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Towards a Better Future of Peripheries: Regional Migration Policy

Ku lepszej przyszłości peryferii: regionalna polityka migracyjna

Abstrakt: Regiony peryferyjne są powszechnie uważane za obszary wymagające wsparcia rozwojowego. Tradycyjne metody wspierania rozwoju nie przynoszą oczekiwanych rezultatów, konieczne jest więc poszukiwanie metod alternatywnych. Skutecznym narzędziem może być prowadzenie polityki migracyjnej zróżnicowanej regionalnie i ukierunkowanej na wzrost najważniejszego z kapitałów rozwojowych – kapitału ludzkiego. Kluczowym elementem tej polityki powinien być system zachęt administracyjnych dla imigrantów nakłaniający ich do pozostania w regionach peryferyjnych lub do przeprowadzenia się tam z innych obszarów kraju imigracji. Przedmiotem szczegółowej analizy jest polityka migracyjna Polski.

Słowa kluczowe: migracje; polityka migracyjna; kapitał ludzki; rozwój regionalny; regiony peryferyjne

Abstract: The peripheral regions are areas in need of development support. Traditional methods of support do not bring the expected results, so it is necessary to look for alternatives. This research shows that a regionally differentiated migration policy oriented to the increase in human capital may be a good choice, with a system of administrative incentives for immigrants designed to encourage immigrants to stay in the peripheral regions or to move there from other areas of the country of immigration. The subject of detailed analysis is the migration policy of Poland.

Keywords: migration; migration policy; human capital; regional development; peripheral regions

INTRODUCTION

Today's world is highly diverse in social, economic, political and cultural terms. The existence of diversity implies inequalities in the level of development. Over time, disproportions are growing, and this regularity has been observed for years both on a global scale and on a national or local scale. This is due to differences in the rate of development of core, semi-peripheral and peripheral areas. Core areas are innovative growth poles, they attract economic and human capital, while peripheral areas lose it (Perroux 1955). Wash-out processes drain peripheral areas through selective migration processes, depriving them of the best part of their human capital, while the processes of spreading innovation and factors stimulating development from core to periphery are rarely able to compensate for losses (Myrdal 1957).

In the developed countries, peripheral areas are fields of action for policies aimed at supporting their development, with EU Cohesion Fund and European Regional Development Fund as distinct examples. These policies generally focus on infrastructural investments, on attracting investors with financial incentives, and transferring funds to soft projects that enhance human capital. Although it is nowadays believed that the role of human capital in economic development is more important than that of economic capital (e.g. Oxley, Le, Gibson 2008), the efforts of state agents focus almost exclusively on increasing the value of already existing human capital, while the possibility of attracting it to the peripheral regions is ignored (Nagel 2002). This is also true in the European Union countries, which, without exception, pursue migration policies at the national level. Although numerous scientific studies indicate that the economy of highly developed countries can benefit from a reasonable immigration policy as well as from the implementation of a common migration policy by the European Union countries, the decision-makers are not in line with the proposed solutions. The awareness of long-term economic benefits is obscured by the desire to achieve short-term political goals, and keeping immigrants at home is one of them (Bakewell 2008). This conviction is widespread in many countries, and it is particularly strong in Poland, where even mere foundations of migration policy created in 2012 were annulled by the right-wing government aiming at restricting immigration (*Polityka migracyjna...* 2012).

The aim of this work is to examine the process of creation of Polish migration policy and juxtapose it with the need to support peripheral regions development. The working hypothesis is that the implementation of newly created migration policy may help solve the development problems of peripheral regions, if a regional component becomes a part of this policy. The background

for the considerations is an analysis of the effectiveness of the most frequently undertaken measures aimed at stimulating the development of such areas, with particular emphasis on the situation of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, i.e. the least developed administrative region of Poland (Eurostat 2021).

POLISH MIGRATION POLICY

The demand for a regional migration policy in a country where there is no migration policy even at the national level may seem peculiar at first sight. However, this circumstance may be considered as favorable, as it is often easier to create a coherent concept, provided that it is built from the outset. The reconstruction of already existing concepts is always connected with the need to seek compromises between the goals, actions and solutions adopted so far and the set of new tasks – which often gives much worse results.

The only document created in the last decade, which comprehensively analyzed the current situation and future needs of Poland in the field of migration management, was *Migration Policy of Poland, Current State and Proposed Actions (Polityka migracyjna...* 2012). The preparation of this study did not stem from the need to operationalize the migration doctrine or strategic objectives, as these have never been formulated. The authors set themselves the goal of outlining “[...] the migration policy of the state agreed with social partners and an efficient and flexible migration management system able to response to changing conditions” (*Polityka migracyjna...* 2012, p. 13; all translations by the author). They rightly pointed out that although at the time of the drafting of the document, Poland was not yet a net immigration country, which had been predicted since the beginning of the 21st century (cf. Górny et al. 2009), there was a high probability of a rapid change in a difficult to determine, but rather close future. From the perspective of just a few years since the creation of this document, one can see how accurate this forecast was.

The authors of the *Migration Policy of Poland...* clearly and unequivocally state that in the medium term it will be necessary to make up for the shortage of labor with immigrants. Therefore, they postulate a modification of the Polish legal system so as to open Poland to foreigners, simplify administrative procedures related to accepting them, as well as reconstruct the system of integration of foreigners. They also recommend indicating specific categories of foreigners, whose admission would be in the interest of Poland, and postulate the implementation of a system of active acquisition of foreigners in the desired market sectors.

The very fact of submitting the above postulates clearly indicates the lack of legal and conceptual regulations in the indicated aspects of the migration policy.

Even those who would object the thesis about the lack of migration policy in Poland (e.g. Kicinger 2005; Górny et al. 2009) note that the only way to find out about its assumptions is to follow official documents on related issues and oral declarations of or interviews with Polish authorities. The very existence of manifestations of migration policy cannot be questioned, but the lack of a general strategy and clearly formulated specific objectives makes it difficult to verify whether subsequent legal acts implement this undefined policy in the desired direction or are not fully compliant with it. In order to be able to verify and ensure such compliance, it is necessary to establish a conceptual framework within which the legislative and implementing acts should be placed. Meanwhile, instead of creating a conceptual framework for Poland's migration policy, in 2017, the Polish government led to the annulment of the aforementioned document, not replacing it with any other to date.

The creation of Polish migration policy is a common sense necessity. Failure to notice the rapidly growing influx of foreigners to Poland is an expression of the decision-makers' stubborn ignorance of the fundamental rights of migration and the economic rights governing the globalizing world economy. The number of foreigners who took up legal work in Poland in 2017 exceeded 2 million, of which almost 90% were Ukrainian citizens using the fast track access to the labor market in the form of job induction declarations, while in 2013, the number reached only a quarter of a million. The structure of employment also changes rapidly. In 2013, as much as 50% of the immigrant labor force was engaged in agriculture, while in 2018, this percentage fell to only 8%. It is estimated that in 2017, about 0.8–1.3 million Ukrainians worked in Poland at one time (Chmielewska, Strzelecki 2019).

Conceptual work on building a comprehensive, coherent migration policy for Poland should take into account the experience of countries that have already completed the path of transition from a typical emigration to immigration state, on which Poland is now located. We face a unique and unrepeatability opportunity to foresee the possibility of using migration flows to improve the economic situation of peripheral regions. Immigrants will come, whatever party rules the country, and this is only the question whether they will settle where they wish or where we would like them to settle and participate in the creation of regional development. The subject of the next subchapter will be the reasons why it is worthwhile to do so, and in the next one we will learn what mechanisms should be implemented to make the inclusion of the regional component in the migration policy effective.

STIMULATING DEVELOPMENT OF PERIPHERAL REGIONS –
EXPERIENCES TO DATE

The growth factors of peripheral areas are similar in nature to those of regional development. They can be divided into exogenous and endogenous. The former include state actions and external economic, social or political conditions that affect various characteristics of the peripheral region. Examples include: the construction of transport infrastructure with external funding, global economic situation, or impact of other growth centers manifested by migration outflows. Endogenous factors are the region's own resources, such as the entrepreneurship of its inhabitants, the effectiveness of implementing the development strategy, the attractiveness of the offer for foreign investors, the very existence of tourist attractions and infrastructure, and also the quality of education offered by regional universities. Also objective features, like location close to the border of a given permeability that facilitates or restrains transborder cooperation and economic development, should be mentioned (Miszczyk 2013; see also Bański, Janicki 2012). The modern policy of development of peripheral areas is increasingly breaking with the once functioning habit of waiting for external support, without which development could not take place. The role of endogenous factors is being emphasized, indicating that the effective use of external aid is only possible if it initiates sustainable development based on the potential of the peripheral region (*National...* 2006; Barca 2009; *Raport...* 2009).

The growth factors of peripheral areas can also be analyzed by looking at the nature of the utilized resources. This leads to the Ekins Four Capital Model (1992), which distinguishes the following capitals: economic, natural, social and human. The increase in the level of each of these capitals in the peripheral region is a factor facilitating the development of the region.

Economic capital is a *sine qua non* for development. Its availability is one of the distinguishing features of core areas that effectively attract investments. The most effective way of influencing a potential capital investor is to use tools of a financial nature, mainly tax-related. In most countries tax policies are shaped centrally, so regional authorities cannot create exceptionally strong and effective incentives for economic capital.

Natural capital is usually understood as natural resources which can be used in production processes. For centuries people have believed that access to natural resources is a guarantee of economic prosperity. Also today, attempts to guarantee access to natural resources or their scarcity are the cause of many political and economic phenomena of varying importance, spatial scale and consequences. Increasing natural capital of a region is only possible if technological progress

allows for finding new deposits, opens the possibility of exploiting previously unavailable deposits, or replaces them with others fulfilling the same functions. It is, therefore, not possible to significantly increase the resources of this capital in a specific place in a short time horizon.

Social capital is a resource that exists through a system of connections taking place in a human group in a specific space (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988; Putnam 1995). These connections can have the character of social norms, interpersonal relationships, habits, typical behaviors, etc. – the totality of these characteristics of society influences its development potential.

Human capital, in turn, refers to the individual and means the usefulness of an individual to create their own welfare, and welfare of the whole community. This usefulness is derived from education, work experience, skills, motivation, work ethos and other characteristics that co-decide about their contribution to the development of the area they live in. Social capital is, therefore, an environment in which the human capital of individuals can be used better or worse.

Human and social capital are increasingly considered as key factors for economic growth and regional development, even more important than economic capital (e.g. Temple 2001; Oxley, Le, Gibson 2008; Bronisz, Heijman 2009). Demographic analyses also emphasize the role of human capital. However, it has been shown that quick increase of this capital in a form of attracting immigrants is only able to reduce the problem of labor shortages in some sectors of the labor markets of highly developed countries, but cannot save existing pension systems, nor will it be able to maintain the current age structure of societies (*Replacement...* 2000; Golini 2000; Abernethy 2001; Bouvier 2001).

Regional analysis leads to similar conclusions. Outmigration from the less developed regions lowers their development chances, strengthening the advantage of the core areas, attracting and retaining young and entrepreneurial people. Both these factors – a high level of entrepreneurship and a relatively young age structure – are considered important for development. As the average level of entrepreneurship and education of outmigrants is higher than the average in the outflow region, this reduces the value of its human capital in quantitative and qualitative terms. Moreover, the age structure deteriorates and aging accelerates.

In the context of the above, it is worthwhile to look at what methods support the development of peripheral areas and which of the four capitals is supported most frequently. The most common measure is increasing the transport accessibility of the peripheral areas through huge infrastructural investments, including the construction of expressways and the modernization of railway lines. In addition, tax incentives are created, and in regions peripheral also in the geographical sense, development opportunities are seen in cross-border cooperation.

These measures are aimed at attracting economic capital. As presented above, a significant increase in the level of natural capital is not possible in the short term, so the second and last direction of potential actions is social and human capital. The main problem faced by the peripheral regions is the outmigration caused by lower wages and higher level of difficulty in finding a satisfactory job, compared to the core regions. Attempts to reduce the intensity of outflow most often boil down to investments in human capital, i.e. in the organization of professional trainings, as well as investments aimed at raising living standards of the inhabitants.

The effectiveness of the vast majority of the above actions lags far behind their expected results, with the eastern states (*Länder*) of Germany as the most significant example. In the quarter of a century after the reunification of Germany, a sum of up to two trillion euros was invested there (*Schröder...* 2014). Despite this, a negative migration balance is still observed there, unemployment is much higher than the national average, and in search of tenants for apartment vacancies, German local governments conduct advertising campaigns on the Polish side of the state border.

A much less known example, but equally clearly showing the low effectiveness of typical pro-development activities is the Lubelskie Voivodeship. Located in Eastern Poland, directly on the state border with Ukraine, therefore, on the edge of the European Union, it is the least developed region of Poland. Sparsely populated, with no flagship industry and deeply rooted traditions of family farming on the one hand, and with relatively unpolluted environment, vast protected areas and improving transportation accessibility on the other.

In the years 1995–2018, the region of Lubelskie lost 124 thousand inhabitants, about 5.9% of its population. Among the measures aimed at preventing a demographic disaster is the ongoing construction of expressways in all directions. There are attempts to develop cross-border cooperation, but in view of the low permeability of the Polish-Ukrainian border and the significant imbalance between the competences of Polish and Ukrainian regional authorities, these actions are not effective (Bański, Janicki 2012; Kowalczyk 2015; Jakubowski et al. 2017). The extension of hard coal mining in the local basin to new areas was planned, but the activities of foreign capital have been blocked by governmental factors for years (*Prairie...* 2019). The opportunity was seen in the production of shale gas, but the predicted abundance of potential deposits was verified negatively. The high-quality agricultural production scenario is falling down when confronted with the agrarian structure of the region dominated by small farms; the ones exceeding 50 hectares occupy in total only 0.5% of the agricultural land. The interviewed inhabitants of Lubelskie borderland point to

clean environment as the most important chance for development (61.4%), with tourist values as the second most frequent answer (43.6%) – in a region where there are no tourist attractions of even national scale (Janicki 2009; Flaga 2010; Wesołowska, Szczęsna 2015; cf. Więckowski 2010). The inhabitants' own activity as a developmental factor was the last in the list (13.5%), so the level of endogenous potential necessary for the development of the region should be considered insufficient (Bański, Janicki 2012).

The litmus test of the situation in a region is always the migration behavior of its inhabitants. As human capital flows out of Lubelskie in a wide stream, it is worth making an attempt to identify the circumstances that would allow to reverse this tendency. Policies aimed at supporting development of Lubelskie contain numerous keywords, such as the knowledge-based economy, information society, competitiveness or innovativeness, but they do not translate into proposals for any specific actions that could contribute to a real acceleration of development and reversal of depopulation. They are mainly based on imitation of paths of development pursued by core regions. It is, therefore, necessary to look for specific, unconventional solutions to reduce regional development disparities, since the existing measures have proved ineffective.

HOW TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN THE PERIPHERAL REGION

Theoretically, there are four different possibilities to increase the level of human capital in the region. Firstly, in an attempt to retain people in the region, new, attractive jobs may be created. Since 1959, when Special Economic Zone in the Irish town of Shannon was created, Zones became the basic tool for attracting investors, but international competition for economic capital has led to the fact that today it is again not the state but the investor who indicates the place where they will place their factory if they receive a guarantee of tax relief; otherwise the investment will be made elsewhere, abroad (see Augustyński 2017). The peripheral regions are in competition for this capital in a very difficult starting position because the rate of return on capital in core regions is inherently higher, so most investments are made there. The possibility of a wage increase in the peripheral region that is detached from market realities would require government subsidies, which no one has ever decided to do for budgetary reasons. Thus, measures aimed at retaining the population in the region are difficult to consider as feasible, or at least effective.

Secondly, there may be an attempt to persuade emigrants to return. Actions may be aimed at a real improvement of living conditions in the region and

at creating financial incentives to return, or at organizing information campaigns promoting life in the peripheral region in other Polish cities and abroad. The problem lies in the fact that in unitary states the creation of any tax-related tools remains out of reach of regional authorities. In this context, the second action, i.e. the creation of information campaigns, behind which there is little to hide, is devoid of any rational basis.

Thirdly, one can try to stimulate the own activity of the inhabitants of the peripheral region and invest in trainings. These are the objectives of the institutions distributing funds from many EU programs. A total of more than 4.8 billion euros has been allocated to support development projects in the five eastern voivodeships of Poland in the years 2007–2020. Despite this, in the Lubelskie Voivodeship in 2017, there were only 6.5 commercial companies per 1,000 residents, while in the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship located in the western part of Poland – 15.4. This leads to a rather sad conclusion – learning entrepreneurship is a very time-consuming activity and it is impossible to expect quick results of work on stimulating entrepreneurship.

Fourthly, it is possible to attract immigrants and try to compensate for the deficit caused by the outmigration with the human capital of foreigners (Janicki 2015). This solution in many countries, including Poland, raises concerns and sometimes radical social opposition. For this reason, openly pointing to the admission of immigrants as a solution does not happen in principle. However, it seems that this may be the only way to reduce the negative effects of natural loss and outmigration in a long run. Its implementation requires preparing the assumptions of the migration policy in such a way that it includes a regional component, which enables shaping the migration policy in a different way in different regions. Whether this policy will be implemented by the regional or central authorities is an important, but secondary issue, as the very existence of the regional policy is crucial.

Migration policy does not necessarily mean opening the borders for foreigners. Peripheral regions – like any other regions – hold some potentially valuable resources, currently used to a very limited extent. This is hidden human capital – immigrants who already live there and whose skills and potential are wasted. These are graduates of local universities, holders of work permits, or seasonal workers, among others. A significant part of them legally reside in Poland, but cannot fully use their competences. A comparison of the level of formal education of Poles and immigrants from Ukraine indicates that 17.5% of adult Poles and almost 35% of Ukrainians hold a university degree (Cierpień-Wolan 2016). At the same time, in the ranking of positions most often occupied by work permits holders, there is not a single position requiring higher education; the professions related to simple

construction work dominate in number, and the first place is taken by housekeepers. Also within those working on the basis of an employer's declaration there is not a single such position. A comparison with education structure clearly indicates that the potential of immigrants is being wasted.

Some immigrants crossed the border or work without necessary permissions. The procedures for normalizing their stay and work are so burdensome and lengthy that they often effectively discourage any effort (Lipowicz 2011). As the interviewed officials dealing with foreigners in the Lubelskie Voivodeship admit, the waiting time for issuing the simplest temporary residence permit is at least two months. Therefore, undocumented immigrants constitute a hidden reserve of labor – its proper use is not connected with the influx of next immigrants. Meanwhile, in the strategic documents indicating objectives, directions and concepts of development, including the government's Human Capital Development Strategy 2020 (*Strategia...* 2013), immigrants are referred to only in the context of filling the gaps in the labor market, reducing the risks associated with demographic changes and the need for their integration. The authors of this document do not notice that immigrants hold significant human capital, whose potential is in most cases not used properly.

In 2015, the number of residence permits issued in all EU countries together exceeded 2.6 million (Eurostat... 2018). More than one in five of them (over 540 thousand) was issued in Poland. In the EU, 707 thousand work permits were issued, of which more than half – 375 thousand – in Poland alone. The figures for the following years are even higher – for example, in 2018, over 1 million work-related residence permits were issued, including 597 thousand in Poland. About 85% of the latter number were Ukrainian citizens. Therefore, the number of foreigners legally residing in Poland and present on the labor market is huge. The rhetoric of governmental authorities, openly reluctant to immigrants, is clearly contradictory to the facts and to the policies implemented by the same authorities who admit large numbers of immigrants. However, the key question remains not the reasons for these somewhat schizophrenic behaviors, but the methods of better use of the potential of immigrants in peripheral regions than before.

HOW TO DIRECT IMMIGRANTS TO THE PERIPHERAL REGIONS AND KEEP THEM THERE

The country and migration remain in a strong mutual dependence. It is a feedback – both the state can influence the intensity, specificity and directions of migration movements, as well as migration shapes the reality of state operation. In contrast to this, the relationship between migration and peripheral regions is

mainly one-way street, as regional authorities only very rarely have competence to formulate rules of migration (cf. Bruquetas-Callejo et al. 2008), regardless of the political system of the state. Sometimes the sub-national authorities are given the competence to carry out some tasks related to immigrants, e.g. social welfare, education, health or housing, but the framework in which they can operate is defined by central governments. Therefore, the regions remain more or less passive subjects of influence of the country in which they are located, and of migrants.

The classic migration factors – economic, political, environmental, family and other – which are typical subjects of migration analysis suddenly cease to determine migration when state policies change. The construction of the border walls and the strengthening of the border regime, whether in Israel, Western Sahara, on the Greek-Turkish or Serbian-Hungarian border, being a tangible manifestation of the countries' migration policy, changed migration flows radically. The wide opening of Germany's borders and invitation to refugees from Syria also caused radical changes in the image of international migration in Europe. These are simple examples confirming the thesis that the state has powerful tools for shaping migration flows and directions. These tools may also be used to support the development of peripheral regions, when purposely shaped aiming to reach this goal.

The consequences of emigration are commonly regarded negatively. Due to high share of women of childbearing age in the age structure of emigrants, it gives a negative impulse to the birth rate, as well as causes deformation of the age structure. It is a reason for a decrease in the region's labor resources, in particular those of highly qualified workers, and the resulting disturbances on local labor markets, as well as a decrease in tax revenues. In the socio-cultural aspect, it weakens social ties, generates family problems related to the absence of parents and an increase in the number of divorces (Lesińska, Okólski 2013). However, emigration has also positive effects. Emigrants reduce the demand for labor in the outflow region, contributing to a decrease in the unemployment rate, send money from abroad to their families remaining in the country, and on their return they bring with them knowledge and experience from a better developed country. However, despite many doubts and ambiguities of assessments, the balance of benefits of migration flows is generally considered positive in the countries of immigration, and negative in the countries of emigration.

A similar thesis can be put forward at the level of regional analysis. With outmigration peripheral regions lose their most important growth factor – human capital. Intensity of migration flows increases with the emergence of further facilitations for mobility. The irreversibility of changes resulting from migration

has for years been highlighted by numerous researchers, who have also called for a reorientation of social policy. Instead of the doomed to failure struggle with outmigration and aging, they propose to focus on introducing such changes in the organization of social life that will allow for the most effective adaptation to new realities (e.g. Abernethy 2001; Meyerson 2001; Bijak et al. 2005).

The EU's regional policy is based on the concept of reducing development disparities between countries and regions. Its implementation is expressed, among others, by providing strong financial support to underdeveloped regions, aimed at the construction of a communication network, at scientific research, at projects assuming international cooperation, as well as at the increase in the level of human capital. The latter aims at professional activation of the inhabitants, education, training, development of entrepreneurship and combating unemployment. However, the EU's regional policy does not contain any elements signaling interest in the use and distribution of human capital coming from abroad, i.e. immigrants. Information on development priorities defined for the entire EU, including the use of the potential of the immigrant labor force, its better integration and forward-looking labor migration policy, contained in the Europe 2020 strategy, is not reflected in the concepts of regional development. It is, therefore, clear that migration policy has little common ground with regional policy, as if there were no link between migration and regional development. However, not only do they exist, they are very strong. It, therefore, seems appropriate to start work on regional migration policy conduction also at the EU level and on the integration of regional and migration policies, in certain aspects of them.

The concept set out above does not oppose the progressive unification of migration policy across the EU that was adopted already in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999. Within the framework of a concept of common EU migration policy, some of its rules could be shaped by sub-national authorities. Since it is possible to allocate specially earmarked financial resources to regions in need of exceptional support, nothing should prevent similar solutions from being adopted on the basis of migration policy. The foundation of them could be creating exceptionally favorable conditions for immigrants to come, stay and work in those regions where their human capital is most needed. A similar opportunity has been offered by the migration policy adopted in Germany in 2005. According to its assumptions, the most basic residence permit an immigrant can obtain in Germany may restrict their right to stay or work in certain parts of the country (Schmid-Drüner 2006). Nothing stands in the way of these restrictions directing the flow of immigrants to peripheral regions.

As part of its own regional immigration policy, each peripheral region could define its needs in terms of the social structures of immigrants, including, for

example, education or profession, and choose the tools of attracting immigrants. Such a policy would be likely to achieve both political objectives, including social peace, and economic objectives, with employers at the forefront, as pointed out by Zimmermann (2001) almost two decades ago. A regionally differentiated migration policy could also employ modified tools used at the national policy level, with a spatially limited abolition policy in the forefront. It could legalize the residence of those immigrants who meet the conditions of abolition established at the national level, while, at the same time, residing and possibly working in peripheral areas. Abolition for foreigners has generally been seen as a tool for migration management, but in this approach it could become a tool to support regional development.

The use of abolition as a way to solve the problem of illegal immigration is questionable, as it often becomes a factor attracting a further influx of immigrants who are then waiting for the next abolition. However, a much more beneficial solution from the perspective of the Polish labor market and society is to admit to it and grant full rights to those foreigners who already know the reality and language of the host country, as they are already partly integrated with the host society. They are also much better prepared to stay in Poland permanently than new immigrants, even if the latter appear fully legal. Therefore, the abolition should not be challenged as a tool to unfairly reward those who have previously broken the law, but should be treated as an effective tool supporting the processes of social and economic development by directing streams of migrants to regions in need of support.

The current migration policy of Poland does not at all direct immigrants to peripheral regions. It seriously limits the possibility of changing employers, making the legality of an immigrant's stay and work in Poland dependent on their work for the employer reported to the office at the stage of obtaining a work permit. Additionally, each change of employer requires the consent of the Office for Foreigners. However, this tool is not used for spatial allocation of immigrants, but for permanent control of their place of residence and work. The Act on Foreigners, in force in Poland until 1997, gave the government the right to introduce a temporary ban on the stay of foreigners in certain parts of Poland (Ustawa... 1997) – this tool has also never been used to shape the spatial dimension of Poland's migration policy.

Making an immigrant with restricted mobility to decide to stay in the place *de facto* indicated by the host state is possible with the use of the method of facts made – you can either stay and work in the indicated place or not at all. The situation is completely different for those people whose freedom to choose their employer and the region where they live, is not subject to administrative

restrictions. Creating effective tools of regional migration policy, directing both these groups to the desired places, requires the analysis of factors influencing the decisions regarding their further stay. While it is highly difficult to identify clearly the weightings of the different driving factors that induce immigrants to stay in the peripheral region, it is possible to create a list of factors influencing the decision of an immigrant. Some of these factors are external in nature, but some can be influenced by the authorities – the latter are the administrative factors. A summary of such factors is provided in Table 1.

Tab. 1. Selection of factors influencing the decision of an immigrant to choose their residence (author's own study)

Place of residence	Economic and social factors	Administrative factors
Peripheral regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lower maintenance costs – lower pace of life – lower land price – lower crime rates – lower social pressure for success – lower population density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – possibility of legalization of stay – possibility of undertaking legal work – possibility of working according to one's profession – possibility of obtaining citizenship after short time – possibility of bringing in a family – possibility of use of the state social welfare
Core regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – greater possibilities of finding a job in a trained profession – higher wages – greater chance of developing own business – possibility to combine the benefits of working in a big city with those of living in the suburbs – higher level of tolerance for immigrants in big city communities – greater opportunities to live among co-natives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lack of benefits offered in peripheral regions

As shown in Table 1, the first group of factors that induce immigrants to make a specific migration decision are economic and social factors, so typical migration determinants. They affect in a way all migrants, regardless of their legal status in the country of immigration. The second group are the administrative factors by which the migration decisions of people whose freedom of movement and work may be restricted for legal reasons can be influenced. These factors intentionally concern only the latter group of migrants. In many countries, including Poland, this group constitutes the lion's share of the total migrant stock, so the possibility of influencing the decisions of migrants concerns a really

large part of migrants and is, therefore, of high importance. Regional migration policy may, therefore, prove to be an effective tool influencing the distribution of migrants in the destination countries.

Regional migration policies in core and peripheral regions may differ significantly and target different groups of migrants, as their internal diversity is significant – even if we consider only immigrants with a common ethnic origin, citizenship and status in one destination country. As demonstrated by Eade, Drinkwater and Garapich (2007), migrants can be divided into four groups with different migration strategies. It is important to know which of them is the most valuable from the perspective of the development opportunities of core and peripheral regions.

The first group is made up of so-called “storks” – people arriving seasonally, taking low-paid jobs and trying to make up for their home budget deficits on an ongoing basis. The second group is made up of “hamsters” – they come once for long time in order to accumulate capital which will allow them to achieve specific goals after a pre-planned return. The third group is made up of “researchers” – people who have no predetermined assumptions and who still consider all options regarding their future. The last group is made up of “stayers” – people who plan to stay permanently in the country of immigration and to advance on the social ladder.

The “storks” and “hamsters” take advantage of the differences in the level of earnings in the countries of origin and destination in order to earn and use the money saved upon return to their homeland. Both of these groups bring numerous direct, ongoing benefits to region they live, but their presence is connected with the outflow of money abroad and in the long run does not play any role in the demographic aspect. In the core regions these groups may prove to be the most desirable. The flexible labor markets and the high dynamics of economic change, typical of these regions, will consider it beneficial to be able to react quickly to changes by attracting a highly mobile workforce in line with current labor market needs. On an ongoing basis, “stayers” bring the same benefits to the region as other groups, but they also spend all the money they earn in their current location. This increases demand on the local market, brings additional revenue to the local budget and allows the full use of the immigrant’s presence in their place of residence – in social, economic and demographic terms. It would be beneficial if “researchers” joined the “stayers” – at least from a macroeconomic regional perspective. The question arises how to get as many “stayers” and “researchers” as possible to stay in a peripheral region of that country or, even more importantly, to move to it from another region.

Here, it is necessary to return to the list of administrative factors listed in Table 1. If a migrant can be legalized in the peripheral region only, then an alternative appears before the immigrants staying or working illegally in the core region: either they remain there and remain in hiding, or they use abolition to legalize their stay and work, provided they move to the peripheral region. Some immigrants will surely choose the first option, as they wish to continue to benefit from an illegality rent, allowing them, e.g. to provide cheaper work, but some will come out and start a new chapter in their lives in the peripheral region. It can be assumed that the core of the latter group will be “stayers” and a significant share of “researchers” will also be involved, while the majority of “storks” and “hamsters” will remain illegally in the core region, with plans to maximize the level of capital accumulation.

In a similar way, consideration can be given to all subsequent points of the list of administrative factors in Table 1. If an administrative decision makes it easier for people to work in their profession in selected peripheral regions – for example, thanks to the faster nostrification of diplomas – and not in the core regions, then it may encourage them to stay in or move to the peripheral region. Similarly, provisions on naturalization, family reunification, the use of state social security and others could be designed. It is likely that the sum of all these factors will be large enough to break the decision-making inertia and lead to a significant increase in the number of immigrants in the peripheral regions. Appropriate use of their human capital there will make it possible to a certain extent fill the gaps created by outmigration and reduce the development gap between the peripheral and the core regions.

The quick opening up of access to the labor market in learned profession is probably one of the most important catalysts for success in attracting immigrants to the peripheral regions. As Wilczyński writes (2017, p. 14), juxtaposing the social and economic problems related to immigrants that Europe is facing with the relatively fast and effective integration of immigrants in the United States, “[...] in Europe, even if the immigrant was an educated person, he had to perform low-paid, unskilled jobs. The United States, therefore, gave its immigrants the opportunity to develop and, at the same time, to take full advantage of the potential they presented themselves. Europe, meanwhile, underestimated and wasted what could have become its important asset in the future”. This lesson should definitely be borne in mind.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this work was to examine the process of creation of Polish migration policy and juxtapose it with the need to support peripheral regions development. It appeared that creation of the policy that will contain a regional component would enable using the potential of incomers to the benefit of these regions that struggle to keep up with core regions. The possibility of shaping the migration policy in each region separately, respecting the assumptions adopted at the central level, has a chance to use the potential of immigrants to increase the level of human capital in the peripheral regions and to support them on their development path. The fact that they need support seems to be indisputable (see Miszczuk 2013). This could be achieved by administratively differentiating the living and working conditions of immigrants in different regions, with the aim of encouraging immigrants to stay in or move to the peripheral regions for specific benefits. Therefore, the working hypothesis that migration policy may help solve the development problems of peripheral regions, may be considered confirmed.

What is crucial, none of the methods used so far to stimulate the development of the peripheral regions in the long term has been effective, as evidenced by the progressive exodus from these regions to the core regions. It seems necessary to change the tools for achieving this objective, as continuously using the same tools that have repeatedly proven their own ineffectiveness is the best guarantee that we will still fail to change anything.

In Poland, there is no migration policy, either *sensu largo* or *sensu stricto*, no clearly defined objectives, no strategy. There is only a list of *ad-hoc* activities, on the basis of which one can guess the intentions of people and institutions behind these activities. In the face of a situation where the number of foreigners staying and, in most cases, working in Poland probably exceeds one million, the lack of migration policy is not only a negligence, it is even detrimental to future generations. The latter will have to cope with the effects of today's negligence and today's mistakes resulting from making decisions which are not the result of in-depth analyses and adopted strategy, but of *ad-hoc* actions reflecting current needs.

For these reasons, the issues raised here seem to be important for the development of the peripheral regions. They are in constant need of new ideas for development, as the distance between the most and the least developed regions in absolute terms is constantly growing. Outmigration from peripheral regions is clearly visible even where they have been supported on a massive scale. The implementation of the recommendations for migration policy, resulting from this analysis, does not require any investment effort, significant political or social

changes, and does not even require allowing new immigrants into the country. It only requires the willingness to see the existing possibilities and to release the potential of those immigrants who are already in the country from the ties of the current legislation, which is completely incompatible with today's needs.

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