

Micro level factors leading to a migratory decision: Migrant groups in the Czech Republic.¹

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Abstract

This paper combines the results of research targeting several distinct migrant communities living and working in the Czech Republic. This research further develops work which documented the experience of highly educated Slovak workers in the Czech Republic by including additional linguistic groups. Preliminary findings uncovered a nuanced perspective which elucidated the tendency of young individuals to seek out opportunities in the 'near abroad' whereas experienced workers became migrants only after ensuring the economic benefits of making a move. Further work encompassing a larger cohort has indicated that Individual agency plays a key role in individual decision making. The project has elucidated the complexity of micro level causal factors in relation to migratory decision making. While this work demonstrates that a network effect exists in some cases rational choice and cultural commonalities also play a significant role leading up to migration and indeed in perpetuating flows. It has also become clear that some groups are intent on settlement in the Czech Republic.

Non-Technical Summary

Research focused on the experience of migrants in the Czech Republic demonstrates the importance of taking into account a variety of factors when discussing migration intentions. This paper has used information from two distinct surveys, one focused on Slovak nationals and a second including other foreigners working in the Czech Republic. The research has found that individual choice is an important factor that must be included in any discussion about why individuals choose to move. In addition existing connections with family or kin are of great importance as they provide support to migrants upon and after arrival. The work discusses the complexity of flows into the Czech Republic and how variation leads to difficulty in applying existing theoretical constructs.

Keywords: Czech Republic, migration, intentions, remigration trends, employment, near abroad, agency

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Contents

Abstract	1
1 Introduction	3
2 Theory	3
3 Methods and Limitations	4
4 Target groups	5
5 Groupings	6
6 Reason for Leaving One’s Home Country	7
7 Remigration Trends	8
7.1 Return home if unemployed	8
7.2 Wage Length of Residence and Perceptions	9
7.3 Social Capital	10
7.4 Plan to Move: Rationale	11
7.5 Satisfaction	11
8 Bifurcation on the Labour market	12
8.1 Change Employment	12
8.2 Lack of Bifurcation	15
9 Findings	16
10 Future Trends	17
11 Concluding Remarks	19
12 References	21
13 Appendices	23

1 Introduction

Multidisciplinary work has yielded a variety of attempts to formulate unified theoretical frameworks to aid our understanding of the complex flow of individuals under the rubric of migration. While these attempts have greatly enhanced our understanding of determinates of aggregate flows comparatively little is known about remigration trends, second generation returnees or migrant resettlement during multistage migratory phases. Taking into account the reality that migrant itineraries are continuously under development and are subject to change, (Rallu, p. 289) this work seeks to clarify our understanding of migratory flows into the Czech Republic with a particular focus on highly educated migrants. This has been made possible by analysis of the responses collected from a snowball sample of migrants in the Czech Republic.²

In the interest of developing a better understanding of the complex web of flows and micro flows within and across the target region the researchers have targeted several distinct migrant groups. These groups have been divided into distinct linguistic groupings; Slovak speakers, Russian speakers (including Ukrainians and Belarusians) and English Language speakers (from a variety of source countries).³

Keeping in mind that the flow of particular groups (Ukrainians) is largely understood to be part of a larger regional system we have focused attention on the less mobile (non-transient) migrant population in the Czech Republic.⁴ Recent work illustrates how ‘mobility’ has spawned dynamic streams of human movement based on an litany of personal choices, motivations and external factors, including but not limited to the state and society. (Salt, 2008) Taking up this theme this work will attempt to clarify factors which impact upon select flows within the Czech Republic.

Kaczmarczyk & Okólski (p. 16) have deemed the Czech Republic to be a ‘new migration pole’ part of a larger network of CEE countries exhibiting unique country specific mobility patterns which together form a unique and separate migratory system within Europe. Within this specific case we seek to determine the migration related intentions of migrants, both past and potential. Understanding the reality that current migrants have greater potential to re-migrate than non-migrants (Chiswick, p. 69) and that individual migration experiences are an ongoing process the researchers look to the underlying rationale for the original mobility decision, the potential for remigration (onward or return) as well as the current state of the individual’s life situation in the Czech Republic. This work will explain the project methods and intentions, discuss limitations of such an approach and seek a deeper understanding of migratory trajectories within the results.

2 Theory

² We avoid the use of the term ‘Highly Skilled’ as it is often used as bureaucratic label utilised by the state.

³ We recognise the difficulty associated with using ‘linguistic’ groupings however it is necessary considering the wide range of nationalities involved. (Table 2 Nationality) We also note that we have been unable to include the Vietnamese migrant community in this work; a group which is highly visible in the Czech Republic and relatively well integrated into society. (Heisler, p. 80)

⁴ We do include so called sojourners within our case, however, the majority of subjects included in our work are in full time employment and have regularized status in the country.

We find that typical theoretical approaches applied to migratory streams often fail to be clearly applicable to the multiple migratory streams which have been included in this study. While network based explanations of social capital theory are applicable in the vast majority of cases their application varies in explanatory power depending on the linguistic group under study and appear to be most applicable to Russian speakers. (Massey.et.al., 1998) Similarly economic rational choice models are applicable but do not always clearly encompass the primary ‘push’ utilised in individual rationalizations. A model of rational expectations seems to provide the best ‘fit’ to the multiple streams under study. With individuals making rational decisions based on personal preferences or calculated risk aversion strategies in the face of regional economic imbalance, life satisfaction and the expectation of improvement after a migration decision has been made. (Massey.et.al., 1998)

Often arguments which purport to explain migration include the supposed ‘pull’ of available jobs which need to be filled by migrants. The segmented labor market theory as espoused by both Piore and Sassen describes the structural labour demand which act as a pull factor leading to migration. (1979 and 1991) This approach is somewhat applicable to the Czech labour market which has exhibited stronger growth over the past decade than surrounding countries.⁵ However, the secondary labour market as described by Piore and Sassen is not clearly applicable to all migrants groups within the Czech labour market. Due to the nature of our sample we find that in the case of well-educated migrant populations there is no single theoretical approach which evidences adequate explanatory power in the case of the Czech Republic.

3 Methods and Limitations

The original survey was distributed to Slovak speakers via online media. After the first round of data had been analysed the Russian, Ukrainian and English versions of the survey were released during spring 2013.

The survey design utilised an extended form of snowball sampling, wherein individuals known to the researchers were asked to inform their contacts about the survey and to distribute a link to the online questionnaire. By virtue of the sampling method the majority of respondents tended to be from the same social group or network/cohort; leading to a convenience sample of respondents.⁶ This sampling method led to over representation of highly educated individuals. Unfortunately, limitations imposed upon the research project prevented the implementation of a more balanced distribution

Respondents indicated via a variety of demographic questions details which have provided the researcher with rich content related to their living conditions and experience in the workplace. The English and Russian samples are composed of 121 individuals the Slovak Sample is comprised of 222 respondents.⁷ Individuals were presented with the option of completing the survey in one of four language versions;

⁵ See Figure 7 GNI Per Capita

⁶ Social media used include; *LinkedIn* for the English Language group, *somvprahy* for Slovak nationals and *email.ru* list servers for the Russian language speakers.

⁷ Not all samples were gender balanced with Females dominating one linguistic group (Russian Females 76 %) and Males dominating another. (English Males 60 %) The Slovak sample was 52% Female, 48% Male.

English, Russian, Slovak and Ukrainian.⁸ The vast majority of respondents were highly educated; with 88 per cent holding a University degree.⁹ Such over representation was not unexpected given the fact that the majority of respondents are employed in the capital region or other large commercial centers in the Czech Republic where employability often depends on education level. Much in line with research from other European countries we find that migrants exhibit high participation rates in the labour market.¹⁰ (Niessen & Schibel, 2005)

4 Target groups

Before the transition in the early 1990's the Czech Republic was incorporated into a heavily regulated regional migratory network which was based on historical relationships and political calculation. (Kaczmarczyk & Okólski, 2005) These historical flows were disrupted during the period of transition in the early 1990's but were later rapidly re-established and often expanded in scope. The most significant historical migrant groups include Ukrainian and Slovak nationals.

Ukrainian nationals have been employed on the Czech labour market for decades as temporary or 'pendular' migrants often spending several months a year at home in the Ukraine. Slovak nationals have historically been granted, and still utilise, special status to live and work in the Czech Republic as a result of a variety of bilateral agreements agreed upon after the velvet divorce. (Horáková, 2000) (Strielkowski, 2007)

In addition to the large numbers of Slovak and Ukrainian nationals in the Czech Republic there are also a number of other nationalities who play a significant role within the local labour market. In fact the number of foreigners registered in the Czech Republic has doubled in the past 10 years and now totals nearly half a million individuals with the capital of Prague hosting the largest number of foreign nationals. Foreigners now make up 14 per cent of the total population of the city.¹¹ This work focuses our attention upon three primary groups; Russian language speakers,¹² Slovak Nationals and English Language speakers, which is a catch all group representing European and non-European Westerners. This division has resulted from time and financial constraints which limited our ability to include other groups. (Table 2 Nationality)

⁸ A Ukrainian version of the survey was provided alongside the other Language versions however only one individual took advantage of this translation. There were however a number of Ukrainians respondents to the Russian Survey who came primarily from Kiev.

⁹ English speakers more likely to have BA, Russians more likely to have MA as a result of conventions in their country of origin.

Russian - BA -12.7% MA 49.3% PhD 5.6%

English - BA -27% MA 35.4% PhD 7.3%

Slovak - BA -11.7 % MA 61% PhD 4.5%

¹⁰ No data is available which would allow us to compare the qualification level of migrants across regions although it is often mentioned that the highly qualified are more likely movers than others. (Baláž & Williams, 2004, Massey, et al., 1998)

¹¹ Total foreign population of the Czech Republic is 449,450. The population of Prague is 1,272,690 of which 178,177 are foreigners. (Czech Statistical Office, 2012)

¹² Most choose to complete the survey in Russian even though the survey was also provided in the Ukrainian language

The English language survey includes a number of individuals from North America and Europe while the Russian language survey includes individuals from the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, and several other post-soviet states. We believe that this cross section, including differing linguistic groups, provides a deeper understanding of the lived experience of individuals who have migrated. We do not include analysis of the economically active Vietnamese community due to constraints on the research project, although future work should focus on this migrant community.

It would appear that Prague as the capital city and the Czech Republic in general is seen as an ideal location for the majority of migrants from the proverbial 'East' as it is *less different* than further West but still 'West' of the old soviet divide yet it is perceived from the other side as being an *exotic* eastern city which has a dynamic economy and is 'safe' for westerners.¹³

5 Groupings

Retrospective analysis of responses clearly indicates that within the various groups included in the data there are several distinct subgroupings. Those who are living in the Czech Republic and plan *to settle for the long term*, those who are more *flexible* and are *unclear as to their future* migration(remigration) intentions and those who are what have been deemed *transient migrants*. Within these three groups we see a clear distinction between; those who came as part of, or with the intention of participating in a *study program* leading to a degree, those who moved for *personal reasons* (lifestyle migrants),¹⁴ those who moved in order to *gain international* experience, and those who sought out a more stable environment in which to *further their professional and personal growth*. There also exist several sub groupings of individuals who left their home country under some form of duress (for political reasons) or who 'returned' (astronaut¹⁵ migrants or second generation returnees).

In brief we find that a large majority of respondents fit the category of lifestyle migrants, especially those from Western Europe and North America who take advantage of the lower costs of living in the Czech Republic or the freedom living abroad entails. Indeed the opportunity potential for ambitious youth is very positive looking forward as unemployment has historically been very low in the Capital region.¹⁶ Another significant portion of respondents fits to the category of student migrant, those who have studied or are studying for a local degree. Relatively few respondents fit the categorization of transient migrant, although a number of Western Europeans and North Americans indicated that this is only a 'stop' along the way or a sort of 'gap year' in their life plans. In addition we have seen the demonstrable influence which networks have on some groups, in particular the Ukrainian and Russian speaking respondents who indicate dependence on their compatriots for finding employment. English respondents are more

¹³ Inverted comma's and italics indicate that these terms often have a loaded (often pejorative) meaning.

¹⁴ (O'Reilly, 2012) Discusses lifestyle migration in terms of British retirees along the Spanish Coastline. Here the concept is more apt to apply to young Westerners who do not intend to stay for the long term and may be taking advantage of the permissive social environment of the country. One individual went so far as to say he was in the country because of 'escapism plain and simple'.

¹⁵ See (Rallu, 2008) for a more detailed description of Astronaut migrants; Those whose have a business or property in one country but live in or attempt to gain a second citizenship and as a result spend a great deal of time in different countries.

¹⁶ Unemployment in the Capital hovered around 2% before the recent economic crisis and remains low even today with average unemployment in the county at roughly 7%. (Eurostat, 2013)

dependent on acquaintances than on friends when seeking employment; the so called strong and weak informal networks which link migrants together in destination states. (Morawska, 2007) This difference may be a result of historical flows which resulted in the established of a network for Ukrainian and Russian speakers which then provides a springboard for newcomers, while for other groups there is less of an established network given the more transient character of many of the westerners' migration patterns. The case of highly educated is unique as it would be anticipated that they would be less dependent on a network of kin or compatriots (Bakewell, de Haas, & Kubal, 2011, p. 17) for settlement and employment given their skill set and personal ambitions. Although data indicates that this is true for most groups there are some cases which do not conform, primarily Russian speaking men who are reliant on friends when seeking employment in the Czech Republic.

6 Reason for Leaving One's Home Country

The more traditional 'push factors' generally utilised in migration research such as economic factors or imbalances in living conditions are apparently of little significance to individuals. In essence we see common explanations for leaving one's home country are related to employment or the desire for change. Although employment is a significant factor we find that explanations for leaving one's home country are as often related to family reunification or a need for change as they are related to work. There are, however, significant differences within subgroups. Variation in the relative importance of each factor is highlighted when groups are separated along linguistic lines. Family reunification was important for Russian speakers while interpersonal reasons were given more often by English speakers. Study was indicated as an important factor for between 12 and 26 per cent of all respondents while family reunification was relevant for Russian speakers but negligible within other groups. (Table 1 Reasons for leaving home country)

Although intragroup differences based on gender were not always clear as a result of the relatively small sample size of each subgroup Russian speaking females did indicate that they migrated in order to seek out change whereas English speaking men were far more likely to indicate employment as a primary rationale. Similarly Slovak men more often claimed to have moved due to work while Slovak females were more likely to indicate that they moved due for family reunification, need for change or interpersonal relations. 'Need for change' was an important factor was for all groups, in particular for Russian speakers which may be a reflection of the difficulties individuals indicated that they have had in Russia, both politically and personally. Several individuals indicated that they enjoy the freedoms associated with the European project and would only return to their home country if there was significant political change or a serious family crisis which demanded return.

Table 1 Reasons for leaving home country by per cent valid

	Total	English	Russian	Slovak
Interpersonal	10%	17.5%	1%	6.5%
Family reunification	7.3%	1.6%	14.9%	3%
Work	27.3%	34.8%	17%	28%
Business	5.5%	6.3%	6.4%	0%
Study	12.7%	14.3%	8.5%	26%

Need for change	22.7%	15.9%	31.9%	15%
Number Valid	285	63	47	175
**Valid per cent within group. May not equal 100				

While a significant portion of respondents are focused on work or a need for change it should be noted that a large numbers of students have remained after completing their studies in the Czech Republic. In the case of the English speakers a large number participated in the European mobility program *Erasmus* or similar exchange programs and then choose to stay on or returned after completing their degrees. The case of Slovak and even Russian speaking students is unique to the region as they are able to take advantage of the fact that education is provided free of charge in the Czech language at public schools if the individual can pass the entry exam in the Czech language.¹⁷ Even though many individuals claimed to have moved in order to study even more moved immediately after completing their education. A sizable portion of respondents migrated immediately after their studies ended; roughly 30 per cent of Slovak, 23 per cent of English and 17 per cent of Russians indicating that they were students before leaving their hometown. We find that employment is a primary factor leading to a migratory decision for some groups, however, we find that personal reasons play a significant role leading up to a migratory decision. We hypothesize that within the younger cohort lifestyle choices and adventurism play a significant role in driving migration decision making; irrespective of the fact that many explain their decision via the utilization of the socially acceptable explanation ‘work’.

7 Remigration Trends

In an attempt to better understand the potential for remigration survey respondents were asked to clarify their future plans and their willingness to return to their home country in the case that they were unemployed for an extended period of time. Additional questions related to potential migration onwards to other EU states. We find that Russian speakers are strongly resistant to the idea of returning home whereas other groups are more amenable to the idea even when underemployed on the local market. We find that satisfaction is highly dependent on an individual’s frame of reference, with those coming from the east being more satisfied even taking into account their lower than average salaries. The impact which networks have on employability and wages is of interest; our findings indicate that different linguistic groups depend to varying degrees on friends and family when seeking employment. There is an indication that those who rely on close friends earn, on average, less than those who are directly employed by companies or those who depend on business acquaintances for employment. There is clear differentiation between linguistic groups in this respect and indicate that network effects may have a constraining influence as much as they facilitate integration into the workforce, an influence discussed in more detail by de Haas. (2008)

7.1 Return home if unemployed

From what respondents indicated the majority intend to remain in the Czech Republic for the foreseeable future. In the case of uncertainty only 31.5 per cent would return home if they were to be unemployed for more than 6 months. By the far the majority 68.5 per cent would not return home even if threatened with

¹⁷ Nearly four per cent of university students in the Czech Republic are Slovak (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010)

extended unemployment. There is variation between groups; with Russian speakers being more unwilling to return home in the face of unemployment.¹⁸ This may reflect the availability of unemployment benefits for those with full time contracts, the limitation imposed on mobility for those ‘settled’ in the Czech Republic or the simple fact that ‘things are worse at home’.¹⁹ Statistically there is no correlation between the number of years an individual has been in the Czech Republic and their willingness to return if unemployed. There is, however, a correlation between language group and willingness to return home.²⁰ This may also be related to the fact that some migrants have ‘human and social capital specific to the origin that has not fully depreciated in their absence.’ (Chiswick, p. 69) In this case of highly educated coming from the west may perceive that there is an opportunity for continued success in their home country, while those coming from the east may not have such a positive view of return. There is conflict in responses with Russian speakers being unwilling to return while Slovaks would return even considering the comparative high unemployment in their home region. We presume this has to do with political reasons when discussing Russian speakers and the familial support available to returnees in the case of Slovak nationals.

7.2 Wage Length of Residence and Perceptions

Salary is not clearly linked to length of residence as those living in the Czech Republic the longest do not tend to earn more on average than those who are relative newcomers. Of course our sample is composed of mainly those who have been in the country less than 10 years which limits generalization. In line with expectations wage levels follow well established trends, at least in relation to age, with young people (21-30 years of age) earning low or average level wages which rise progressively with age(at least for male respondents). Wages for older female respondents (41-50 Years of age) are lower than would be expected given their experience; however, this may be explained by the limited sample size and its diverse character.²¹

The limited impact of length of residence on salary level may have something to do with deskilling or the stability of income once settled. It is possible that individuals are likely to ‘fall into’ a job and then become dependent on that position once employed. (i.e. They are unlikely to seek out other employment even if there is potential for greater earnings elsewhere and also when taking into account the existing social system which provides six months insurance against unemployment) The authors are of the opinion that this effect has something to do with individual perception. Individuals from ‘eastern’ countries integrate into the Czech labour market with limited difficulty yet their salary expectations are moderated by the fact that they seek only to improve their standards in comparison to their (relatively poor) country of origin. In contrast those coming from the west have a different benchmark from which to compare. (i.e. the market in the country of origin is ‘stronger’ with higher wage standards). That is to say that the large number of ‘eastern’ respondents have lower expectations thus earn lower than average salaries, yet are

¹⁸ Unemployed more than 6 months return home

Russians	Yes 17.5 %	No 82.5 %
English	Yes 42.3%	No 57.7%
Slovak	Yes 42%	No 58%

¹⁹ See Appendix Figure 7 GNI Per Capita

²⁰ Pearson Chi-Square is 6.446 at the 0.01 level (two tailed) for English speakers

²¹ A small sample of those over 40 years of age limits generalization and in terms of diversity we see; Two housewives, one accountant, one retiree, one manager, one salesperson, one executive.

paradoxically more satisfied with their decision to live in the Czech Republic than the higher paid 'westerners' who are less satisfied on the whole. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction stem from the difference in their frame of reference)

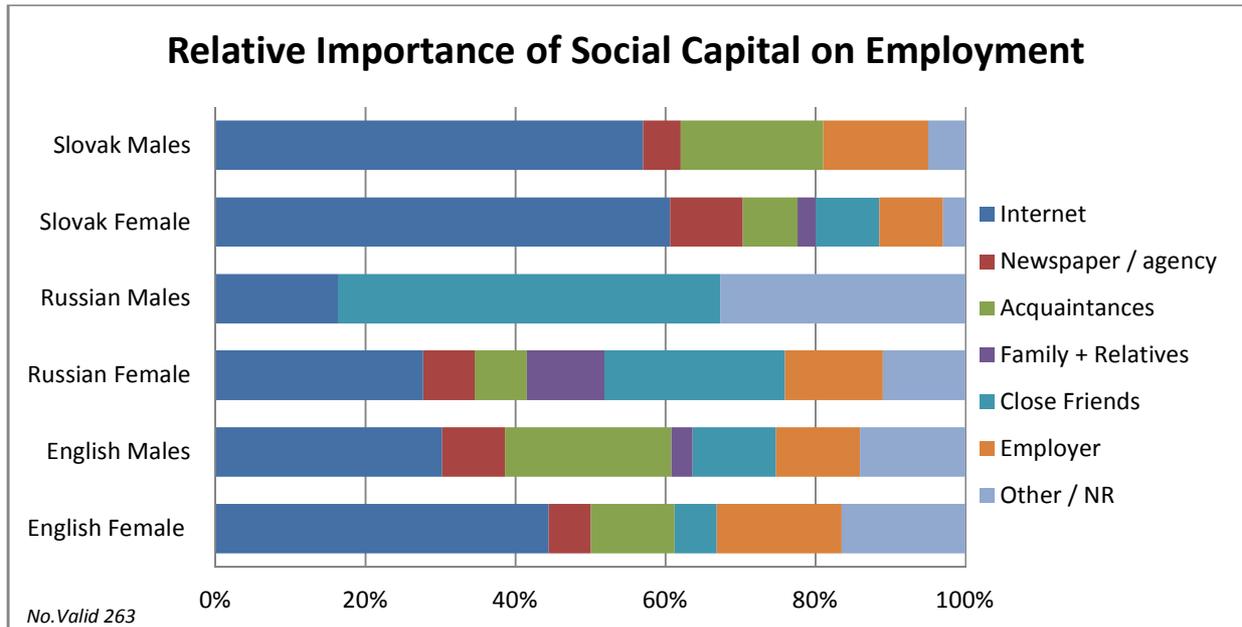
7.3 Social Capital

The importance of connections when searching for employment was significant for some individuals. It would appear that an individual's connections with the community play a significant role in settlement and in the stabilization of an individual's living situation. While it is not possible to clearly determine the importance of these personal connections for settlement they are clearly important for ensuring employment for a quarter of respondents.

When asked how they found their current employment in the Czech Republic 31 per cent indicated that they found work via the internet, 9.1 per cent via acquaintances, 17 per cent via close friends, 4.5 per cent from agents and only 12 per cent direct from their employer. The dependence on the internet as a source of jobs was expected and is in line with the youthful character of the cohort.

Interestingly there is significant variation between groups in terms of reliance on *connections* for employment. Taking a look at Figure 1 Relative Importance of Social Capital on Employment we see that the relative importance of what has been called 'social capital' varies significantly between groups. (Putnam, 2007) Russian speakers were far more likely to depend on 'close friends' when seeking employment in the Czech Republic. (female 24% males 50%) English speakers (males) were more likely to utilise acquaintances (22%) while English females were more dependent on the internet (44.4%) or direct contact with the employer. (16.7%) This variation indicates that social capital may be more important for some groups than others; indeed the type and strength of connections also play a role. English speaking males on average earn more than other respondents, which may be linked to their position in firms, or may be reflective of the importance of connections for success in particular industries. The reliance of Russian speakers on friends and other acquaintances lends itself to the supposition that dependence on social capital hinders potential for some migrants but not others. Relying on those you know can be a boon in terms of employment but may also relegate individuals to lower end jobs (in the case of Russians who rely on close friends and family) whereas it may be more beneficial to depend on acquaintances who can provide better jobs within ones area of expertise. (as is seen with the English speakers)

Figure 1 Relative Importance of Social Capital on Employment



7.4 Plan to Move: Rationale

When asked ‘What about the current situation makes you think of moving?’ A quarter of respondents indicated that their low income was a major factor pushing them to consider moving. Less important was the idea that moving would allow individuals to save money (10.7%) or would ameliorate their poor living conditions. (7.4%) However, when asked the question ‘What would be the advantage of moving to another state?’ responses were highly varied with 36 per cent of respondents indicating that it would be ‘nice to get to know another country’ very similar to ‘higher potential income’. (30.6%)

Thus traditional explanations of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors leading to migratory decision-making provide less explanatory power than would be expected. An explanation based on rational choice is far more persuasive when discussing the potential for remigration.

7.5 Satisfaction

In connection with wage earning and intentions to move we looked at satisfaction levels within the groups under study. We seek to compare satisfaction levels in terms of income, stability of income and satisfaction with the original decision to make a move to the Czech Republic.

In terms of stability of income a large number of respondents (35%) are unsatisfied with the stability of their income, only 7 per cent are very satisfied. Russians are generally more dissatisfied with the stability of their household income (48.6%) which may be connected to the significant number earning below the Czech average wage. Interestingly while it would be expected that the higher average wage for English speakers would lead to higher satisfaction levels the truth is more mixed with a quarter of English respondents being unsatisfied. It is clear that Russian Speaking men are the least satisfied (and exhibit less variation in opinion than other groups) in clear contrast Female English speakers are the most positive group yet with the greatest degree of variation in responses.

Stability of income is of concern to many respondents, even for those earning above average salaries. This insecurity may stem in part from *perceived* instability in the market, due to the recent financial crisis or, for some, instability in their income if they are self-employed (~22% of total respondents). Statistical evidence supports the mixed results we see among groups with a relative weak negative correlation between ‘Satisfaction with stability of household income’ and ‘Take home Wage’.²²

While it is expected that individuals who earn less than average would be less satisfied with the *stability* of income there appears to be significant variation between and within groups also when asking about their satisfaction with their original migration related decision to move to the Czech Republic. As an example we find that the most satisfied group are those female Russian speakers in the mid to low income category. We understand this to be linked to the fact that they are able to, and indeed do, compare their income with the relatively low income levels at ‘home’. In addition we find that gender differences are significant. Wealthy males tend to be more dissatisfied while lower income females tend to rank their satisfaction level higher on the scale.

What is noteworthy is the fact that a large portion of wealthy English speakers are often dissatisfied with their decision to move. Indeed there are a number of outliers within the English Language group who are extremely dissatisfied with their decision to move to the Czech Republic. We note that there is some disjuncture between satisfaction with individual *decision to move* and satisfaction *overall* (with salary and employment) it appears that some individuals claim to be very unsatisfied with their *decision* but then claim to be satisfied in terms of their salary level, work environment and the like. Leading us to believe that further study of ‘relative’ satisfaction is necessary to better understand this discrepancy.²³

8 Bifurcation on the Labour market

Previous research has indicated that economic factors weigh heavily on migratory decision making. Economic rationalizations and structural factors lead individuals to make migratory decisions while also constraining choice in employment; within either the primary or secondary labour market. Thus we would anticipate that migrants pushed by economic factors would be more likely to accept employment outside of their intended occupation. The data, however, indicates a far more complex picture.

Bifurcation of the labour market in the Czech Republic fits with the segmented labour market theory of Sassen and Piore. (1991 and 1979) Anecdotal evidence indicates widespread participation of Ukrainian nationals in the secondary labour market, both officially and unofficially, (Horáková, 2000) (Association for Integration and Migration / Sdružení pro integraci a migraci, 2012) (Valentová, 2012) however, this project has shown that highly educated migrants participate mainly in the primary labour market. This we surmise from the large number of self-employed who earn above average salaries in addition to the large percentage employed in large to mid-size enterprise.

8.1 Change Employment

Individual responses indicate that a significant portion of respondents would be willing to change professions in the event that they were to move to another country. The difficulty associated with

²² Pearson’s correlation (two-tailed) -0.330 with significance at the 0.01 level.

²³ In this regard we have no information related to individuals’ satisfaction in the domestic sphere.

verification of intentions without extended multistage surveys is well known. Authors differ as to the actual outcome of migration intentions although evidence indicates that nearly a quarter of those who claim an intention to move actually make a move after 2 years. (van Dalen & Henkens, 2008).

Respondents indicated that 49.4 per cent would be willing to change profession in the case that they moved to another country. Delving deeper along this strand we see juxtaposition between linguistic groups. Our previous work found that a majority (53%) of Slovak nationals living in the Czech Republic would be willing to 'completely change their profession' in the event that they moved to another state within the EU. This fit clearly with our understanding that Slovak nationals do not consider the 'near abroad' as an actual migratory experience. That is, they would be willing to make a significant change in profession for the purpose of earning money, or improving their experience or language skills while abroad in a western country but not while in the Czech Republic

However, English speakers were more willing to change profession (57.7%) than Russian speakers. (37.8%) We anticipated that this was a reflection of the young age of many respondents in the English cohort and their relative mobility (being recent arrivals). In contrast Russian speakers indicated that on the whole they intend to stay in the Czech Republic which may be related to the fact that they are generally well integrated in the local market and have little inclination to move again given their deeper societal integration, familial connections and ties to the community. Willingness to change employment and even sector, does not, however equate to the actual situation. (see Figure 4 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Russian Speakers)

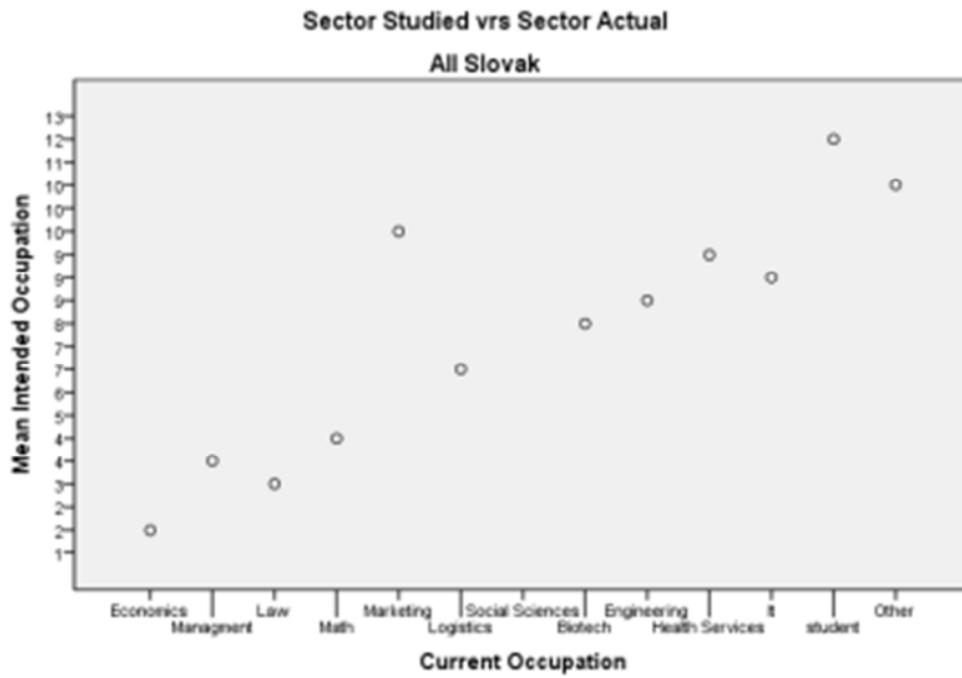
We find that both Slovak and English speakers tend to be employed, primarily, in similar sectors to that which they studied for when in the Czech Republic. Russian language speakers, in contrast, are more likely to be employed outside of their 'expected' profession. As part of the migratory experience they are pushed out of their comfort zone and risk being employed in other professions. We see significant variation between linguistic groups when comparing education experience and current employment by sector when data is charted graphically.

A detailed analysis of the data allows us to see aggregate variation between individuals 'intended' profession and 'actual' or current profession. (refer to Figure 2 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Slovak Speakers) It is clear when we compare the outputs that in distinct contrast to Slovak speakers who track clearly along the expected midline (when expected and actual professions align) English and Russian speakers tend to cluster in particular professions; such as 'management', 'biotech' or 'other' professions which are non-standard but highly specialised.²⁴ Clustering along the midline would support the supposition that those who intend to stay are likely to attempt to remain in their chosen profession. Those who do not 'fit' the midline are either employed in non-standard professions or have taken a job outside of their profession of choice.²⁵

²⁴ Nonstandard as a large number of English Respondents are employed in professions or indicated professions which are difficult to code. (i.e. Retired, Telco, COS coordinator, analyst etc)

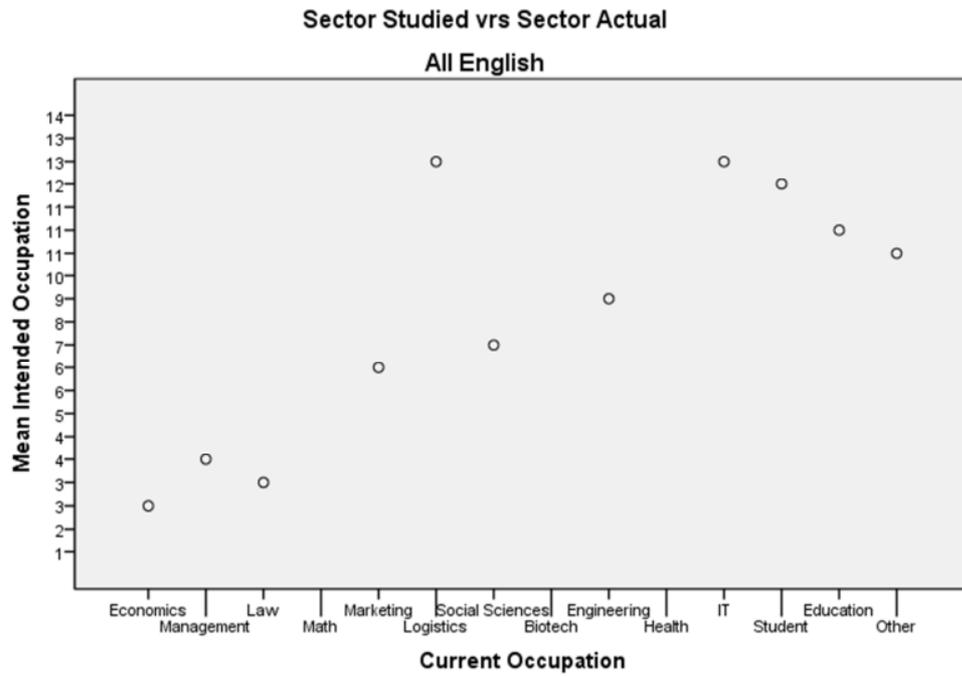
²⁵ Some professions are, of course very similar, Economics and Management for example, however many professions are not. We have plotted the Mean Occupation in order to clean the data of spurious cases.

Figure 2 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Slovak Speakers



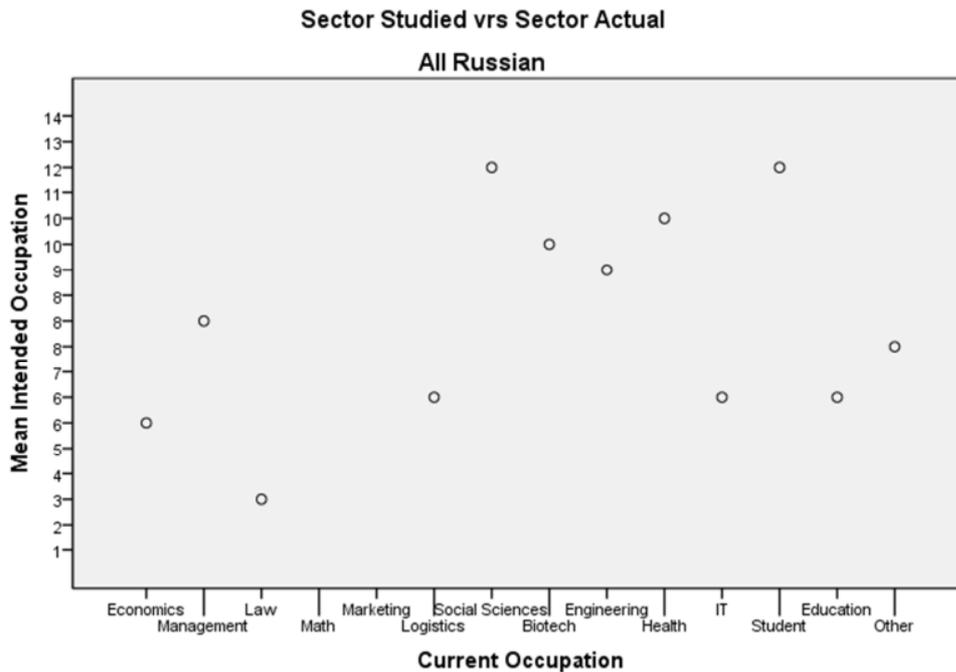
No. Valid 203

Figure 3 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual English Speakers



No. Valid 66

Figure 4 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Russian Speakers



No. Valid 55

8.2 Lack of Bifurcation

In contrast to indicated ‘willingness to change profession’ during migratory experiences we find that when employed on the Czech labor market Slovak nationals are highly likely to be employed in jobs similar to their intended profession or field of study. (see Figure 2 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Slovak Speakers) This links in well with the aforementioned bifurcation of the labour force, with Slovak nationals being employed in both the primary and secondary market in the Czech Republic, with the majority of respondents to this research being employed as highly skilled labour in the primary market.

English language speakers appear to ‘fit’ essentially the same trend. Although English speakers indicate a willingness to change professions (57.7%) when in the Czech Republic English language speakers are only somewhat more likely to be employed outside of their ‘expected’ profession than Slovaks. (see Figure 3 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual English Speakers) It was anticipated that as part of the migratory experience they would be willing to step out of their comfort zone and risk being employed in other professions much as Slovak nationals who, when abroad, would be willing to change professions. Although a portion are employed in differing professions than that which they studied for, for the most part English speakers are employed in similar professions for which they studied. We believe that this is due to the large portion of respondents who are employed in the primary labour market and are thus less inclined to change professions.

Russian speakers do not conform to the trend seen among other linguistic groups. Russian speakers indicated a general unease with changing professions ‘if they moved to another EU state.’ With only 37.8 per cent of Russian speakers being willing to change professions upon a future move. Yet, even with this rejection of change we find that there is significant deviation from intended and actual professions among

Russian speakers in the Czech Republic. We would predict that this is due to employment in the secondary labor market but that is not the case, with a large portion of Russian speakers being highly skilled and employed in the primary labour market. What we see instead is the resulting impact of two key factors; chiefly the influence of networks which Russian speakers are more dependent upon for finding employment and secondly the large number of Russian speakers employed in professions which do not 'fit' normal categorization, such as nongovernmental organizations, non-profits, and research institutions.²⁶

9 Findings

We can hypothesize that those who consider their work to be relevant for the long term are not willing to deviate from their profession of choice; however, those who are not planning to remain (short term migrants) are more willing to take on the challenge of jobs outside of their professional qualifications. Thus we find a link between the segmented labour market theory and human capital models for some groups under study. Those who have invested themselves in gathering human capital via education and networking are more likely to have a vested interest in staying in higher level positions in the primary market. In contrast those with less education or weaker skillsets are pushed to adapt to the local market. Deskilling is a distinct possibility for some migrants, however, we do not see true deskilling within this research project, yet underemployment or employment outside of individuals intended profession.

When comparing groups and even within groups we find significant variation in human capital development and intention to change profession. It is possible that the specific human or social capital utilised in daily life is not lost during short term migratory experiences but, on the contrary, may be enhanced. Thus some individuals would be willing to take the risk of de-skilling in the case that their migratory trajectory had a limited time horizon, i.e. working for 6 months in England. The same individual would not, however, be willing to deskill if they were intending to 'stay' for any given period of time. Thus we postulate that individuals who make short term, experiential, migratory moves are willing to deskill as a result of the fact that work experience is not their key objective. Those who make such moves are focused on enhancing their language skills, networking, traveling and the like. (European Commission, 2010) Factors confirmed by work undertaken by (Baláž & Williams, 2004) in their study of Slovak student migration from Bratislava. Of course this applies predominantly to those who do not 'intend' to stay for the long term. The case of 'settled' migrants or 'grounded' individuals is the opposite, with their intention to stay precluding deskilling whenever possible as evidenced by the Russian speakers in this study.

We see that Russian speakers are employed in a variety of fields, yet remain underpaid. One assumption would be that they are deskilling, however, this is not likely the case as the majority are employed in standard businesses yet with (as of now) limited potential for advancement or are self-employed. A more likely explanation is that our sample contains a large cohort of fresh graduates who earn less than average due to their lack of experience and who are willing to work across sectors. In the case of those who are well established we find that they are primarily engaged as researchers in education and research facilities. (well known for their stability yet lower than average wages)

²⁶ This is reflective of the snowball sampling method used as part of this projects methodology.

For purposes of clarification we can compare the responses from the English language group which indicate that individuals fit one of three categories; (1) well established long term residents involved in the high tech industry or upper management; (2) recent arrivals who are employed in skilled positions as researchers, analysts etc.; (3) the less skilled (teachers, interns) who tend to earn less than average wage due to the market conditions in the country.²⁷ The majority of the English language subgroups are employed in industries which require transferable skills. (human capital) Thus the English language group is perhaps prone to consider taking another migratory decision due, in part, to the flexibility of their particular skillset and the applicability of their human capital elsewhere. English speakers are also the least able to integrate into the local cultural milieu due to linguistic difficulties which form a significant barrier to integration, this is a particularly acute issue for those who only intend to stay a short time.

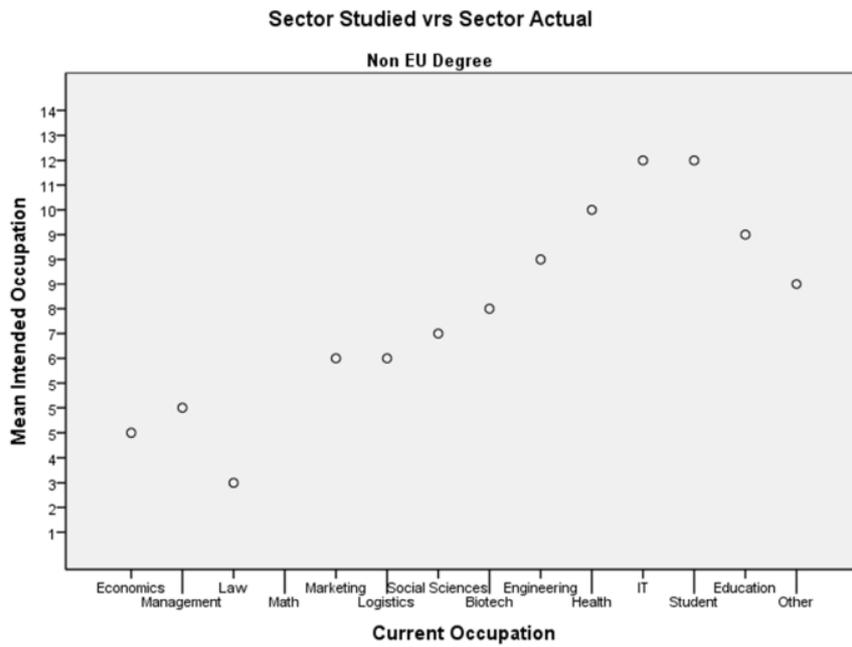
10 Future Trends

Taking into consideration the multifaceted nature of each of the migratory streams under discussion we assume that each linguistic group will exhibit differing characteristics and potential for onward or repeat migration. The English speaking group is more likely to consider taking another migratory decision and to change profession in the process as a result of the flexibility of their particular skillset and the transferability of their human capital elsewhere. This is in contrast to Russian or Slovak speakers who may have the human capital but are not willing to risk a move or to change profession. For the Slovak group this is partly due to fact that they often do not perceive this current migratory experience as migration. Russians perhaps perceive moving to the Czech Republic as being a 'safe' move; considering the similar mindset, linguistic structures etc. which they encounter in the receiving society. They are less likely to consider moving onwards and are even less likely to consider moving 'home' so to speak, given the political issues which many respondents indicate limit their willingness to return.

Clarification of the variation which exists between linguistic groupings has required interpretation of several variables which impact upon individuals. A more detailed examination of other micro level factors which impact upon decision-making may further clarify our understanding of individual experience. Whereas individuals indicated a willingness to change professions perhaps a more precise indicator of the likelihood of being employed within ones specialization is where one studied. We find that when data from all non-Slovak respondents is aggregated those who obtained a degree from within the EU are less likely to work in the occupation for which they studied while those with a degree from outside of the EU (Non-EU) were more likely to be employed in their occupation of choice. (See Figure 5 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Non-EU Degree) Something which is counter intuitive if we accept the premise of the segmented labour market, which presupposes that migrants will be pushed into the secondary labour market.

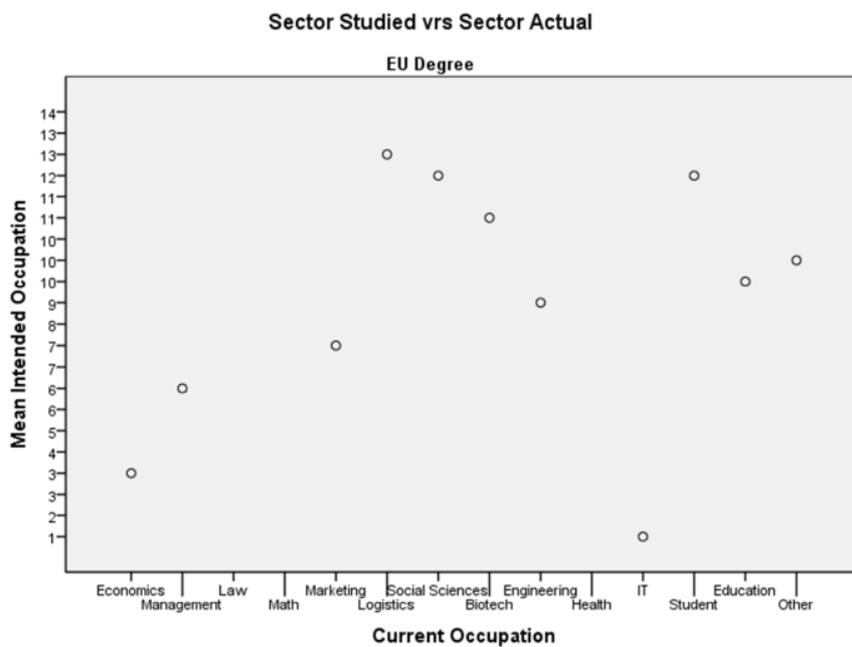
²⁷ Non-salaried hourly wage earners.

Figure 5 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual Non-EU Degree



No. Valid 54

Figure 6 Sector Studied vrs Sector Actual EU Degree



No. Valid 42

This variance with traditional explanations which stress how structural factors push migrants to de-skill is surprising, yet may result from the purposive nature of the sample which is composed largely of highly educated individuals. Respondents from this snowball sample are more likely to be successful migrants, likely to participate in the primary labour market and who fit the 'highly skilled' categorization. We assume that those who migrate into the Czech Republic after completing their first degree as highly skilled migrants are more likely to search out employment in their sector or have employment offers before entering. In contrast those with an EU degree may be more willing to take risks and work outside of their intended occupation. Our data indicates that a large number of EU graduates are employed in the primary labour market, yet not in the specific sector they studied for. We take this as indicative of the transferability of their skill set although further work would be needed to clarify this. We assume that the non-EU graduates are more focused in their specific area of expertise due to visa restrictions, demand in the local market and as one observer astutely put it 'they come here because local specialists moved to Germany.'

11 Concluding Remarks

Understanding that the migratory experience of individuals is a complex multistage process under constant re-visitation we find that the complexity of the migratory system of the Czech Republic defies generalization. Decision making falls into multiple categories and reflects the social position of the actor, educational level, life history as well as longer term intentions. Micro level factors play a significant role in the process itself i.e. intention to settle, employment prospects, the presence or absence of family, strength of networks, connection to the destination as well as the level and ease of integration into the social milieu.

The complex of flows included in this project can be broken down into several distinct groups; those who came due to reasons of family reunification, those who migrated as students and stayed, (or returned after graduation) lifestyle migrants those who migrated for personal reasons (may they be politically driven or a result of a need for change) and labour migrants. (both short and long term) Other forms of migration are understood to exist but are not covered within this research project. (tourism, asylum seekers, 'pendular' migrants or transitees)

Within these flows we find that income or earning potential plays a significant role in the decision making process but is not the only factor of relevance. Quality of life, potential for new experiences, job opportunities and the presence of friends or family in potential destinations all play a significant role. Given the limited scope of this project we are not able to determine the likelihood of remigration or onward migration; follow up research is necessary in this respect.

Of interest is the understanding that some groups are more willing to undertake the risk of working in professions or positions which are not directly related to their original field of study. As an example Slovak nationals are unwilling to work outside of their target profession while in the Czech Republic (close to home) but claim to be willing to de-skill or work in jobs unrelated to their field of study while abroad. The same has been found in the case of English speakers who, while in Prague are willing to take on jobs outside of their field if necessary yet do not exhibit this in reality. We understand this to relate to general inclinations towards settlement and as part of long term planning in terms of the utilization of human capital.

Some individuals are willing to take risks while 'abroad' as the primary reason for employment abroad is language skill development, travel or life experience. In contrast decisions about work 'at home' in the Czech Republic are informed by longer term interests such as career planning, stabilization of living conditions or the establishment of a family. We find that those who graduated from non-EU institutions are more likely to remain within their field than those who have graduated from EU institutions, something that perhaps reflects the flexibility allowed to 'locals' and their willingness to take risks associated with being employed in different professions than they are trained for. The availability of a social safety net may allow for this flexibility as it provides something to fall back onto, in contrast third country nationals do not have this option and thus are pushed to stay within their field of expertise. Additionally, variation between groups may be a reflection of their education trajectory and employment history and less an issue of deskilling.

Established theories of migration offer weak explanatory power in relation to the mixed migrant flows in the Czech Republic as clear generalization are difficult if not impossible considering the complexity of mixed flows in this region. Application of several theoretical approaches may provide greater insight; however, the risk of generalization is a loss of detail leading to fuzzy assumptions which are applicable only to some cases. A deeper understanding of the varied flows requires in-depth knowledge of the local market and legal; issues which are only glossed over during this study but which should be taken into consideration in future. Further study may benefit from an enhanced understanding of the complexity of these flows as well as an expansion in scope to include other migrant groups.

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13 Appendices

Table 2 Nationality

	Total	%	English Language Group	%	Russian Language Group	%
Total respondents	120	100	66	100	53	100
British	14	11.7	14	21.2		
Other EU	20	16.5	20	30.3		
Other Non-EU	14	11.6	8	12.1	6	11.3
American	11	9.2	11	16.7		
Russian	32	26.7			32	60.4
Ukrainian	11	9.2	2	3	8	15.1
Belarusian	7	5.8			7	12.7
Dual	3	2.5	3	4.5		
Czech	1	0.8	1	1.5	2	3.6
Italian	5	4.2	5	7.6		
Canadian	2	1.7	2	3.0		
Missing	1	0.8				

Figure 7 GNI Per Capita

