



CAUSES AND DIRECTIONS OF STUDENT MIGRATION USING POLISH AND PORTUGUESE STUDENTS AS AN EXAMPLE

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Abstract

This paper analyses the directions and causes of student migration in the information society at economic universities in Poland and Portugal. An international survey was conducted among students born between 1981 and 1995. The research included a group of 121 Polish and 55 Portuguese students. The conclusions of the study confirm the hypothesis that the place of residence/country of origin has a significant effect on the direction of migration. Furthermore, the causes of migration are largely dependent on the gender of the respondents and their professional status.

PRZYCZYNY I KIERUNKI MIGRACJI STUDENTÓW NA PRZYKŁADZIE STUDENTÓW UCZELNI POLSKICH I PORTUGALSKICH

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Słowa kluczowe: społeczeństwo informacyjne, generacja Y, migracja, Polska, Portugalia, studenci.

Abstrakt

W artykule przeanalizowano kierunki i przyczyny migracji studentów społeczeństwa informacyjnego (SI) wytypowanych uczelni o profilu ekonomicznym w Polsce i Portugalii. Przeprowadzono autorskie, międzynarodowe badania ankietowe, skierowane do grupy studentów urodzonych między 1981 a 1995 rokiem. Badania objęły grupę 121 studentów polskich i 55 portugalskich. Wnioski z badań pozwalają na potwierdzenie hipotezy, że miejsce zamieszkania/kraj pochodzenia istotnie wpływa na kierunki migracji. Z kolei przyczyny migracji w głównej mierze zależą od płci respondentów i ich sytuacji zawodowej.

Introduction

The information society (IS), regarded as identical to Generation Y, is the generation which perceives state borders, emigration and a change of the place of residence and work differently than previous generations. The IS was the first to perceive the European Union (owing to the European integration and the Schengen Area) as a space accessible to everyone. Representatives of the Y generation are of the opinion that by emigrating they will improve their position and life opportunities. At the same time, the people of Generation Y are proud of their national identity and declare their attachment to tradition. They do not have an emigration dilemma. They perceive leaving the country only as a change of the place of residence (Kisiel, 2016, p. 85-83). Looking at the generations from the view of the information society and mobility shows the importance of information and the use of modern technologies in studying the reasons for migration.

It was assumed in this paper that the information society (IS) can be regarded as identical to Generation Y – people born in the period between 1981 and 1995. They are often called “the network generation”. They were brought up in the world of new technologies. There is no life for them in a world without computers, smart phones and the Internet. Therefore, they are more mobile and open. Owing to the Internet and the knowledge of foreign languages, they

Table 1

Characterisation of the information society by the following criteria: life priorities, application of new technologies, methods of communication and migration

Criteria	Information society (1981–1995)
Priorities	life around the media, learning through experience, lifelong education, “closeness” of peers important
Application of modern technologies / information society	continuous use of modern technologies (Laptop, tablet, iPhone); the information society generation – they cannot imagine a life without modern technologies
Methods of communication	communicating through social media: Instagram, Facebook, Skype; at work: teleconference, Skype
Foreign migration	they do not remember borders or how difficult it may be to cross them; migration is not a problem to them; for them to emigrate is only to change the place where they live and work (temporarily or permanently), rather than to depart from their family and friends

Source: prepared by the author based on Kowalewska *et al.* (2018).

find it easier to travel and get to know new cultures. This generation does not remember border checks and information controls.

The main aim of this paper is to determine the causes and directions of the migration of students of economic majors representing Generation Y in Poland and Portugal.

A diagnostic survey was applied to achieve the main aim of the study. A non-probabilistic technique of convenience sampling was applied. This study allows for the generalisation of results for the entire population, although a significant margin of error can occur. The survey was conducted in 2017 in Poland on a group of 172 students from the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn and from the Porto Polytechnic – School of Management and Technology of Felgueiras. The same questionnaire was used in Poland and in Portugal. The survey was conducted as a direct auditory questionnaire. Due to the high number of people emigrating from Poland and from Portugal, especially young and educated people, the research subject taken up seems interesting from a cognitive point of view.

Information society and migrations

An information society (IS) is a society in which information plays a key role as an element of socio-economic activities and change (Casey, 2001). It has access to well-developed means of communication and information processing (Krzysztofek, 2002, p. 170). In an information society “everyone can create, access, use and share information and knowledge, which allows individuals to achieve the full potential of approaching sustainable development and improvement

of the quality of life (World Summit on the Information Society, 2003, 2005)”. This young generation makes use of both information and knowledge to a much greater extent than previous generations have ever done before (Niezurawska *et al.*, 2016). Technology is not a barrier for the information society (like for earlier generations), but is perceived as an opportunity, or even a necessity, for contact with the world around. Technology allows (e.g. Internet, social media) for the collection of information about the country of migration, the living standard, wages, the cost of living, the unemployment rate, employers, as well as methods and costs of transport (Kowalewska *et al.*, 2018).

Migration has been known for ages; it is associated with the spatial mobility of the society, which results in a relatively permanent change of the place of residence (Lee, 1966; Okólski, 2005; Kaczmarczyk, 2005; Organiściak-Krzykowska, 2013). However, these flows are not limited to the territory of one country (internal migrations). They often involve crossing state borders (external migrations). Currently, European countries considerably influence the contemporary migration processes. The migration policy is a result of the integration processes in Europe and establishing the European Union.

According to the latest recommendations of the UN (*Recommendations on Statistics...*, 1998) an *international migrant* is a person who changes their place of usual residence, i.e. the place where they usually stay (i.e. live and spend most of the time). There are long-term migrations (for at least 12 months) and short-term migrations (between 3 and 12 months).

Literature review

The literature on the subject of the theory and phenomenon of foreign migration is extremely rich (including Ravenstein, 1885; Lee, 1966; Piore, 1979; Todaro, 1976; Pryor, 1985; Iglicka, 1995; Arago, 2000; Górny & Kaczmarczyk, 2003; Okólski, 2005; Kaczmarczyk, 2005; De Haas, 2008; Organiściak-Krzykowska, 2013; Kowalewska *et al.*, 2016, 2018; Zdrojewski & Kisiel, 2017; Skibiński, 2017). Articles and research on youth emigration in Poland usually refer to a specific region, eg Opolszczyzna (Jończy, 2006), Lower Silesia (Spatial mobility of young people in the Lower Silesian labor market, Center for Social Analyses and Cultural Education, 2013) or Podkarpacie (Piecuch & Piecuch, 2014). There is also literature analyzing the motives of student emigration (Witczak-Roszkowska & Okła, 2015; Stanimir, 2015; Szyszka, 2016; Kowalewska *et al.*, 2018). The issue of youth migration concerns not only Poland. It is also discussed in the foreign literature. For example, research carried out in north-east England refers to the problem of adapting the educational offer and the labor market to the needs of young people and counteracting the phenomenon of their emigration through the policy of prominence (Henderson, 2005). Migration is a serious problem

in Estonia and Romania (Tverdostup & Masso, 2015). In Romania, the biggest issue of youth migration is the outflow of highly educated young people and Italy is the most popular destination for them (Feraru, 2012). In Portugal, a significant issue associated with a high rate of unemployment is the emigration of young and educated people (Cerdeira, 2016). David Cairns is involved in the discussion on student mobility. He presents migration plans and directions of trips for Portuguese and Irish students. He also examines the impact of the economic crisis on the decision for emigration (Cairns, 2017). The issue of youth migration also concerns countries from outside the EU, ie: the USA, Australia, Russia, Peru, and Ghana. For example, in the USA there are regions with a negative net migration rate of young and educated people. The largest group of emigrants is in New England. These are people aged 25-35, with higher education (there is an excess of well educated young people) (Brome, 2007).

Dynamics of emigration from Poland and Portugal in light of public statistics data

The migration of Poles and citizens of other EU member states is a serious socioeconomic problem (Jończy, 2006). Emigrants are usually young, educated people of production age. They represent economic and social potential, which the state fails to make use of (Kowalewska *et al.*, 2018).

The migration issue has been important for Poland, especially since 1 May 2004. According to the literature and statistical data, the considerable size of this phenomenon warrants migration studies. The scale of migration is the result of lifting restrictions on international traffic (1989) and Poland's accession to the EU (2004). Data on temporary migrations show that the number of migrating Poles increased from 1 million in 2004 to 2.5 million in 2016 (*Informacje o rozmiarach...*, 2017). The years 2009 to 2010 were a period with a downward trend, and were followed by an increase of migrants (2016, Information on the size and directions of the migration from Poland in 2004-2016) (*Informacje o rozmiarach...*, 2017).

According to data published by GUS, the most popular EU target countries of Polish migrations in 2004-2015 included: the United Kingdom (720 thousand), Germany (655 thousand), The Netherlands (112 thousand), Ireland (111 thousand) and Italy (94 thousand) (*Informacje o rozmiarach...*, 2017).

Portugal is the EU country with the highest emigration index. According to the World Bank (*Bilateral Migration...*, 2017), there were a little less than 1 million emigrants in Portugal in 1960. This number increased in the 1980s (1,872,211), to begin a downward trend. Next, the number of emigrants leaving Portugal grew from 2011 to reach a maximum in 2014, when as many as 1,350,000 Portuguese left their country (Rapazote, 2015). The number of emigrants started

to decrease again after 2014. 1.7 million Portuguese people live in Europe, but not in Portugal, and half of them are second generation. It must be remembered that the population of Portugal is only approximately 10 million people. The majority (65%) of emigrating Portuguese choose the EU and countries like the UK, France and Germany as their destination (outside the EU – Switzerland). Outside of Europe, the Portuguese preferred Brazil and Africa, especially the former Portuguese colonies – Angola and Mozambique. The reason for migration to former colonies is the ability to use the Portuguese language (no language barriers), the cultural closeness as well as the demand for a highly qualified labour force. The majority of emigrants are without a university education. The Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark are the only countries where a third of the Portuguese population are qualified people (Rapazote, 2015). Considering the emigrant profile (including in the European countries), the majority are young people with 56.6% of them aged 15 to 24 years.

Study methodology

The main aim of this paper is to identify the causes and directions of the migration of students of economic majors representing the IS in Poland and Portugal. The following study hypotheses were put forward:

H1: The main reasons for emigration among SI students are: opportunities to achieve higher earnings and improve the quality of life.

H2: The reasons for migration are mainly dependent on the respondents' gender and professional position.

H3: The direction of migration for students representing the IS society are determined by the country of origin.

The main objective of the study was pursued by means of a diagnostic survey. The survey was carried out in March 2017 at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn on a sample of 121 students (46 men and 75 women) of regular studies (99) and extramural studies (28), in the Faculty of Management. The survey was also conducted at the Polytechnic of Porto, School of Management and Technology among 51 students in the Faculty of Management (28 men and 23 women). The respondents' date of birth (their belonging to the IS) was the selection criterion. The survey was not obligatory. Only volunteers participated in it, hence the different size of the research group at the analyzed Universities. The subjects of the survey were representatives of the Y generation – people aged 23-37. The paper presents the results of a pilot study for a wider survey study.

The respondents from Poland and Portugal were asked to assess the effect of selected causes of migration on the attractiveness of emigration using the Likert scale with the following scoring: 1 – unimportant factor, 2 – factor of little importance, 3 – factor of medium importance, 4 – important factor, 5 – very important factor.

Study results – willingness to migrate in the study population of students

One of the aims of the research was to examine the willingness to leave the student's home country, that is, to determine how they subjectively evaluate their willingness to emigrate (Fig. 1).

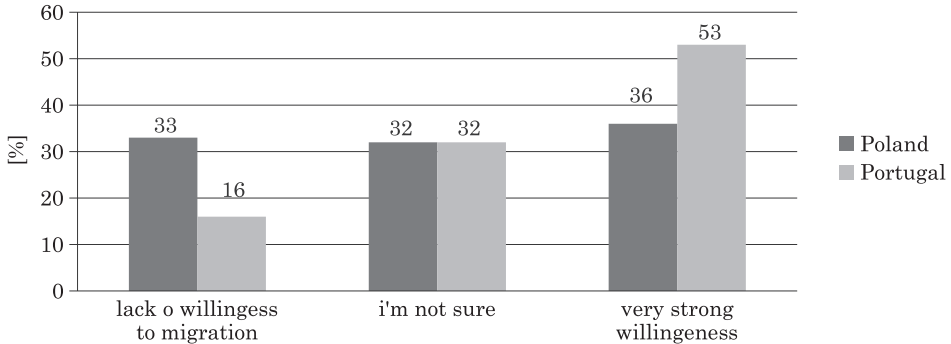


Fig. 1. Willingness to migrate among students from Poland and Portugal

Source: prepared by the author based on the surveys.

A very strong willingness to migrate was observed among the Polish students – representatives of the IS. The survey data show that as many as 36% of respondents from Poland declared a strong or very strong willingness to migrate. 33% did not want to leave the country, and as many as 31% refrained from answering. In Portugal, over half of the surveyed students (53%) described themselves as people willing to emigrate. Only 16% of respondents were reluctant to leave the country, and 32% refrained from answering.

In the case of Poland, 36% of respondents decided to leave the country, 20% were women and 16% men. Of the 33% of respondents who were not willing to emigrate, 17% were women, 16% were men. In Portugal, 53% of respondents decided to emigrate, with an equal number being male or female (26%) (Fig. 2). Interestingly, 16% of the male population from Portugal did not want to emigrate. There was not one female among the respondents who was not willing to emigrate. This shows that women in Portugal are more willing to emigrate, although the same percentage of men and women (26%) declared being willing to emigrate. The percentage of those undecided was also the same at 16%.

With 36% declaring their willingness to leave Poland, as many as 23% of respondents had a job and over 13% did not. Also among people who do not want to leave Poland, a larger percentage (as many as 23%) were employed and only 10% were unemployed. Almost 26% of the surveyed Portuguese students who work wanted to emigrate. In the case of people not working, about 26%

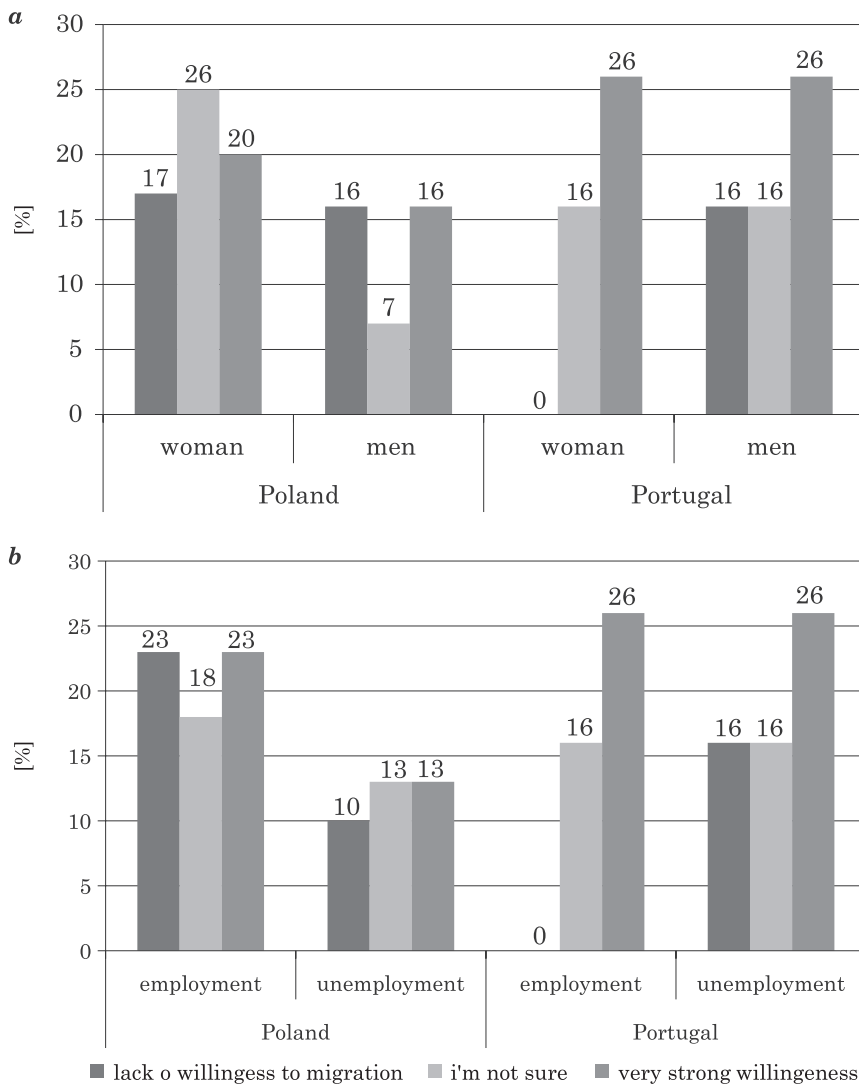


Fig. 2. Willingness to migrate among students from Poland and Portugal: *a* – gender, *b* – employment
Source: prepared by the author based on the surveys.

of respondents would like to leave the country, with less than 16% being not inclined to do so. It turns out that both working and non-working people (in Portugal and in Poland) declare a greater tendency to emigrate than to stay in the country. However, people with professional work experience are more likely to leave the country than the unemployed or the learner. With knowledge and experience, they are not afraid to make a migration decision.

The study found a greater willingness to emigrate among students in Portugal compared to those in Poland (53% vs. 36%) and a relatively small percentage – 16% – of the respondents unwilling to emigrate (Poland was 33%). Surprisingly, the percentage of students in Poland and Portugal unwilling to emigrate was high (31% and 32%). This is caused by the personal situation of the respondents (study and/or work) as well as by the political and economic situation in Europe, in Poland and in Portugal (the migration crisis in Europe, Brexit, terrorist attacks). All of the respondents were studying, so they could postpone the decision of whether to emigrate or stay until they complete their education. An analysis of the willingness to emigrate with respect to the gender and professional situation provides some interesting information. People with jobs were more strongly motivated to emigrate than those without one. They had professional experience and they saw emigration as something that could give them more opportunities than staying in the country. People without jobs see emigration as an opportunity; however, they were willing to stay in the country more often than people with jobs.

Reasons for migration

The economic reasons for migration are the most important to respondents from Poland. They saw it as an opportunity to achieve a higher living standard, to get a better-paid job and to have an opportunity for promotion (Fig. 3). For Poles, the social security offered by the target country is less important. The aspect of family reunification is of medium importance, and the willingness to change one's situation and the threat of terrorist attacks is of the least importance.

The most important reason for migration for Portuguese students included: social security as well as (like Polish students) achieving an opportunity to achieve a higher living standard, to get a better-paid job and to have an opportunity for promotion.

For the Portuguese an increase in earnings was less important. The lack or low probability of terrorism in the destination country and the willingness to change one's situation were of the least importance (Fig. 4).

Directions of migration

As many as 79% of the respondents from Poland mentioned one or more countries to which they would like to emigrate. Most people indicated their willingness to go to the UK (17.95%), Germany (17.09%), the USA (16.24%), Norway (11.11%), The Netherlands (6.84%) or Denmark (5.13%). These are the countries mentioned by 74.36% of the respondents (Fig. 5).

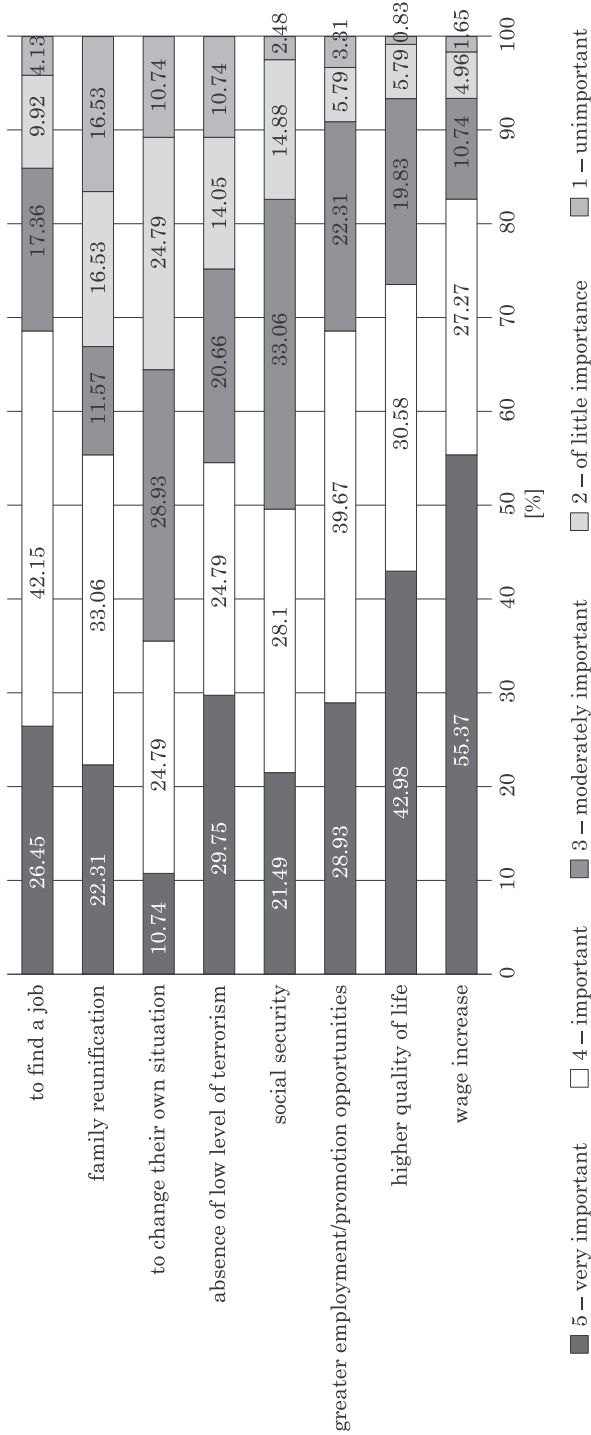


Fig. 3. The effect of the selected reasons for migration on the attractiveness of emigration in the opinion of respondents – students from Poland

Source: prepared by the author based on the surveys.

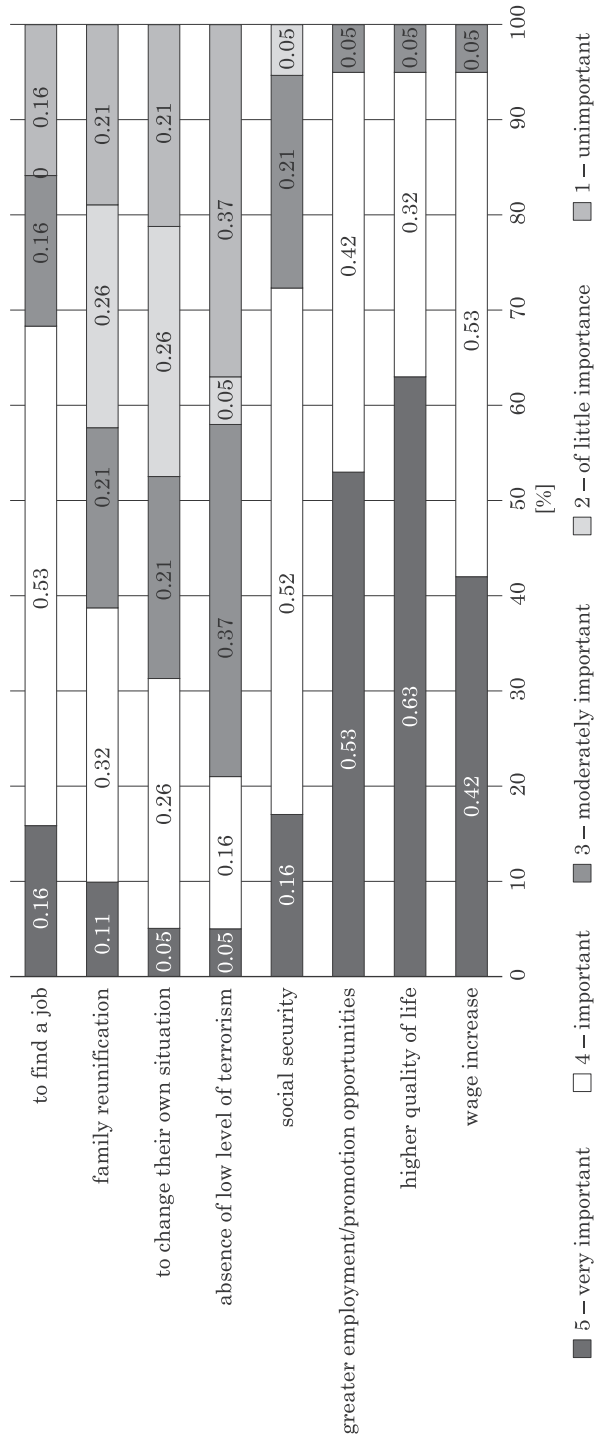


Fig. 4. The effect of the selected reasons for migration on the attractiveness of emigration in the opinion of respondents – students from Portugal
Source: prepared by the author based on surveys.

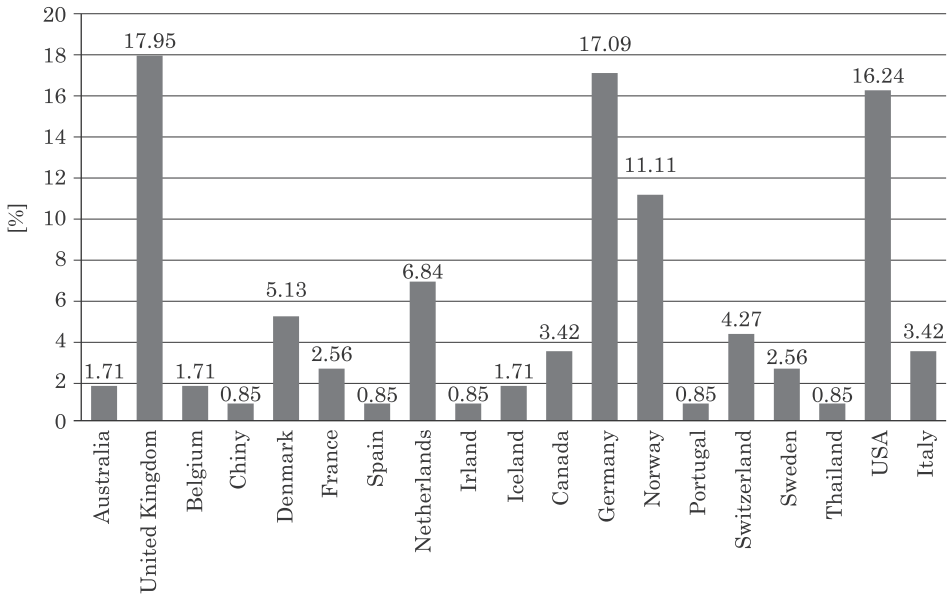


Fig. 5. Preferred directions of emigration for Polish students

Source: prepared by the author based on the author's research.

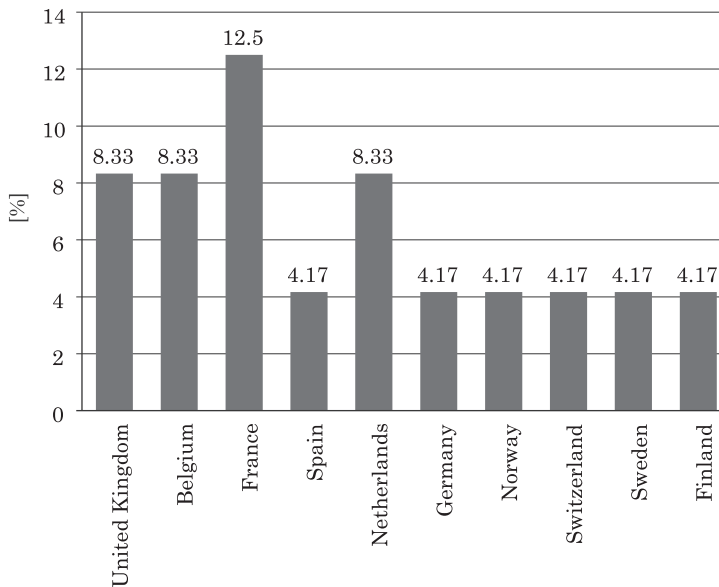


Fig. 6. Preferred directions of emigration for Portuguese students

Source: prepared by the author based on the author's research.

Directions of migration of the students – representatives of the IS – coincide with the directions of migration of other Poles (*Informacje o rozmiarach...*, 2017). The UK and Germany dominate among the target countries of emigration.

Only 29% of the Portuguese respondents defined the direction of migration and, interestingly, a quarter of them mentioned parts of a continent, e.g. Europe, northern countries, or Central Europe. Figure 6 shows the countries mentioned by the respondents. None of them mentioned any non-European country. Among the chosen countries, the dominant position is occupied by France (12.5%), followed by Belgium, The Netherlands and the UK (8.33% each), the Scandinavian countries (Finland, Sweden and Norway) and Germany.

The destination of migration for both Polish and Portuguese students were characterized as having a very good economic situation in the target country (a low unemployment rate, a high standard of living, and high wages) or as being close to the borders of Poland/Portugal (low cost of migration, contact with family and friends or the possibility of a quick and inexpensive return). The research confirmed the diversification of the migration direction of students representing the IS society based on the country of origin. The Portuguese prefer destinations such as France or the Netherlands (Fig. 6), while Polish students prefer directions such as: Great Britain, USA or Germany (Fig. 5).

Summary and conclusions

The information society, represented in this study by students of UWM and Porto Polytechnic, was brought up in the free market economy. Compared to earlier generations, their standard of living has been much higher. They are distinguished by perceiving change as a normal state. A quick pace of life translates into the ability to communicate and move from one place to another quickly. Owing to modern technologies: computers, the Internet, mobile phones and communicators, they can acquire information quickly and create virtual communities. It increases their openness and mobility. Through the Internet and owing to a good knowledge of foreign languages, they establish contacts with other cultures and, owing to the political situation (establishment of the European Union), they do not find it difficult to travel around Europe.

On the basis of this study, the study hypotheses were verified and the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Students – representatives of the IS – exhibit a strong willingness to emigrate. In the case of Portuguese students, it was nearly 53%, and for Polish students it was 36%. The reasons for migration depend mainly on the respondents' gender and their professional situation. Students and people who, apart from studying, were employed on a full-time basis or a contract were more likely to migrate.

2. Students – representatives of the IS – who had a permanent job, were more willing to emigrate. The work experience gained gave more certainty in finding a job and coping with new conditions.

3. Economic (financial) factors increased the mobility of students – representatives of the IS – and allowed for their self-accomplishment and development. Economic (financial) factors were crucial when making decisions about emigration. The desire to improve the financial situation, the vision of higher salaries and promotion opportunities were the most common reasons for the emigration of the information society – representatives of the IS in Poland and Portugal.

4. The research confirmed the diversification of the migration directions of students representing the IS society based on the country of origin. The directions of migration for the information society, represented by students in Poland, included: the UK, Germany and the USA; and the most popular directions of migration for the IS represented by the Portuguese students, included: France, Belgium, The Netherlands and the UK.

The absence of borders and no need for a work permit gives students – representatives of the Generation Y – greater opportunities for the choice of education and career. Therefore, these are often people who are more self-reliant and have higher self-esteem than people of previous generations. However, greater individualism and aspiring for self-accomplishment results in them facing difficulties in interpersonal contacts. The information society, which is represented in this study by UWM students, is a challenge to employers and can also potentially bring many benefits both to employers and to other employees when made use of properly. The study had limitations due to the small sample size (a total of 172 people), the narrowing of the sampling to students of economic studies only and the application of the so-called “comfortable” selection may have caused significant sampling error. Nevertheless, it has a diagnostic value. It allowed the identification of tendencies and trends. Further research by the authors will be carried out in the direction of applying quantitative and qualitative analysis in the study of the phenomenon of migration and expanding the research group to other EU countries.

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