

## **Abstract**

The association agreement between EU and Ukraine includes visa liberalization, which brings concerns about the capability of absorbing the increasing migration of Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic. The theses aims at showing realistic state of affairs especially through statistics and interviews with members of crucial interest groups connected to migration process. The text is demonstrating that number of Ukrainians in the Czech Republic is significantly raising, but we cannot consider this raise as intractable. The increase directly connected with visa liberalization can be clearly demonstrated at the number of tourists. Looking at the number of asylum applications, growth was not noted which is considered as sign of well-managed liberalization of migration. Significant changes cannot be seen also in the statistics of illegal migration. Nevertheless, members of foreign police agree that they observe increase of illegal Ukrainians but do not have the capacities to arrest them and register as illegal in the statistics.

Visa liberalization is not the only reason of the increase of Ukrainians in the Czech Republic. Major influence is the overall socio-economic situation of both countries and especially extremely low unemployment in the Czech Republic, which creates pressure to the employers and consequently to the change of governmental migration projects to make easier the acceptance process of foreign workers from Ukraine.

Significant actors in migration processes are interest groups, foremost already mentioned employers, unions and nongovernmental organizations. Employers have crucial role in creating migration policy and in Czech environment are also part of the selection of application processes. The number of yearly working permit has doubled in last year especially because of the pressure of employers and cooperative approach of the government. This trend has been interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and it is expected that the economic will suffer a setback and therefore many Ukrainians will (temporarily) come back to Ukraine. The counterweights to this group are unions, who are strongly suggesting, that the problem should be primarily addressed directly in Ukraine and migration policy should not try to take advantage of difficult economic situation of people. Foreigners working for minimal wages are setting a bad precedence for local workers, which is for unions especially undesirable. Nongovernmental organizations are foremost aiming at dignified life conditions for foreigners and consequently, their integration in all spheres of life, which would in a large extend address the problem of unequal conditions of employment.

The thesis was written before the Covid-19 Pandemic and thus is not reflecting the trends in migration since its beginning.