

Abstract

International Migration. Professional Footballers in the Czech 1st Division

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In the present time the extent of the phenomenon of international migration of sports labour has increased significantly. That is why it has become the subject of academic research. However, this phenomenon is accompanying the history of the football, in principal, since 1920s.

In the theoretical part, the thesis treats migration in the sports in general. Drawing on existing, somewhat scarce literature, on the subject, it presents typologies of sports migrants. Further, it gives theoretical concepts of international migration applicable to the sphere of sports. The thesis notes also some aspects of international migration from the point of view of the sports law.

The aim of the thesis is to analyse the migration of foreign footballers to the Czech Republic. To create a framework for that, a general history of the international migration in football is resumed in brief.

In empirical part of the thesis, a survey of the foreign footballers in the Czech 1st Division in the period 1993/1994 – 2006/2007 is presented. The concept of the foreign footballer for this purpose is defined as a foreign national who actually has taken part in the play in the field at least once in the course of the season. The period corresponds with the existence of the Czech Republic after the split of Czechoslovakia..

The innovative part of the thesis presents the materials of the qualitative research based on the semi-structured interviews with ten foreign footballers and seven professionals from the Czech football environment.

The main conclusions that can be drawn from them are as follows:

The main motive for the engagement in the Czech Republic for the foreign footballers – as was stated in the interviews – was their perception of the Czech Republic as a step on the way to the top European leagues.

Czech clubs recruit the foreign players due to lack of native players of sufficient quality.

Search in to the mechanism of the transfer of players showed that the most important role in the mechanism belongs to the player agents.