

# Immigration – A New Challenge for Poland

Bozena Leven\*

## Abstract

*Recent economic and political changes in the European Union have created new labor migration patterns for Eastern European countries with limited experience and institutional capabilities for managing international labor mobility. One of those countries is Poland. Widespread economic liberalization and significant wage and employment rate differences between Western and Eastern Europe have, in a sense, once again placed Poland at the crossroads of Europe. Currently, three distinct, identifiable phenomena are occurring. A significant number of Poles are emigrating westwards to the open markets of the EU or returning to Poland after years (or even decades) of living abroad, while foreign migrants from both inside and outside the EU are flowing into Poland, often without legal work permits.*

*In this paper we seek to better understand the impact of immigration on Poland's economy and society. To do so, we describe these recent immigrants (where possible) by country of origin, gender, education, profession and area of relocation. We then identify the few domestic economic policies now in place that purport to address Poland's new labor market problems revealing – among other things –no long-term strategy to match labor market demand with labor availability. The paper concludes with a suggested approach for bridging this gap in a way that recognizes and incorporates current and some future labor market needs and migration patterns.*

Filed of Research:  
International Economics  
Contemporary Issue in Economics

---

\*Bozena Leven  
The College of New Jersey  
Ewing, NJ 08628 USA  
bleven@tcnj.edu

## Introduction

Poland is a very homogenous society, with less than 1 percent of its population characterized as ethnic minorities and, before 1990, very limited external migration. Under socialism, most migrants were Poles who emigrated illegally (primarily for economic reasons) by overstaying tourist visas in Western countries. Relatively few foreigners visited Poland, and even fewer stayed there for prolonged periods. Those few who did, were mostly students from other socialist bloc or aligned countries, including Iraqi, Libya, and Vietnam. Poland's transition towards marketization – a process that began in 1990 - changed this situation dramatically. Internally imposed travel restrictions to the West were first eased, and then largely eliminated following Poland's accession into the EU in 2004, providing Polish workers free access to several EU labor markets. During this same period the dissolution of the Soviet Union, coupled with disparate economic performances of various European economies, created additional incentives for amplified transnational labor movements.

Because pre-1990 Poland was a closed society, it lacked organizational and legal institutions to address migration issues. As current events overtook historical expectations, Poland is poorly positioned to embrace and intelligently engage its changing migration circumstances. What instead emerged was a largely ad hoc, reactive, and uncoordinated set of responses. For example, Poland's entry into the EU focused the attention of policy makers on the rights of a few EU nationals, but not on other major immigrant groups. This lack of a long-term, coherent vision and supporting policies persists despite the rising numbers of immigrants, the changing composition and needs of Poland's labor market, and a long-term demographic trend indicating aging population.

Currently, Poland is experiencing three broad immigration trends. One is the return of Poles to Poland after living abroad. Another is the relatively small, but growing, number of legal immigrants to Poland, and a third is the larger, essentially unquantifiable, number of illegal foreign migrants, most of who originate from Eastern Europe. This paper focuses on these three Polish immigration trends. We begin by examining who is coming to Poland and why, describing different migrant groups (where possible) by country of most recent origin, gender, education, profession and destination. The as yet unmet challenge of designing economic and social policies regarding Poland's current and future labor market is then assessed. We conclude with a suggested framework of policies designed to help Poland better address its changing labor market in the short and medium-term.

# 1. New patterns of immigration

## A. Returning Poles

Between the late 1940s and 1990 Poles, with a few notable exceptions,<sup>1</sup> were not allowed to legally emigrate. Instead, most emigration consisted of Polish "tourists" illegally overstaying their visas to work in the West. This decision, however, was not without cost. Obtaining a Polish passport was very difficult and the Polish authorities routinely punished Poles who overstayed their visas. This created a dilemma for those permitted to travel to the West; either return to Poland after a brief period abroad, or be effectively disowned by their homeland. Faced with that choice, many would be temporary emigrants opted to stay abroad indefinitely, with all the uncertainties that such a decision implies.

It is difficult to assess whether, and to what degree, this group of older Poles (as well as more recent Polish emigrants to the West) is now availing itself of the ability to return to Poland. No existing data document their numbers and literature on the topic is limited for several reasons. International statistics fail to clearly define a "returning emigrant," though there is some consensus that citizens whose stay abroad exceeds one year qualify for such status. Additionally, Poland's official immigration statistics only capture those seeking legal residency in Poland. Most Poles who left Poland, even for a prolonged period of time, never renounced their Polish citizenship, do not need to undertake any legal procedures to legally participate in the Polish labor market, and are therefore not accounted for in any official immigration data.

Although we cannot quantify its magnitude a few general themes are both intuitively likely and generally consistent with the limited data that are available for this group. Specifically, those Polish migrants who return to Poland are seeking family unification, re-immersion in Polish culture, and the opportunity to realize economic returns from saved capital and acquired skills (see Table 1).

Table 1 Causes of immigration, by countries, 2002

|           | Germany | US  | Ukraine | France | Russia | Kazakh | Vietnam |
|-----------|---------|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Education | 137     | 134 | 665     | 25     | 159    | 194    | 96      |
| Work      | 683     | 293 | 1235    | 328    | 267    | 8      | 382     |
| Family    | 1093    | 469 | 2364    | 212    | 625    | 93     | 147     |
| Other     | 747     | 237 | 748     | 112    | 330    | 60     | 118     |

Sources: Based on Rocznik Demograficzny (Demographic Yearbook of Poland), GUS, Warszawa, 2006, p. 483.

Germany is the country where, statistically, the largest numbers of Poles are emigrating from, with approximately 23,000 permanent immigrants between 1992 and 2002 (Table 2). It is, however, virtually certain that this figure grossly

underreports actual immigration, based on the following circumstances. From the 1970s until the early 1990s Germany, for both internal and external political reasons, actively sought to reunite ethnic “Germans” by granting *Aussiedler* status to Poles claiming separation from their relatives due to post-war border changes. To qualify, Poles needed only to produce limited documentation about their German family roots (Okolski 1998) to obtain legal German status. This led to the legal emigration of over half a million Poles into Germany, many of whom were undoubtedly in search of economic opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

Because in Germany average earnings have historically exceeded those in Poland by more than tenfold, these transplanted *Aussiedlers* were well-positioned to accumulate capital at a rate far outpacing Poles who remained in Poland. Given the geographic proximity of these two countries, and corresponding diminution in the costs and risks of migration, there is every reason to believe that some meaningful proportion of these *Aussiedlers* have returned to Poland without being captured in any official statistics. And, indeed, anecdotal evidence indicates that returning *Aussiedlers* have concentrated in their "areas of origin," that is Western Poland including Poznan, Wroclaw , Opole, the coastal part of the country, and the Mazurian lake district (Iglicka 2002).

The US ranks second as the country of origin for returning expatriates, subject again to the same statistical limitations referenced above (see Table 2). These immigrants generally divide into three categories. The first is young recent college graduates; often, the children of Polish emigrants who left Poland under the Solidarity (Iglicka 2003). This group typically represents skilled labor and finds employment in companies connected with foreign investment and trade. It is, however, unclear whether their return to Poland is a career step, or manifests a long-term intent to reside in Poland.

Table 2. Permanent Immigrants to Poland, 1990-2002, by country of previous residence

| Country    | Total number of immigrants |
|------------|----------------------------|
| Germany    | 23173                      |
| USA        | 12157                      |
| Ukraine    | 5453                       |
| France     | 3277                       |
| Russia     | 2988                       |
| Kazakhstan | 2157                       |
| Vietnam    | 788                        |

Source: National Population and Housing Census as of May 20, 2002.

A second type of returning expatriates are older Poles who left Poland in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (Iglicka 2002). This group typically brings capital and experience to Poland conducive to opening small businesses, particularly in regions popular with tourists. Notably, the relative age of these expatriates and physical challenges involved in relocating from North America to Europe suggest

that they are more likely than returning *Aussiedlers* to have moved to Poland on more permanent basis. The third category of immigrants from the United States includes Polish retirees. In addition to sentiment, it is highly likely that some substantial percentage of these expatriates never legalized their status in the US, speak limited English, and (being outside the social welfare network in the US) seek greater access to nationalized Polish medical care. Meaning, among other things, that this group, too, are likely to remain in Poland.

## **B. Foreign Legal Migrants**

While socialist Poland was unable to prevent Poles on tourist visas from remaining abroad indefinitely, the same closed borders that prevented most Poles from leaving during the Cold War also allowed the state to severely restrict, and exercise a great deal of control over, immigrants who wanted to enter the country. The degree of such control was, in fact, virtually absolute; evidenced, in part, by the fact that substantially less than two thousand immigrants per year (see Table 3) were allowed into Poland during most of the socialist period (Rocznik Statystyczny 1989, p.59).

Table 3. Poland's annual migration, in thousands, for the period 1970-2005

| Year        | 1970 | 1981 | 1990 | 1992 | 1994 | 1996 | 2000 | 2002 | 2003 | 2005 |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Emigration  | 14   | 23   | 18   | 18   | 25   | 26   | 27   | 25   | 20.8 | 22.7 |
| Immigration | 1.9  | 1.4  | 2    | 6    | 7    | 8    | 7.9  | 7.0  | 7.0  | 9.3  |

Source: Rocznik Statystyczny 1986, p. 56; 1995, p. 69; 1997, p. 112; 2001, p. 117; 2005, p. 212; 2004, p. 213.

The current number of foreign legal immigrants to Poland – being only 9,300 in 2005 - remains quite low relative to both Poland's population and the immigration rates of most other Western European countries. In absolute terms, however, that figure represents a more than four fold increase since 1990 (see Table 3). Because legal migrants must, by definition, obtain permission from various government offices, their composition is statistically well-documented. In 2006, almost 54% of this group originated from the East (Ukraine 42%, and Russia 11.5%). Germany was the source country for an additional 22%, followed by the United States - 9.4%, Vietnam -6%, France - 5.6%, and Kazakhstan - 2.9% (see Table 4).<sup>3</sup>

Table 4 Work permits granted by education, occupation and country of origin 1998-2000

|                          | Germany | US  | Ukraine | France | Russia | Kazakh | Vietnam |
|--------------------------|---------|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Post-secondary education | 904     | 555 | 1588    | 942    | 420    | 55     | 261     |
| Secondary education      | 300     | 75  | 1070    | 248    | 300    | 261    | 669     |
| Vocational education     | 129     | 2   | 205     | 15     | 16     | 25     | 114     |

Sources: Based on Rocznik Demograficzny (Demographic Yearbook of Poland), GUS, Warszawa, 2006, p. 476, "Migration and Labor Markets in Poland and Ukraine", ISP, Warszawa, 2003, p.47.

Unsurprisingly, 58% of legal migrants were college educated or above, another 36 percent completed high school, and 6 percent had vocational degrees (see Table 4). About 43 percent of these migrants were permitted to work in the Trade (23.4%) and Industry (17.9%) sectors, followed by Real Estate (10.9%), Hotels (5.9%), Construction (4.8%), Transport (2.6%), Education (2.1%), and Farming (1.2%) (see Table 5).

Table 5 Work permits granted, by economic sector, 2002, in percent

| Industry | Construction | Farming | Transport | Trade&Food | Education | Real estate | Hotels |
|----------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|--------|
| 17.9     | 4.8          | 1.2     | 2.6       | 23.4       | 2.1       | 10.9        | 5.9    |

Based on "Popyt na Prace Cudzoziemcow," Stanisława Golinowska (ed). p. 154.

Like other migrant groups, Vietnamese immigrants are highly concentrated in large urban centers. There are at least two distinct, but related reasons for this clustering; one being sociological, and the other economic. Although there are no Polish data on this point, the common experience of immigrant groups is that a distinct appearance, language, and culture tend to isolate group members from the larger society, encouraging the formation of ethnic networks that rely, in large measure, on close proximity to function. One purpose of these networks is to create outposts in which the particular group's own culture predominates, or is at least accessible. Those cultural outposts in turn, create economic demand for specific services.

Vietnamese migrants are largely self-employed, operating small businesses in the food and retail sector. To a degree, those employment decisions are likely driven by the dynamic described above, in that these jobs are mostly semi-skilled, whereas the great majority of migrants have at least a high school diploma. A similar situation exists among Middle Eastern migrants, whose numbers are relatively small. As noted earlier, pre-transition Poland hosted university students from various aligned countries, including Iraq and Syria. A

number of these students remained in Poland after graduating, and the most visible component of that small group can be seen in Middle Eastern restaurants and small businesses in several large Polish cities. This latter group of immigrants appears to be the least integrated with Polish society, which may be explained, in part, by differences in physical appearance and limited Polish language skills. Unlike Asian migrants, however, Middle Eastern students were also historically the privileged children of political and economic elites. Many Poles felt that these students had been imposed upon them by a deeply unpopular socialist government, and this resentment has persisted. In addition, the more recent, popular association between Islam, terrorism, and the persecution of Christians in Moslem countries can only have complicated this group's ability to assimilate.

### **C. Illegal Migrants**

Illegal immigrants outnumber legal immigrants by between five and tenfold – posing a more significant challenge and opportunity for the Polish labor market. Though data on this group are inherently imprecise, the Polish Ministry of Labor and Social Policy estimates that there were between 150,000-250,000 illegal workers from Eastern Europe in Poland in 2002. Geographic proximity, lower wages and persistent unemployment rates exceeding 10 percent in Ukraine (Rocznik Statystyczny 2005, p.772) appear to be the primary drivers for these workers, who are broadly concentrated, by gender, into particular employment sectors.<sup>4</sup>

Most male illegal immigrants work as skilled and unskilled construction, forestry, and farming laborers. One Polish data set estimates that in 2005 some 30 percent of all illegal immigrants worked in construction, and other studies suggest that they constitute substantially far more than half the total workforce in that sector (Migrants in Poland's Labor Market, 2005, p. 66). Most of these illegal workers are immigrants from western Ukraine, young (18-40 years old), and educated beyond the high school level. The majority of female illegal immigrants work as domestic help, providing housekeeping, cleaning, babysitting, elder care, and related services. In 2001, at least ten percent of those Polish households employing domestic workers hired illegal foreign labor (Golinowska, 2004, p.189). And, as in case of male illegal workers, most females are also from western Ukraine although, unlike the men, they tend to be less well educated.

## **2. Policies**

### **A. Immigration Policies– A Lack of Vision**

#### **(1) Labor**

Ideally, every developing country would deploy purposeful immigration policies designed to diminish current (and anticipated) shortages of human capital without unduly straining social institutions, while encouraging sustainable foreign investment in the domestic economy. To date, however, this has not occurred in Poland. As far as can be determined, Poland's current immigration policy consists of ad hoc, reactive responses to discrete events; specifically, how to handle small numbers of asylum seekers, EU related labor mobility regulations, and the rights of EU nationals. There appears to be no long or even medium-term immigration strategy to anticipate or meet current labor shortages addressing Poland's inevitable transformation into a service economy.

Today's labor market conditions are, of course, a function of domestic and international labor imbalances. Key domestic issues include dynamic structural economic changes, a shift in the composition of Poland's labor demand, and persistent limitations on domestic labor mobility, which strongly inhibit workers' ability to meet fluid employment demand characterized by rapid job creation in some sectors and regions, and sometimes drastic reductions in others. Various factors contribute to the lack of internal labor mobility, including the inflexible structure of Poland's housing market, which can generally be divided into legacy and market sectors. The "legacy" sector consists of millions of small apartments clustered in large developments that were highly subsidized under socialism and distributed on the basis of a waiting system, rather than on cost, income, or price. The "market" sector, by contrast, is comprised of relatively new housing conceptualized, and built, pursuant to free market forces.

Unsurprisingly, this housing dichotomy generally parallels the "winners" and "losers" of the marketization process. The unemployed, underemployed, unskilled, and retired predominate in legacy housing, while Poland's newly emerging professional and entrepreneurial class build their own homes or purchase modern apartments in new developments. Over time, more and more Poles can be expected to join the "market" housing segment. Until that occurs, however, the affordability gap prevents many legacy homeowners from moving to regions, or even out of neighborhoods, in search of greater economic opportunity.

A similar phenomenon persists in the countryside. By severely limiting the size of private farms, socialism left Polish agriculture highly inefficient and unprofitable. Agricultural consolidation will take years, limiting farmers' ability to move to employment opportunities. One result is that the structure of Poland's unemployment rate (about 11 percent in 2007), is highly segmented

geographically. While sectors such as construction, experience persistent shortages and unemployment is virtually non-existent in most major cities, more than 20 percent of Poles lack jobs in some rural regions. Rather than encourage legal immigration (in whatever form) to meet labor needs, however, Poland's response has been uneven and unrealistic, and working illegally as a foreigner in Poland remains the norm, particularly for migrants coming from the East. To some extent, this may be a function of circumstances, rather than intent, in that the wage and employment disparities driving Ukrainian migration are not present for most western workers, who tend to be skilled and employed by large firms in Poland. Because most Eastern European migrants do not (as yet) have employer sponsors they face the full panoply of bureaucratic and financial obstacles imposed on foreigners by the Polish authorities, which include high processing costs and lengthy wait times.

A window into this “on the ground” dichotomy is provided from a top line comparison of the construction and trade/food sectors. Most construction jobs are temporary, and hiring is done on an individual, itinerant, basis. Accordingly, there is little incentive to navigate the hurdles of legal employment and, despite persistent sectoral labor shortages, relatively few legal work permits are issued in this sector (see Table 5). Contrast this with the trade/food sector, which is increasingly characterized by large, enduring “big box” stores with predictable labor requirements and sufficient capital. In this highly visible sector hiring illegal workers is more difficult and, critically, less consistent with the needs of participating businesses than it is in the construction sector. One result is that the highest numbers of legal work permits are issued to trade/food sector labor.

The government's response to short-term labor shortages in construction and home care is emblematic of its generally reactive, ad hoc approach. In July 2007, employers seeking foreign workers were permitted to apply for three month work visas for those workers. After three months these workers are required to return to their home countries. Predictably, the time and costs involved in obtaining these permits, coupled with their short duration, discouraged both employers and workers, and this program has had no impact on the number of illegal workers or labor market shortages.

## **(2) Capital**

The desirability of increasing human and financial capital inflows to Poland is self-evident but difficult to quantify in terms of cause and effect. Two things are apparent, though. One is that the many Poles now having lived abroad for varying periods of time represent a meaningful source of both types of capital. Another is that Polish policymakers have done little to facilitate these inflows. To date, no incentives to persuade Poles to return to Poland have been proposed, and there is no indication that such incentives are even being considered. Because Poland has not yet meaningfully grappled with migration we write, in effect, on a clean slate that seeks to match basic goals and policy directions.

The basic objective is uncomplicated; to facilitate domestic economic growth by matching labor demand with supply, and encouraging individuals with high skills, investment capital, or both to reside in Poland.

### **(3) Legal Migrants**

As applied to legal migrants, we focus on two target groups. One consists of foreigners employed by established firms for discrete periods and professionals. The other is returning Poles. Presumably, most foreign firms desiring a presence in the Polish market have adequate resources to overcome bureaucratic obstacles and obtain the employee skill sets that they require. Even so, there appears to be little reason not to lower fees, lengthen the time periods covered by work permits, and reduce paperwork to encourage greater investment of foreign labor and capital. And there is ample room for improvement. A recent World Bank Doing Business Report ranked Poland 129 (out of 178 countries) in terms of bureaucratic obstacles to business, behind Bulgaria and Moldova. One of the criteria measured was hiring and recruiting domestic and foreign labor (World Bank 2007).

Regarding professionals, the migration policy focus to date has been on securing the ability of Poles to work outside Poland. That focus should be changed to create practical incentives that attract professionals to come to Poland. One of the many ways to do so could be to offer graduate students in selected fields subsidies and/or the promise of relevant work experience if they complete their education in Poland. Returning Poles represent a larger group of potential “migrants” and a significant opportunity. Although Poland’s transition to a market economy has been rapid, it remains incomplete. Basic credit instruments, such as mortgages, are just now becoming available, the entrepreneurial ranks (though growing) remain thin, and state of the art training in high technology, medicine, and other rapidly evolving fields continues to mature. Many Poles now living abroad have needed skills, and their return to Poland should be purposefully encouraged. Obvious ways to do so include targeted tax breaks, loan guarantees, and similar initiatives widely employed in the United States and Western Europe. These same basic strategies should also be deployed to facilitate capital inflows by encouraging Poles with liquid assets to return to Poland.

### **(4) Illegal Migrants**

A more complex picture is presented by illegal migrants, who are typically less skilled and bring little or no capital with them to Poland. Notably, though, this group also poses relatively few absorption challenges. Several studies suggest that geographic proximity, a shared post-war experience, and language similarities have allowed Ukrainians and other East European migrants to move easily into Polish society (Bienicki, 2006). Indeed, Poland's underground

economy, which likely employs as many (or more) illegal Polish workers as foreign workers (UNDP Report of Social Development 2004), is widely accepted.

Moreover, the effect of these immigrants on Poland's unemployment rate is marginal. By working in construction or as domestic help exhibiting a high degree of labor mobility, immigrants rarely compete directly with Poles for jobs or lower the market wage. For example, in 2005 the average pay for a Ukrainian construction worker was between 6 and 10 Polish zlotys per hour (\$2-3). This pay is lower than the average wages paid to Polish construction workers, but the difference is not substantial. Employers do save money by evading taxes and health benefit contributions for illegals, but their primary motivation in hiring illegal workers are severe, persistent shortages in these segments of the Polish labor market.

There is also no evidence that illegal migrants have contributed to Poland's growing crime rate. To the contrary, while the relevant crime statistics capture only those actually apprehended, for example, in the Opole vojevodship (one of the major destination of foreign labor), of 37,989 crimes reported in 2006, only 88 involved foreigners. In 2005, the numbers were 55 of 24,150 crimes reported. In both years, more than half of these reported crimes were non-violent, involving motor vehicle violations ("Ocena Stanu" 2006). And, since illegal migrants are outside Poland's social welfare system, their impact on public services is quite limited. Welfare benefits are completely unavailable to this group, as are vacations and pensions, while publicly funded medical care is limited to emergency cases.

We do not mean to suggest that illegal immigration is a wholly benign phenomenon in Poland. Certainly, significant health, public safety, national security, and other issues are raised whenever a substantial number of individuals live and work in a society without legal status. However, to date the societal impact of this group appears small, and the economic impact generally positive. For Polish policy makers, this should permit a degree of flexibility when formulating migration policies that is unavailable where the societal and economic issues commonly associated with illegal immigrants are more acute.

Most demographic projections indicate that in the next 10 to 15 years Poland, along with much of the EU, will experience a significant decline in the working age population. Whether that broader problem should be addressed by encouraging permanent or long-term legal immigration is well beyond the scope of this paper. From a strictly economic perspective, though, one way to meet fluctuating labor sectoral demand is through a guest workers program that meets each stockholder's needs, is transparent, and is (in fact) temporary. The primary stakeholders are employers, employees, and the government, as the recipient of tax revenues and provider of social welfare benefits. Longer work visas (e.g., three years) that cost less, are easier to obtain, allow migrants to make multiple entries, accord visa holders a renewability preference (tied to labor market

conditions), and issued for sectors experiencing labor shortages are consistent with these diverse needs. Employers would achieve greater workforce stability, lower costs, and business planning predictability, but at a price; the imposition of a tax per employee in an amount sufficient to defray a portion of the costs of allowing legal migrants to participate in the national health care system while working in Poland.

For foreign migrants the benefits, and cost, would be similar. Stability, legal status, access to health care, and the probability of continued access to the Polish labor market could be “purchased” by having each immigrant’s employer withhold a portion of their salary in an interest bearing account, which would be paid to migrants if they returned home on time and had not been convicted of a crime. The government would benefit in several ways. Migrants would become visible in the tax system, the health care system would be better able to protect the entire population from contagious disease, a portion of migrants’ direct health care costs would be paid by employers, and the disproportionate fiscal burden on the system of costly emergency room care, which is the only health care now available to illegal migrants, would undoubtedly be reduced. Labor market imbalances would also diminish, and the likelihood that migrants would go home when their visas expire would dramatically increase. Of course, a guest worker (and any other) migration policy require sufficient flexibility to adjust to market needs. For example, if the withholding and taxes suggested here unduly discouraged migrants or employers, then the government could adjust the interest rate paid on migrant deposits upwards to increase labor participation.

### **3. Conclusion**

Poland is particularly well positioned to benefit from targeted migration policies. Membership in the EU provides ready access for skilled labor and professionals to enter the Polish marketplace, if appropriate incentives to do so are put in place. There are millions of ethnic Poles living abroad, many of whom are fluent in the Polish language and culture, whose skills and capital could have an immediate beneficial effect on Poland’s economy. And Poland is bordered by less well developed Eastern neighbors with a motivated, mobile, and available labor pool that can be effectively developed to diminish domestic labor shortages.

Admittedly, migration policies are politically charged. Most societies struggle to balance labor needs with often elusive voter support, and there is no reason so suppose that Poland will be an exception. As Poland’s economy (and population) continues to mature, however, purposeful, targeted, and effective migration policies will no longer be a luxury. They will soon be a necessity.

## Reference

Bienicki, M. Kazmierkiewicz, P. and Smoter, B. 2006. Integration of Foreigners in Poland, ISP, Warszawa.

Bojar, H. Gasiór-Niemiec, A. Bieniecki, M. Pawlak, M. 2005. Migranci na Rynku Pracy w Polsce [Migrants in Poland's Labor Market], ISP, Warszawa.

Golinowska, S. 2004. Popyt na Prace Cudzoziemców [Demand for Foreign Labor], Stanisława Golinowska. IPISS, Warszawa.,

Migration and Labor Markets in Poland and Ukraine, 2003. ISP Report, Warszawa.

"Integration or Discrimination," 2003 in Iglicka, K. (Ed.), ISP, Warszawa.

Okolski, M. 1998. Recent Trends in International Migration – Poland 1998. SOPEMI Report, Warszawa.

"Ocena stanu bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego w województwie opolskim za okres I półrocza 2005 r" [Evaluation of safety and order in Opole Vojevodhip for 2005]. 2006. Komenda Wojewodzka w Opolu, Opole.  
[http://www.opole.uw.gov.pl/1organizacja/gabinet\\_wojewody/kolegia/2005/protoko116.rtf](http://www.opole.uw.gov.pl/1organizacja/gabinet_wojewody/kolegia/2005/protoko116.rtf).

"Return Migration of Poles," 2002 in Iglicka, K. (Ed.), ISP, Warszawa.

Rocznik Demograficzny [Demographic Yearbook of Poland], 2006, GUS, Warszawa.

Rocznik Statystyczny [Statistical Yearbook], various issues, GUS Warszawa.

UNDP Report of Social Development, 2004 Washington, DC.

World Bank Doing Business Report 2008, 2007, Washington DC.

Zapotrzebowanie na Prace Obcokrajowców w Polsce [Demand for Foreign Labor in Poland], 2005, ISP, Warszawa.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> During brief periods in 1956, 1968, 1970, and also in connection with the Aussiedler program (more fully described, *infra*) a number of Poles were permitted to emigrate.

<sup>2</sup> Since Germany's unification, that policy has come under increased scrutiny and, with Poland's entry into the EU, is largely outdated.

<sup>3</sup> More recently, Poland has also admitted small numbers of legal migrants from China and South Korea. A number of these migrants have followed their companies' investment in Eastern Europe, tend to stay in Poland temporarily, and work at large firms funded with Asian capital.

<sup>4</sup> As appears below, the temporary nature of these jobs strongly suggests that these workers do not remain in Poland indefinitely. Insofar as Poland's EU membership has resulted in the tightening of that country's eastern border, the most likely means of entry is to obtain a tourist visa, and then remain in Poland without legal status. Once inside Poland, these same workers can more easily travel to other EU countries in search of jobs.