

# Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

<b>Student:</b>	<b>Bc. Blanka Weyskrabová</b>
<b>Advisor:</b>	<b>PhDr. Wadim Strielkowski, Ph.D.</b>
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Economic Aspects of Remittances and Migration: Case Study of Ukraine and the Czech Republic</b>

## **OVERALL ASSESSMENT** *(provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):*

Blanka Weyskrabova's diploma thesis is unique because of three reasons: i) she used economic tools and analysis to tackle the aspects that has rarely been tackled by the Czech economists before (remittances, migration), ii) she obtained the unique set of data from the Ukrainian migration project that allowed her to get her hands on rare data unavailable from the statistical offices and analyzed this set using both common data analysis methods and advanced econometric techniques; iii) based on the two pillars mentioned above she provided very interesting empirical results that concern the Ukrainian labour migrants in the Czech Republic, their remittance behaviour and the use of remittances by their families in Ukraine. All these findings constitute a gold mine for the Czech stakeholders and policy-makers interested in shaping up modern migration policy of the Czech Republic.

There is no doubt that international migration became a widely-discussed phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to the World Bank, there are 215 millions international migrants in the world – approximately 3 % of the whole world's population. Most migrants are coming to the United States, the Russian Federation, Germany, Saudi Arabia, and Canada. Most migrants leave countries of Mexico, India, the Russian Federation, China and Ukraine. However, migration flows became weaker as the financial crisis destabilized economies.

International migration is distinguished both by an unprecedented global diversity in the sources and destinations of migration and by the absolute magnitude of these flows. Over the past 30 years, migration patterns have broadened to include a much wider array of both sending and receiving countries. Migrants are now moving between all of the world regions, not predominately between Europe and its colonies as in the previous era of internationalization.

Among all aspects of migration and its impact on human society, the economic impact of migration became, by far and large, the most important topic. Economics of migration distinguishes the economic impact on the sending and receiving countries of migration and attempts to come up with measuring this impact and its consequences.

Increasing mobility of population and social transformation processes taking place on all geographical strata contribute to the growing importance of the phenomenon of international migration. Reports on the situation in the field of migration in the Czech Republic that are regularly issued by the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic point out the migration as the one of the most significant issues of the EU policy. Moreover, the relevance of migration is constantly increasing in the context of changing demographic characteristics of the population. For instance, in 2003 the Czech government stated in its resolution „Principles of the Czech governmental policy towards the migration of foreigners“ that it was aware of the growing attractiveness of the Czech Republic as the target country of migration and thus called for the necessity to react on the changing role of migration policy which was transforming from the passive tool of defence from unwanted migration into the tool for implementing active economic and demographic state policy. As a part of the resolution the government of the Czech Republic obligated to fight the illegal migration as well as to contribute to the international effort to solve the consequences of humanitarian disasters including their prevention through development aid.

Ukrainian migration that is the core of the empirical model presented in Blanka's thesis has a special importance in this context. One has to realize that the Czech Republic is, due to its advantageous geographical location, a now becoming a very important country for European migrants (either as a final destination or a springboard to the West). From all post-Communist CEECs the Czech Republic

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receives the largest part of foreign labour force, with Ukrainian workers being a most important group. In 2009, Ukrainians made 21 % of all immigrants but in 2006 their share was even larger – over 30 thousands which was 46 % of total immigration. Currently, there are 124 281 Ukrainians in the Czech Republic that makes them the largest group of foreigners that is followed by the Slovaks, Poles (EU citizens subjected to favourable treatment) and Vietnamese and Russians (people from the non-EU countries).

Most of these Ukrainian migrants sent remittances back home. Remittances and their structure and channels via which the flows of money and goods proceed represent a particular interest for scientists, statisticians, politicians and activists from humanitarian aid organizations. There is a large bulk of theories that advocates for the remittances being the best tool for supporting and enhancing development in low-income countries than the development aid. Blanka was able to provide a very interesting discussion supported by the first-hand data and their analysis that might provide those interested in remittances and their impacts of the source (in our case Ukraine) and the target (in our case the Czech Republic) economies.

Last but not least, I cannot but mention the whole structure of the thesis. The whole work is very well-structured, organized in a clear and comprehensive way and contains all necessary elements a complete research work should contain: it has the introduction, literature review, insight into the main problems, research hypotheses, data description, hypothesis testing and providing conclusions and discussions on the main results. The Master thesis looks more like a research paper of a graduate student and can even be mistaken for a draft of a PhD thesis.

Overall, I cannot but admire Blanka's analytical mind, determination, eagerness to pursue her project and her diligence in writing her Master thesis. Therefore, I am giving her an A ("1") and recommend her thesis for the **Dean's special distinction** ("pochvala děkana za vynikající diplomovou práci").

## **SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED** (for details, see below):

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
Literature (max. 20 points)	19
Methods (max. 30 points)	28
Contribution (max. 30 points)	29
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	19
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> (max. 100 points)	<b>95</b>
<b>GRADE</b> (1 – 2 – 3 – 4)	<b>1 (with a suggestion for the Dean's distinction)</b>

**NAME OF THE REFEREE: PhDr. Wadim Strielkowski, Ph.D.**

**DATE OF EVALUATION: 15.06.2012**

  
**Referee Signature**