Bitter Berries of Better Life: Socio-Demographic Costs of Labour Migration for the Ukrainian society

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Abstract

Is labour migration a viable strategy, indispensable for the solution of the socio-economic consequences of transition to free market economy? If so, what are its social and demographic implications for Ukraine as a labour exporting country? This paper reviews the issues pertaining to international labour migration in Ukraine throughout the years of transition to free market economy, placing special emphasis on the role of the human factor in the process of economic mobility and on the social costs of the human capital loss for the nation. It traces migration incentives of Ukrainian ‘movers’, outlines the typology of migration flows, examines the multidimensional outsourcing from Ukraine due to migration and considers its effect on the wellbeing of the society.

Introduction

The demise of the socialist system and the transition to liberal market economy propelled multiple transformations in the post socialist societies. Throughout the years following the dissolution of the USSR, the social status of the bulk of the population changed. The ‘shock therapy’ in early 1990s entailed the emergence of unemployment, the outspread of poverty and a rapid social polarization of the hitherto homogeneous society. The survival potential of individuals in the changing economic environment was preconditioned by their flexibility and adaptability to the process of increasing social, occupational and geographic mobility. Thus, according to the data of the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine, while in 1986, i.e. at the beginning of ‘perestroika’, the total of border crossings did not exceed 43,000, in 1991 this figure increased to 2.3 mln (taken from SIFY, 2004, p. 14). However, if under socialism the purposes of international travels were mainly business, cultural and academic cooperation or tourism and leisure, then over the years of economic reforms the goals of international journeys changed to search for income and employment abroad. Thus, the so-called “mobility for

1Current work is a revised copy of the draft paper, presented at the International conference “Facing Tragedies” held at Salzburg University (Austria) on May 6-9, 2008.
The Ukrainian labour migration is a comprehensive process, affecting from 10% to 20% of the working age population (see in more detail below). Together with family members, it encompasses over 1/3 of the Ukrainian total population. Indeed, considering the scope, this process invariably transforms the society. However, the social implications of this change for the nation and the individual are still awaiting for their conceptualization, insofar as Migration Studies in Ukraine are but in their infancy, being focused mainly on the macro- and micro-economic analysis, but still lacking theoretical insights into the human dimension of increasing economic mobility.

Therefore the goal of this paper is to answer the following questions: is labour migration a viable strategy for the alleviation of the negative socio-economic consequences of transition to free market economy? If so, what are its social and demographic implications for Ukraine as a donor society?

The key argument of the paper is that labour migration entails the outflow from Ukraine of the most economically proactive, socially and geographically mobile, skilled and educated cohort of the population, a social backbone of the modern Ukrainian society who traditionally compose a national middle class and are viewed as the principal investors into the human capital of the nation. The lack of this “creative class” (Florida, 2005) in the socio-demographic structure of the society is one of prime challenges to the wellbeing and security of the society in the future.

Given that the social implications of labour migration for the Ukrainian society is a relatively under-researched domain, the paper uses statistics, reports of sociological polls and analytical materials gleaned from various secondary sources on Ukrainian labour migration, combined with the results of the author’s earlier research on this issue.

The Typology of Migratory Flows from Ukraine

Throughout the transition, international economic mobility became commonplace in Ukraine. Official statistics reflect its dramatic rise over this period. Thus, if in 1996 it encompassed 11,800 people, in 1998 it nearly doubled and amounted 24,400, in 2001 - 36,300, and in 2002 reached 40,683 people (SCSU, 2002, p. 177). Experts argue, however, that the officially registered statistics does not reflect the real situation of labour migration in the country, inasmuch as it does not consider undocumented migration, which outnumbers the administratively reported one in dozens times (Vorona, Shulgha, 2004). Thus, according to a 2001 study of the West-border oblasts²
in Ukraine, it exceeded the official records in 70 times (Libanova, Poznyak, 2002, p. 78). Overall, in regards to migration outflows from Ukraine, national experts identify four principal kinds, contingent upon ‘legality rate’:

1. **Official (documented) labour migration:** refers to Ukrainian citizens who officially declare employment abroad as a goal of their travel and who acquire a status of legal labour migrants in recipient countries. It is this category of migrants, who are documented by official statistics.

2. **Undocumented legal migration:** border crossing by Ukrainian citizens, who leave the country with the officially reported goal of tourism, family visiting, business trips, studies, and so on, but on arrival to the destination country secure legal employment and acquire an official residence permit. In Ukraine, these travellers are not documented by national statistics as official labour migrants, but in recipient countries they may acquire a legal status as such.

3. **Successful undocumented migration:** international travels, resulting in unauthorised, but legal employment, officially recognized by legislation in the destination countries.

4. **Forced migration of criminals’ victims:** human trafficking and other kinds of coerced detention of Ukrainian citizens, often in inhuman conditions, with the purpose of enforcement into illegal labour abroad. (SIFY, 2004, p. 14-15)

I argue, however, that this classification lacks at least one more kind of migration, which requires recognition. It is a clandestine (illicit) kind of border crossing, either on foot or by air, most often to Ukraine’s border countries: Poland, Romania, Hungary and the Slovak Republic. It is connected with life hazardous conditions of border crossing, for instance, in refrigerators, engine sections of air-jets, boots of trucks etc. Although this kind of migration is not as wide-spread as those above, nonetheless, in 2005 alone the Polish Border Guards arrested 1388 citizens of Ukraine (including 888 on the Polish border with EU states) for clandestine border crossing (Jaroszewics, Szerepka, 2007, p. 91). In 2006, the stock of Ukrainians, trying to cross the border with Slovakia illicitly, encompassed 264 people (Dušan, 2007). This is why the above classification should be supplemented by the clandestine border-crossing as a criminal form of migration, which requires closer attention of migration services in terms of its efficient control and counteraction.

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2Oblast is an administrative unit in Ukraine, equivalent to a county.
Incentives for Migration

As research literature maintains, the migration decisions of the majority of Ukrainians of both sexes are triggered primarily by the outspread of poverty, low cost of the workforce and dramatic lack of possibilities for gainful employment (SIFY, 2004, p. 9). Emergence of social inequities in the access to higher education in the post soviet period serves as an additional motive, heating economic mobility of young people (Tolstokorova, 2007). In the 2007 sociological poll, 26.7% of the interviewee aged 18-40 reported to be considering migration as a viable option for themselves against economic exigencies at home, among them 19% reported a high probability of leaving for earnings abroad within the two years ahead (GFK, 2008, p. 4).

As evidenced by a number of polls (SCUFY, SIFY, 2003; SIFY, 2004; Parkhomenko N., Starodub, 2005), economic motivations for labour migration are pivotal. Among them, above of all, the intention to advance one’s own material/economic wellbeing, to earn money to start one’s own business, to provide for the wellbeing of dependents. Non-economic incentives, such as a possibility to acquire access to other cultures and to learn a foreign language, to familiarize oneself with international business standards, to secure professional experience in a foreign setting, appear to be less significant (SIFY, 2004, p. 9). Table 1 reflects the dispersion of incentives for international mobility among potential migrants aged under 40.

It is notable, however, that the majority of Ukrainian migrants, interviewed in these sociological polls, reported that they would never leave to work abroad, should there be opportunities for gainful employment at home (SIFY, 2004). This confirms the opinion of an ILO officer Patrick Taran, conveyed in the interview to Deutsche Welle, that labour migrants would stay home if there were no work for them, for example, in Germany (taken from Gerter, 2005). Indeed, it is obvious that “if there were better opportunities for economic development in source countries, people would think twice before making a decision to migrate” (Petrenko, 2006). This is why in regards to labour migrants from Ukraine, and similarly from other transition societies, the “migration myth” about the voluntary character of foreign employment, especially in sex industry and in sweat labor, often undocumented and low-paid, is entirely groundless. The enforced nature of Ukrainian migration as a result of economic shock and political crisis as well as its adverse implications for migrants were admitted in many studies. Thus, as shown by the Human Development report on Ukraine for 2006, Ukrainian laborers in the EU are being paid 4-5 times lower than native workers doing the same work. According to IOM, 46% of them worked 12 hours per day, every fourth – 13 hours and more, 60% had no fixed days off, while 25% did not have days off.
Throughout the ten years covered by the Report, over one thousand of Ukrainian undocumented migrants were detained abroad. They were being robbed, tortured and abused in jails, treated beyond any legal regulations. According to the Ministry of International Affairs, over the time span of two years, more than 2500 Ukrainian citizens were reported perished in 69 countries across the world. In 2003, only on the territory of Russian Federation 250 Ukrainian labourers were reported missing (taken from Libanova, 2006, p. 160-161). For them, migration was not a matter of a free choice, but an enforcement and an imposed survival strategy. Most Ukrainians, especially the young, seek employment abroad because they have no other choice to provide decent conditions of life for themselves and their families. Therefore, I want to emphasize once again the opinion voiced in my earlier work (Tolstokorova, 2009a) that labour migration from economically disadvantaged countries to affluent ones should be categorized,

**Table 1: Responses of potential migrants to the question regarding their incentives to leave aboard to work (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives for leaving abroad</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To advance the material/economic wellbeing</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To solve housing issues</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To secure funding for studies</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide for elderly parents</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide for the children</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To earn money for medical treatment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To earn money start one’s own business</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pay the debt</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to live in Ukraine</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of employment possibilities in Ukraine</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to see the life abroad</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for adventures</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive international experience of one’s acquaintances</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from family violence</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from complications in daily life (in work, studies, etc.)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage possibilities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


at all. As few as 15% of Ukrainian labour migrants had documented jobs.
Enquire 3(1)

albeit only theoretically, as “enforced employment displacement” and “economic asylum seeking”, while labour migrants should be identified as “victims of structural economic violence” and “economic refugees”. Together with that, coerced migration or labour exploitation in any labour sector, including manufacturing, agriculture, service work, domestic work and sex work, should be treated as trafficking (Chang, 2008).

‘European Vacuum-Cleaner’: Draining Ukrainian Resources

The above classification of migratory flows, pinned mainly on undocumented kinds of migration, enables a suggestion that the actual scope of external economic mobility in Ukraine tangibly exceeds the official data. Thus, according to the state statistic reports, the actual stock of Ukrainian citizens temporarily employed abroad in 2001, was no less than 1 mln people (Libanova, Poznyak, 2002a, p. 78). Sociological polls carried out that year by the State Employment Centres allowed for a conclusion that the total stock of labour migrants in Ukraine could amount around 2 mln (MLSPU, TSAT, 2002, p. 41), which was confirmed by the IOM statistics (IOM, 2006). The information by Caritas and the Institute of Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine evidenced 4.5 mln Ukrainians working abroad (Markov, 2009, p. 59), which is not in stark contrast to the figure of 4.93 mln by the National Bank of Ukraine (Gajducky, 2007). According to the assessments of the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, the stock of Ukrainian citizens annually working abroad may reach from 5 to 7 mln (Ombudsman of Ukraine, 2003), although experts find these data unrealistic.

Throughout the last decade, the geography of labour migration from Ukraine tangibly expanded, resultant from the development of new trends in the labour market, transparency of state borders, the emergence of close family ties and crossborders community connections. While hitherto the principal target countries for migration were the closest geographical neighbours to Ukraine - Russia and Poland – thereafter affluent Northern economies, mainly OECD members, have joined the list of favoured destinations. This can be attributed to better living conditions offered by these societies and liberal immigration legislation, enabling foreign employees to be more readily legalized. Table 2 provides a summary of key destinations of Ukrainian migratory flows and their socio-demographic composition.

The Name of the Game: Brain Drain or Skill Drain?

Grouping of the Ukrainian labour migrants by the level of educational attainments evinced the following distribution: the largest share are skilled labourers: 38.2% of them have University training, 38.3% - secondary school/
Table 2: Statistic overview of the Ukrainian labour migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Czech Republic</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>Portugal</th>
<th>Greece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of migrants</strong> (official data vs expert estimates)</td>
<td>16,469 vs over 450,000</td>
<td>64,000 vs 200,000</td>
<td>3,500 vs over 10,000</td>
<td>10,000 vs 70,000</td>
<td>169,000 Vs over 2 million</td>
<td>195,412 vs around 600,000</td>
<td>69,903 vs over 200000</td>
<td>3,785 vs 75,000</td>
<td>Around 20,000 vs 60,000-80,000 (as of 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average age</strong></td>
<td>40 for guest workers and 25 for students</td>
<td>25-45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>41-60</td>
<td>20-45</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Around 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong> (males / females, %)</td>
<td>33/67</td>
<td>Largely males</td>
<td>55/45</td>
<td>60/40</td>
<td>80/20</td>
<td>16.8/83.2</td>
<td>54/46</td>
<td>62/38</td>
<td>30/70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education (%)</strong></td>
<td>75 – secondary school/college with professional training 20 – University 5 – high skills professionals of top category</td>
<td>Largely University or secondary school/college with professional training</td>
<td>10 – secondary school, (including drop-outs) 25 – secondary school/college with professional training 65 – University including unfinished (at least 3 years of studies)</td>
<td>80 – secondary school 20 – University and high skills professionals of top category</td>
<td>Around 20 – secondary school (including drop-outs) Around 65 – secondary school/college with professional training Over 15 – University including unfinished</td>
<td>Around 15 – secondary school (including drop-outs) Around 50 – secondary school/college with professional training Over 35 – University including unfinished</td>
<td>8 - secondary school, 44 – secondary school/college with professional training and University</td>
<td>30 - secondary school, 70 – secondary school/college with professional training and University</td>
<td>30 - secondary school, 70 – secondary school/college with professional training and University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in the world</strong></td>
<td>Around 4.5 mil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

primarily to the lack of skilled engineers, technical and administrative personnel resultant from their outflow abroad. The dilapidated system of public education does not inspire any hope that the prospective generations of skilled laborers, who will take over the places of the ‘old guard’ in the labour market, will be equally efficient (Pylynsky, 2007). The so-called “talent deficit” (Florida, 2005) that ensues, leads to the degradation of the intellectual potential of the society, and its proletarization, especially in the long run.

“Vital Energy Drain”: Out-migration of Youth and Persons of Working and Reproductive Age

Statistics maintain that Ukrainian labour migrants, for the most part, are middle- and young-aged. The share of youth aged below 28, that is, the most socially viable and mobile group, amounts around 20-30% of the total stock of migrants (SIFY, 2004, p. 10). Furthermore, the share of youth steadily augments, while the average age of ‘movers’ gradually decreases accordingly. Thus, if in early 1990s, the average age was 36.0-37.0 years (MLSPU, TSAT, 2002), in 2001 it was 33.4-36.0 (Libanova, Pozdnyak, 2002b) and in 2002 – 33.0 years (Pribytkova, 2002). These figures make plain that the out-migration from Ukraine is not least a movement of people of the working age, but most importantly, an outflow of the population of the active reproductive age. From this, labour migration may be regarded as “vital energy drain”, if to put it metaphorically.

This kind of a drain is especially challenging if to consider that it is accompanied by the increasingly gendered character of economic mobility, entailing regional gender asymmetries in the labour force composition. For example, in Doneçk, a regional capital of the Ukrainian East, the State Employment Centre reported a persistent lack of a male labour force and a surplus of vacancies requiring men, ensuing the outflow of men to work at construction sites in Russia (DREC, 2005). Meanwhile, in the West-border oblasts, where females increasingly leave to work as domestics in the EU, there is a lack of female labour force (Tolstokorova, 2009b, p.66-67). These regional disparities in the gender composition of the work force due to the gendered character of labour out-flows, create a challenge to the demographic structure of the society, preconditioned by the following variables: 1) numerical increase in the migration loss of the population of reproductive age overall; 2) decreasing fertility and birthrates in transnational families, resultant from the “fragmentation” of their family life (Libanova, Poznyak, 2002a, p. 18; Tolstokorova, 2009a); 3) increasing gender disparities in regional marriage markets (SIFY, 2005, p. 22-24) entailing the decline of
marriage rates\textsuperscript{3}.

Additionally, it is argued that the core of the migratory cohort is composed by the most economically and socially proactive and self-reliant people with selforganization skills and entrepreneurial potential, who leave abroad because they lack opportunities to realize their talents at home (Vavryshuk, 2006). Thus, despite all the challenges to Ukrainian small business, the willingness to acquire a capital to start their own business was one of key migration incentives for around 20% of potential ‘movers’ (SCFY, SIFY, 2003, p. 42). The outflow of this cohort entails “the flight of the creative class” (Florida, 2005), which jeopardizes the entrepreneurial and creative potential of the nation and has adverse implications for the human capital of the society. Additionally, in the long run, the lack of this proactive group in the social structure of the society may slow down the efficacy of structural economic reforms in Ukraine.

**Feminization of Migration: Female Drain and Care Drain**

In 1990s, when the construction industry was the principal job placement for Ukrainian workers abroad, migratory flows were composed, for the most part, by males. In 2000s, however, a wave of female migration started (GFK, 2007, p. 9) in response to “changing labour markets globally, particularly the massive demand for cheap female labour from poor countries to fill the growing demand for caregivers in rich countries” (UN-INSTRAW, 2007a, p. 1). Therefore, it was caused by the so-called “care deficit” (Hochcshild, 1997) in the First World and the ensuing “care crises” (UN-INSTRAW, 2007b). Hence, the feminization of Ukrainian low-cost migrant force, if seen in larger terms, was preconditioned by new requirements in the labour markets in societies ‘on the demand side’.

For one hand, it was connected with the age related problems, which cause nowadays the most serious concerns in the post-industrial world (European Commission, 2005). Northern societies are ageing rapidly, the age pyramid being turned on its head as long as birth rates fall down and life expectancy rises up. Feminist scholarship convincingly demonstrated that the socio-economic underpinnings of ‘care deficit’ encompass the following key determinants: a massive entrance of women into the labour market of paid professions coupled with the traditionally unequal distribution of household responsibilities between the sexes; a dramatic aging of the population accompanied by a grave health-care crises; the deconstruction of the welfare

\textsuperscript{3}Thus, for instance, in the ChernivcyWest-border oblast alone, the most highly affected by migration, marriage rates throughout 1990-s dropped in 1,3 times (SCSU, ChRD, 2001, p. 235).
state and the ensuing relocation of care work from the state to the family (Aronson, Neysmith, 1996; Ungerson, 2000; Degiuli, 2007). The combination of these factors created a high demand for paid care services, hitherto performed by the unpaid “labour of love” (Bock, Duden, 1977) of women and girls in the family. Thus, a large informal “care economy” emerged, also referred to as “invisible economy” (UNRISD, 2007), or “other economy”, aimed to maintain the direct production and maintenance of human beings (Donath, 2000).

For the other hand, feminization of migratory flows was propelled by the processes of accelerated urbanization and the rise of “world cities” (Friedman, Wolff, 1982), shaped to a large extent by gender roles and relations. As discussed in my earlier paper (Tolstokorova, 2009c), these nodal megalopolises are “vital to the smooth functioning of the global capitalism” (Prol-Position News, 2005, p. 8), because they concentrate advanced services of international level, have decision-making abilities and represent a dimension of global economic command (Agibetova, Samson, 2008). Furthermore, they perform the functions of management, banking and finance, legal services, accounting, technical consulting, telecommunications and computing, international transportation, research and higher education (Friedman, Wolff, 1982), requiring highly paid, skilled professionals, ready to work long hours. As was shown in a number of works (Hochcshild, 1997; Sassen, 1998; 2001; Parreñas, 2001), to be able to work full-time, employees in these highly competitive urban sectors tend to relocate a growing share of domestic and care work from the household onto the labour market, by hiring domestic and care workers. To sustain this sector of the high-paid ‘white collar’ and to enable them to work full-time, a labour market of low skill workers is required to fill the ‘care deficit’ in homes of the former, starting with office and house cleaners to carers for the children and the elderly. Therefore, the acceleration of these elitist urban sectors is accompanied by a concurrent growth of a labour market of low paid and low status workers, recruited mainly from deprived social groups: women, retired persons, migrants from poorer countries, etc. Hence, ‘world cities’ depend on migrant labour, primarily on females as traditional careers and domestic workers.

From this, the ‘care crises’ coupled with the development of a network of ‘world cities’, were the “motors of the feminisation of migratory process’, because they ‘have opened up labor opportunities mainly available to women in the area of care giving” (UN-INSTRAW, 2007b, p. 2-3). This lead to the outflow of care labour force, i.e. mainly females, from the source countries and therefore entailed “care drain” (Hochschild, 2000) and “female drain” from these economies. The adverse effect of these kinds of outsourcing on the Ukrainian family and community was the case in point in my earlier papers.
(Tolstokorova, 2008; Tolstokorova, 2009a; Tolstokorova, 2009b), so, I will not dwell on them here. What is important to accentuate however, is what can be identified as a ‘Deae ex Machina effect’ of this kind of outsourcing, outlined by feminist scholars (Fodor, 2006; Lyberaki, 2008). Thus, it is argued that the deterioration of the economic situation of women in countries of collapsed state socialism, followed by the outflow of females for earnings aboard, “strikingly coincided” (Fodor, 2006) with an emerging demand in female labour in countries of the collapsed welfare state, and thus ensured a “sudden supply of –relatively cheap and flexible – immigrant labour” (Lyberaki, 2008, p. 1) to compensate for the shrinking labour market of domestic workers “exactly at the time” (Fodor, 2006) when it was most required by ‘the demand side’, thus ensuring the so-called “just-in-time women’s migration” (Karjanen, 2008). Considering a UN-INSTRAW argument that the regulatory frameworks of immigration policies in destination countries play an important role in channeling migration by directly or indirectly promoting the immigration of particular groups according to the requirements of their labour markets (UN-INSTRAW, 20007a, p. 2), these observations enable a conclusion that the emergence of the class of “new domestics” (Lutz, 2008, p.4), represented mainly by women, was due not to the requirements of the supply side, triggered by the desire of impoverished women to seek ‘better life’ “in countries where standards of living and thus salaries are much higher” (Lutz, 2007, p.189), but primarily, due to the requirements of the demand side. In particular, due to the fact that “Europe's population would decline without migrants” (Phillips, 2008) and because “Europe will, on current trends, come to rely ever more on immigrants to balance supply and demand in labour markets, and more generally to fuel economic growth” (OECD, 2007, p. 11).

Children Drain and Teenage Drain: a Challenge to the Nation’s Demographic Future

The outflow of women from Ukraine entails another kind of drain as a “chain reaction of the care crisis” (Prol-Position News, 2006, p. 12). More specifically, it goes about such a recent trend in migration flows as the increase in family reunifications due to achieved legislative regularizations with some countries. However, this process mainly entails the reunification of migrant mothers with their children in the country of work. Less often it encompassed the reunification of migrant wives with their husbands or migrant husbands with their wives, leave alone a reconjunction with elderly parents. Therefore, ‘female drain’ invariably develops into ‘children drain’ from Ukraine, thus accelerating the trend of the aging society and increasing the demographic pressure on the working age generation. This tendency is
accompanied by the growing numbers of babies born in Ukrainian families abroad. For example, according to the data of the Ukrainian embassy in Italy, in 2006 alone, 1,700 newborns of Ukrainians living there, were registered as citizens of Ukraine (taken from Kudryk, 2007). It should be noted, however, that parents of babies born aboard (which often automatically secures them a citizenship in the hosting country), who are young and middle aged people often with a status of documented workers, are the least likely to ever return to Ukraine, because they are the most integrated category of migrant couples. Furthermore, now that the Act of the Parliament from September 2008 prohibited double citizenship in Ukraine, it is most unlikely that the choice of citizenship will be made by migrants in favour of the home country, which is not ready to accept its citizens back (Tolstokorova, 2009a).

A tangent effect of the female out-migration is what is being referred to as “a changing gender consciousness of migrant women’s children” (Cherninska, 2007), which in the long-run may entail a ‘teenage drain’ from Ukraine. This phenomenon implies that due to the absence of parents, these “social orphans” are bereft of the natural experiences of family socialization and samples of gender roles arrangements (Nikolayevsky, 2007, p. 123). Therefore, they have no opportunities to learn such survival skills as self-organization, individual responsibility, emotional maturity, and so on. Put otherwise, migration fosters a generation of young Ukrainians, who are reluctant to work, but instead choose to live on remittances sent by their parents, wasting them on their whims, if not vices (Kyrchiv, 2004) They do not see how hard their mothers (and fathers) work abroad to provide for the wellbeing of their children. What they do see is remittances arriving from abroad. So, in effect, they often regard their parents as ‘paycheck fathers’ (Mummert, 2005) and ‘private ATM machines’ (Tolstokorova, 2009a), emitting banknotes for them. They associate international employment with easy money and dolce vita, and grow up with a belief that making money is worth only abroad. Being financially better-off than children from non-migrant families, they are perceived by their peers as a telling example of the validity of this belief. It comes as no surprise than, that a sociological poll among migrants’ children at a number of Kyiv high schools showed that 86% of them did not see their future in Ukraine, while 65% of school-graduates were willing to leave abroad by all means and as soon as possible (taken from Kyrchiv, 2004). This means that children of labour migrants represent a ‘lost generation’ for Ukraine and a cohort of new potential ‘movers”, unlikely to contribute to the national economy.

Additionally, the ‘children drain’ via labour migration is exacerbated by

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4Social orphans are “children deprived of parental care”, or “children who are left without care of their parents” (MUFCYA, CSREC, 2004, p. 76.)
the growing number of adoptions of Ukrainian children by foreign nationals from low fertility nations, primarily from Italy. Thus, according to the expert assessments, throughout the years of independence, over 30,000 of Ukrainian minors have been adopted by foreigners (Komsomol’skaya Pravda, 2009). Furthermore, there is a growing number of trafficked children, used for sexual exploitation, organ/tissues donation, forced begging and involuntary servitude in the agriculture (Chaloff, Eisenbaum, 2008). In Ukraine, in conditions of the increasingly aging society, the outsourcing of children, teenagers and young adults, combined with the outsourcing of women of reproductive age, means the outsourcing of the nation’s ‘genetic depository’, which jeopardizes the reproductive potential of the nation and may have devastating consequences for the demographic structure of the society both in the short and in the long run. Some experts speak about the effect of “decreasing passionarity” of the nation resultant from the out-migration (Nikolayevsky, 2007, p. 121).

Thus, for the efficacy of migration policy in Ukraine, it is necessary to take into account the gender and age dimensions of the economic mobility, so that to efficiently regulate challenges, caused by the socio-demographic specificities of the labour force flows. Likewise, it is necessary to consider increasing feminization of migration from Ukraine to Northern economies so that to make women-migrants and their exigencies visible and address them within the framework of the state migration policy and management.

Conclusions: Migration as a ‘Danaorum dona’ of Democratisation

As various studies have demonstrated (Sjaastad, 1962; Borjas, 1995; Isbister, 1998), migration scholarship in labour exploiting societies, echoed in global reports by the World Bank (2007), OECD (2007), UNDP (2009), favours an apologetic approach to migration, highlighting its overall positive effect and a progressive role in promoting the ‘supply and demand’ balance in the labour markets on both sides of migration circuits. Furthermore, remittances became a sort of ‘migration mantra’, seen as a panacea against economic hardships in families of migrants and source societies at large, and a key

5”Passionarity” is a term coined by a dissident Soviet historian, ethnologist and anthropologist Lev Gumilyov (1912-1992). It is the central concept of his “Passionarity Theory of Ethnogenesis” and may be explained as the level of vital energy and power, characteristic of any given ethnic group. Retrieved January 30, 2010, from www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lev_Gumilyov

6“Gifts of Danaans”, from Vergilius’s: “Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes “ (lat.) - Beware of Danaans (Greeks) even if they bring gifts.
‘silver lining argument’ for those who are mindful of negative repercussions of outsourcing. Yet, what is silenced is that remittances accelerate inflation in the receiving countries, and therefore, shrink the consuming potential of the population (SIFY, 2004, p. 21). Additionally, the benefits of remittances “may not offset the losses of the local social protection systems and/or budget deficits resulting from the fact that the migrant workers do not pay taxes in their home countries, but their families use public goods (healthcare, education and other public services)” (Góra, Rohozynsky, 2009, p. 11). Equally, while foregrounding the financial benefits of labour export for the source societies, this approach often neglects the social and human costs of migration, especially in the medium and the long run. Hence, the focus in migration research and management is not on the individual as a subject in the “emerging system of international labour mobility” (OECD, 2007, p. 12), but on the economic outputs of human activities. This explains why the phrase “We asked for workers but people came”, became an “oft-repeated aphorism” (taken from OECD, 2007, p. 23.)

Meanwhile, the Ukrainian sources gleaned in this paper make plain that the voices from the ‘supply side’ are not as optimistic. For, while acknowledging that labour migration is “a plus for the economy’, the national media, the academic community and the civil society emphasize that first and foremost, it is ‘a minus for the society” (Volyanska, 2005). The nodal among its adverse implications is the loss of human resources, accompanied by social and emotional costs for the individual, the family and community. In turn, this position is criticized as “anti-modern”, “conservative” and “traditionalist” (Zimmer, 2007) by those voicing the interests of the labour exploiting side.

As was shown in this paper, the post soviet transition, allegedly aimed to provide a ‘better life’ by means of the democratization of all sides of life in a hitherto totalitarian society, in essence turned Ukraine into the supplier country in the world economic system, exposed to multiple drains in favour of its core: brain drain and skill drain, female drain coupled with care drain, children and teenage drain, the drain of the nations’ vital energy accompanied by the outflow of the ‘creative class’. This multidimensional outsourcing gradually changes the status of the country in the new global economic order, moving it from the semi-periphery, where it resided hitherto as a society of state socialism (Lane, 2004), into the direction of “the bottom billion” (Collier, 2007). Not surprisingly, in the World Bank Report for 2006 (World Bank, 2007), Ukraine was ranked the 3rd among the top ‘labour exporting countries’ in the world. Having less than 46 million of the total population, it exports more labour force to the Northern economies than India and China. The pull of remittances Ukraine receives from the citizens working abroad, by analysts’
assessments, may amount between 0.7% to 25% of GDP (GFK, 2008, p. 5). Thus, according to the National Bank of Ukraine, in 2006 alone Ukraine received $5.6 bn of remittances from its migrant workers (taken from Gajducky, 2007), the IFAD statistics for that year was $8.47 bn (IFAD, 2007, p. 12). Meanwhile, by the estimates of Ukrainian experts the real sum may reach up to 10-20 bn (taken from Fedorak, 2007), considering that Ukrainians do not trust the national bank system and prefer unofficial means of credit transfer. By contrast, the foreign direct investments Ukraine attracted throughout 16 years of the state independence, did not exceed $24 bn (Kyiv Post, 2007). In the most economically disadvantaged oblasts, as for instance Ternopil and Chernivcy, this contrast is even more remarkable: the ratio between foreign investments and informal migrant remittances into the national economy amounting 1 vs 40 (Parkhomenko, Starodub, 2005, p. 20). Alongside with that, Ukraine among other postsocialist states, is qualified by international organizations as one of the main countries of origin of trafficking in women, men and children, sold in slavery abroad with the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor (US Department of State, 2006).

Therefore, my general conclusion is that the post soviet “school of democracy” (Homra, 2000) instead of placing the Ukrainian demos in the heart of the societal system, has converted it into the principal “export commodity“ (Tolstokorova, 2009a), generating foreign exchange for the home economy (Seguino, Grawn, 2006), and an object of lucrative trade by the “cosmopolitan, comprador, bourgeois” elites (Soskin, 2007, p. 3), enabling them to survive in the globalized economic system, maintained by the ‘three whales’: trade in goods, capital flows and movement of people. From this, the answer to the key question of this paper, formulated in the introduction, is rather negative than positive, because the materials of this paper showed that for the counteraction of socio-economic challenges of postsocialist transition, migration is not a viable strategy: while resolving some immediate economic problems, it fosters new exigencies instead. That is, although it may have some economic benefits in the short run due to remittances, in the long and medium run it will have, and already has had, devastating socio-demographic consequences for the society at large. Indeed, migration can be seen as a temporary solution to economic hardships of the transition period, and at the onset of economic reforms this approach was sound and commendable. Nowadays, however, given the loss of migration flux in Ukraine amounting 20-30% of its total stock, it is already obvious that labour migration from Ukraine to Western Europe, North America, Israel and Oceania has been acquiring a permanent pattern (Libanova, 2006, p. 160), confirming the aphorism that “nothing is more permanent than a temporary immigrant” (OECD, 2007, p. 23). Thus, the “bitter berries of better life” in
Ukraine are in the irreparable loss of the most creative bulk of the nations’ human resources.

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