

ABSTRAKT

The main aim of this dissertation is to compare migration strategies and level of integration of Romanian immigrants in two European capitals – London and Paris. Romanian immigrants were chosen because they migrate for economic reasons in considerable numbers into both of the capitals. Also, the issue of Romanian migration is relevant to the Czech Republic and will be even more in the future when Romania will join the European Union. Nobody has studied immigration of Romanians into these capitals before and that is why detailed statistical data and other secondary sources and pieces of information were not available. A questionnaire method was used as a main research tool, on the results of which our dissertation is based. The sample of population could not be representative under the given conditions and limits. However, we strongly believe that the results are relevant and important and that they bring us meaningful information. Theories of international migration, current issues of international migration in Europe, basic socio-economic characteristics of studied countries and their developments in international migration are discussed too.

The questionnaire survey was key to our study. We asked fifty respondents in each of the capitals. The questionnaire focused on three areas: 1. Job market (searching for jobs via fellow countrymen community, usability of qualifications from home country, most usual professions, etc.), 2. Family and lifestyle (number of family relatives in destination country, communication among Romanians in destination country, living conditions, etc.), and 3. Transnationalisation (extent of communication with home country).

The results are as follows: The majority of respondents were 25-40 years of age without children. The respondents spoke the language of the destination country usually very well. It contributed significantly to the high level of integration of respondents into the community of destination country. There is no (and is not likely to be in the future) a solely Romanian quarter within any of the capitals. The typical motives for leaving Romania were either economic or studies. The destination was selected by the respondents for their knowledge of the language, better job opportunities and presence of compatriots – mostly related people or friends.

High levels of education usually did not correspond to the types of jobs the respondents had. A major group of respondents worked in construction and most respondents had only one job at a time. There was a variety of jobs the respondents were involved in, however, most of them were within the secondary sector. Only one third of them made use of their qualifications achieved in Romania. While searching for a job, interpersonal ties to people from the community proved relatively useful. Family income was below the average of the destination country. At least half of the respondents said that they were not sending money back to Romania. Thus, the often proclaimed conclusions concerning significance of such money for the home regions of immigrants were not confirmed. It is a sort of paradox that households with lowest incomes tend to send the highest annual amount of money back home. The annual amount of money corresponded to the average monthly salary of the respondent.

Cohesion within the community in the capital proved to be high. The main location for mutual gathering of immigrants is always the relevant Romanian church. Very few respondents were members of fellow countrymen organisations. Three quarters of respondents helped voluntarily their fellow countrymen, with more help taking places in cases where the people meet each other often. Therefore, it appears that migration nets have already been built in both capitals and that they are functioning well. Almost all respondents said that they keep their traditions during the stay in the destination country. The number of journeys outside the destination country to states other than Romania is insignificant.

The impact of Romanian accession into the European Union upon the respondents cannot be forecasted on the basis of answering a question of whether they are planning to stay in their destination country after the accession: the three alternatives (yes, no, not sure yet) were answered in similar numbers. The results can therefore be also interpreted as proving that the respondents were satisfied with their lives in the destination country (more in Paris than in London). The expectations about the main location of their lives for the future five years varied significantly according to the current place of living: two thirds of respondents from Paris expect to stay in France, whereas two thirds of respondents from London think of returning to Romania. It can therefore be predicted that circulatory migration between Romania and the two studied countries is likely to continue in the future, with immigrants to Paris being more likely to settle in the destination country.

Bearing in mind that this study is first of this type, possibilities of its further use and development are wide. For example, research could be done with larger groups of respondents also selected via probability sampling methods, it could be narrowed down to a particular aspect of the immigrants' lives, or it could be carried out later on again to predict migration behaviour of citizens from candidate countries into the EU, or to compare the results for Romanians in other countries, such as the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain or Israel.