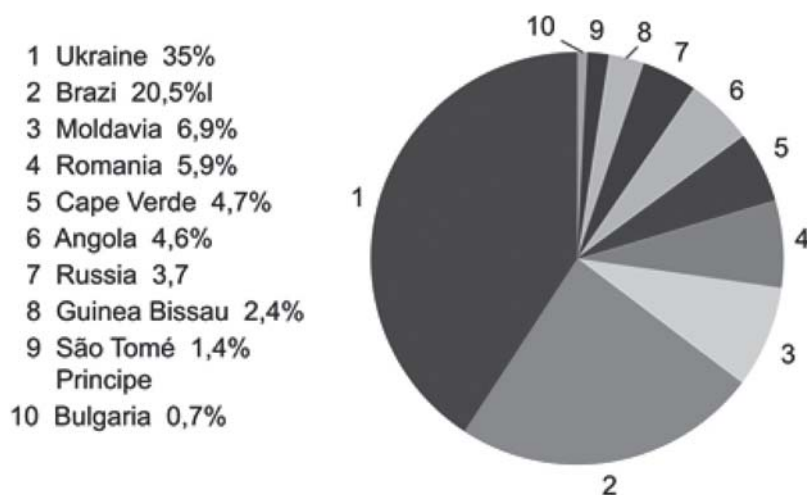
of application for residence permits by Ukrainians, let us refer to the previous years. In 2008 residence permits were issued to 484 Ukrainians, in 2009 to 978 Ukrainians in 2010 to 1358, while in 2011 – to 2336 people. Data indicate the annual increase of application of Ukrainian immigrants for residence permits in Portugal [4].

The first Ukrainians arrived in the country in 1998. At that time, Portugal won the Football Championship 2004 and there was a need for labour force for the construction of sport objects and other related constructions. Just at that time, the government of Portugal created convenient conditions for immigrants [7]. Those immigrants who had arrived in Portugal in different ways from the East European countries with expired visas or sometimes without visas at all were not deported and pursued. They were given an opportunity to work legally and get permits for work. Percentage of Ukrainians among the foreign population in Portugal having stay permits issued during 2001–2004 is shown in Fig.1.

During such first campaigns, the only requirement necessary to get the residence permit was the available valid passport. Later the terms changed. To obtain the residence permit the immigrants were to have a concluded work contract. Nevertheless, Portugal remains one of the most emigrant-loyal countries in Europe.

Figure 1

Ukrainians among the foreign population with stay permits issued in 2001 – 2004, %



Source: [13].

Table 3 illustrates distribution of migrants by regions. The main place of location

of all nationality groups is Lisbon. Speaking about immigrants, the main three locations in Portugal are: Lisboa, Faro, Porto, and also Setúbal. One can see from the table that workers from CEEC are concentrated in the Central and Southern parts of Portugal. In the case of Ukrainian migrants, they are more concentrated in Lisboa, Faro, with Leiria appearing as the third major district for these workers.

Table 3

Geographical location of the native and immigrant employees in Portugal, in average, 2002 – 2008, %

	Employment (rate of change)	Natives	Immigrants	EU15	PALOP	Cape Verde	CEEC	Ukraine	Brazil	China
Aveiro	1.8	7.4	4.2	4.2	1.8	0.6	5.4	6.7	3.1	3.0
Braga	2.6	8.9	3.3	4.5	1.5	0.5	3.6	4.6	2.1	2.7
Faro	6.0	3.2	11.7	18.6	6.0	7.5	18.0	15.9	9.4	13.1
Leiria	3.0	4.5	4.5	5.2	1.8	1.9	7.9	10.2	3.5	2.8
Lisboa	3.6	31.7	45.3	34.2	67.5	69.9	32.4	28.6	53.0	37.3
Porto	3.2	18.8	9.5	12.2	6.2	4.9	7.1	8.2	8.4	16.9
Santarém	2.5	3.5	3.3	2.8	1.5	0.9	5.8	6.8	2.9	4.9
Setúbal	2.2	4.6	7.3	3.9	8.8	10.2	6.7	4.9	8.9	7.0
Others	3.6	17.4	11.0	14.4	4.8	3.6	13.0	14.1	8.6	12.3
Total	3.3	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: [3].

Foreign workers in Portugal are mostly employed in construction and consumer services. The construction sector is especially attractive for male immigrants (specifically from PALOP and CEEC countries, including Ukraine). High concentration of immigrants in construction is caused by a great demand in this sector before the beginning of the financial crisis. The crisis had some influence on the number of employed immigrants; however, their share is the highest in such sub-sectors: hotels and restaurants, real estate and business services, wholesale and retail sales. Females are mostly employed in consumer services.

When speaking about the wage level of migrants we must note, first of all, that the level of wages in Portugal, to compare with other EU Member States, is not high. The financial crisis has only aggregated the situation. In 2013 the average wage was equal to €984 and was one of the lowest in the EU. Portugal occupies the 18th place in the list of wages, which is headed by Denmark (€3,739), Luxembourg (€3,009), Finland (€2,622), Ireland (€2,621), and Germany (€2,574).

Portugal has also surpassed Greece where the average wage is fixed at €1,028 per month and also Spain with the average wage by 60% higher (€1,643) than in Portugal. Portugal is followed in the list by Croatia (€848), Poland (€693) and Bulgaria (€316) (Económico, 2014). In 2015, the national minimum wage in Portugal remained fixed at €589 per month [12, 14, 15].

The wages paid to immigrants are not controlled and therefore they are, on average, paid below the wages of native workers. We can say for sure that the number of workers that are paid below the minimum wage is higher for immigrants than for natives. According to statistics, the average wage of workers from the EU15 is almost twice higher than that of natives and immigrants. The wage level commonly depends on the age, sex, education, contract type, and sector of economy of the immigrant work.

According to the data of International Labour Organization since 2010, Portugal has turned into a country of emigration, i.e. the number of people leaving the country has exceeded the number of immigrants. The number of permanent emigrants increased sixfold between 2007 and 2012.

3 Survey Methodology

To find the main factors of emigration and the most topical problems of organization of the Ukrainian communities' life in Portugal, we have carried out an expert survey in spring 2015. Immigrants from Ukraine, who at the moment of the survey lived in the South of Portugal (Algarve) and had a durable work experience in foreign labour markets, served as experts. 50 immigrants of the middle-age and older (40-60 years old), including 2/3 females and 1/3 males participated in the survey. Almost all participants of the survey had basic or higher education. At the time of the research, the majority of the interviewed had a special permission for stay and work in Portugal.

Motivation factors of emigration of Ukrainian citizens abroad. The research data obtained allows us to say that labour migration is motivated both by the traditional and new factors. In the first case, the questions were related to clarification of the personal motives of people, their relatives and acquaintances to move abroad. Experts proposed to choose not more than three answers from possible twenty-two. Answers were in most cases typical – low wages, unemployment and also willingness to provide a decent level of life for their children (see Table 4). These factors took the leading ranks of

importance by the choice frequency. The third rank position corresponding to the motivation of “economic crises, corruption in Ukraine” attracted a special attention. A necessity to pay credits and debts occupied the fourth position among the reasons of emigration. The important motivation reason is also the desire to acquire new knowledge, being a positive tendency in the development of motivation field of migrants regarding formation of information society.

The next step of research was determination of the experts’ opinion on the “stimulating” average monthly salary in Ukraine. For example, the reply to the question “What average monthly salary, in your opinion, should be in Ukraine to stop migration of Ukrainian people abroad?” a majority of choice (62%) was €801–1000. The remaining answers were divided almost equally within the range from €601–800 and €1001–1200. Results of this survey and of other similar investigations allow us to conclude that the increase of the minimum wage level in Ukraine at least three times can be one of the basic restricting factors of the mass labour migration of Ukrainians to foreign countries.

Table 4

Main motives of Ukrainian citizens’ migration abroad¹ (by the results of expert survey, 2015)

Reasons of migration abroad	Expert personally		His/her friends, acquaintances, relatives	
	% observations	Importance rank	% observations	Importance rank
Low wages	55.3	I	34.0	III
Willingness to provide his children an appropriate way of life	34.3	II	34.0	III
Economic crises, corruption in Ukraine	32.6	III	54.7	I
No job, unemployment	21.0	IV	43.0	II
Necessity to pay credits and debts	21.0	IV	17.3	IV
Untimely and incomplete payment of wages	17.2	V	17.3	IV
Problems with housing	13.3	VI	8.4	V
Desire to gain new knowledge	10.4	VII	5.3	VIII
Family reunification	10.4	VII	6.3	VII
Favourable conditions for emigration	7.7	VIII	6.7	VI
Positive experience of relatives, friends	5.7	IX	4.2	IX
High level of crime	4.0	X	4.0	X

¹One was allowed to choose three from the proposed 22 alternatives, therefore a total per cent is over 100%

Source: developed by the authors of the survey.

Main obstacles to Ukrainians' adaptation to Portugal. Concerning the problems most often encountered in the everyday life of Ukrainian migrants, in the experts' opinion, these are: difficulty in mastering and understanding the language of the host country, difficulty to find the first job and difficulty to find job in general. These problems took the first three rank positions by the frequency of a fixed choice. Besides, the results of the survey indicate that Ukrainian migrants face a keen problem of total or partial non-recognition of diplomas on education issued in Ukraine. The next problem by the frequency of approval is the problem of hard exhausting work. The analysis of answers to this question in the context of gender demonstrates that this problem is troublesome mostly for men. At the same time, women are more concerned about loneliness and lack of communication. Such differences can be explained by the socio-psychological and individual peculiarities of men and women.

About one third of experts indicated the unjust system of work payment in Portugal (understated wages, overtime work with no extra payment and other), and also violation of human rights (preference in employing native citizens, in career growth, etc.). The remaining part of the proposed answers concerning problems most often met in the life of Ukrainian migrants got an insignificant number of choice; therefore, there is no point in analyzing them. Besides, it should be emphasized that nobody of the experts has indicated the absence of his personal difficulties or difficulties of his friends from the Ukrainian community. Despite the fact that this variant of answer was equally placed among the proposed alternatives, it still did get a single choice.

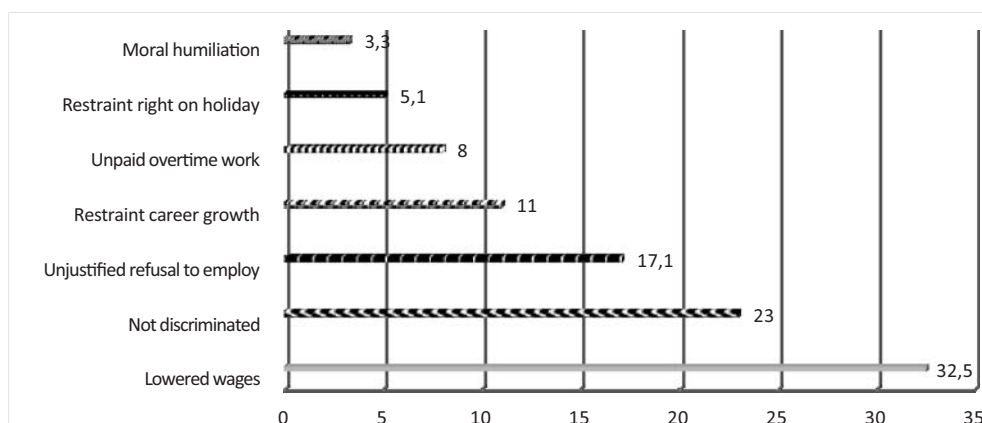
Thus, the expert survey demonstrated that Ukrainians faced the main difficulties in the socio-labour sector of the Portuguese society. At the same time, the international investigations prove that just discrimination is one of the main causes of complications in employing immigrants in the host country labour market [8, 17]. Therefore, the survey task was to reveal what forms of discrimination, by the feature of migration, the experts personally or their friends from the Ukrainian community had experienced.

Results of the expert survey have demonstrated that the most widespread form of discrimination of Ukrainian migrants in Portugal is that their wages are inadequately lower in comparison with those of native workers or migrants from other countries of the same level of education, qualification, as shown in Fig. 2.

The next, by the recorded choice frequency, signs of discrimination were: unjustified refusal of employment and limited career growth. Only 8% of the survey participants indicated the problem of induced overtime work. The remaining alternatives proposed in the questionnaire received an insignificant choice; so in our opinion there was no need to analyze them.

Figure 2

Main forms of discrimination of Ukrainian immigrants in Portugal (based on the results of expert survey, 2015)



Source: developed by the authors of the survey.

In general, it looks positive that every fourth expert has noted that neither he nor his friends from the Ukrainian community has been subject of discrimination in the country of his stay.

Migrants, as a result of direct or hidden discrimination in the labour market of the host society are in many cases forced to take the work that does not correspond to their qualification and education. Thus, the results of the research prove that half of the interviewed people – Ukrainians by birth – have a job that does not correspond completely to the obtained education, that is, they indicate that their level of education is much higher and they deserve a better job. One third of the interviewed people answered that their present job only partly corresponded to their education level. Though the experts have a certain employment history in the Portuguese labour market, only every tenth of them has indicated a complete correspondence of the occupied job to his education.

Ukrainian diaspora, public communities or emigrants' centres can facilitate to some extent the adaptation of newly arrived migrants to the host society.

Meetings with Ukrainian diaspora help migrants not to feel socially isolated, lonely and sometimes assist in solving a number of their social and economic problems. The research has found that the most common places of Ukrainians' meeting are church communities of migrants, meetings after mess, stores with common for Ukrainians food, parks, and also Saturday schools for the Ukrainian migrants' children. Thus, it is possible to say that today church plays a key role in connecting Ukrainians living abroad.

One of the most priority directions of the work of the Ukrainian emigrants centres (the first rank of significance by the frequency of choice) is legal consultancy of migrants on their rights and opportunities. Besides, the experts have stated the following much desired directions of work for emigrants from Ukraine: assistance in finding the first job and also in the process of finding job, participation in organizing and work for public organizations of immigrants and also rendering socio-psychological assistance to the people who are in a complex reality situation.

Speaking about difficulties in forming the emigrants' centres of Ukrainians the experts noted, first of all, the migrants' passive position, their excessive concentration on material goods and earning money. It is possible to assume that such situation is related with migrants excessive employment and lack of time. This can be also proved by the experts' statements who indicated among the main problems of the formation of emigrants' centres the lack of time due to overloading with work. This fact can be explained by the fact that labour migrants often help their families, relatives in Ukraine. To ensure a decent life for themselves and be able to help their relatives migrants are to work overtime or find additional job.

Moreover, because foreign countries refuse completely or partly the diplomas issued in Ukraine, a significant part of migrants attend not only language but also professional courses or gain education in the country of their stay. Therefore, lack of time can actually be the objective reason of their public passivity.

4 Prospects of Re-emigration

Regardless of the political, social and economic crisis, instability in Ukraine, most of the survey participants still express their desire to return home. Thus, a share of people who have already decided to go back to Ukraine in the nearest future is 20%. Thus, the number of migrants who have expressed their

desire to return home not in the nearest future and those who are thinking about this but still hesitate is almost equal – 30%. 15% respondents express their wish to return home but do not see the prospects for themselves. Only 5% – on the contrary – are more likely to stay in Portugal, and none of the interviewed declared their firm intention not to go back to the motherland.

The economic and political factors that could encourage the expert personally to return to Ukraine are the most decisive, namely: the improvement of economic situation in Ukraine (54%), high level of wages (43%) and the change of political situation in the country (32%). Results are represented in Table 5.

Table 5

Circumstances that could encourage Ukrainian immigrants to return to Ukraine (results of the experts' survey, 2015)

Causes of re-emigration	Expert personally		His/her friends, acquaintances, relatives	
	% observations	Importance rank	% observations	Importance rank
Improvement of economic situation in Ukraine	54	I	42.0	I
High wages	43.3	II	24.0	III
Change of political situation in Ukraine	31.5	III	32.6	II
Reaching the retirement age. Possibility of receiving a pension in Ukraine, earned abroad	21.0	IV	16.0	IV
Loss of job in the host country	21.0	IV	24.0	III
Guaranteed opportunity to find job	11.2	V	42.0	I
Health problems, disability	9.3	VI	6.4	V
Family circumstances	7.4	VII	4.3	VI

Source: developed by the authors of the survey.

Speaking about the people closest to the experts, they noted the decisive factors (in their opinion) of re-emigration which are: guaranteed employment and improvement of political situation in Ukraine. These two positions obtained the equal number of choice and took the first rank of importance (42% each). In the experts' opinion, the following factors are also important: change of political situation in Ukraine (32.6%), high wages in Ukraine (24%) and loss of job in the country of emigration (24%).

5 Conclusions

In general, we can say that immigration from Eastern Europe to Portugal has its specific features. The most active flows of migrants were registered in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Its peak was recorded in 2001. Majority of these immigrants were from Ukraine (most migrants), the Republic of Moldova, Russia, and Romania. East European migration was quite a new phenomenon for Portugal. As the authors' investigation proves, migrants trying to enter a foreign country apply most frequently to agents who sell them a short-term tourist visa to any of the Shengen countries, arrange travel details and give information about a contact person in Portugal. This contact person is responsible for providing housing and help finding job upon arrival. For sure, this type of migration is rather risky and not safe. Often "smuggling" cases become "trafficking" ones after arrival. Some persons of the network for exporting immigrants demand a "subsidy" for the protection of immigrants, and they often use violent means.

As the survey data prove, despite the crisis and job cuts in Portugal resulting in the decrease of welfare of population, the Ukrainians have no intention to return home. The unstable economic and political situation, which has become much worse in the last years, is considered to be one of the main reasons for that.

Speaking about the survey results obtained by the authors, it is possible to say that the motivation factors of Ukrainian migrants are mainly economic. This means that labour migration can be regulated basically by social and economic mechanisms.

To encourage re-emigration of Ukrainians, the following problems must be solved first of all:

- to bring social standards in Ukraine close to European standards (first of all, a three-fold increase in minimum wage and its timely pay);
- to ensure better opportunities for finding job of economically-active population;
- to fight down corruption on all society levels in the country, etc.

However, in the current situation, the first step in regulating the migration processes is to establish peace and justice in Ukraine. Successful solution of the above problems will not only prevent "washing away" of the most valuable human potential from the country but will promote creation of the favourable conditions for re-emigration of labour migrants to Ukraine.

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