

International Migration Programme

***Irregular economic activities of migrants in the Czech Republic***

Dušan Drbohlav, Lenka Medová-Lachmanová, Eva Janská, Dagmar Dzúrová,  
Dita Čermáková, Zdeněk Čermáková and Zdeněk Čermák

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# 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

## 1. 1. General background

Migrants' informal economic activities are closely linked with the phenomenon of irregular migration, as these activities are very often carried out by irregular migrants (very broadly and simply characterized - as those without necessary basic documents that would enable them to come/stay/work legally in a new destination country).

At the turn of the millennia, irregular migration was considered to be the fastest growing component of migration overall. It is estimated that irregular migrants make up 15 – 20 per cent of the world migrant population, about 30 to 40 million persons. The largest number of irregular migrants (approximately 11 million individuals) resides currently in the United States (US) (Papademetriou 2005). As compared to the US, estimates on the number of irregular migrants residing in the European Union (EU) cannot be based on census results. EU estimates are based on various methods and resources, however sometimes not fully appropriate, and range from about 2 million (Global Migration Perspectives 2005 cited by the European Commission in 2007) to 8 million (United Nations Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2003 Revision cited by the European Commission in 2007). This is confirmed also by the estimates of Martin (2003), where the EU itself (in the demarcation before May 2004) gained over 0.5 million irregular immigrants a year, naturally not all going to settle down in Europe. The largest number of irregular migrants can probably be found in the Southern European Mediterranean countries (Papademetriou 2005).

When characterizing irregular migration, one cannot omit to mention two other general processes: trafficking and smuggling, which irregular migration may closely be tied to. "It has been argued that while smuggling is an intermediary function which facilitates the illegal crossing of borders, usually with the consent of those smuggled, trafficking is characterised by coercion and the subsequent exploitation of those trafficked" (Europol 2005).

Various international studies elaborated by competent organizations (e.g. IOM, EUROPOL) state that the numbers of trafficked persons are between 700,000 – 2,000,000, out of which 300 – 500,000 persons are inside Europe (Černík et al. 2005). Though it is difficult to accurately measure, the US official sources estimate that 800,000-900,000 human beings are bought, sold or forced across the world's borders each year (see Obuah 2006). However, current estimates by the ILO put the minimum number of persons in forced labour at a given time as a result of trafficking at 2.45 million. In fact, by 2003 an estimated 27 million people were held in some form of bondage worldwide, which indicates that trafficking in persons is, in terms of sheer numbers, greater today than in any

<sup>1</sup> The Working Paper was produced thanks to the support of the following institutions and projects:

1) The ILO; 2) Project of the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic No.: 1J 057/05-DP1, "International migration and illegal working activities of migrants in the Czech Republic in a wider European context"; 3) Project of the Czech Science Foundation - GA ČR, Eurocores – ECRP, Number: CPR/06/E001, "Trafficking and Forced Labour for Other Purposes than Prostitution: The Czech Case"; and 4) Investigative plan of MSM 0021620831 financed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Physical Education of the Czech Republic. Besides the given authors, also Andrea Baršová and Milan Lupták contributed to getting the relevant information/data.

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other period of history (of this figure, about eight million are children forced into prostitution, pornography and bonded labour) (see sources in Obuah 2006). It is apparent that irregular migration (namely the organization of the transfers) today is seen from the point of view of financial profit to the biggest businesses on a global scale (Salt 2000). According to ILO estimates, the yearly profits of the offenders were about \$ 31.6 billion (National Strategy 2005). Of course, besides (and, in fact, through) quantitative aspects, the irregular migration and related migrants' irregular/informal economic activities may affect many attributes of economic, social, cultural, geographical, psychological etc. spheres of destination countries.

Today, the foreign workforce represents an indispensable portion of the labour market in the majority of developed countries. Irregular migration and economic activities performed by migrants outside the framework of the law are a dangerous phenomenon. As they do not comply with the law and legislation, they contribute towards undermining democratic systems, which are built on adherence to regulations. In principle, they are also inequitable. The participants (employers, employment agencies, and, to some extent, the migrants themselves) profit from breaking the law. Conversely, those who do adhere to the law, pay the required taxes and insurance, and act in accordance with the regulations (employers, local citizens, and legal foreign workers) are at a disadvantage. At the general level, irregular migration and irregular activities carried out by migrants are accompanied by a number of risks (for example, economic, social and psychological ones), which are tied not only to the migrant, but also to the migrant's "new" environment (destination country), the environment through which the migrant travelled (transit country), and even to the environment the migrant left (source country) (e.g., de Tapia 2003). These risks are diverse in nature.

From the perspective of economic risks as they relate to migrants as individuals, it is necessary to emphasize, especially in the case of irregular economic activities, the frequent discrimination that occurs on the part of the employer or employment agent. This is reflected in, amongst other things, lower wages, longer work periods, unstable employment, and the overall level of subordination that exists in relation to the employer/employment agent. Irregular activities carried out by migrants lead to the deformation of the labour market in destination countries (the quality of working conditions decreases; non-payment of taxes and other deductions gives companies that employ irregular workers an advantage, etc.). If reliance on cheap foreign labour reaches an above-average level, there exists a real threat that certain branches will become "unhealthily" dependent on foreign workers as well as the danger that structural changes required for desirable economic development will be delayed. Irregular migration also introduces risks within the social sphere. Quite often, in close relation to formally resident migrants, enclosed migrant enclaves might be established which might be socially marginalized and offer no perspective for improving living conditions and integration within the majority population. The existence of such communities can subsequently be linked to anti-state activities, including terrorism. Just the migration process itself, and especially irregular migration, can be linked with other factors that threaten the safety of target countries (minor crimes, counterfeit documents, organized crime, human smuggling, counterfeit consumer goods, weapons, drugs, nuclear materials, and others). Overall open tolerance of irregular migration also deforms the ethical and moral codes of the receiving society. At the individual level, as far as the migrant is concerned, psychological risks are at play specifically stress, ensuing from the migration process and integration (or possibly non-integration), including breaking existing social ties, living in a new cultural and social environment, etc. Irregular migrants often struggle with stress caused by the "irregular" nature of their arrival, residence, or work, fear of being caught, and the possible subsequent penalties. Overall, it is a situation wherein the migrant lives in a state of permanent uncertainty and, often, even danger. "Psychological" risks also exist at the local, regional, and macro-social levels, when migration (regular or irregular) can cause anti-migrant feelings within the majority society.

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On the other hand, it cannot be overlooked that economic activities carried out by irregular migrants also bring a number of positive benefits – not only for the migrants, but also for their countries of origin (through remittances) and the destination country, primarily for the employer and gross national product (Tapinos 1999).

One can point out that it is necessary to consider irregular economic activities carried out by migrants as a component of a country's "grey economy", not as the cause of it. At the same time, the informal economic sector is considered to be a structural component of developed capitalist economic systems. In addition, it can be expected that in those countries where an informal economic system is widely tolerated by society, the likelihood of the informal employment of migrants is also higher (Williams, Windebank 1998 cited by Baldwin-Edwards 2006, Palidda 2005, and Tapinos 1999). All these facts only support arguments that a systematic research in the given field in new EU member states, in countries of Central/Eastern Europe (including the Czech Republic), is an inevitable must.

## **1.2. An analysis of migration in the Czech Republic**

At the end of 2007, there were 392,315 foreigners residing formally in the Czech Republic and, of this number, 309,027 were economically active (Český statistický úřad 2008). It can be expected that a significant part of the economic activities with which migrants contribute to the Czech economy are performed legally, in accordance not only with valid legislation pertaining to general employment conditions but also with the laws governing the residency and the employment or independent business activities of foreigners in the Czech Republic. It cannot be forgotten, however, that in the Czech Republic, as in other developed countries, there is also a "grey economy" (Renooy et al. 2004) in which migrants are involved. Like in other post-communistic countries of Central and Eastern Europe (compared to other developed countries) there is relatively little knowledge about irregular migration and related migrants' irregular economic activities available in the Czech Republic. There are several reasons for this. One being little experience with migration generally and another being relatively little interest in resolving migration issues, thus far. On the other hand, there is no doubt that in the Czech Republic – thanks to the relatively high level of living standard and the demand on the internal labour market (strong "pull" factors) and also because of the rather liberal legislation and practice in terms of managing migration/integration issues (typically in the 1990s) – the number of irregular immigrants might be rather high. Individual estimates, however, have more a character of "guesstimates" and range between 40 thousand and 300 hundred thousand individuals, in relation to the definition of an "irregular migrant" and the "method" used (see e.g. Drbohlav 2003, Intermundia 2005, Fassmann 2006). The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic estimates the number of irregular migrants working in the Czech Republic to be comparable to the number of economically active regular migrants<sup>2</sup>. A somewhat quantitatively different view of the issues of irregular migration is reflected in the statistics collected by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic. This authority defines irregular migration in a more specific way: as consisting of the illegal entry of persons across the state border, unauthorized departure from the country, and violations of residency laws<sup>3</sup>. In 2007, 7,549 incidents of irregular migration of foreigners were discovered on the territory of the Czech Republic. Of this number, 62 per

<sup>2</sup> E.g., the speech of Minister Nečas (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic) at the conference on the Demographic Development in the European Union and the Czech Republic: "Threat? Challenge? Opportunity?", Senate of the Czech Republic, May 9, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Violation of residency laws pertains to persons who illegally enter the Czech Republic and then illegally reside in the Czech Republic, or those who enter legally but do not depart from the Czech Republic when the permitted residence period expires (Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky 2007).

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cent consisted of cases wherein residency laws had been violated (Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky 2008).

To obtain more detailed and structured information about the process of irregular migration and about migrants' informal economic activities in the country, one has to conduct a sophisticated study based on various surveys done in the field. In the Czech Republic, there have been several studies published devoted to the "Client System"<sup>4</sup> (Nekorjak 2006, Intermundia 2005, Černík 2006) and to the problem of trafficking in people (Černík et al. 2005, Trávníčková et al. 2004, Hulíková, Kocourek 2005). Despite bringing some interesting and important results, it is obvious that more is needed to get to know deeply the whole issue. Still many questions remain unanswered in this field and, moreover, many aspects may and do change over time.

This Working Paper brings three "independent studies" that differ specifically in the methods used: "Migrants' Irregular Economic Activities in the Czech Republic (Delphi Study among Czech Experts)", "Migrants' Tough and Challenging Lives (Irregular Economic and Transit Migration in the Czech Republic – Qualitative Approach)" and "Irregular/Informal Economic Activities of Migrants in the Czech Republic (a Quantitative Approach)". The report is cemented by the authors' common background (social geography) and base (the Department of Social Geography and Regional Development, Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague), by the common topic (irregular migration and migrants' irregular economic activities), studied region (the Czech Republic), and, last but not least, by common sponsors that enabled that the research was done and/or the results published.

In our research and, accordingly, in this Working Paper, we use the term – "irregular economic activities" – for those activities carried out by migrants which conflict with the law. We distinguish two basic types of migrants' irregular activities – those that are completely irregular and those that are quasi-regular.

Completely irregular, or completely informal, economic activity of an immigrant is considered to be a situation when an immigrant does not possess both a residence permit and a work permit/trade license or he/she possesses a residence permit (e.g. tourist visa) but he/she does not hold a work permit or a trade license.

Quasi-regular economic activity of an immigrant is considered to be a situation when an immigrant possesses a residence permit as well as a work permit/trade licence but he/she strongly violates work-related laws - e.g. he/she works in a different region, branch or profession or for a different employer than it is stated in his/her work permit, or he/she smuggles goods or is employed although having a trade license.

From the *de jure* perspective, both types of activities are irregular (or rather illegal). However, when considered *de facto*, specifically on the basis of the migrant's "level of guilt", there is a significant difference. The fact that there are a number of factual differences within the framework of migrant irregularity is also confirmed by Tapinos<sup>5</sup> (1999).

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<sup>4</sup> The Client System is a specific model of controlling the migrant by a „Client“ who organizes the work and mostly other necessary services for the migrant in the target country. At the same time, however, he/she gets the migrant into bondage, in which he/she exploits him/her in all possible ways.

<sup>5</sup> Tapinos, however, uses not only the ownership of a work permit but also the manner in which the destination state is entered and the ownership of a residence permit as the criteria for further differentiation within the illegal/irregular status.



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## 2. Migrants' Irregular Economic Activities in the Czech Republic (Delphi Study among Czech Experts)

The economic activities carried out by migrants that are not in compliance with applicable laws are the subject of this paper. As the activities in question are in conflict with the law, the options available for a broad research of these issues, especially quantitative methods, are rather limited (e.g., Chiswick 1988, Heckmann 2004, Jandl 2004). For this reason, we applied the qualitative Delphi method, which is based on investigating the opinions and approaches of selected experts in relation to the phenomenon in question.

For the purpose of this article, we use the terms as were defined within the Introduction chapter. Hence, "irregular economic activities" refer to those activities carried out by migrants that are in conflict with the law. We further distinguish two basic types of migrants' irregular activities – completely irregular economic activity is performed by migrant who does not possess neither a work permit, nor a trade license, versus quasi-regular economic activity is tied to a migrant who holds a residence permit as well as a work permit or trade license but to large extent violates labour- or business-related laws and rules.

### 2.1. Methodology

This Delphi method research project is based on the knowledge and opinions of Czech experts in the field of migration issues. Our goal was not only to obtain expert opinions from the professionals we addressed and an evaluation of the current situation of irregular migration and irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic, but also to acquire a basic idea of how they might develop in the future. Our research also did not omit defining goals and measures that could be implemented at both the national and European level in order to eliminate irregular migration and irregular economic activities on the part of migrants. Using the Delphi method specifically allowed us to research a range of topics as diverse as this.

When considered at a broader level, this interactive research technique can be characterized as a structured group communication process that allows certain disadvantageous characteristics of group communication to be eliminated<sup>6</sup> and will, at the same time, emphasize the benefits of group communication<sup>7</sup> (Linstone, Turoff 1975, Martino 1972).

More specifically, the Delphi method can be described as a method of collecting expert opinions through a series of distributed questionnaires<sup>8</sup> interspersed with controlled opinion feedback for individual rounds of the study (Linstone, Turoff 1975, Martino 1972, Drbohlav 1995). The main characteristics of the Delphi method thus include the anonymity of the experts (panelists) and multiple rounds with feedback to the preceding rounds,

<sup>6</sup> For example, the Delphi method allows the suppression of the influence exerted by a dominant personality, the pressures exerted by a group on its members, or the influence of the same prejudices and subjectivity stemming from belonging to the same culture (Drbohlav 1995, Martino 1972).

<sup>7</sup> One of the advantages of a group is the fact that the total quantity of information available to the group is greater than the amount of information held by its individual members (Martino 1972).

<sup>8</sup> A technique of in-depth interviews can be used as a flexible alternative to questionnaires (Gordon 1994).

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which allows the panelists to confront any dissenting opinions indirectly and also to change their opinion should they feel it necessary (Martino 1972, Masser, Foley 1987).

The Delphi method was first used at the beginning of the 1950s at the American RAND think-tank as a tool for military strategic forecasting (Linstone, Turoff 1975). Since that time however, the Delphi technique has recorded rapid internal development. As a result, not only the scope in which it can be applied has been expanded but it is significantly differentiated internally as well. Today, there are two major types of the Delphi technique. The classical form, or “Conventional Delphi”, adds a third characteristic to the two general ones (i.e. anonymity and controlled feedback), which is a statistical presentation of the answers. The opinions of the panelists can be represented by a number of statistical indicators (e.g., mean, standard deviation, median) and not only on the basis of the majority opinion. This form of Delphi is used primarily for forecasting future development on the basis of a consensus reached amongst experts (Martino 1972, Gordon 1994, Drbohlav 1995). In comparison, the objective of the second type of Delphi so called “Policy Delphi” is not to reach a consensus, but rather to analyze a policy problem and to find possible solutions while still respecting the basic characteristics of the method (e.g., Turoff 1975, Martino 1972, Turoff, Hiltz 1996). Systematic evaluation of importance, necessity, or feasibility of the proposed measures is often used within this type of the Delphi method (Turoff 1975). Due to the diversity of the topics of our study, we used both forms of the Delphi method.

When describing the characteristics of the Delphi method, it is important to stress the fundamental role of the experts, although there is not a specific count of experts required for a standard Delphi research and usually, their number is not high. According to Gordon (1994), most of the accomplished Delphi studies used fifteen to thirty-five panelists. Diversity is an important characteristic of the panel. Generally, the panel should reflect a broad range of experience and a variety of opinions on the topic under investigation (Masser, Foley 1987, Martino 1972, Drbohlav 1995).

It is this (arbitrary) selection of experts, together with the structure and the evaluation of the questionnaires that are considered to be the most vulnerable and thus the most often criticized components of Delphi research (Linstone 1975, Martino 1972). Furthermore, the Delphi method as a whole also has its critics (i.e., existential criticism - Sackman 1975, Rowe, Wright 1999). They primarily point out that there is an insufficient retrospective analysis of results obtained via the Delphi method. Nevertheless, it is necessary to bear in mind that a number of Delphi research studies were performed for the purpose of making long-term forecasts, and thus their validity has not yet been proved.<sup>9</sup>

As has been mentioned above, during its early days the Delphi method was used for military strategic forecasting. Today however, we can find Delphi studies being performed for technological planning purposes; for example, in the field of telecommunications (Wright 1998); energy industry (Wehnert et al. 2007), and nanotechnology (Salamanca-Buentello et al. 2005), as well as in social and environmental fields. Within the latter two areas, the Delphi method has been applied to transportation issues (Cavalli-Sforza, Ortolano 1984); healthcare (Hudak et al. 1993); education (Wicklein 1993); housing (Mullins 2006); climate changes (Wilenius, Tirkkonen 1997); and future societal development (Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Verkehr 1998). The original application of the Delphi method for forecasting and planning was thus expanded to studies pertaining to complex problems influenced by numerous interlinked factors and to topics lacking appropriate background data (Rowe, Wright 1999, Martino 1972). The issues pertaining to international migration, and especially irregular economic activities

<sup>9</sup> From our own research, we can however confirm a fairly satisfactory correspondence between short-term predictions and actuality (Lachmanová 2003).

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carried out by migrants, are thus a very appropriate area for a Delphi study (Drbohlav 1995, Bijak 2006, Kupiszewski 2002).

In spite of this fact, the Delphi method is still not a standard tool for a migration research. As far as we know, only a few projects in this field of social science were carried out using the Delphi method. In the US, a Delphi study focused on immigration and its impact on American cities was completed (Loveless et al. 1996). Within the European environment, a project concerned with the future development of migration between Eastern and Western Europe was completed at the beginning of the 1990s (Drbohlav 1995, 1997). Furthermore, a sort of a follow-up study was later performed, which also included a comparison between the original forecasts and real development. Significant correspondence between the forecasts and reality has thus been confirmed (Lachmanová 2003, Lachmanová, Drbohlav 2004).

Within the area of irregular migration, the Research Institute *gfs.bern* performed a Delphi study in order to estimate the number of irregular migrants living in Switzerland and to describe their socio-demographic structure and living conditions (gfs.bern 2005). Although thematically close to our research, this study differed from ours in a number of methodological and contextual aspects. On the other hand, the Delphi study titled “Migration und Irreguläre Beschäftigung in Österreich” (*Migration and Irregular Employment in Austria*) (Bilger et al. 2006, Jandl, Hollomey, Stepien 2007) displays many common methodological characteristics as it was prepared in close cooperation with authors of this ILO paper. It can thus be said that the Delphi method is an innovative cognitive tool for international research, especially in the field of irregular migration.

## 2.2. Research Design

The goal of our research was to expand knowledge of the phenomenon of migrants' irregular/informal economic activities and of irregular migration. The following research questions have been addressed:

1. What forms of irregular economic activities occur amongst migrants in the Czech Republic?
2. What are the reasons behind these activities in the Czech Republic?
3. What is the structure of irregular migrants in the Czech Republic?
4. How many irregular migrants reside in the Czech Republic?
5. What might be the future development of migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic?
6. What are the impacts of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants?
7. What are the relations between the 2004 EU enlargement and irregular migration/migrants' irregular activities?
8. What measures should be taken in order to limit the scope of irregular migration and migrants' irregular economic activities?

In order to collect the answers to the above-specified research questions, we prepared two rounds of a questionnaire survey. Each questionnaire contained definitions for completely irregular and quasi-regular economic activities as described above.

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This Delphi study of irregular migration and migrants' irregular economic activities was prepared in autumn 2005. The structure and topics of the study were based on a series of thirty interviews with selected Czech migration experts that had preceded it. The Delphi research itself consisted of two rounds of questionnaire survey. The questionnaires were distributed via e-mail to the experts that were selected on the basis of their direct knowledge (e.g., working in the non-profit sector) or intermediated knowledge (e.g., government workers) of issues pertaining to irregular migration and to economic activities on the part of migrants in the Czech Republic.

Sixty-four experts were invited to join in the first round, which took place between November 2005 and February 2006. Of this number, thirty-two participated in the research. Over the course of spring 2006, the first round was evaluated and the second round of questionnaires was distributed in May to those that participated in the first round. The second round was closed in June with a total of 23 respondents. The return rate for the questionnaires was 50 per cent for the first round and 72 per cent for the second. These relatively low values are an accompanying characteristic of Delphi research (Martino 1972, Gordon 1994). In the case of irregular migration and migrants' irregular economic activities this might be the result of the high complexity of the phenomenon in question and insufficient available information, which is an "inherent" characteristic of this area. In addition, completing the questionnaire, especially in the case of the first round, was very time-demanding process with no money reward.

As is mentioned in the section on methodology, a significant characteristic of every Delphi study is the composition of the panel of experts. The results of Delphi research cannot be considered as statistically significant, but only as a synthetic opinion of the given panel (Gordon 1994). For our research, the sphere of potential respondents was limited only to Czech experts as the primary topic concerns irregular economic activities of migrants in the Czech Republic. On the basis of our knowledge, we addressed very competent experts, who tackle one or more aspects of the phenomenon of irregular migration and the irregular economic activities of foreigners in an ongoing manner. We tried to build a panel composed of the broadest possible spectrum of experts with various professional backgrounds. The panel for the first round included three types of respondents. Type One (N=13) was represented by academics and researchers (primarily specialized in sociology) who are directly involved in researching the issue at hand. Type Two (N=8) consisted of representatives from the most significant non-profit organizations who are often in direct contact with irregular migrants and thus are very familiar with their living conditions. Type Three (N=6) was made up of state employees from ministries (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, and Ministry of Trade) and migration control authorities. The remaining members of the panel were representatives of international organizations working in the migration field, representatives of the political sphere, and representatives of business and labour associations.

The questionnaire for the first round consisted primarily of open-ended questions which we used to determine the reasons for irregular economic activities carried out by migrants, the impact of these activities on various entities, and goals that should be reached in order to limit the scope of migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic and the European Union. In order to determine the main forms of migrants' irregular economic activities, we put together a basic list of these activities and the respondents were asked to supplement this list with additional relevant activity types. Some other questions were presented as multiple choice queries. Overall however, the Delphi questionnaire for the first round was conceived more as a broad platform of topics and the respondents' opinions. On the other hand, the questionnaire for the second round structured the opinions from the preceding round in a more "closed" format. Thus even the questions were more in the form of lists of statements from which the experts selected the most significant ones. The respondents were also asked to review their opinions from the first round and make

any changes should they feel it necessary. For some of the questions, the panelists also used simple methods to evaluate selected statements. A more detailed description of individual questions is included in the next section of this paper.

## 2.3. Delphi Study Results

### 2.3.1. Forms of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic

During the first round of the Delphi research, the respondents were asked to supplement the list of forms of completely irregular and quasi-regular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic. From all of the replies received within the first round, a list of a total of nineteen, sometimes overlapping, forms of migrants' irregular economic activities was identified. During the second round, the experts were asked to select the five most frequent activities from the list that occur in the Czech Republic (Table 1).

Table 1: Most frequent forms of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic (Delphi Second Round; N=22)

Forms of migrants irregular economic activities	Absolute Count
Claiming business activities (having a trade license) whereas being employed – “disguised employment” (so called “Švarc system”)	18
Any form of irregular or quasi-regular economic activity organized by a “client”	18
Violating rules of an acquired visa/permit (this applies to visa for a period exceeding 90 days or long term visa), e.g., change of profession or region, etc.	14
Irregular employment while holding only a tourist visa or after a tourist visa has expired	14
Foreigners establish a legal entity with numerous partners, who then act as employers	10

The type of activity whereby a migrant possesses a residence permit as well as a trade license but, in fact, works for someone else as an employee and is thus not self-employed (i.e., “disguised employment” or in the Czech context so called “Švarc System”)<sup>10</sup> was selected by eighteen experts as one of the most frequent forms of migrants' irregular economic activities. Needless to say, this form of breaching valid legislation is also significantly widespread within the Czech workforce (Horáková, Kux 2003). The same number of panelists chose as a frequent form such a form of irregular economic activity whereby a migrant performs a job through an intermediary agent, in Czech context known as “client”. This type of economic relationship is referred to as a “client system” and it can be briefly characterized as a highly organized network of relationships, which, in addition to numerous auxiliary services (accommodation, transport, financial loans, etc.), ensures the most important thing for foreign workers (both irregular and regular) – i.e., work – in return for financial compensation. The work is usually performed through a sub-contract system for a Czech employer (e.g., Černík 2006, Nekorjak 2006, or section 4.3. of this report).

In the opinion of the experts, other forms of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants most frequently include: violating rules of an acquired visa/permit (this applies to visa for a period exceeding 90 days or long term visa), e.g., by change of

<sup>10</sup> The “Švarc System” has presented a long-term legislative problem as far as definition is concerned because it is complicated, ambiguous, and changing over time and difficult to identify in practice.

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profession or region, as well as working while on a tourist visa or after a tourist visa has expired.<sup>11</sup> Another situation that the experts on our panel considered to be quite frequent is an activity whereby migrants establish a Czech legal entity (co-op) with a number of foreign partners, who subsequently become employed as opposed to performing their own business activities.

On the basis of the expert opinion of our Delphi panel, we can generally characterize migrants' irregular economic activities as being often organized by a client and 'partially regularized' by having (in present or in past) a visa or permit, although not fully appropriate for becoming employed. Further, it can be said that the economic activities of migrants who can be considered as 'truly irregular' (they never had any type of visa or residence permit, i.e., did not enter the Czech Republic in a regular situation), seem to be a quite infrequent type of irregular employment. The regular entry into the country by migrants who later become irregularly employed is basically a feature of the majority of developed destination countries (Heckmann 2004, Baldwin-Edwards 2002).

### ***2.3.2. Reasons for migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic***

During the first round of the Delphi research, the respondents expressed their opinions with regard to why there are migrants in the Czech Republic who perform completely irregular or quasi-regular economic activities, the reasons that bring these migrants to the Czech Republic, and why they obtain employment here. The answers to these questions were subsequently analyzed and systematically sorted into a list of reasons. During the second round, the experts evaluated each set of reasons according to their importance using a scale of 1 (key reason) to 5 (unimportant reason). The reasons selected as most important, as well as those that are least important, are listed in Table 2.

<sup>11</sup> A foreigner residing in the Czech Republic on the basis of a tourist visa does not have the right to work.

Table 2: Most important and least important reasons for migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic (Delphi Second Round; N=23)

<i>Most important reasons</i>	<i>Mean importance</i>
Strong and established lobby of intermediary agents ("clients")	1.70
High demand for irregular (cheap and flexible) foreign labour, especially for physically demanding work	1.78
The irregular employment (even of Czech citizens) is a fairly widespread phenomenon	1.82
The procedure for obtaining a legal work permit is complicated and burdened by needless bureaucracy	2.00
Strong "push" factors exist in the countries of origin of irregular migrants, which are primarily linked to undeveloped economies and political instability (possibly even to internal conflicts), which force the local citizens to leave for elsewhere, including the Czech Republic	2.29
The Czech Republic does not have an effective "migration administration" regime for temporary labour migration	2.36
<i>Less important reasons</i>	<i>Mean importance</i>
The Czech Republic is used as a transit country along the way further West	3.52
Labour migration to the Czech Republic is a traditional activity (especially for Ukrainians from the western part of the Ukraine)	3.29
Entering the Czech Republic is very easy	3.00
Cultural and especially language proximity are a strong magnet, mainly for many citizens of Slavic post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe	2.95
Uncovered irregular employment is not heavily punished by the Czech administration – "gentle legislation", "low level of punishment and fines"	2.95

Note: The respondents rated the reasons on a scale of 1 (key) to 5 (unimportant).

Table 2 clearly shows that irregular (completely irregular and quasi-regular) economic activities performed by migrants are linked to strong migration "pull" factors. This primarily involves an established lobby of intermediary agents (clients), a high demand for irregular foreign labour (cheap and flexible, especially for physically demanding work), and the fact that the irregular employment of Czech citizens is a fairly widespread and tolerated phenomenon throughout the entire country. Furthermore, corruption, which is another phenomenon generally disapproved of but nevertheless deeply rooted, also appeared as one of the important explanatory factors. On the other hand, the Czech Republic as a transit country, historical and cultural relationships, relatively easy entry to the country, and the relatively small penalties for breaking the law were considered by the respondents to be unimportant within the given context.

The opinions received from the respondents active in the academic sphere differed from those given by the representatives from the governmental and non-governmental sector, specifically in the fact that the former emphasized the significance of the demand for irregular (cheap and flexible) foreign labour more strongly and decreased the importance of the fact that the Czech Republic serves as a transit point for migrants on their way West.

The high importance of the demand factor corresponds to some common theories of migration (dual market theory, world systems theory, neoclassical theory, or the push-pull model). The significance of intermediary agents (clients) is confirmation of the "efficient" functionality of social networks as described in the theory of the same name (Massey et al. 1993). The role of institutions - especially the governmental migration administration and the intermediary (client) structure - refers to the "organized procedure" of the migrant (irregular) employment process (see institutional theory of migration, Massey et al. 1993).

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Correspondence with the above-mentioned theories is also confirmed to a high degree by the similarity between migration processes taking place in the Czech Republic and many other developed immigration countries (on which some of these theories are based).

The tolerance of Czech society towards the phenomenon of irregularity and its manifestation in the labour market is also listed as one of the important reasons behind the existence of irregular economic activities. In this respect, the Czech Republic, thanks to its communist heritage, is similar to other countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Renooy et al. 2004). However, a parallel can also be observed in the situation in Southern Europe, as described by, amongst others, Baldwin-Edwards (2002).

### ***2.3.3. Basic characteristics of migrants involved in completely irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic<sup>12</sup>***

One of the fundamental tasks assigned to the respondents was to specify the structure of migrants that are currently involved in completely irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic. The answers submitted by the panel are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 presents the results from both the first as well as the second round of the Delphi study. In the second round, the experts were provided with the summarized results from the first round. Thus, they had the opportunity to review their own positions with regard to the opinions of others concerning the significance of listed source countries. They could change the order of importance of the entire list of given source countries from the perspective of saturating the Czech Republic with irregular labour migrants, or could re-assess their opinion only on the three countries (Russia, Moldavia, and Bulgaria). These three source countries were evaluated very differently in the first round – their standard deviation reached the highest values. Twelve respondents took advantage of the opportunity to re-evaluate their opinions on the sequence of the countries.

<sup>12</sup> Only migrants involved in completely irregular economic activities were addressed in this section due to easier handling of the issue.



Table 3: Country of origin of migrants (according to their citizenship) performing completely irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic (Delphi First Round; N=24; Delphi Second Round; N=12)

<i>Country of origin of completely irregular migrants (according to citizenship)</i>	<i>Sequence</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>New sequence</i>	<i>New Standard deviation</i>
	<i>Delphi 1<sup>st</sup> Round</i>	<i>Delphi 1<sup>st</sup> Round</i>	<i>Delphi 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> Round</i>	<i>Delphi 2<sup>nd</sup> Round</i>
Ukraine	1	0.20	1	
Vietnam	2	2.16	3	
Moldova	3	3.08	4	2.43
Russian Federation	4	3.31	2	1.18
Belarus	5	2.84	5	
Slovakia*	6-7	4.89	6-7	
Other countries of former USSR	6-7	2.81	6-7	
Romania	8-9	2.49	9	
Bulgaria	8-9	3.26	8	2.63
China	10	2.77	10	
Countries of former Yugoslavia	11	2.77	11	
Poland*	12	3.34	12	
Albania	13	2.51	13	
United States	14	2.95	14	
Canada	15	1.50	15	

Note: Slovakia and Poland were both on the original list of evaluated countries. However, as these countries have been members of the EU since 2004, they have a special status (governed by different directives, rules, and practices in relation to immigration) and were excluded from further evaluation. It is also important to keep in mind that, at the time the research was performed, neither Bulgaria nor Romania were members of the EU.

According to the experts, Ukraine is undoubtedly the most important source country of completely irregular labour migrants in the Czech Republic. The uniformity of this opinion, as measured by the standard deviation, is noteworthy. This fact also corresponds to the number of regular migrants, amongst whom the number of Ukrainians is also dominant. At the end of 2007, they made up 32 per cent (126,721 individuals) of all foreigners who hold regular residency status in the Czech Republic. Ukrainians also made up 62 per cent (2,904 individuals in 2007) of foreigners who were detained by the Police of the Czech Republic for breaching residency rules (Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky 2008). Further, the respondents also reached a fairly high consensus in their opinions regarding Viet Nam and some of the countries of the former Soviet Union (specifically, Moldova, Russia, and Belarus) as amongst the most important source countries. On the other hand, Canada, the United States, and Albania are not at all important in the eyes of the experts within the given context. Bulgaria and Romania were somewhere in the middle between these two polarized groups. It is worth mentioning that the re-evaluation of the sequence of the countries that took place during the second round of the Delphi research more or less confirmed the original results from the first round (in an even more coherent pattern), whereby Russia strengthened its position as a source country – it moved from fourth place to second.

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During the first round, the experts also had the task of identifying regions of the Czech Republic that probably have the highest concentration of migrants involved in completely irregular economic activities and identifying the citizenship of the irregular migrants in the applicable regions. Prague and the neighbouring Central Bohemian Region far outweighed other areas<sup>13</sup>. Although it is obvious that the territorial specification of migrants' irregular economic activities presented the experts with significant difficulties, certain trends could be indicated. Russians were localized in Prague and the Karlovy Vary Region; Vietnamese in Prague and the Czech-German border areas (the south, west, and north of the Czech Republic); according to the experts, Ukrainians are, following Prague, most often in the Central Bohemian Region but are also active in many other areas of the Czech Republic.

Many of the regions in which significant completely irregular economic activity on the part of migrants was identified also have a high rate of regularly employed foreigners and also contain the largest Czech cities, from the perspective of both population as well as importance. This relationship between the territorial distribution of regular and irregular migrants has been confirmed in other countries (Jandl, Kraler 2006, de Tapia 2003).

The respondents were also asked to identify the main sectors or areas of the economy in which completely irregular economic migrants in the Czech Republic are active most often. The results specify a fairly wide range of diverse sectors and areas of the economy (refer to Table 4).

<sup>13</sup> The other regions that were mentioned most often include the region of Karlovy Vary, Ústí nad Labem, as well as Jihomoravský, Moravskoslezský (with the explicitly specified city of Ostrava), and Plzeňský region.

**Table 4: Completely irregular economic migrants and the sectors/areas of the Czech economy in which they are active (Delphi First Round, N=24)**

Completely irregular economic migrants according to source country (citizenship)	Economic sectors/areas
Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Auxiliary work</li> <li>• Cleaning</li> <li>• Agriculture and forestry</li> <li>• Hospitality and accommodation services</li> <li>• Industry</li> </ul>
Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Services</li> </ul>
Moldova	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Agriculture and forestry</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Services</li> <li>• Sales</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Information technology</li> </ul>
Belarus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Services</li> <li>• Healthcare</li> </ul>
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Hospitality and accommodation</li> <li>• Services</li> <li>• Forestry</li> </ul>
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Sales</li> </ul>
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wholesale</li> <li>• Hospitality industry</li> </ul>
Countries of the former Yugoslavia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Hospitality industry</li> <li>• Agriculture and forestry</li> <li>• Sales and services</li> </ul>
Albania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitality and accommodation services</li> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Goldsmith</li> </ul>

Note: The sequence of sectors (areas of the economy) does not indicate the importance of the specified activities.

In contrast to the manual types of labour that are performed by the above-specified groups of migrants (with Russia being the only exception), according to the experts Americans and Canadians are, in addition to services (hospitality industry), also irregularly involved in more intellectually demanding activities, primarily translating and English teaching.

The respondents also estimated the possible overall sectoral structure of completely irregular economic activities carried out by migrants (Table 5).

Table 5: Sectoral structure of completely irregular economic activities carried out by migrants (Delphi Round Two, N=20)

Economic Sector	Mean of share of completely irregular migrant active in the sector (in %)
Construction	41
Hospitality and accommodation services	13
Domestic services (cleaning, care provision, etc.)	12
Agriculture	11
Wholesale / Retail	11
Textile industry	9
Food processing industry	8

Note: 100% should represent the total number of all completely irregularly economically active migrants in the Czech Republic. However, the values for individual shares are the mean values for the sector in question and thus the total does not add up to 100 %.

The estimated employment structure more or less confirms what has already been indicated in relation to the activities of individual migrant groups (see above). Construction was indicated as the most significant area in which the irregular foreign workforce is active. The next most significant sectors, amongst which there is not as much of a difference in the frequency of occurrence, are: hospitality and accommodation services; domestic services (cleaning, care provision, etc.); agriculture; and wholesale/retail. These are followed by the less emphasized textile and food processing industries. All these sectors have common characteristics, i.e., low wages, high demands on worker flexibility and a low level of attractiveness for the domestic workforce, and are traditional employers of irregular migrants in other countries that attract migration (de Tapia 2003, Castles, Miller 2003).

#### **2.3.4. Estimated number of completely irregular economically active migrants in the Czech Republic<sup>14</sup>**

During the first round of the Delphi research, the respondents were asked to estimate the likely number of migrants who are involved in completely irregular/informal economic activities in the Czech Republic. In spite of the fact that we were fully aware of the difficulties involved in making such an estimate, we offered the experts a list of options in the form of ranges, from which they could select the most likely option. The results (Table 6) show that the experts differ in their estimates to quite a significant degree. While one-third estimated the count to be between 40,000 and 99,999 individuals, approximately one-fifth believes that the number exceeds 200,000 individuals. There is thus no consensus in the eyes of the experts when it comes to this sensitive question. Estimating the number and flow of irregular migrants is a generally complex and ambiguous problem overall (Jandl 2004; de Tapia 2003).

Table 6: Estimated number of completely irregular economically active migrants in the Czech Republic (Delphi First Round, N=27)

Estimated number of completely irregular economically active migrants in the Czech Republic (count)	Respondents' answers
Less than 39,999	11
40,000 – 99,999	33
100,000 – 149,000	19
150,000 – 199,999	19
More than 200,000	19

<sup>14</sup> Only migrants involved in completely irregular economic activities were addressed in this section due to easier handling of this complex issue.

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### **2.3.5. Future development of migrants' completely irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic<sup>15</sup>**

Given that the Delphi method is considered to be an appropriate tool for forecasting future development (Linstone, Turoff 1975, Martino 1972, Bijak 2006), our study also included questions pertaining to the future development in the volume of completely irregular economic activities conducted by migrants in the Czech Republic. In the questionnaire for the first round of the research, our panel of experts was requested to describe the most likely trends for the development of irregular economic activities on the part of migrants in the Czech Republic during the period 2006-2010<sup>16</sup> by selecting one of the offered options (significant decrease, decrease, stabilization, increase, or significant increase). During the second round, they were asked to submit arguments supporting their choice.

Twenty-six respondents submitted their predictions for development trends during the first round, but there was a high degree of variance in their replies. It is therefore impossible to speak of a clear tendency for the future. The experts only believe that the development might be gradual and thus there should not be a significant decrease or increase. Almost 40 per cent of the respondents (N=10) characterized the future development as stabilization of the current volume. The majority reasoned that the socioeconomic and legislative status quo will be maintained both in the source countries as well as in the Czech Republic. Two of the respondents were an exception, whereby they believe that the Czech economy will grow significantly and, together with it, the demand for irregular foreign workforce will increase. However, in their opinion, there will not be an overall increase in the number of completely irregularly economically active migrants in the Czech Republic, as stricter laws will be imposed along with stronger controls of the workforce. The end result will thus again be stabilization of the current volume.

Another 27 per cent of the respondents used the same argument (i.e., the growth of the Czech economy); however they anticipate an increasing trend in the volume of completely irregularly economically active migrants in the Czech Republic during the 2006-2010 timeframe. One-third of the respondents predict that there will be a decreasing trend. The latter group based their opinions primarily on the fact that stricter rules and sanctions will be implemented throughout the entire EU and that there will be internal changes implemented within the Czech economic system (e.g., tax reforms) which will decrease the demand for an irregular foreign workforce.

An interesting aspect of the forecasts that was made is the fact that the experts from the academic and research sphere are highly dominant in the group of respondents who predict an increasing volume as compared to the other categories of respondents. It is however impossible to speculate whether their estimates are based on a more realistic view of the government's ability to regulate irregular labour migration.

<sup>15</sup> Only migrants involved in completely irregular economic activities were addressed in this section due to easier handling of this complex issue.

<sup>16</sup> The research was performed during the 2005-2006 timeframe, and thus the first year for the future projections was designated as 2006.

### **2.3.6. Future development of migrants' completely irregular economic activities within selected sectors of the Czech economy**

In addition to the overall development in the volume of completely irregularly economically active migrants, during the second round of the Delphi research we were also interested in obtaining estimates for the development in certain economic sectors during the 2006-2010 timeframe (Table 7).

Table 7: Future development of migrants' completely **irregular** economic activities within selected sectors of the Czech economy during the 2006-2010 timeframe (Delphi Second Round, N=22)

Economic sector	Decrease ( in % )	Stabilization – no change ( in % )	Increase ( in % )
Construction	23	50	27
Agriculture	19	48	33
Hospitality and accommodation services	5	54	41
Domestic services (cleaning, care provision, etc.)	0	33	67
Industry	33	33	33

Note: The respondents had to select one of the possible development trends for each row.

The majority of experts anticipate a significant increase in the number of completely irregular migrants involved in the domestic services sector (cleaning, care provision, etc.). They expect stabilizing or increasing trends for the hospitality and accommodation services sector as well as for agriculture. As far as industry is concerned, no significant changes in either direction are expected. In the case of construction, which is the most significant sector from the perspective of the population under investigation, one half of the experts forecast stabilization while the other half is fairly equally divided between those who expect an increasing trend and those who expect a decreasing trend.

The future anticipated growth in the domestic services sector can be interpreted as the logical consequence of the current and future intensifying process of the ageing of the European population. A typical example of the relationship between ageing (and its consequences) and migration is neighbouring Austria, where there is already a great demand and a corresponding rapid increase in the growth of international migrants, primarily women, into this sector (Bilger et al. 2006).

### **2.3.7. Impact of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic**

In the first round of the Delphi research, the experts (N=26) generally evaluated the overall impacts of irregular economic activities on the Czech economy, employers, and domestic employees (on a scale ranging from very negative to very positive). Within the evaluation of the impact of migrants' irregular economic activities on the Czech economy, a negative perspective of the issues at hand (54 per cent of the experts expressed a negative opinion)<sup>17</sup> outweighed the possibly positive perspective (only 23 per cent of the experts predict an overall positive impact)<sup>18</sup>. A significantly negative impact on the Czech domestic workforce is predicted overall for the irregular economic activities of migrants (a half of the respondents replied negatively as compared to 12 per cent positively and 38 per cent neutrally). On the other hand, the impact of the phenomenon in question on employers

<sup>17</sup> Within this context, the term "negative" combines the categories of "very negative" and "negative".

<sup>18</sup> Within this context, the term "positive" combines the categories of "very positive" and "positive".

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(the subcategory of those who already take advantage of the cheap irregular foreign workforce) was evaluated by the experts to be fairly positive (73 per cent positive replies).

During the first round of the Delphi research, the respondents were also asked to briefly characterize the main impacts (positive as well as negative) of migrants' irregular economic activities on the Czech Republic as whole. During the second round, they were then asked to select the five most important positive impacts and the five most important negative impacts from the list that was created on the basis of the replies received during the first round.

Filling unappealing and low-paid work positions, a cheap and flexible workforce, and the development of certain economic entities and branches were selected as positive impacts most often (Table 8). On the other hand, the experts selected tax evasion and unfavourable working conditions for irregular foreigners (including salary discrimination) as the most important negative impacts (Table 8).

Table 8: Most important positive and negative impacts of migrants' irregular economic activities on the Czech Republic as a destination country (Delphi Second Round, N=22)

Most import positive impacts	Absolute number
Filling unappealing and low paid work positions	18
Cheap and flexible workforce contributing to economic developments	16
Development of certain economic entities and branches (e.g., construction)	15
Individual households benefit from the presence of irregular workers (cheaper home services, construction, reconstruction, etc.)	12
The prices of some services and economic services decrease	10
Increased competitiveness amongst employers who take advantage of irregular employment	9
Most important negative impacts	Absolute number
Tax evasion	14
Unfavorable working conditions for irregular foreigners (including salary discrimination)	14
Growth of the "grey economy"	11
Unfavorable working conditions will extend to regular employees (foreign as well as Czech)	
Tolerance of Czech society for breaching the law (including accepting irregular employment)	9
Damage to the business environment – unfair competitive advantages ensuing from employing irregular migrants	8

### 2.3.8. Goals and measures for limiting the irregular economic activities of migrants in the Czech Republic

We also researched the topic of irregular economic activities on the part of migrants from the policy perspective using the "Policy Delphi" approach. During the first round, we asked the experts to propose the five most important goals and/or measure that should be implemented in the near future in order to decrease the scope of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic. On the basis of these proposals, we prepared a list of forty-seven goals/measures for the second round, which the respondents were to rate on the basis of their desirability (on a scale from 1 = very desirable to 5 = very undesirable) and their feasibility (on a scale from 1 = very feasible to 5 = very unfeasible). A total of twenty-three respondents evaluated the goals in this manner during the second round. We then calculated the mean level of desirability and feasibility for each individual goal.

The experience we acquired from our previous Delphi studies (for example Lachmanová, Drbohlav 2004) indicate that goals/measures which are evaluated as being the most desirable are also those that are often considered to be difficult to implement. During this research study however, this tendency was not confirmed. The experts evaluated only a few of the most required goals as being difficult to implement. The exception to this rule was primarily the measure that was evaluated as being the most desirable out of all proposed, specifically an *"uncompromising battle against corruption within the ranks of the Police of the Czech Republic"*. This measure's mean level of desirability was 1.35; however the level of its feasibility attained a mean value of 3.17.

Table 9 specifies the goals/measures that were evaluated as being the most desirable. These goals/measures pertain primarily to four thematic spheres. The first is to improve the conditions for regularly employed migrants. Increasing the flexibility of work permits, easier acquisition of these permits, and creating a more transparent and "more accommodating" environment for granting residence and work permits were all included amongst the recommendations. The proposals pertaining to legal migration channels included the following: *"unifying the administrative procedures for residence permits and*



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*work permits*” and *“creating more coherent immigration policies”*, which was also however evaluated as being difficult to implement (the mean level of feasibility attained a level of 3.09).

The next group of highly desirable goals pertains to the distribution of information on migration issues amongst potential migrants and those that are already present, e.g., *“increase the level of information on the possibilities, procedures, and advantages of regular employment provided to foreigners both in their countries of origin as well as in the Czech Republic”*; *“perfect the information system on regular employment migration (available work positions, the ability to submit CVs, ...”*, and *“information and support programs for migrants who would like to escape the irregular environment”*.

Within the framework of finding solutions to the problems related to irregular economic activities of migrants, the experts recommended measures pertaining to the control and sanction mechanisms in place for this phenomenon, e.g., *“improving cooperation between individual institutions that control the irregular employment and residence of foreigners”*. Controls and sanctions should be in place not only for (as a rule Czech) employers, but also for employment agencies, and intermediary agents (clients).

The fourth topic that appeared amongst the most required proposed measures was the simplification of deductions (tax, social security, etc.) that employers are required to make for employees, which would generally be advantageous for regular employment.

**Table 9: Most desirable goals/measures in order to limit migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic (Delphi Second Round, N=23)**

Goal/Measure	Mean level of desirability	Mean level of feasibility
Uncompromising battle against corruption within the ranks of the Police of the Czech Republic	1.35	3.17
Increase the level of information on the possibilities, procedures, and advantages of regular employment provided to foreigners both in their countries of origin as well as in the Czech Republic	1.52	1.87
Increase the flexibility of work permits for foreigners in certain areas (e.g., provide the ability to change employers for performing the same occupation without having to apply for a new permit, protective period in the event employment is lost, etc.)	1.57	2.09
Perfect the information system on regular employment migration (available work positions, the ability to submit CVs, ...)	1.57	1.91
Greater protection for witnesses in court proceedings pertaining to human trafficking	1.57	2.22
A more transparent and "more accommodating" environment for granting residence and work permits	1.61	2.78
Creating more coherent immigration policies	1.61	3.09
Simplifying and speeding up the process for the regular employment of foreigners	1.65	2.35
Effective control and sanctions system for employers of irregular migrants (including "clients")	1.65	2.87
Information and support programs for migrants who would like to escape the irregular or quasi-regular environment	1.70	2.48
Improving cooperation between individual institutions that control the irregular employment and residence of foreigners	1.70	2.70
Unifying the administrative procedures for residence permits and work permits	1.78	2.48
Acquire control over the activities of intermediary agencies	1.78	3.43
Simplify tax regulations and the regulations in place for social security deductions	1.78	2.74
Decrease deductions and the tax burden in order to ensure that legal employment is more advantageous for employers	1.78	2.91

On the basis of the evaluations performed by the experts, we can also select goals/measures that could be applied in practice. These are goals/measures that were evaluated as highly desirable as well as feasible. They could thus significantly contribute

towards eliminating irregular activities carried out by migrants and, at the same time, their implementation is possible at the current time (Table 10).

**Table 10: Goals/measures for limiting migrants' irregular economic activities that can be applied in practice (Delphi Second Round, N=23)**

Goal/Measure	Mean level of desirability	Mean level of feasibility
Increase the level of information on the possibilities, procedures, and advantages of regular employment provided to foreigners both in their countries of origin as well as in the Czech Republic	1.52	1.87
Perfect the information system on regular employment migration (available work positions, the ability to submit CVs, ...)	1.57	1.91
Increase the flexibility of work permits for foreigners in certain areas (e.g., provide the ability to change employers for performing the same occupation without having to apply for a new permit, protective period in the event employment is lost, etc.)	1.57	2.09
Greater protection for witnesses in court proceedings pertaining to human trafficking	1.57	2.22
Simplifying and speeding up the process for the regular employment of foreigners	1.65	2.35
Unifying the administrative procedures for residence permits and work permits	1.78	2.48
Acquire the cooperation of governmental and nongovernmental organizations in source countries for the purpose of distributing information on the conditions for regular employment in the Czech Republic	1.83	2.35

On the basis of the replies we received from our respondents, we can thus state that important goals/measures, which should be implemented, should be targeted at supporting the distribution of information on the regular options for employing migrants in the Czech Republic in the source countries in cooperation with local governmental and nongovernmental organizations. In addition, the system in place for issuing work permits should be simplified, better connected with the issuance of residence permits, and, at the same time, the conditions bound to the permits should be relaxed. An increased level of protection should be guaranteed for witnesses participating in proceedings pertaining to human trafficking, which would increase the effectiveness of the battle against human trafficking and the organized crime that is involved.

### **2.3.9. Regularization of irregular migrants and their economic activities in the Czech Republic**

One of the tools, however a rather controversial one, a state might use to limit the volume of irregular migrants is a regularization/legalization of a certain defined irregular migrant population. There are many different forms and modes of regularization process that turns irregular status of a migrant to a legal one (see e.g., de Bruycker 2000). However, leaving aside possible variations of regularization, we addressed this issue in a general manner asking our panelists in the first round what are their opinions towards this ambiguous policy option. Furthermore, in the time of our Delphi research a public debate on this contentious issue has been opened by several non-governmental organizations in the Czech Republic (under the project titled *Regularization of irregular migration*). Hence, our Delphi question pertaining to the issue of a possible regularization in the Czech Republic can be seen as a small "expert opinion poll".

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Out of twenty-seven respondents of this question, almost a half (N=13) expressed their pro-regularization opinions, usually supporting it in a form of a one-off action for certain clearly defined categories of irregular migrants. Six panelists were against a regularization process in the Czech Republic. Opinions of other eight experts could be characterized as neither pro-oriented, nor disagreeing. Thus, no clear tendency within our panel occurred.

However, what did occur was a strong division of opinions regarding different types of respondents. Experts from the non-governmental sphere who answered the given question (N=6) accepted unequivocally the possibility of a regularization in the Czech Republic. On the other hand, those who strongly opposed the idea of a possible regularization were mainly panelists from the governmental sphere and a politician. Accordingly, this result is in harmony with the often declared view of Czech state officials on this issue. Panelists from the academic sphere were present in all three opinion streams.

The issue of regularization also appeared in our Delphi survey with regard to desirable and feasible policy goals/measures for limiting migrants' irregular economic activities. However, the proposed regularization measures (in a form of free leaving the country without any punishment or of a well-prepared regularization for specific categories of migrants) were evaluated as not so much desirable (2.61 for both) as well as not highly feasible (2.83 and 3.17 respectively). Within the whole group of goals/measures recommended by the experts they ranked in both categories (desirability and feasibility) among the last ones.

### **2.3.10. The 2004 EU enlargement and irregular migration**

Also, we tried to explicitly tackle an important issue as to how irregular economic activities of Czech migrants are tied to a broader European dimension. This issue is, of course, relevant to the EU enlargement, to enabling a free movement of a labour force within the Union and, thus, to real and potential migratory movements of the newly accepted countries, including the Czech Republic.

The statement that "Restrictions of the former member EU countries which limit the inflow of labour migrants from the new EU countries should be eliminated by 2011" is supported by strong majority of the experts (44 per cent strongly agree and 40 per cent agree versus only 4 per cent do not agree and further 4 per cent do not know – it concerns the second Delphi round, N=23). In the same way, another opinion has clearly crystallized. The statement that "Elimination of such restrictions (that limit the inflow of labour migrants from the new EU countries to the old ones) would cause an increase of irregular economic activities in the old EU member countries" is opposed by 80 per cent of respondents (70 per cent do not agree and 9 per cent strongly disagree versus 17 per cent agree and 4 per cent do not know – these results come from the second Delphi round, N=23). Similarly, rather a strong negative opinion (from the first Delphi round, N=31) is linked with a statement that: "After elimination of restrictions of the "old" EU member countries for the new ones, there will be a significant increase of East-West migration (especially in border zone areas of Austria and Germany)"; 68 per cent disagreed, three per cent strongly disagreed versus ten per cent who agreed, three per cent who strongly agreed and 16 per cent who did not know.

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### **2.3.11. Measures at the EU level in order to limit the irregular economic activities carried out by migrants**

The problem of irregular migration and irregular economic activities carried out by migrants is an international problem and the scope of its solution significantly exceeds the borders and legal competencies of individual countries. Thus, if we want to resolve the situation in this area within the Czech Republic, it is also necessary to include supranational institutions in the process, primarily those of the European Union. In addition, the inclusion of the Czech Republic in the Schengen System (December 2007), which, amongst other things, will also result in the free movement of individuals, will increase the significance and the necessity of common, unified measures in the Czech Republic in order to resolve the issues pertaining to the irregular employment of foreigners. For this reason, we also focused at the EU level within the scope of our research.

During the first round of the Delphi research, the experts were asked to recommend several measures that could be implemented at the EU level for resolving the issues related to irregular activities carried out by migrants. The proposals related primarily to the harmonization and simplification of the rules in place within the framework of the EU; controls and sanctions; distribution of information; changes to job market regulation; and stricter security measures. The experts' opinions were synthetically processed and were incorporated in the questionnaire for the second round of the Delphi research in the form of a list of twenty-two recommended measures. Each of the respondents was to select the five measures they consider to be the most important. Table 11 presents the measures that were selected most often and can thus be considered as the most important in the eyes of the panel.

**Table 11: Most important measures recommended for resolving the issues pertaining to migrants' irregular economic activities at the EU level (Delphi Second Round, N=21)**

Recommended measure	Absolute count
Greater harmonization within residency and employment regulations for foreigners	12
More effective system of controls and sanctions for employers	11
Simplification of the legislative environment for employing foreigners	10
Simplifying and relaxing the procedures for regularly employing workers from third countries	9
Increasing the level of information provided to potential labour migrants	8

On the one hand, measures simplifying regular migration were recommended most often. In the opinion of our panel, the harmonization and simplification of the regulations in place for the legal residence and employment of foreigners (primarily those from third countries) could lead the way towards limiting irregular economic activities on the part of foreigners within the framework of the EU. On the other hand, recommendations that would make the sanction system for irregular employment stricter and more effective, specifically from the perspective of penalizing employers, were also submitted. In addition, the recommendation to increase the level of information distributed amongst possible labour migrants with regard to the regular possibilities for migration and employment should not also be overlooked.

## 2.4. Conclusions of the Delphi study

The results of the qualitative Delphi research study performed amongst Czech migration experts (N=32 for the first round and N=23 for the second round) during the timeframe of November 2005 through June 2006 provide a number of concrete conclusions in relation to the researched phenomenon, specifically the irregular economic activities of migrants in the Czech Republic.

According to the respondents, one of the most frequently occurring forms of irregular economic activities on the part of migrants is the “disguised employment” in Czech context referred to as “Švarc system”, whereby a migrant possesses a residence permit and a trade license, but in reality works as someone’s employee. The same importance was assigned to the economic activity whereby migrants perform their (completely irregular or quasi-regular) job through an intermediary agent, or “client”. Other frequent forms of economic activities carried out by migrants in conflict with the law included: violating rules of an acquired visa/permit (this applies to visa for a period exceeding 90 days or long term visa), and working while on either a tourist visa or an expired tourist visa.

In examining the reasons why migrants participate in irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic, the tempting “pull” factors were clearly confirmed as playing a significant role. This primarily involves an established lobby of intermediary agents (clients), a high level of demand for a foreign workforce (primarily in the area of physically demanding work), and the fact that the irregular employment of even Czech citizens is a fairly widespread and tolerated phenomenon throughout the entire country.

When defining the basic characteristics of migrants who carry out completely irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic, it was determined that Ukraine is the

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most significant source country, followed by Viet Nam, and some other countries of the former Soviet Union. As far as the territorial distribution of irregular migrants is concerned, in the opinion of the respondents, Prague and the Central Bohemian Region are the unequivocal leaders. When asked about the areas in which irregular migrants are probably most active, the respondents provided a fairly wide range of economic sectors and areas: construction, followed by hospitality and accommodation services, domestic services (cleaning, care provision, etc.), agriculture, and wholesale/retail. The textile and food processing industries were viewed as less important. From the perspective of the expected future development in the volume of irregularly economically active migrants, the majority of the experts predict that there might be an increase in the domestic services sector.

The estimated number of completely irregularly economically active migrants on the Czech employment market is very heterogeneous. While one-third of the experts estimate that the count is between 40,000 and 99,999 individuals, almost one-fifth believe that the number exceeds 200,000. The overall estimate for the development of the phenomenon in question for the 2006 to 2010 timeframe is similarly varied.

Filling unappealing and low-paid job positions, a cheap and flexible workforce contributing to economic development, and the development of certain branches (e.g., construction) were listed as the most positive impacts of the irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic overall. Tax evasion and unfavourable working conditions for irregular foreigners (including salary discrimination) were specified by the experts as the most important negative impacts.

Panelists fully supported a free movement of the Central/Eastern European labour force (from new EU member states) to old member states, whilst in relation to this they do not see in the future any potential increase of irregular migration at the expense of the “West”.

Regarding attitudes towards an application of regularization programs in the Czech Republic, no clear tendency appeared among our panelists. However, differences between the opinions of experts from non-governmental sector (supporting regularization) and those of Czech governmental officials (who strongly oppose it) were found.

The most desirable goals/measures that should be implemented in order to limit irregular economic activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic include: an “*uncompromising battle against corruption within the ranks of the Police of the Czech Republic*” (in the panel’s opinion, however, the measure is very difficult to implement); goals/measures connected with the level of information available to the concerned parties; more flexibility in the regular migration channels; and more effective control and sanction mechanisms for tracking and penalizing this phenomenon. The most required measures also include the simplification and decrease of deductions businesses have to make for their employees, which would generally make regular employment more advantageous. Similar measures were mentioned by the respondents when it came to making recommendations to help resolve the situation at the EU level. This “double emphasis” on measures connected with simplifying the legislative environment as it pertains to legal employment, increasing the level of information provided to potential migrants, and stricter sanctions only serves to strengthen their importance.

The measures appropriate for implementation into practice in the Czech Republic (i.e., those that were evaluated as being very necessary and, at the same time, fairly feasible) include measures supporting the distribution of information in the Czech Republic and in source countries with regard to the regular options for employing migrants, and measures that would simplify the current system for issuing work permits and the related binding conditions. Guaranteeing a higher level of protection for witnesses

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in proceedings pertaining to human trafficking are also included in this category of measures that can be applied in practice.

It is also possible to compare the results of this Delphi research in the area of desirable goals/measures with current Czech migration policy. In spite of the fact that migration and integration policies (and subsequently current practice) as they pertain to certain economic areas (labour market) face many problems in the Czech Republic, as is also the case in many other developed countries, (e.g., Drbohlav, Horáková, Janská 2005, Čaněk, Čížinský 2006) some important steps towards meeting some of the above-specified required goals have already been taken or are in progress (by state authorities, often working in cooperation with the non-governmental sector and international organizations). These include steps such as the establishment of the Interministry Authority for Battling the Illegal Employment of Foreigners (which has set the fight against “client” system as its main target); the creation of information portals (available on the Internet) and printed materials for foreigners that present the conditions for working and doing business in the Czech Republic, as well as the creation of information centres that perform the same task (especially in Ukraine); or the implementation of a pilot project called “Výběr kvalifikovaných zahraničních pracovníků” (*“Selecting Qualified Foreign Workers”*). Another project preparing the implementation of “green cards”, which should provide much simpler and more flexible access to the Czech labour market for foreigners is also underway. Further additional measures are in progress for intensifying the battle against corruption within the ranks of the Police of the Czech Republic.

Table 12 brings authors’ synoptical comparison of the most important reasons for having migrants that are involved in irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic - with relevant policy goals/measures. Reasons as well as policy goals were formulated independently by our panelists and only afterwards, we juxtaposed them to each other. We did it in a way that to each important reason (see Table 2) we tried to find relevant solutions among the proposed desirable policy goals/measures (see Table 9). The table may also serve as a “menu” from which policy makers can choose when searching for possible “right solutions” to migrants’ irregular economic activities.



**Table 12: Main reasons for migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic juxtaposed to desirable goals/measures**

Main reasons for migrants' irregular economic activities	Desirable goals/measures
Strong and established lobby of intermediary agents ("clients")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective control and sanctions system for employers of irregular migrants (including "clients")</li> <li>• Acquire control over the activities of intermediary agencies</li> <li>• Uncompromising battle against corruption within the ranks of the Police of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Simplifying and speeding up the process for the regular employment of foreigners</li> <li>• Increase the level of information on the possibilities, procedures, and advantages of regular employment provided to foreigners both in their countries of origin as well as in the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Increase the flexibility of work permits for foreigners in certain areas</li> </ul>
High demand for irregular (cheap and flexible) foreign labour, especially for physically demanding work (e.g. in construction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease deductions and the tax burden in order to ensure that regular employment is more advantageous for employers</li> <li>• Simplify tax regulations and the regulations in place for social security deductions</li> </ul>
The irregular employment (even of Czech citizens) is a fairly widespread phenomenon	<i>There is no possibility to adjoin adequate goals since policy goals that could be tied to this reason were not found. Nevertheless, generally we propose to establish more moral environment (within whole society, especially educational institutions and families), to make a tax reform, to push stricter legislation and more effective punishments.</i>
The procedure for obtaining a legal work permit is complicated and burdened by needless bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more transparent and "more accommodating" environment for granting residence and work permits</li> <li>• Simplifying and speeding up the process for the regular employment of foreigners</li> <li>• Unifying the administrative procedures for residence permits and work permits</li> <li>• Increase the flexibility of work permits for foreigners in certain areas (e.g., provide the ability to change employers for performing the same occupation without having to apply for a new permit, protective period in the event employment is lost, etc.)</li> </ul>
Strong "push" factors exist in the countries of origin of irregular migrants, which are primarily linked to undeveloped economies and political instability (possibly even to internal conflicts), which force the local citizens to leave for elsewhere, including the Czech Republic	<i>There is no possibility to adjoin adequate goals since policy goals that could be tied to this reason were not found. Generally, it is a factor that any country has hardly ever been able to precede. Increasing role of developmental economic aid and related special programs targeting underdevelopment (including information campaign), come into the play above all in this regard.</i>
The Czech Republic does not have an effective "migration administration" regime for temporary labour migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the flexibility of work permits for foreigners in certain areas (e.g., provide the ability to change employers for performing the same occupation without having to apply for a new permit, protective period in the event employment is lost, etc.)</li> <li>• Simplifying and speeding up the process for the regular employment of foreigners.</li> </ul>

The table confirmed what has already been said in relation to the most desirable policy goals/measures that these can be grouped into four basic thematic areas as presented in chapter 3.8. (see above). Moreover, we added the fifth general area that should be

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addressed by relevant policy goals/measures - i.e., systematic attempts to establish a more “moral/ethical environment” within which irregular is considered to be a “bad thing”.

The overall results of the Delphi research study show that, due to its “mysteriousness” and high level of complexity (numerous varied external conditions and factors), the phenomenon of migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic, is hard to grasp even for migration experts. Within the framework of this research study, the answers submitted by the panel in reply to important questions pertaining to the estimated number of irregular migrants, their structure, and the future development in this area varied greatly. A more visible consensus dominates only in some areas (see above).

On the other hand, this mosaic of estimates and opinions sufficiently proves that a number of aspects in the field of irregular activities carried out by migrants in the Czech Republic are almost identical to those that are known from other destination countries. This pertains to the character and functioning of the overall environment (labour market segmentation, forms and mechanisms for including the informal economics of migrants into the socioeconomic structure of the destination country)<sup>19</sup> (e.g., Baldwin-Edwards 1999, European Commission 2007, Reyneri 2002, Düvell 2006), as well as to some other individual aspects (refer to the applicable sections above). The indicated concurrence indirectly also appears in the fact that we can, with a certain degree of caution (Arango 2000), explain some aspects of migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic by applying migration theories/concept that are used in other developed immigration countries (e.g., Massey et al. 1993, 1998).

With regard to the nature of the irregular economic activities of migrants, it is obvious that elimination of this phenomenon is a long-term task with unclear results. The battle against irregular migration and its accompanying phenomena has not yet been won by anyone and it seems it will not be won in the near future either. As Baldwin-Edwards (2006) describes in detail, the informal sector in the post-industrial developed world is gaining in importance. The significance of irregular economic activities carried out by migrants is also confirmed by the fact that, in some western European countries, informal economies (including irregular activities carried out by migrants) are represented to a higher degree in the most developed regions as compared to less developed regions (Williams, Windebank 1998 cited by Baldwin-Edwards 2006). Many areas of developed economies are also dependent on the informal sector and irregular migration. Long-term unresolved and still continuing mass irregular migration usually in relation to the blossoming informal economies is often “quietly” tolerated by political representations, which again provides evidence that the phenomena in question are structural components of modern capitalism (e.g., Pallidda 2005). In order to strengthen this thesis, even with regard to emphasizing the difficulty of the battle against irregular migration, we also conclude that there is still an intense and permanent demand for an irregular foreign workforce, specifically from a number of businesses in developed countries who will always be willing to hire this cheap, flexible, and productive workforce in spite of the various risks involved. In addition, the post-communist world must overcome its unfortunate inheritance of the past, which degraded morale and allowed many informal activities to become a generally tolerated reality (e.g., Renooy et al. 2004). In the future therefore, the Czech Republic will without a doubt continue to be faced with irregular migration and migrants' irregular economic activities. Nevertheless, it must still attempt to eliminate these phenomena.

<sup>19</sup> However, the existing client system seems to be a rather specific form of labour organization among Post-Soviet migrants in the Czech Republic and possibly in other Central European countries. Nevertheless, to make more convincing conclusions in this regard it is necessary to investigate the issue in a more detailed way.

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### **3. Migrants' Tough and Challenging Lives (Irregular Economic and Transit Migration in the Czech Republic – Qualitative Approach)**

#### **3.1. Main goals, design of the research and methodological approach**

In this chapter we try to describe in a complex way and to explain the essential features of international migration and irregular working activities of migrants in Czech Republic, with a closer insight into the processes of trafficking and smuggling. The basic research questions (beside others, also in harmony with the approach of critical realism (Sayer) 1992) were as follows: What is the migration process at the end of which there is an irregularly economically active foreigner in the host society or a foreigner who used the given country only as transit space? What mechanisms and wider conditionalities are there in the given context? How does it all work? What is the specific behaviour of an individual migrant? In the comparative view it is important to verify if the situation in the field of irregular migration and irregular economic activities of migrants in Czech Republic are similar to those that have been typical of the developed classical immigration countries, especially the older member states of the EU.

The basic approach applied in this chapter is the so-called intensive approach, on a more general level of the whole social science relatively unambiguously isolated from the so-called extensive approach, or the extensive form of research (Sayer 1992). Whereas typical methods of extensive research are descriptive and use inferential statistics, numerical analysis and large-scale formal questionnaires of populations or 'representative samples', intensive research uses mainly qualitative methods such as structural and casual analysis, participant observation and/or informal and interactive interviews (see also more in Sayer 1992). What is necessary to be stressed here is the fact that the intensive approach is not a panacea, and as it is duly expressed by Sayer, "both methods are needed in concrete research". They are not competitive approaches, on the contrary, the two views enrich each other (see also e.g. Massey 1987 or Piore 2006).

In the specific project and in relation to the research of the (irregular) migration issue, an application of the intensive research approach by partial methods of, for example, semi-structured and unstructured interviewing, participating observation, oral history, life history, interpretation of stories, etc. is used (see e.g. Creswell 1994, Hay 2000, Agozino 2000). In the developed countries with an immigration history, these approaches are not a novelty or, as the case may be, of a widely determined integration problem (see for example in United States, Gilbertson 2004, Stephen 2004, Pai 2004, 2006, Hess-Puckhaber 2004, Abrego 2006, Coll 2004, in Western Europe, van der Leun-Kloostermann 2006, Van Liemt 2007 and a collection of studies presented in Düvell 2006). Nevertheless, in the new EU member countries of Central and Eastern Europe, such approaches have not yet been frequently used (see for example, Kovács-Melegy 2001 and Hamar-Szaló 2007).

In this chapter, the results of the intensive research are presented. The source of the research results come from semistructured interviews conducted with 63 irregular migrants altogether. To be able to understand the reality of the group under study, we structured the intended interview into several basic thematic domains: basic personal characteristics, motivation for migration, journey to (or also from) Czech Republic, work, housing, social relations, relations to source/mother country, contacts with police, any exploitation, any discrimination and future behavioral strategies. That was the ideal. Naturally, each participant did not react to all mentioned themes. On the other hand, the interview sometimes went beyond these limits, becoming "less formal, less standardized and more interactive kind of interview was applied" (Sayer 1992).

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The target group consisted of irregular migrants who were contacted in two different environments.

In the first case, nine migrants were interviewed who had been performing irregular economic activities freely in the Czech Republic, in the capital city Prague or in its surroundings. For the purpose of this research, a reliable Ukrainian already integrated into the Czech society was hired, who was, at the same time, familiar with the environment of irregular migrants. He established contacts, or made use of his existing connections and experience and then, in the intervals of several weeks, he brought irregular migrants into the building of the Faculty of Science, usually in the evening hours, where they were then interviewed (the interviewers were the members of the research team themselves). The interviewees were economic migrants from the countries of the former Soviet Union (they make up the biggest legal and evidently also irregular migrant community in the country), who were greeted in an informal way and treated with some food. The main objectives of the research were explained to them and also anonymity was guaranteed to them. The interviews were held from December 2005 to April 2006, mostly in Russian, seldom in Czech. The respondents were financially rewarded for their information and time spent (about one hour).

In the other case, migrants already detained by the police were contacted. These migrants had offended Czech law in a more serious way<sup>20</sup> and were staying in one of the detention centres run by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (MV CR). The members of the research team, in intensive cooperation with the relevant responsible organizations of MV CR, visited the detention centres<sup>21</sup>, where they performed the semi-structured interviews. The potential respondents from among the detained migrants were informed about the research, its' aims and character by the researchers on the spot. The persons interested, for whom this activity represented a way of relieving the monotony of the tedious course of the day, were assured about keeping their anonymity and also about the fact that their information would serve only for research purposes.

The composition of the participating respondents in terms of citizenship was very diverse (see below Table 1 for demographic details concerning individuals directly quoted in the text). The interviews were held in Russian, English, French, and, with the help of translators, in Vietnamese and Chinese. For providing the information, the respondents were – after agreement with the management of the detention institutions – rewarded with some chosen delicacies and cigarettes. The interviews in the detention centres were held in two rounds, in May and December 2006.

<sup>20</sup> The issues were namely repeated breach of the residence regime, an attempt of illegal crossing of the State border, unknown identity of the foreigner and so on.

<sup>21</sup> Detention centres are located at Velké Přílepy, Bělá-Jezová, Poštorná and Frýdek –Místek.

Table 1: Main characteristics of the respondents quoted in this contribution, own survey, 2005-2006

Respondent/type of respondent	Place, where interview was performed	Country of origin, sex, age, highest education degree, family status, number of children
R1D	Poštorná	Sri Lanka, female, 31, basic, single
R2C	Poštorná	Ukraine, male, 35, skilled, single
R3C	Poštorná	Ukraine, male, 30, basic, single
R4D	Poštorná	India, male, 21, basic, single
R5C	Poštorná	Ukraine, female, 33, high school, single
R6D	Poštorná	Pakistan, male, 22, high school, single
R7D	Poštorná	India, male, 25, basic, single
R8D	Poštorná	Nigeria, female, 19, basic, single
R9D	Poštorná	Pakistan, male, 25, high school, single
R10D	Bělá-Jezová	Ghana, male, 17, basic, single
R11A	Faculty	Ukraine, male, 20 let, high school, single
R12A	Faculty	Moldova, male, 37, high school, divorced
R13C	Faculty	Russia, female, 38, high school, married (in Ukraine), 2 children
R14A	Faculty	Ukraine, female, 27, high school, married, 2
R15C	Faculty	Ukraine, female, 40, high school, widow, 1
R16A	Faculty	Ukraine, male, 22, high school, married, 1
R17A	Faculty	Moldova, male, 23, high school, divorced
R18B	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, female, 34, high school, married, 2
R19B	Poštorná	Ukraine, female, 32, basic, married
R20A	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, male, 51, university, married, 2
R21A	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, male, 42, high school, married, 2
R22A	Velké Přílepy	Belorussia, female, 45, high school, divorced, 1
R23C	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, female, 25, skilled, divorced
R24B	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, male, 51, skilled, single
R25B	Frýdek-Místek	Ukraine, male, 64, married, 4
R26C	Faculty	Ukraine, male, 24, skilled, single
R27A	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, male, 45, high school, widow, 3
R28D	Poštorná	China, female, 29, basic, married, 2
R29B	Poštorná	Ukraine, male, 38, university, married, 1
R30D	Bělá-Jezová	Iraq, male, 26, basic, single
R31D	Bělá-Jezová	Sri Lanka, female, 20, high school, single
R32A	Poštorná	Kyrgyzstan, male, 24, basic, single
R33C	Poštorná	Ukraine, male, 36, high school – skilled, divorced, 1
R34A	Velké Přílepy	Ukraine, male, 27, high school, single
R35D	Velké Přílepy	India, male, 23, basic, single
R36D	Velké Přílepy	Viet Nam, male, 25, high school, single
R37C	Velké Přílepy	Russia, male, 37, high school – skilled, married, 2
R38B	Frýdek-Místek	Russia, male, 27, high school, divorced, 2
R39B	Frýdek-Místek	Russia, male, 28, skilled, single, 1
R40B	Frýdek-Místek	Ukraine, male, 42, basic, married
R41D	Poštorná	China, male, 24, high school, single
R42A	Poštorná	Ukraine, male, 45, basic, single
R43D	Poštorná	Ukraine, male, 28, basic, high school, single

Notes: Types of respondents:

- A) Heading for the country on purpose, economically active, in bondage of the clients
- B) Heading for the country on purpose, economically active, organizing their work and life by themselves
- C) Heading for the country on purpose, economically active, in bondage of the client at the beginning, then leaving the client and organizing the work and life by themselves
- D) They do not aim to stay in the country, only in transit on their way to a richer country of the EU.

63 interviews were performed (20 females and 43 men), nine of them were with contemporary irregular economically active migrants (they were not caught by Police and 54 interviews were conducted with migrants in detention centers in the Czech Republic).

In summation, the choice of respondents could not be other than of the purpose-oriented character. Naturally, this brings about the fact that “actual concrete patterns and

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contingent relations are unlikely to be ‘representative’, ‘average’ or ‘generalizable’” (Sayer 1992). Besides the general problem of the lack of representativeness, which is taken into account in the intensive research, the research team had to face other obstacles caused by the fact that the interview was held with an irregularly operating foreigner, who was either afraid of being given away and caught afterwards (foreigners still operating freely in the territory) or of the possibility that the facts revealed by him/her could somehow complicate his/her situation or the present administration procedure (foreigners forced to stay in the detention centres)<sup>22</sup>.

Despite the mentioned methodological obstacles, the result of the interviews is relatively satisfactory and many of the responses can be ‘interpreted carefully’. At a macro analytical level we feel that at the given moment and under the given circumstances – via N=63 and their responses and stories/narratives – we reached to large extent the ‘saturation of knowledge’<sup>23</sup>.

### **3.2. Some selected basic characteristics of the set of respondents participating in the research**

In the whole set, two different groups of respondents are clearly differentiated according to the source countries and the character of the migration process: 1) migrants from Eastern Europe (arriving for economic reasons and thus in the country intentionally) and 2) migrants from Asia and Africa (transit migration).

Among transit migrants (N=26), Asia (N=22, mainly Viet Nam, China, Sri Lanka and India) dominates as a source region. Females represented 35 per cent of the Asian and African transit migrants. The composition of the economic migrants (N=37, mostly Ukrainians (27), followed by Russians (4) and Moldovans (2), females represented 30 per cent) in terms of age and family status in the investigated set is more homogenous than with the transit migrants where young (under 30) and single people prevail. The proclaimed higher education is related unambiguously to the economic migrants, a majority of whom stated completion of secondary education, whereas transit migrants stated completion of only basic education.

### **3.3. Analysis of the performed interviews**

The evaluation of all 63 performed interviews indicated that the given migrants/respondents, depending on the character of their behaviour and migration and integration strategies used, cluster into several basic types. The key differentiation factors

<sup>22</sup> In the first case, the mediating person, the Ukrainian, was of great help, and was able to inspire confidence. Also the academic environment of the faculty and the highly informal approach of the members of the research team helped in making the atmosphere more relaxed and establishing a bilateral atmosphere of confidence, although just for a short time. In the detention centres, it was the social workers present who were of help. It took a longer time to build confidence, nevertheless, perhaps the most important thing was reached – persuading most of the respondents that the research team was independent and did not work for any of the state organizations and that the results of the investigation would serve only for scientific purposes, or, could possibly, be of help in finding better solutions to some troublesome situations in which the illegal migrants in the Czech Republic find themselves. Admittedly, the financial or material reward might have stimulated participation in the research to a certain measure.

<sup>23</sup> “The point of saturation refers to validity in the sense that the information received is relevant to the problem of interest and no new information is coming up in the form of controversies or things hitherto unknown to the researcher from the field” (Agozino 2000).

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in creating the given typology of migration/integration models were the following important circumstances: 1) if the migrant aims at working or running a business in the Czech Republic either on a long-term or permanent basis, or perhaps at permanent settlement versus transition across the country; 2) the way in which the migrant is economically active here, above all if s/he is in bondage to client (who obtains and organizes work for them for a reward) or if they seek and arrange work by themselves or if there is a combination of both models – they started working under a client and then they got out of his/her bondage and started organizing everything by themselves. In our opinion, it is these two circumstances – the decision about the target country and the fact in what ‘free microenvironment’ the migrant organizes their economic activity – that in many aspects predetermine the nature and character of the whole stay (and many other aspects of their life) in the territory of the host country (i.e. the Czech Republic).

Based on the given facts, four basic types of migrants could be specified:

- A. heading for the country on purpose, economically active, in bondage of the clients;
- B. heading for the country on purpose, economically active, organizing their work and life by themselves;
- C. heading for the country on purpose, economically active, in bondage of the client at the beginning, then leaving the client and organizing work and living circumstances by themselves;
- D. not aiming at staying in the country, only in transit on their way to a richer country of the EU.

The fifth type is made up of two special groups that we do not give any additional detailed commentary on, due to their specific character (see below).

E. Specific cases.

- In the frame of the typology, the representatives of the source countries created specific groups depending on nationality. While the types A to C are represented above all by migrants from the countries of the former Soviet Union, mainly Ukraine, but partially also from other countries from the European part of the former Soviet Union (see Table 1), type D is represented by the citizens of typical developing and more geographically distant countries (e.g. India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, China, Nigeria).
- In this chapter we make use of or interpret the responses of the following 43 respondents, whose closer specification is given in Table 1. We will introduce the main features, mechanisms, conditionalities and characteristics of the particular types of migration and integration behaviour of the migrants investigated. Throughout this section we will present a full version of one ‘typical interview’ as the ‘flagship’ of the given type. This given story will always be completed with a number of extracts from other interviews.

### **3.3.1. Basic migratory types I**

#### **Type A – Bondsmen/women**

The story given below depicts, in short, the nature of many adventures that these migrants have to face. The key importance belongs to the position of submission and dependence on the mediators of work (clients) who exploit their bondsmen/women and from the bondage of which these migrants have not freed themselves for various reasons.

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The asylum regime is misused as a 'cover up', under which irregular work flourishes<sup>24</sup>. It is rather through a limited measure that the migrants establish stronger human relationships. Even their link to their fellow countrymen/women's communities, not to mention the link to the Czech institutions, is rather of a marginal character. The economic situation of no escape is often accompanied by the failure of other relationships (both personal and 'institutional'), by pessimism and by unclear strategies for future behaviour.

R12A I decided to immigrate into the Czech Republic for economic and psychic reasons. I was a worker of high rank in a wine producing plant and I started criticizing the falsehood in the wine production (they made two out of one wine), so I was fired. This happened in 1995. I was unemployed for a long time and started having problems in the family, too. I got divorced. Then they kept taking me to the court and asking why I was not working. If I had worked, I would have spent more on the transport than how much I could have earned.

*I knew that in the nearby village there was a driver who took migrants to Italy and to Czechia. So I paid him USD 75 for the tourist visa and USD 100 for the journey (paid off only in Czechia, arrival in August 2000). We crossed the border without any problems. He discharged us at Náchod and on the first day the client came and took us to a construction site in Prague. The owner of the construction was Czech and the client issued the invoices for us. I was paid about CZK 35 – 45 per hour. First I was a bricklayer's man and later I did almost all kinds of work. In 2002 I decided to apply for asylum and I was 20 days in the asylum centre and then, thanks to my connections, I managed to get work in Prague - Uhřetěves at a construction site. The owner did not want to pay me without invoices, so I had to find a client. At night I worked as a watcher and during the day as a bricklayer's man. I was in charge of all the machinery. I was satisfied, and the owner treated me fairly; he was a sort of an old communist. The client paid me CZK (Czech crowns) 55 per hour. I used to send the money home to my sister, altogether about USD 2,000, but I do not any more. In 2003 my only son drowned in Moldavia and my sister did not tell me. It is awfully grievous to talk about it, today he would be 11 years old; I do not want to speak about it. When I saved about USD 2,000 I was assaulted at the construction site at Uhřetěves. It was the Ukrainian mafia and I think that my client told them about me, because it was him who knew how much money I had and where. They threatened me with death, so I gave them the hidden money. I changed the client and started working at a construction site at Láň, again as a watcher and bricklayer. The wage was CZK 55 per hour. Now I work at a construction site in Prague – Řepy, and I stay with the Ukrainians.*

*I do not meet any fellow-countrymen and I do not meet any foreigners either; I do not trust them. In Moldavia I keep contacts only with my neighbours. I have two Czech friends – one is from Kladno and the other from Prague. I met them at the construction site.*

*I did not get asylum and in 2002 the validity of my passport expired. I tried to prolong the passport, but the Moldavian consul does not come to Prague any more (I phoned her). I wanted to buy the work permit, but I do not have the passport and I do not have anybody at home who would get the new passport for me. For me, it is a situation without any solution; I do not want to return home, I have sad memories. I do not know what I will do in the future, how to solve this situation. I am also afraid that the police could stop me – I think they would not take a bribe and they would expel me immediately.*

<sup>24</sup> The current Czech legislation enables the applicants for asylum to work legally only after the expiration of one year from submission of the application for asylum.



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## Type B – Independent and with support from friends

The story below depicts the hard life of a migrant in irregularity, nevertheless it is considerably different from the story of the type A in the fact that the migrant is, mostly thanks to his/her courage and ability but also to the assistance of social links (often of family members, countrymen/women, and sometimes of friends from the Czech society), able to organize his/her work and life on his/her own terms, without the controlling role of the mediators/clients who often exploit the migrants heartlessly. Also, for representatives of type B the future outlook into future is clearer and more optimistic, often with the goals of settling down in the country.

*R18B In March 2004 I got a half-year tourist visa, then I submitted an application for consolidating the family and it did not come out well (my father and husband are staying in Czechia legally). Since that time I have been here irregularly. Once, as I was coming back from my friends, a police patrol caught me, and everything was given away. At the beginning I came here with my husband in his car – from our home in the Transcarpathian Ukraine. My husband keeps dogs in Czechia but we have quarrelled lately and have not lived together.*

*I have been coming to Czechia for 13 years already. My children (sons who are now 13 and 10) are with their grandmother in the Ukraine. I myself have not been home for 2 years. Otherwise, I have been circulating between Czechia and home, and I have always had a tourist visa.*

*My job here in Czechia was excellent. I found it thanks to my husband and his friends. I cooked in a pub outside Prague, in the district Prague-East. I had super conditions; it was a steady job and a good collective. I earned about CZK 24,000 net a month. I have never used the client or the client system. I stayed in a rented flat with my husband. It was a room and a kitchen, and my husband's employer arranged it for us. My husband paid for the flat about CZK 2,000 a month.*

*I feel homesick. I have good contacts with the Ukrainians here, but there are few of them. I have many more contacts with the Czechs; these contacts are also good. I used to spend my free time with my woman friend. We used to go shopping to Prague, to have a little coffee ...; I sometimes also rode a horse. However, I am not involved in any organisations.*

*I often phone and write to my family back home in the Ukraine. My husband also sends money through his friends. I have not met bribes, blackmailing or discrimination and I have not had to do with any other breach of the law either. Now I am prohibited from staying in Czechia. After the expiration of one year I certainly want to come back with the children and to legalize my stay here. I clearly see a better future here for myself and also for my children than in the Ukraine. We want to take root here.*

## Type C – Those who have learnt a lesson and the courageous ones

The story is an apposite to another type whose characteristic feature is that the migrant, once dependent on the mediator/client gets out of his/her bondage after a certain time and starts organizing his/her own economic activities and life. This type represents a kind of a transition model.

*R23C I studied for 11 years and then I learned the job of a florist. My parents and siblings are backing home, in the Ukraine in Lutsk.*

*To Czechia I came on December 26, 2003 and it was for economic reasons. I got the tourist visa through a mediator for USD 200 and I came to Prague by coach on my own. A*

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*contact person was expecting me there who took me to a lodging-house. I got a job at Česká Lípa where I worked as a cleaner at a building site – this was only for 14 days. Then I got a job through a friend of mine and went to Klatovy where I worked for half a year with pallets. Again I stayed in a lodging-house near Klatovy, which was paid by the client. I used to get CZK 45 an hour. There were two Ukrainian women staying in the room with me, and there were also some other Ukrainian people there. We did not have a fridge and the cooker was in the room. After half a year I came back to Prague and I wanted to earn money even without the client. When I wanted to interrupt the contacts with them, they did not want to let me go and they kept on calling me. Finally I changed my phone number and they left me alone.*

*In 2004 I was checked by the policemen in Prague; my documents were not in order, so I asked for asylum. I was brought to the asylum centre at Vyšné Lhoty, then to Stráž pod Ralskem, and from there I left for Prague. After a certain time I always checked the mail that had arrived at Česká Lípa at an address that I had given. My countrymen – friends were to inform me in case I got a notification from the court or some other mail. Sometimes I even went there to check it. Unfortunately it did not work; I did not pick up the notification denying me asylum, and so I did not know I was staying here irregularly – none of my friends called me.*

*I was detained at the Austrian border where I was going shopping at the duty free zone with a Czech woman friend. After submitting the passports at the border, the policeman detained me saying that my documents were not in order and that I had been in Czechia irregularly for three months. I was told I had to leave the country immediately, and I told them I would leave by the first coach the following or the next day. In the end they detained me however and took me to Vyšné Lhoty (I did not try to bribe them) and from there they took me further to Velké Přílepy. Everything happened at Easter, so now I have been here for 14 days. After being released I want to return home and have a rest.*

### **3.3.2. Elaboration on basic migratory types I**

#### **Motivation for leaving the source country/or motivation for coming to the Czech Republic**

The motivations for migration of nearly all respondents were predominantly economic factors, but there are additional factors in play. The extracts given below confirm some of the following factors: the importance of the cultural propinquity of the source and target countries (post-Soviet space vis-à-vis the Czech Republic), ‘family reasons’, possibly consolidation or completing the family, health problems in the family, crime and contacts with the uncompromising mafia, religions intolerance, aversion to the military service and different political opinions. As another possible reason entering into play the aspect of ‘administrative and bureaucratic burden’ can be noticed, which is the price and time necessary for arranging the documents needed for entering and staying in the potential target country.

*R20A I came because I could not find a job back home in the Ukraine. Earlier I worked as an agronomist in a cooperative farm. After ‘liberating the Ukraine’ the cooperative farms went bankrupt, and there were 700 agronomists like me without work in the given region. I wanted to be a farmer but there were no loans available. Simply it was not possible. ...Then, my son was getting married. I borrowed money for the wedding – USD 1,500. I had to pay it off, and I also wanted to contribute to my grandchildren ....*

*R22A In Belorussia I worked on a computer as a production technician. But the factory paid little, so my husband and I wanted to go abroad. In Belorussia there are various professional companies offering visas for abroad. My husband left for France this way and now our son has followed him there. I did not want to go at all, because of the*

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language. ...Then a woman friend who worked in Czechia told me I could make myself understood in Czechia and that it was possible to earn quite a lot of money there. And she also promised to help me.

R16A I left because I simply wanted to try it. In Czechia I had had my mother-in-law for about 1.5 years. It was her who prepared everything for me; I just went to Kiev to pick up the working visa and everything went relatively smoothly.

R21A I came to Czechia because we are all Slavs.

R27A I come from a village in the Charkiw region in the Ukraine. I have a secondary education with an electrowelder specialisation. I have three children aged 10 to 17, and my wife died of cancer at the age of thirty. Because of her treatment we are very indebted; she underwent two operations in Germany. I borrowed EUR 10,000 and USD 10,000. Now I need money to pay the debts.

R25B I had to escape from the Ukraine. I had problems with the mafia. In the elections I voted for one president who wanted to make an economic zone in the Sub-Carpathian Ukraine, so in fact I was helping him, and then I paid dear. I had to get out of the way.

And moreover, during my military service I made a lot of enemies ....

R29B In the Ukraine we had problems with religion – my wife is Korean – Buddhist and I am Catholic. In the Ukraine it meant trouble for us.

R24B In the Ukraine I heard that Czechia was a good country to live and work in, so I wanted to move here. I also heard about Prague as a beautiful city. So I sold my flat in the Ukraine and came to Prague.

R15C I left for Czechia because I have to support my daughter who is in the last year of the obligatory school education by myself (her grandmother takes care of her back in the Ukraine), and because my daughter wants to continue studying at the Institute....

R26C The reason why I came was lack of work and badly paid work in the Ukraine. As a driver I earned about 1,500 a month when converted to Czech currency.

R3C I did not want to go to Slovakia because they pay less there. And Germany is too expensive – you pay about USD 2,000 for the visa and another USD 300 for the arrangement of all other documents for a one-year stay....

## Forms of arrival in the Czech Republic

Most of the migrants arrive in the Czech Republic legally with valid tourist visas with different lengths of validity (most often from two weeks to half a year). To obtain the visa, migrants very often pay the mediating organization, and sometimes relatives or friends are of help. The visa does not allow the individual to work and, moreover, its validity expires soon. The migrants get into an irregular position due to their economic activity. The cases of irregular, 'wild' crossing of the 'green' state border do not seem to be so frequent with this type at all, although they do exist (see for example R32A). The statement of R13C indicates that getting all necessary documents arranged in the source country may get the migrant a higher probability into the position of a bondsman.

R20A I came on July 24, 2004 to Czechia with a two-week tourist visa. But it expired and since then I have stayed here illegally.

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*R39B I came to Czechia as a tourist to join my parents who have been living here for a long time. They advertised Czechia very much.*

*R22A To the mediating company from our town I paid EUR 180 for the tourist visa, and I bought a ticket for the coach to Prague from a travel agency.*

*R17A I came in 2003. My brother had already been working here for 4 years and helped me with money and the visa. I came with a trade licence and a one-year visa. I arrived by coach. I had arranged everything at the consulate in Romania.*

*R32A My friend gave me a contact who takes people to Poland. I paid USD 250 to him (100 in Kiev and the rest after crossing the border). I travelled at the back of the truck with three other people I did not know. After crossing the border, the driver stopped and we paid the rest to him and he took us to Warsaw. I spent 3 days in Warsaw, and I paid zloty 20 a night for accomodations. There I also met a Kyrgyzstanian who had already applied for asylum in Czechia and wanted to get back there, so I decided to go with him. He knew a contact who could show us where to cross the border to Czechia. When we arrived by train in Kłodzko at 9 in the morning, we called him (he was Czech), and he waited for us at the post office and drove to the border and showed us which way to go, and he promised to wait for us at the Vietnamese stands across the border in Czechia. And he really waited for us there and drove to Prague. For that service he wanted EUR 160. We were crossing the border on Sunday at 10 o' clock. Right after arriving I applied for asylum at Frýdek –Místek<sup>25</sup>.*

*R13C I came to Czechia with a tourist visa for 12 days, and I paid a person who had arranged the visa in Kiev (it cost USD 90). I gave USD 50 for the coach ticket. After arriving I went to work as early as the following day. It had been arranged already in the Ukraine. I had the flat and work arranged but I did not know what I would do – I was ready to do anything. On the phone I learned about where I was to go to work after my arrival – I washed dishes in a restaurant. ... There are two possibilities of gaining the documents. One possibility is to gain the documents in the Ukraine but is problematic because it takes longer and you are then dependent for a longer time on the 'client' in Czechia until the money is paid back to him (it takes about 2 months). The other possibility is to travel with a tourist visa, in that case you work right on your own and you try to arrange the documents later....*

### Circumstances of the performed economic activity

The presented facts indicate how much the client system is exploited, whether it is the low payment for work or no payment at all, or the working conditions and length of working hours. The migrants get involved in the system in the source country or in Czechia. It is often a well organized activity (one client in the source country with links to the other in the target country). Sometimes a certain role is played by relatives or friends. The clients differ in their inhumane practices. Whereas some of them are more than cruel, others use milder and 'more human' forms of exploitation, and they arrange several things

<sup>25</sup> R33C also spoke about the way of illegally crossing the state border: "My brother's friend advised me in Uzhgorod and organized the journey to Czechia. We went 4 – me, two Ukrainians (I did not know them) and I guide (a friend of that acquaintance, also an Ukrainian). In Uzhgorod and nearby villages, there are a lot of guides, it is not difficult to find them. Those two paid USD 1, 000, it was cheaper for me because it was through a friend – for USD 300 in cash, paid on the spot. We crossed the Ukrainian-Slovak border on foot crossing the woods (over the Lysá mountain), the guide knew the way well. We came to a village where a minibus was waiting for us. That took us over Slovakia and we even crossed the Slovak-Czech border in it - we drove along a forest road. Then we arrived".

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for the migrant. It is evident that many migrants exchange the client in the course of the stay, in connection with his/her behaviour.

It seems that among the frequent practices of organizing the irregular work and stay of migrants in the country is arranging false documents or their unauthorized prolongation (this happens outside of the standard approving procedures). The detention and detection of the irregularity of the stay and/or work by the Czech police is often solved by the migrant's application for asylum.

A cruel economic environment is often described by migrants categorized as type B. Unlike type A, however, the life of the migrants of type B is 'relieved' due to the belief in their own strength and abilities and to a strong network of friends and acquaintances, which enables them to act in a relatively independent way. From some responses you can feel a mutual and strong human relationship established between the migrant and some countrymen/women or representatives of the majority society (e.g. R24B). Such relationships then in many ways relieve the 'unbearability of being' in irregularity. It was also evident, however, that the non-existence of the mediator/client does not necessarily mean the end of the usual exploitation. This negative role can sometimes be taken on by the employer (see R25B).

The extracts from the interviews document in what way and under what conditions the relationships between the migrant and the mediator/client works and how some of the migrants broke this link and launched out on their own in terms of 'organization'. Although the responses do not signal any 'dramas', getting out of the bondage of the mediators surely is not simple for the migrant and it is the personal courage, often supported by the existing strong social links that is of great help here.

*R11A I have already been in the Czech Republic for two years working with a Ukrainian company building for a Czech. I do all kinds of work at the building site. Ukrainians, Slovaks, Armenians and Czechs work at the building site. I know some Czech people working for the Ukrainian company. I work illegally but I have a permit to stay. In the morning I get up at five o'clock, I commute to work for half an hour; in winter I work for 10 hours, in summer for 12 hours, I have normal lunch breaks. In the Czech Republic I met a client who issues invoices for my work. I have the documents arranged by another person. The first arrangement cost CZK 7,000, the second year was free and the third year cost CZK 7,000 again. I earn CZK 10 – 15,000 a month (CZK 70/hour, earlier CZK 49/hour). The client invoices CZK 85. I pay for the accommodations myself. I still have work for three weeks (we work outside – it is cold there). Then I am going home to sit for the exams (I study high school back home). It happened once that the client did not pay CZK 10,000 to me. It is normal to happen. I have to be careful who gets the documents ready for me because they collect USD 1,000 and then they give you false documents.*

*R14A I have been here for one year already. I started working immediately in a restaurant in the centre (with a disco and striptease; the owner is Czech). A woman friend arranged the work for me. I started working at night doing dishes, now I work during the day. I do all that is necessary, mostly chinaware, but I also peel garlic, potatoes, and onions. My hands are chapped a lot; I always have to hide them. I get a monthly wage. A female Ukrainian client pays it to me. I work 11 – 13 hours daily, also on Saturdays and Sundays. I have free time only when I go shopping or when I am ill. It is about once a month, but then my body starts aching, so it is better not to stop working. The client pays me CZK 40 an hour (15,000 a month) but I do not know how much the owner of the restaurant pays to her. I have two meals at work.*

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*R16A In Czechia I started working for the first two weeks for a private businessman at Čelákovice near Prague (my boss was my mother-in-law). I got CZK 75 an hour net. We made the roof on the building, balconies on the houses and so on. However, this good work came to an end in a short time. My present client takes good care of me – for example now, with the frosts (as low as –20° C) it is warm at the construction site, the building is heated inside and I appreciate it a lot ... The clients are different; they want to be trusted by their workers, but perhaps I was lucky with them. When I was leaving for home last for a ten-day visit, my current client even gave me 500 crowns bonus for the well done work.*

*R17A Last year I worked four months for a construction company. Now I am working for a Vietnamese, he is an engineer and set up a shop and I do the construction work in his shop. I do not always prepare an invoice. I have people who prolong my visa every year for me – it costs me CZK 6,000-8,000. I only pay social insurance, not the health insurance. When I have a problem, I go to see my doctor and I pay cash to her.*

*R25B After arriving I started running a business, but under a borrowed name. I worked mainly for Ukrainian businessmen, still under a borrowed name. The beginning was hard. Mainly my friends helped me. First I got paid CZK 35 an hour. In the end I got paid CZK 50 an hour. On average I worked 12 or more hours, so I had CZK 500 a day, but the employer deducted money for food and accommodation, so often there was only about CZK 200 left. I was not paid at all several times. They owe me about CZK 70,000, but when you work illegally, you do not have a place to complain. They kept excusing themselves: “You see, my subcontractor did not pay to me, so I do not have anything to pay you...”*

*R24B Through my friends I got a job and accommodation with an old couple (they were both over 80). The gentleman is a reputable fruit-grower – he has a large orchard in Prague, so I stayed with them, and from spring to autumn I helped him in the orchard, and in winter I helped them with the house and maintenance. I also took meals with them, and I was given a small wage. I had trouble with my stomach and the landlord even got the medicine for me. I like both of them very much. I was staying there till I was arrested – 2.5 years altogether.*

*R13C After a week of washing the dishes I got an allergy from the detergent and I had to stop. I called the client but he refused to pay me for the week I worked, and he did not change the type of work either. I was promised to get 40 crowns an hour. Then I found a job myself with a Czech. I worked 15 hours a day for about CZK 450 but I had free meals and accommodation.*

*R40B I mostly worked at construction sites. From the beginning I changed employers pretty often, however, last five years I work for one company as a small businessman using my trade license. Except for one case when employer did not pay me about 60,000 crowns I got my money for my work. On average I worked about 80 hours a week. We had good relations in our working team therefore I liked my job.*

## Life conditions

It was found that the housing of migrants in the Czech Republic is in disparate forms and quality: from ‘homelessness’ to lodging-houses to renting flats. There are cases of living in demeaning conditions of overcrowded and scarcely equipped spaces, and also of relatively good quality of living in terms both of the number of roommates and the level of equipment. Quality of the housing depends upon the possibility and willingness of the

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migrants to pay the rent, where the prices differ in a relatively considerable way. Housing of lower quality is often paid in the framework of the so-called client system.

*R27A I lived with a group of Czech homeless people; we supported each other. We stayed in the deserted spaces of a house in Prague 8 on Sklenářská Street, close to the iron scrap yard. The police caught me when they were checking my documents three days ago, and I applied for asylum yesterday.*

*R17A I have been staying at a lodging-house for three years, and my brother lives with his wife in another room. I pay CZK 2,650 monthly. I share the room with a friend. We bought a television and a fridge. I live in the lodging-house also because it is near my work....*

*R20A I lived in Prague with 7 - 8 other workers, actually there were 14 of us in two rooms. The cooking was rather complicated, and we all had 40 liters of hot water for bathing.*

*R3C In Prague I lived in the dormitory at Dejvice where there was a kitchen, a shower and 4 people in a room. There were two buildings in the dormitory; one was 'Slovak' and the other 'Ukrainian and Russian'. Perhaps 150 people lived in each of them....*

*R13C I lived in a flat with 12 women (3 rooms with 4 women each, one toilet, one bath, clean bed-clothes, 'everything OK'). It was a flat in the attic of a five-story house. The Ukrainians and Czechs lived on the first floor....*

*R15C When I am free at the weekend, I clean and tidy my flat, and sometimes I go and see the shops nearby. But what I want most is to have a good sleep. I do not go anywhere for entertainment, no beer, no gambling. I save a lot, and I pay only the flat, the fare and food. The rest I send back home to the Ukraine. I send the money every month – about 9,000 Czech crowns, mostly through my friends....*

## Links to the environment

The social links with the irregularly active migrants are logically minimalized, and they are realized (although again rather to a limited measure) mostly only in the frame of the working collective or at the place of accommodation. As the extracts exemplify, blackmailing gangs functioning on an ethnic basis probably also exist. The willingness to be bribed and sometimes even demanding bribes by the representatives of the state institutions (mainly police) are mentioned by some of the respondents. On the contrary, other migrants have never countered these circumstances.

As is also exemplified by the flagship story of type B, the migrants in this group are more self-confident, and this may also be the reason for their indicated relatively increased involvement in the life of the majority society. Rather rare visits to the source country then correspond with the danger impending an irregular migrant at every crossing of the State border. Confirmed also was the (expected) sending of remittances to the source country and the exploiting practices of some banks.

*R11A Once I was mugged at Národní třída. They were Ukrainians who heard me speaking Ukrainian, and threatening me with a knife, they demanded my mobile phone which I gave to them to save myself.*

*R21A Last month I was working at a construction site at Slavia and I went to buy a snack at Kaufland in my work clothes. I had 50 Czech crowns for the snack, and two policemen stopped me and wanted to see my passport. When*

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*they found out I did not have it (I keep it at home), they wanted 1,000 Czech crowns, but I did not have anything not even a mobile phone, so they took me to the alien police.*

*R20A I have never met with bribes.*

*R19B I send home about USD 100 perhaps once every two to three months. I use the services of a Russian bank. Their interest is only 3.9 per cent unlike Western Union that charges 14 per cent interest! I also paid USD 100 once in Prague when I was caught by the police patrol. They wanted 3, 000 Czech crowns and then they let me go.*

*R2C I have my own experience with corruption. Once we were carried in a minibus – a vehicle full of illegal foreigners – and we were caught by the police. The client paid 100,000 Czech crowns and they let us go. This was some time in 2004. I myself gave several one-hundred crown banknotes in the underground where the city police caught me. Then they let me go immediately. I have heard about many cases of corruption from other people. I sometimes feel the discrimination; I was not paid several times, and sometimes, when they see me, they say ‘a Russian’ and they just wave their hands....*

*R5C At the Czech border I gave a bribe of USD 500, and yet they wrote in my passport - undesirable for 2 years.*

*R2C I am not homesick so much. I call my mother about once a month, and I have a sister in Moscow. I am also in touch with her. I have not been home for about 8 years because of the problem with my documents. I send as much as USD (no amount given in this sentence) to my mother about once every two months through Western Union. I have a lot of friends, Czechs, Ukrainians, and I lead quite a fancy life here – I go swimming, I help out unofficially in the association of voluntary firemen etc.*

### **3.4. Basic migratory types II**

#### **Type D – Desperate, confused and naive**

This story symbolizes the migration experience of many transit migrants detained in the Czech Republic. The basic difference of type D, represented by migrants from distant developing countries from the ‘post-Soviet’ types A, B, C, lies in the fact that these migrants do not choose the Czech Republic on purpose and primarily they do not want work or perhaps live here on a long-term basis. Their aim is to leave as soon as possible and to reach one of the desired and more developed EU countries. ‘The desperation’ often results from the really critical situation in their source countries, ‘the confusion and naivety’ then from the way in which they realize their journey to the desired aim: they are often in bondage of the guides (traffickers), they are helpless, not oriented and not informed about the life in Europe or the administrative mechanisms that logically affect them and determine their life stories in a considerable way.

*R1D I am 31 and I come from Sri Lanka. I am single, childless, and I have taken ten classes at school so I only have basic education (partly due to the permanent conflicts with the Tamils). I have a close friend in Italy. I have been in detention for 1.5 months. My parents decided my life would be better in the developed world rather than in our country where there is permanent danger, even of death, because of the conflicts with the Tamils – we often have to hide underground, there is shooting and so on. When I was a little girl, they killed my brother, and that is why my parents wanted to get me to a safe place, best to*



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*Italy. So I set off for the journey and paid EUR 10,000 for the transport to Italy. I stayed for some time in a motel in Colombo where two male agents came to pick me up. They took me with them. First I went by plane, and then I went twice in a small truck (I was normally sitting on a seat). Then they discharged me near the border and told me I was already in Italy. The whole journey took one day and one night (I slept in the truck). I walked a bit but suddenly they caught me at the border and only there I recognized that it was not Italy. They were Czech frontier guards. I did not have money or a passport ... Unfortunately, that was the end of the journey. I have friends in Italy, and I would immediately apply for asylum there. My parents sent me there. So I applied for asylum here in Czechia, and I would like to stay here although I have no friends here. I phoned my mother and asked for some information about Czechia. It is fine here. My mother advises that I could go further through your country or I could also stay here. After being released from the detention centre, someone will help me.*

*...I will see; I am very homesick.*

### **3.4.1. Elaboration on basic migratory types II**

Motivations for leaving the source country/motivations for coming to the Czech Republic

The samples of the outlined motivations for leaving most typically developing and geographically distant source countries signal a much diversified mosaic of reasons. There are heterogeneous motives based on the ethnic-religious conflicts, unaccepted political orientation, discrimination of women, (tradition of the agreed upon marriages), debts, possible criminal delinquencies, and the simple fulfillment of one of the secondary needs of man - the desire to learn something new, to experience adventure. It is unambiguously shown that in the case of these migrants, the Czech Republic is not the intended target country in their plans but just a space for transit by means of which they want to get farther to the West – especially to Italy, or to Germany or France where established immigration communities of their ethnic groups exist. They often aim to reach their relatives or friends and the motive of ‘consolidating the family’ penetrates the reasons for both leaving and coming (both ‘push’ and ‘pull’ migration factors). They sometimes seem to have appeared in Czech Republic by a sort of accident and, in their disorientation and under the pressure of the events; they do not fully refuse the idea of a potential, more permanent stay in this country. A possible reason of the transit through Czech Republic is sometimes the relatively easy access to the Czech visa in their motherland.

It is as if the economic conditionality of their arrival had disappeared from their motivations, which can be indirectly deduced from their responses. Not emphasizing the economic motives by the given migrants is quite logical, with respect to their participation in the asylum procedure because this admission would clearly disqualify them in the procedure.

*R28D We started having debts back home with my husband. That was one reason why I left. I was not sure about the target country. I had some awareness about Europe... that it is possible to earn more money there.*

*R4D We had terrorists back home in our village. My friend told me that in Europe they treat the foreigners well. So I was thinking about Europe, but I wanted to leave just for some time and to come back as soon as everything had settled down back home.*

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*R8D I come from a village in Nigeria. I left it because of family problems. It happened that my parents died, and my grandparents wanted me to marry my father's brother. So I sold the land I had from my parents and bought the airline ticket to Prague where I got the tourist visa. I arranged everything on my own. I wanted to work here so that I could send some money to my two younger sisters who stayed in Nigeria.*

*R9D I arrived in Prague by air in December 2005 with intermediate landing in some African town and then also in Europe. I got the visa for Czechia. Back home I worked at a construction site; I had work. I left because of political problems; I was a member of the political opposition. I was afraid to stay in Pakistan.*

*R30D It is not possible to live in Iraq. It is terrible there - street fighting, killing, hundreds of people lose their lives daily. I had a taxi business in Mosul but they started blackmailing me. I have relatives in Belgium and also in Germany.*

*R31D I only have a brother in Sri Lanka; my parents were lost in the tsunami. I have several relatives in Europe. My uncle, 3 aunts and grandmother have lived for about 15 years in London; they have settled there. My sister lives in Paris, France; she gained asylum there and is looking for work. I wanted to get to her in France. I left Sri Lanka because there are a lot of problems there, mainly there are permanent fights.*

*R43D my mother work in Italy, so, I wanted to follow her.*

## Forms of coming to- and leaving the Czech Republic

The information gathered on the arrival to and departure from the Czech Republic indicates that an overwhelming majority arrived by air (or perhaps in combination with an overland journey in a truck) and that travel is organized by mediators. The migrants of this type very often use the visa regime where the role of mediators seems to be important. After reaching the target country, the migrants very often make use of the possibility of applying for asylum. The naivety and certain confusion of the migrants results in many of them leaving the Czech Republic irregularly and applying for asylum in another EU country (mainly in Austria or Germany) without realizing that applying in both countries will be detected and that they will be sent back to the Czech Republic (see the Dublin Convention). One of the respondents (R28D) confirms an important fact, namely that the 'waiting houses' in which a great number of irregular transit migrants secretly stay and wait for a suitable opportunity as long as for several weeks or months, also exist in Central Europe.

There is no sense in analysing the circumstances of the performed economic activity or the life conditions or the links to the environment in this transit type of migrants as they were not economically active; they were detained immediately or they applied for asylum. On the contrary, the future strategies of their behaviour are partially discussed.

*R4D I got the visa for entering Czechia from an agent. I contacted him through a friend in Punjab. He recommended Czechia because he heard it was easy to get asylum there, and he took EUR 7,000. I arrived by air by myself, following the route of India – Dubai – Prague (with a tourist visa) and while in the transit space I applied for asylum. Later I left the camp [the asylum centre where he applied for asylum in Czechia] by myself. There were bad relations with other Indians. They caught me at the Austrian border when I wanted to cross. A taxi drove me to the border at about 10 o'clock in the evening. I found the taxi-driver in a 'night club'.*

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*R9D I arrived in Prague in December 2005 by air with intermediate landing in some African town and then also in Europe because I got the visa for Czechia. I applied for asylum at Vyšné Lhoty, and I was given a negative reply, so I wanted to go to Austria and to apply for asylum there. I travelled with another friend to Austria by train (without documents), and we got across the border and applied for asylum. They took my fingerprints and after a few days they sent me back to Czechia to detention.*

*R8D I arrived by air in March 2006. I flew to Egypt and from there to Prague. I came by myself; I did not know anybody here. They detained me at the airport because I did not have a passport. I applied for asylum in Czechia.*

*R28D There (probably in Poland – on the way from China to Austria – via Czechia) they picked us up at the airport – a Chinese and a European – and took us to a house where there were a lot of Chinese people. We were not allowed to leave the house. They took the passports away from us. There were about five rooms, they made the food for us, and we slept on the floor. It must have been somewhere in the country. We stayed there for about two months. We were waiting. Then we set off for the journey in a personal car.*

### Future strategies of the behaviour

The models of the future behaviour of the given migrants are diverse. Many of them still long for reaching the more developed EU countries; others have probably conceded the fact that they will return home, others would be grateful even for the possibility of staying in the Czech Republic.

*R6D My expulsion is written for a borrowed name. Next time I will try to come legally.*

*R7D In detention I applied with IOM for support to return voluntarily. I will wait until IOM gives me money for the air ticket to return home.*

*R10D In detention I applied for asylum, but I do not know what the result will be. I would like to stay here. I did not apply immediately after my arrival because I did not know anything about that possibility.*

## 3.5. Basic migratory types III

### Type E - Special types

In framing the migrant typology independently of the migrants citizenship, or of the fact if of intention, mostly economically conditioned, or only transit through Czechia, there appear two specific, less numerous, but still important types: the first type is characteristic of migrants who come irregularly from an already developed EU country (in our set from Italy, France, the Netherlands, and Germany). As the migrants said, their motive is both the very restrictive environment in the core countries of the EU (for example, it is very difficult to gain asylum) and the easier way of finding a job in the Czech Republic. The other type is specific in the fact that the main actors have certain characteristic qualities, or they have been through some events that have determined their lives in a very significant way and that have modified their life stories to such a measure that they have departed from any 'average stories' – these individuals may be reaching the retirement age, become pregnant, gave birth or encountered serious health complications.

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### 3.6. Conclusions of the qualitative survey

This contribution evaluates the results of semi-structured interviews held in the years 2005 and 2006 with 63 irregular migrants in the Czech Republic, both with those who are irregularly economically active and operate in the country freely and with those who have been detained by the police and stay in the detention centres. In terms of methodology the survey is based on the principles of critical realism characterized by Sayer (e.g. Sayer 1992) where the character of irregular migration, way of life and working activities in irregularity with migrants is analysed by applying the so-called intensive approach (in a way equivalent to qualitative approaches), stressing the recognition of the causalities, conditionalities and functionalities of the mechanisms. The investigation is done based on the analysis of migrants' life stories (or rather of their selected segments).

The evaluation of the life stories of the irregularly present and/or irregularly economically active migrants in the Czech Republic is based on a simple typology. The key differentiation factors were as follows: 1) If the migrant aims at either long-term or permanent working or running a business, or settling down in the Czech Republic permanently versus transitioning through the country, and 2) if the migrant is economically active in the bondage of a client, without a client or if they have rid themselves of the client in the course of time. Based on this, four basic types of migrants could be distinguished in the investigated sample:

1. Heading for the country on purpose, economically active, in bondage to the clients;
2. heading for the country on purpose, economically active, organizing their work and life by themselves;
3. heading for the country on purpose, economically active, in bondage of the client at the beginning, then leaving the client and organizing their work and life by themselves;
4. not aiming at staying in the country, only in transit on their way to a richer country of the European Union.

Economically conditioned arrival of the type A, B, and C migrants to the Czech Republic is typical namely of the citizens of the former countries of the Soviet Union, especially Ukraine. Besides purely economic reasons, which is the dominant reason, the importance of some other factors is confirmed including: the cultural closeness of the source and target country (post-Soviet space vis-à-vis the Czech Republic), family reasons, consolidation or completing the family in the destination country, health problems in the family, crime, involvement with the mafia in the source country, religious intolerance, refusing the military service in the source country, and different political views. Another possible reason appears as well; the aspect of the 'administrative and bureaucratic burden', the lower price of the visa and shorter time needed to arrange the documents necessary for entering the country and staying there.

Most of the migrants arrive in the country legally with valid tourist visa that costs €100-200. However, the visa does not allow them to work and subsequently they break the given regime either immediately or after a certain time when they begin with their economic activity. The cases of irregularly crossing the 'green' state border appear to be less frequent; the most frequent irregular entering of the Czech Republic with the given sample seems to be the zone of the Czech-Polish state border. The irregular position and participation in the 'client system' results in an easy exploitation on the part of the clients or direct employers. The presented facts also indicate how exploiting the client system is, whether it is the low wages for work or no payment at all, working conditions or length of working hours. Among the frequent practices of the irregular or quasi-regular work also

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belongs the arrangement of false documents or their unauthorized prolongation (corruption of the police is indicated by some respondents). To get out of the bondage of the mediators is not easy for the migrant (the client system often affects not only the working sphere but many times it also includes their services necessary for living). Those who are independent of the clients from the very beginning seem to be by far freer in the organization of their life and work and they proclaim greater involvement in the life of the Czech society. They are often supported by the strong social links to representatives of the majority or to chosen members of their own ethnic group.

Otherwise, the necessity of 'hiding themselves' from the police, the efforts to save 'as much money as possible' and the great fatigue due to working strongly influence the involvement which is generally rather very small of the irregular migrants into the life of the Czech community. Even the link to their countrymen/women community, not to speak about the Czech institutions, seems to be rather of a marginal character. A longer stay in the target country without family and children is often the cause of disrupted family (or possibly partners) relationships, leading to the divorce of the parents or a weakening of the family relationships when the children are raised by their grandparents. Also, the rather rare visits to the source country correspond with the danger the irregular migrants have to face whenever they cross the state borders. Sending remittances back to the source country is common, however, the exploiting practices of some of the banks is common as well.

In cases where the irregular operation of the migrants is detected by the police, a rough and ready solution is applying for asylum. After spending the necessary time in the refugee center, the expectants waiting for the decision about the granting/not granting of the asylum are allowed to stay outside these centres, which is again used for working activities. Due to the changing of their residence, the problems of non-delivery of the asylum decision occur. When the migrant is checked by the police, they get into the detention centre and their stay in the country is mostly finished by expulsion.

The type D migrants symbolize the transit migrants detained for various reasons in Czechia. This group is made up of immigrants from Asia and Africa (in our case most frequently Viet Nam, China, Sri Lanka and India) with whom the motive of the mere transit into the 'third' countries prevails. Very often a way out of a precarious personal situation is sought (in the subcontext economic reasons are also detectable), or this could possibly be a reflexion of much diversified instability and lack of freedom in the source country. In addition, certain 'break-away for adventure' can be the reason. A relatively frequent reason is the desire to join their relatives who are already living in one of the older EU member countries. These migrants are often in the bondage of traffickers who, due to the migrants' ignorance, naivety and desorientation in the new environment of Europe, often negatively affect their lives. For the traffickers it is relatively easy to manipulate the migrants and to cheat them without fulfilling the desired and difficult task of taking them safely to one of the older EU member countries; therefore, they often finish their journey in the Czech Republic.

In our sample, as opposed to the above-given types, young and single migrants with low education were more frequently represented among type D migrants. Unlike the migrants from the former Soviet Union, they have to pay for mediating the journey ahead.

The facts found in the comparative investigation indicate that besides many other migration and integration aspects (see Drbohlav 2002), also the situation in the field of irregular working and transit migration in Czechia is, in many terms, similar to how and what happens in the traditional more developed immigration countries (see, for example, parallels in Düvell 2006, Alt 2005, van Der Leun, Kloosterman 2006, Pai 2004 etc.; regarding the specific issue of payments for the migration see Petros 2005 or Futo-Jandl 2006).



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## 4. Irregular/Informal Economic Activities of Migrants in the Czech Republic (A Quantitative Approach)

The objective of this chapter is to present selected results of a sample survey from the field of irregular economic activities and related living arrangements of immigrants in the Czech Republic. Principal research questions target and compare a variety of immigrant groups based on the following criteria: their country of origin, the severity of their unlawful economic activities and the manner in which these activities are organized. We gave a special attention to the so-called “Client System”. It characterizes a specific way in which migrants’ irregular economic activities are managed and organized in the Czech Republic.

### 4.1. Methodology and Survey Design

Data was gained via a questionnaire survey. Questionnaires were administered to a sample of immigrants, working in an irregular way in the Czech labour market. In our research we divide irregular activities of migrants into two separate groups (see also section 1.2.). Completely irregular economic activity is performed by a migrant who does not possess either a work permit or a trade license. Alternatively, he or she possesses a residence permit (e.g. tourist visa) but he or she does not have a work permit or a trade licence. So called quasi-regular economic activity is tied to a situation in which the migrant holds a residence permit as well as a work permit or trade license but to a large extent violates labour- or business-related laws and rules. For example, he or she works in a different region, branch or profession or for a different employer than stated in his or her work permit. Alternatively, this individual smuggles goods or is employed although having a trade licence.

The survey was conducted in two rounds. The first round was completed in Prague and its environments between October 2005 and January 2006. The second round was conducted in selected regions throughout the whole Czech Republic (mostly the region of Karlovy Vary, Plzeň, České Budějovice, Liberec, Náchod, Ostrava and Brno) from March to October 2007.

The questionnaire consisted of 118 questions divided into areas of demographic and migration data, housing and social relationships and the economic activities in the chosen region.

Research was directed towards three important although diverse groups of immigrants in the Czech Republic. In the first largest group were citizens of the former USSR (Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians and Moldovans). The second group comprised persons from Viet Nam and China, while the third group was composed of citizens of developed countries, primarily North America. Due mainly to principle differences between immigrants from the “East” and the “West”, and rather a small group of Chinese respondents, only those immigrants from the Post-Soviet countries and Viet Nam were included into our analysis – it was, in total, 159 respondents (135 Post-Soviets and 24 Vietnamese).

The selection of respondents was “purposive”, it was organized by people that had knowledge of (and contacts to) particular immigrant community (e.g. selected NGOs or church representatives). These mediators addressed immigrants, explained them the task, guaranteed anonymity on behalf of the research team, and collected questionnaires after completion. Both mediators and respondents (via mediators) were paid for their time and endeavour.

Of course, we were not able to ensure a full representation of the selected sample of respondents due to the nature of irregular migration. Despite not having a representative sample, we believe that the given set of respondents revealed interesting and, indeed, important pieces of information that shed light on immigrants' lives.

The data set was processed using basic methods of adequate character of the pooled data – basic statistical analysis, frequency analysis and simple descriptive and association analysis, as well as hypothesis testing using nonparametric T-tests methods.

All analyses were carried out using the SPSS (SPSS Inc, Chicago, USA) statistical packages. The use of the data was in accordance with the statutory obligations to protect confidentiality. Individuals could not be identified from the data provided for analysis.

## 4.2. Results

### 4.2.1. Sample characteristics

Basic information about the surveyed sample of the immigrants is in Tables 1 to 5, separately for a group of immigrants from Post-Soviet countries and the group from Viet Nam. The composition of individuals in our sample with regard to age, gender, education and family status does not differ fundamentally from data featured in more representative studies of regular immigrants and in official Czech statistics (see e.g. Český statistický úřad 2006). Both groups of respondents differ primarily in family status and education. There are more single and higher educated Vietnamese respondents than those from Post-Soviet countries. The sample under investigation represents immigrants with various periods of residency in the Czech Republic; 50 per cent of whom have been in the country for more than three years.

Table 1: Sample of respondents by sex and country of origin

		Males	Females	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	67	68	135
	%	49.6	50.4	100
Vietnamese	Count	14	10	24
	%	58.3	41.7	100
Total	Count	81	78	159
	%	50.9	49.1	100

Table 2: Sample of respondents by age and country of origin

		-24	25-29	30-39	40+	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	17	29	54	35	135
	%	12.6	21.5	40.0	25.9	100
Vietnamese	Count	5	7	7	5	24
	%	20.8	29.2	29.2	20.8	100
Total	Count	22	36	61	40	159
	%	13.8	22.6	38.4	25.2	100



Table 3: Sample of respondents by family status and country of origin

		unmarried	married	divorced	widow/-er	partner	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	37	69	21	3	5	135
	%	27.4	51.1	15.6	2.2	3.7	100
Vietnamese	Count	15	9	0	0	0	24
	%	62.5	37.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
Total	Count	52	78	21	3	5	159
	%	32.7	49.1	13.2	1.9	3.1	100

Table 4: Sample of respondents by education and country of origin

		Basic	Lower secondary	Secondary	University	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	11	74	28	22	135
	%	8.2	54.8	20.7	16.3	100
Vietnamese	Count	2	5	10	6	23
	%	8.7	21.7	43.5	26.1	100
Total	Count	13	79	38	28	158
	%	8.2	50.0	24.1	17.7	100

Table 5: Sample of respondents by the length of the current stay in the Czech Republic and country of origin (in months)

	Months	- 12	13-24	25-36	37-	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	26	22	12	66	126
	%	20.6	17.5	9.5	52.4	100
Vietnamese	Count	3	1	4	14	22
	%	13.6	4.6	18.2	63.6	100
Total	Count	29	23	16	80	148
	%	19.6	15.5	10.8	54.1	100

#### 4.2.2. Transit into the target country

In general, the surveyed immigrants included in our study came to the Czech Republic from villages and towns of various sizes and categories of the countries of origin. Almost one quarter arrived in the Czech Republic from small municipalities (up to 2,000 inhabitants); approximately 40 per cent came from small- to medium-sized towns, while over one quarter of them came from large towns and cities. It is worth noting that 50 per cent of the Vietnamese immigrants came from cities with populations of 100,000 and more (Table 6).

The vast majority of the immigrants in our sample came to the Czech Republic through regular channels and in most cases via tourist visa. Approximately ten per cent of the sample crossed the borders irregularly. Of those, who entered irregularly, seven were smuggled into the country, six crossed the borders using false documents (passport or visa) and three crossed the borders irregularly on their own. Five of the irregular immigrants were from Viet Nam and had been mostly smuggled into the country. On the other hand, 11 irregular migrants were from the post-Soviet countries and they used forged documents to gain entry. Hence, in the Vietnamese sample such irregular migrants represented 21 per cent whereas in the post-Soviet sample only eight per cent entered the Czech Republic irregularly.

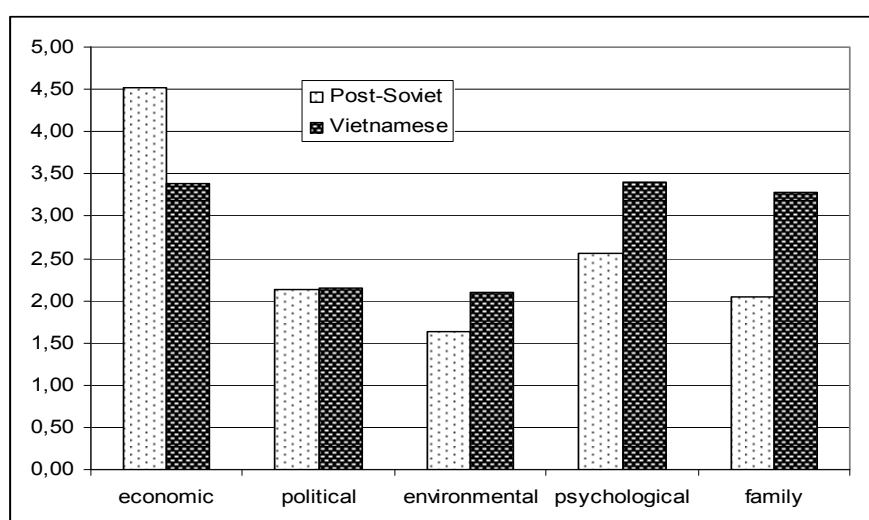
More than half of the respondents insisted that the decision to reach the Czech Republic far outweighed the regrets they would have by leaving their country of origin.

Table 6: Sample of respondents by size of the settlement in their country of origin

	Size of the settlement	-1,999	2,000-9,999	10,000-49,999	50,000-99,999	100,000-499,999	500,000+	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	34	31	23	15	10	15	128
	%	26.6	24.2	18.0	11.7	7.8	11.7	100
Vietnamese	Count	2	3	1	2	1	7	16
	%	12.5	18.8	6.3	12.5	6.3	43.8	100
Total	Count	29	34	24	17	11	22	144
	%	20.1	23.6	16.7	11.8	7.6	15.3	100

Figure 1 can help when deducing different motivations for the entry of immigrants into the Czech Republic. Single-valued dominance of economic reasons in the group of Post-Soviet immigrants compared with Vietnamese immigrants confirms generally accepted impressions of differences between those two communities. On the other hand, family reasons and opportunities to learn and to discover “something new” were of greater importance for the Vietnamese group of respondents. The study results show that political and environmental motives are not so important for migrants (from Post-Soviet countries and Viet Nam) who perform irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic.

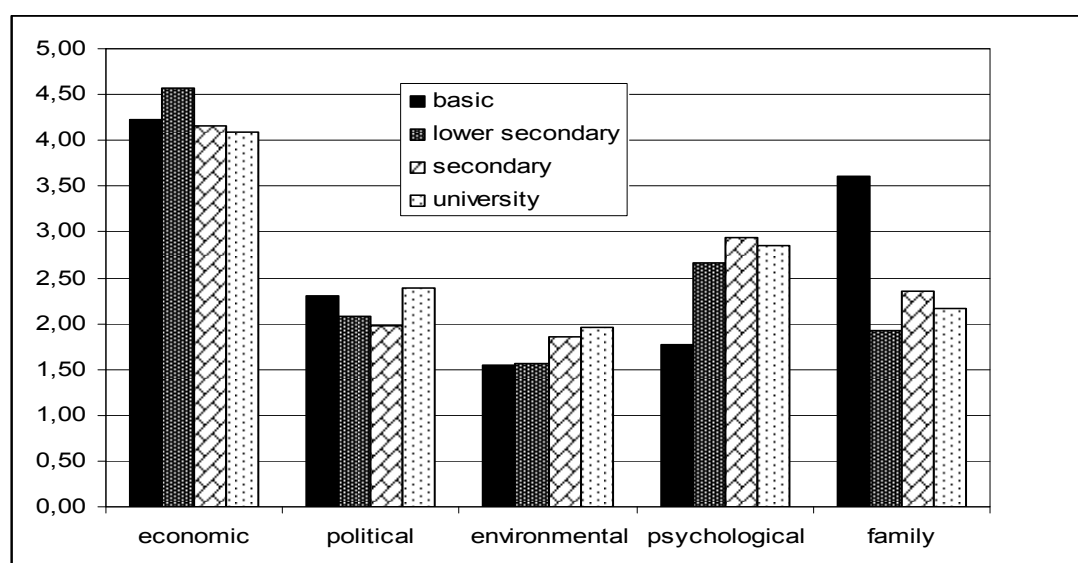
Figure 1: Importance of selected reasons that brought respondents to the Czech Republic (average importance) – by country of origin.



Note: The respondents rated the reasons on a scale of 1 (unimportant) to 5 (key).

Figure 2 brings the differentiation by education vis-à-vis declared reasons for coming to the Czech Republic. The economic situation is the dominant reason in all categories. For immigrants with lower education (basic, secondary lower, secondary higher) are economic reasons for arrival dominant (limited business opportunities, low wages, lack of employment opportunities in their countries of origin etc.). For immigrants with higher education the importance of psychological reasons increases (to discover something new, to gain new experience and experiences, and an adventure). Family reasons were more important for immigrants to the Czech Republic with the lowest education.

Figure 2: Importance of selected reasons that brought respondents to Czech Republic (average importance) – by education



Note: The respondents rated the reasons on a scale of 1 (unimportant) to 5 (key).

### 4.2.3. Economic activities

In Tables 7 and 8 subjective attitudes of the respondents are expressed regarding questions related to the breaking of labour and residency regulations. Results confirm that there is a wide range of unlawful activities. They vary from those who do not have work and residence permits to others who infringe upon some of the norms of labour law relations and often are unaware of it. Nearly half of the respondents (47 per cent) do not have work and residence permits. Little less than 40 per cent of the respondents can be included in the quasi-regular subgroup, while the proportion of respondents from Viet Nam is higher in this case (more than 50%) as compared to Post-Soviets.

Table 7: Sample of respondents by legality of employment or doing business by country of origin

		Yes/No	No	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	49	86	135
	%	36.3	63.7	100.0
Vietnamese	Count	13	11	24
	%	54.2	45.8	100.0
Total	Count	62	97	159
	%	39.0	61.0	100.0

Table 8: Sample of respondents by legality of current residency arrangement by country of origin

		Yes	No	Total
Post-Soviet	Count	66	69	135
	%	48.9	51.1	100.0
Vietnamese	Count	16	8	24
	%	66.7	33.3	100.0
Total	Count	82	77	159
	%	51.6	48.4	100.0

Table 9: Sample of respondents by legality of employment or doing business versus legality of current residency arrangement

			Employment/Business		Total
			Yes/No	No	
Residency arrangement	Yes	Count	60	22	82
		%	73.2	26.8	100.0
	No	Count	2	75	77
		%	2.6	97.4	100.0
	Total	Count	62	97	159
		%	39.0	61.0	100.0

To a large degree, the vocations of irregular immigrants resemble typical pattern of economic sectors recognized from officially published statistics of work permits. Employment in construction is typical of immigrants from Post-Soviet countries, while retail and wholesale (food, electronics etc.) is typical of immigrants from Viet Nam (Table 10). The net monthly income is closely connected to the type of employment and industry and it is € 437 for Post-Soviet immigrants and € 519 for Vietnamese immigrants. The demand for foreign labour and, especially, for irregular labour is permanently high. Immigrants from Post-Soviet countries work on average 11 hours a day while immigrants from Viet Nam work approximately nine hours a day. Over 80 per cent of immigrants report regular weekend work.

Table 10: Employment structure of respondents by economic sectors and country of origin

		Post-Soviet	Vietnamese	Total
Agriculture	Count	4	0	4
	%	3.0	0.0	2.5
Construction	Count	48	0	48
	%	35.8	0.0	30.4
Food industry	Count	15	0	15
	%	11.2	0.0	9.5
Other industries	Count	17	1	18
	%	12.7	4.2	11.4
Hotels/Restaurants	Count	16	3	19
	%	11.9	12.5	12.0
Trade	Count	3	0	3
	%	2.2	0.0	1.9
Wholesale	Count	1	8	9
	%	0.7	33.3	5.7
Retail	Count	1	5	6
	%	0.7	20.8	3.8
Transport	Count	1	1	2
	%	0.7	4.2	1.3
Services	Count	22	2	24
	%	16.4	8.3	15.2
Education	Count	1	0	1
	%	0.7	0.0	0.6
Domestic services	Count	4	1	5
	%	3.0	4.2	3.2
Other	Count	1	3	4
	%	0.7	12.5	2.5
Total	Count	134	24	158
	%	100	100	100

A point of interest is the distribution of immigrants by the size of businesses that employ them. As one might expect the majority is represented by small firms with up to 20 employees, which is typical of Vietnamese immigrants. Nevertheless, representation of larger companies is not insignificant too (see Table 11). In order to avoid detection, these companies tend to hire irregular workers as subcontractors. Majority of respondents – about 80 per cent – work with other foreigners who are predominantly members of their own community.

It is quite normal for immigrants not to have a medical insurance. It concerns especially Post-Soviet respondents, 75 per cent of them had none. On the contrary, 70 per cent of the immigrants from Viet Nam had medical insurance.

It can be presumed that irregular immigrants may experience higher levels of discrimination by the majority population. In fact, almost 40 per cent of the analysed sample reported that they were discriminated against either at work or in their daily lives. There was not a marked difference in reports of discrimination by Vietnamese vis-à-vis by Post-Soviet immigrants.

Table 11: Size of company employing respondents by number of employees and by country of origin

Size of company (number of workers)	- 5		6 - 20		21 - 100		101 - 250		250 +		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Post-Soviet	34	26.8	44	34.6	31	24.4	9	7.1	9	7.1	127	100.0
Vietnamese	15	68.2	6	27.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	4.5	22	100.0
Total	49	32.9	50	33.6	31	20.8	9	6.0	10	6.7	149	100.0

#### 4.2.4. Satisfaction

In response to questions regarding respondents' sense of satisfaction with their current situation, the five grade scale (Table 12) indicated an incline toward the centre position. While the overall life situation is evaluated as worse, the study also revealed some positive trends with regard to employment and housing. A logical connection between satisfaction and income is distinctly expressed. It is seen most prominently in work evaluation of Post-Soviet immigrants, where the level of satisfaction in the income group above € 999 overlaps on average with the fourth grade on the five-grade evaluation scale. Overall data about the level of satisfaction of Vietnamese immigrants does not differ from the Post-Soviet population. However, the evaluation of data regarding their income groups would not be fair or correct due to a low number of respondents.

Correlation coefficients in Table 13 show a significant dependence of the overall life satisfaction on satisfaction with working conditions, housing, and health. While in the Post-Soviet group the relation is strongest between overall life satisfaction and work conditions, in the Vietnamese group it is indicated that it is between overall life satisfaction and housing. The Post-Soviet immigrants are thus more strongly oriented towards employment.

Although most of the respondents are willing to regularize their situation in the event of an amnesty (if it would come into the play), they admitted that they would not hesitate to repeat their earlier decision to be active as irregular economic migrants on the Czech labour market. These results call for more attention to these phenomena.

Table 12: Declared satisfaction of the respondents with work, life and housing by country of origin (mean)

	Monthly income	Working condition	Life situation	Housing situation
Post-Soviet	- 199 EUR	2.00	2.00	2.60
	- 333 EUR	2.86	2.71	3.04
	- 499 EUR	3.07	2.78	3.12
	- 666 EUR	3.70	3.29	3.35
	- 999 EUR	4.29	3.57	3.57
	- 1,666 EUR	4.50	3.50	3.00
	Others	4.00	3.00	3.00
	Total	3.18	2.87	3.14
Vietnamese	- 199 EUR	4.00	3.00	3.50
	- 333 EUR	3.00	1.00	3.00
	- 499 EUR	2.57	2.83	2.86
	- 666 EUR	2.86	3.14	3.14
	- 999 EUR	3.80	3.20	3.80
	Total	3.09	2.95	3.23
Total	- 199 EUR	2.57	2.29	2.86
	- 333 EUR	2.87	2.64	3.04
	- 499 EUR	3.03	2.79	3.09
	- 666 EUR	3.48	3.25	3.30
	- 999 EUR	4.08	3.42	3.67
	- 1,666 EUR	4.50	3.50	3.00
	Others	4.00	3.00	3.00
	Total	3.17	2.88	3.15

Note: The respondents rated condition/situation on a scale of 1 (worst) to 5 (the best).

Table 13: Correlation of declared satisfaction of respondents with work, housing, life and health by country of origin

			Working condition	Life situation	Housing situation	Health condition
Post-Soviet	Working condition	Pearson Correlation	1	0.562	0.324	0.233
		Sig.		0.000	0.000	0.008
		N	130	130	127	129
	Life situation	Pearson Correlation	0.562	1	0.383	0.324
		Sig.	0.000		0.000	0.000
		N	130	134	130	132
	Housing situation	Pearson Correlation	0.324	0.383	1	0.163
		Sig.	0.000	0.000		0.067
		N	127	130	130	128
	Health condition	Pearson Correlation	0.233	0.324	0.163	1
		Sig.	0.008	0.000	0.067	
		N	129	132	128	133
Vietnamese	Working condition	Pearson Correlation	1	0.447	0.487	0.242
		Sig.		0.048	0.025	0.303
		N	22	20	21	20
	Life situation	Pearson Correlation	0.447	1	0.626	0.282
		Sig.	0.048		0.002	0.243
		N	20	21	21	19
	Housing situation	Pearson Correlation	0.487	0.626	1	0.288
		Sig.	0.025	0.002		0.217
		N	21	21	22	20
	Health condition	Pearson Correlation	0.242	0.282	0.288	1
		Sig.	0.303	0.243	0.217	
		N	20	19	20	21

Note: Bold - correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In order to compare different groups of respondents, 13 characteristics were selected and differences were tested always between two selected groups. These were the following groups of immigrants: post-Soviet versus Vietnamese (Table 14), completely irregular versus quasi-regular (Table 15), involved in the client system (see more below) versus not involved in the client system (Table 18). As the results of previous analyses also indicate, the most significant differences were found between Post-Soviet and Vietnamese groups. These are two relatively distinct groups performing “their typical” irregular economic activities in the Czech labour market. The average Vietnamese immigrant in our study works in a small sales firm has a higher education than the Post-Soviet immigrant, works fewer hours and lives either in his own house or as a tenant. The typical Post-Soviet immigrant works in construction or services for a larger company, has lower education, works longer hours and often lives in a dormitory.

The smallest differences were found between groups of completely irregular and quasi-regular immigrants. From the selected characteristics they significantly differed in their average levels of income as well as housing; the quasi-regular immigrants held the logical advantage (higher income and better housing) over those who worked completely irregularly.

Table 14 T-test for characteristics tied to Post-Soviets and Vietnamese

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Company size	713.5	966.5	-3.819	0.000
Income	1,145	10,190	-2.440	0.015
Sex	1,479	1,779	-0.783	0.433
Co-workers	1,236	1,536	-1.900	0.057
Seasonality of work	1,366	10,277	-1.471	0.141
Length of stay	1,178	9,179	-1.231	0.218
Branch	643	9,688	-4.761	0.000
Marital status	921	1,221	-3.659	0.000
Education	1,120	10,300	-2.306	0.021
Remittances	560	665	-0.498	0.619
Satisfaction with work	1,361.5	1,614.5	-0.378	0.705
Working hours	708	1,008	-4.267	0.000
Type of accommodation	986	1,239	-2.636	0.008

Table 15 T-test for characteristics linked with completely irregular and quasi-regular immigrants

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Company size	2,479.5	4,190.5	-0.648	0.517
Income	2,426.5	7,179.5	-2.067	0.039
Sex	2,656	4,609	-1.432	0.152
Co-workers	2,623	7,376	-1.394	0.163
Seasonality of work	2,538	7,194	-1.841	0.066
Length of stay	2,414	3,954	-0.625	0.532
Branch	2,549.5	7,205.5	-1.547	0.122
Marital status	2,844.5	7,597.5	-0.624	0.532
Education	2,887.5	4,840.5	-0.341	0.733
Remittances	1,070.5	3,086.5	-0.916	0.360
Satisfaction with work	2,563	6,658	-0.897	0.370
Working hours	2,291.5	4,121.5	-1.886	0.059
Type of accommodation	2,295.5	4,248.5	-2.437	0.015

In the following section we will attempt to describe and explain the phenomenon of the “Client System” in more detail.

### 4.3. Client system

While researching the irregular economic activities of immigrants in the Czech Republic, we encountered a phenomenon that plays an important role in access to the labour market by quasi-regular and completely irregular immigrants who are mostly from Ukraine. Simply stated, it is a work organization system for immigrants conducted through middlemen, the so called “clients”.

In our survey we have decided to turn our attention to this very widespread phenomenon and have included a few questions tackling issues specific to the Client System. We have also complemented our findings by conducting interviews with two Ukrainian migrants who function as Clients. Our purpose was to describe the origin of the Client System in the Czech Republic, its historical roots and inner structure, its operation and its possible comparison with similar phenomenon abroad. Furthermore, we will concentrate upon questionnaires gained from migrants from Post-Soviet countries among whom we observed the prevalence of the Client System. We will look at the kinds of



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services received from Clients, the reasons for engaging Clients and the range of fees charged by the Clients. We will also determine whether staying in the Client System is voluntary or not. We are also attempting to determine the difference between completely irregular and quasi-regular immigrants involved in the Client System and migrants who do not participate in it. We monitor the level of integration, irregularity or regularity of their residency and employment in the Czech Republic. We explore the conditions in the country of origin, transfer to Czech Republic, economic activity (kind, type and a place of work, length of residency, co-workers, time schedules, work relations and income), housing, social relationships and personal characteristics (education, age, gender and a family status).

The “Client System” is a smoothly run business of work organization for migrants coming from Post-Soviet region to the Czech Republic. Černík (2005) mentions “klientura” (clientele) as a synonym for the Client System and locates its roots in the rural environment of the Soviet Union. The term is derived from the word “client” that signifies an agent negotiating employment for migrants. The term “client” seems to be confusing when looked at from a business point of view as the migrants are the ones in the position of a client. However, a Client is not simply a middleman. He arranges work for migrants and performs additional services for them and their employers while playing a part in a wider system that has organized crime at its nexus (more in Nekorjak 2006). From this position towards organized crime is derived the term “client”. It is likely due to his powerful position in the system based on the nature of his activities that the term “client” gained value in the lower level of the system and finally reached the society as a whole.

The Client System in the Czech Republic began in the late twentieth century. In the first half of 1990 prevailed unorganized irregular migrant work based on individual personal contacts, often based on familial or neighbourhood network principles (Nekorjak 2005). Not until the second half of the 1990 did these relationships begin to organize and institutionalize and thus permit wider access to the labour market for regular, quasi-regular and completely irregular immigrants. The chief organizers of the new system were the so-called Clients. As a rule they were the first immigrants who were able to navigate well in the new environment, learned the new language fast and capitalized on their superior social skills (Nekorjak 2006). The institutionalization of the middleman was facilitated not only by their interest in legalizing their residency and employment but also by expectations of employers. Czech employers needed flexible access to manpower (the state was not able to organize it) by not employing irregular immigrants officially. They needed to save the costs for recruiting workers and to legalize expenses paid in wages to migrants.

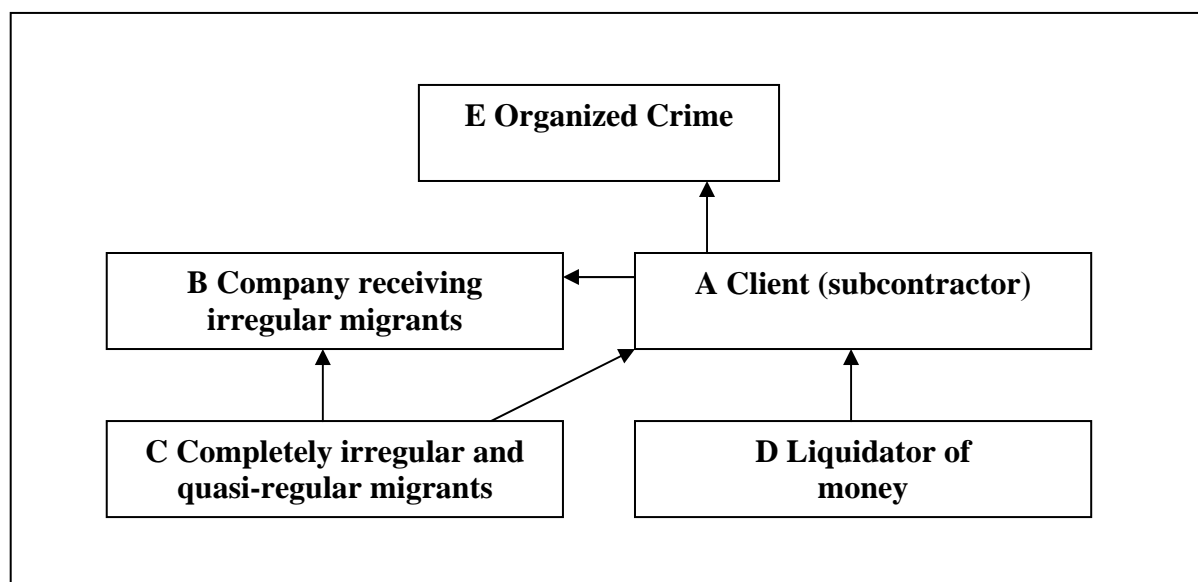
The police were also complicit in the Client System by for example restricting self-offers for employment in specific areas (U výstaviště in Prague – Holešovice). While listing all the players who contributed to the establishment of the system one should not forget the very migrants who struggled in an unknown environment, with a foreign language and encountered a very complicated application process to secure residency and work permits. By this period we are still not talking about the Client System as it began to function at the beginning of the new millennium. Significant criminal activity within the Ukrainian ethnic community also played the part. Small gangs and individuals robbed and extorted migrants as they transported their earnings home (Černík 2005). The police was not able to deal with the problem and the public attitudes were those of non interference with the ethnic relations of migrants.

According to Nekorjak (2006) it was at that moment when organized crime established itself in the “non-governmental” territory. Due to the presence of and as a consequence of an entry of mafia and its offers of protection, the robberies and extortions by unorganized groups and individuals subsided (more in Nekorjak 2006). The interviewed Clients reported, however, that the importance of mafia in the system is declining and that this is due to their inability to generate significant profit.

The use of middlemen for the purpose of securing employment for migrants has also been recognized in other countries. For example in Portugal Malheiros (1999) find ethnic agents who by means of networks arrange for the hiring of migrants from Cape Verde or Guinea into construction. In United States in the latter half of 1980 an increase was noticed with regard to subcontracting arrangements in connection with government restrictions against irregular immigrants and as a consequence the number of irregular immigrants supplied to the labour market through subcontractors increased by ten per cent (Phillips, Massey 1999, Durand, Massey, Parrado 1999). Unlike the above mentioned examples, the activities of middlemen in the Czech Republic are much broader. The migrant often keeps in contact with a Client during his residency and the Client provides other services such as acting as a source of information, supplying visas, work permits, transportation, and accommodations and paying of wages, ensuring protection, and granting credit.

The Client System today has two hierarchically sorted levels with a Client in the centre. (Figure 3 - Nekorjak 2006). The first level is based on interactions between Clients, migrants and Czech employers. The second level is based on relationships between Clients and organized crime. The first level can exist without the second one but the second level cannot exist without the first one.

Figure 3: The Client System – Subjects and their Links



Source: Nekorjak (2006) and own survey

The leading role in the system has the Client (A). His objective is to supply a sufficient number of migrants to employers. It can be a small number but can also be hundreds. Supplied workers are controlled either by the Client or by his associates. In some cases the Client is not present on the work site at all and migrants fully follow their employer's instructions (job description, hours of work etc.). The migrant's wages are paid to the Client by the Czech employer. The middleman/Client pays the migrants and keeps a large portion of their salary. The migrants themselves do not know how much is paid to the Client. According to our questionnaires it could be between 20 per cent - 40 per cent of their salary which was the range reported by clients during interviews. The proceeds are used not only for the personal support of the Client but also for payments to the mafia as well as shelter costs, taxes for quasi-regular migrants, social and medical insurance, and debt payments. All the money that is paid irregularly to the migrants and for which no records are kept has to leave the company and be regularized by the Client. To do so, the Client establishes new companies owned by persons whom the authorities can not locate such as homeless persons and foreigners who do not live in the country (D). Cashless

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transfers of finances to these companies take place and cash is transferred back to the client. The client can cooperate with more than one company.

Another important role in the first level involves the employers (B). They regulate large migration from abroad by subcontracting. At the same time immigrants, because of structural conditions and life strategies (temporary work migration) are concentrated in the secondary labour market, characterized by a high fluctuation of manpower and seasonal work such as in construction. It is the construction industry where Ukrainians are employed most often. The demand to quickly close (and revoke) contracts with immigrants can be hindered by legal barriers that are overcome by subcontracting or by irregular employment. Furthermore, subcontracting and irregular employment lower costs to Czech companies for insurance and tax expenses. Clients are able to flexibly supply the required number of employees to companies that do not have to be responsible for them. The liability and the costs connected with (a) immigration of workers, with (b) demand fluctuation and with (c) sanctions for breaking the law by irregular employment are absorbed by Ukrainian clients. This externalization of risks and costs is according to Czech employers the most important stimuli for using the system of organized employment.

Migrants who experienced the Client System are originally from Ukraine, while a few of them are from Moldova and Belarus (C). They are placed in the first level of the system. They ordinarily become members of the system of organized employment in their country of origin. If it occurs in the Czech Republic, they are usually contacted by a Client upon arrival or they contact the Client on their own. A typical example is the situation where a Czech employer requires the migrant to contact a Client with whom the company cooperates.

The number of migrants who are involved in the organization of employment through Clients is difficult to establish. Nekorjak (2006) reports that 40 to 50 per cent of Ukrainian immigrants have experienced the Client System. In our survey of 135 respondents from the Post-Soviet region 63 (47 per cent) reported that their employment has been organized through a Client and another 11 had an experience with a Client in the past.

The three main reasons migrants report for using client services are an inability to navigate Czech legislation regulating work and residency, lack of language proficiency and an employer's request to have a Client (Table 16). It is obvious that client serves as a mediator during payment of wages by an employer and during securing work and shelter (Table 17). In recent years there has been a large increase of migrants with work permits in the Czech Republic and we believe that it is due to the services of Clients who offer work and residency permits. Our conclusion was confirmed by responses of migrants who report that the handling of work and residency belong to some of the Client's services. Migrants who buy the permits move from a completely irregular position to a quasi-regular position. Quasi-regularly working immigrants are either formal employees of the Ukrainian client, formal partners in his company or they have a trade license. In fact, they work for Czech companies as subcontractors and as such break the law. In our sample of migrants from Post-Soviet regions one-third of respondents belonged to quasi-regularly working migrants (clients' employees or partners).

Table 16: Reasons for using client services by migrants from Post-Soviet countries

Reasons	Mentioned by respondents (in %)
Inability to navigate legislation regulating work of foreigners in the CR	64
Lack of Czech language proficiency	48
Inability to navigate legislative regulating residency of foreigners in the CR	39
Requirement by Czech employers to have a client	36
Inability to navigate Czech labour market	21
It is common to have a client in the CR	21
Inability to look for advertised work	12
It is common to use services of a middleman for arranging a variety of things in the country of origin	12
Other reasons	12
Inability to navigate in the functioning of the Czech society and government	9
Coercion by a client	3

Source: own survey N=33

Table 17: Client services for migrants

Type of service	Mentioned by respondents (in %)
Paying of wages	88
Arranging employment	79
Arranging housing	48
Arranging work permit	45
Arranging residency visa	30
Offer information	30
Paying taxes	18
Giving protection	15
Arranging transportation between the CR and my country of origin	9
Paying insurance	6
Interpreting from/to Czech language	6
Borrowing money	6
Other services	0

Source: own survey, N=33

The asymmetrical relationship between Clients and migrants in terms of power is problematic (Čermáková, Nekorjak forthcoming). The relationship between a Client and irregular immigrants, who comprise the majority of cases, is not legally regulated and as such is outside of the sanctioned powers of the Czech law. As a consequence, the relationship between a migrant and a middleman is based on mutual trust that can be exploited by the one who has the most power. There is also a large variability in relationships depending on their closeness. Čermáková and Nekorjak (forthcoming) report that a certain segment of migrants have contact with more Clients. They organize transport with some of them and visa with others and they also have more Clients who arrange their work opportunities. On the opposite side are the types of relationships where migrants are

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so closely connected with the middlemen that they infringe on their personal freedom. The immigrant cannot freely change employment, cannot engage another Client or even to return home. The modes of coercion used by clients are threats, intimidation and withholding of wages and documents. If the migrant does not submit to Client's will, he runs the risk of physical assault, financial loss or becoming a completely irregular migrant. In our survey sample, 15 migrants (23 per cent) reported conflict with a Client and the rest characterized their relationship with a client as peaceful. The conflicts were related to payments of wages (withholding part of the wages, paying less and delayed payments), failure to deliver promised services (arrangements for work and residency permits or better housing) and walking out on a client.

Our survey identified differences between migrants involved in the Client System and those who reported not using Client services. There are statistically significant differences in the degree of migrant's integration, the size of companies employing migrants, the country of origin of co-workers, the type of work and the evaluation of the migrant's work satisfaction.

The group of migrants who were involved in the Client System achieved lower scores in an integration index than migrants who were not in the system<sup>26</sup>. Lower Czech language proficiency of migrants involved in the client system can be explained by higher separation in the workplace (their co-workers are mostly compatriots and other foreigners) and in housing. The overall lower satisfaction of migrants points toward the negative effects of asymmetric relationships between migrants and clients. The overall lower satisfaction of migrants involved in the client system stems from migrant's insufficient information about the real situation in the Czech Republic that was supplied either by a Client or by a co-worker in the country of their origin. Furthermore, certain hopelessness as a result of the asymmetric relationship with a Client and an overall inconclusiveness of the situation is reflected in the results.

Our results indicate that Clients supply migrants primarily for large companies and for seasonal employment (Table 18). Migrants who are not involved in the Client system work in companies with less employees and their employment is more permanent. For large companies it is easier to negotiate with middlemen in order to recruit a sufficient number of workers. For smaller companies individual interviews or an active search for individual immigrants are not that costly. Statistically significant differences in the remaining characteristics between the two migrant samples were not found.

<sup>26</sup> The integration index was construed on the basis of a satisfaction index (index 1: work satisfaction, life satisfaction, fulfilment of migration objectives, and satisfaction with housing) and Czech language proficiency index (index 2).

Table 18 T-test for characteristics tied to immigrants involved in the Client system and those who are not involved in it

	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Company size	1,238	3,516	-3.878	0.000
Income	1,884.5	3,900.5	-1.861	0.063
Sex	1,948.5	3,964.5	-1.627	0.104
Co-workers	1,739.5	4,367.5	-2.397	0.017
Seasonality of work	1,810	3,826	-2.264	0.024
Length of stay	1,728	4,074	-1.195	0.232
Branch	1,825.5	3,778.5	-1.867	0.062
Marital status	2,092	4,720	-0.846	0.398
Education	2,151.5	4,779.5	-0.567	0.571
Remittances	913.5	1,859.5	-0.285	0.776
Satisfaction with work	1,608	3,438	-2.427	0.015
Working hours	1,714	4,199	-1.683	0.092
Type of accommodation	2,229.5	4,245.5	-0.177	0.859

Source: own survey

#### 4.4. Conclusions of the quantitative survey

The main goal of this chapter is to introduce selected results of the questionnaire survey (done in two waves between October 2005 and January 2006 and March and October 2007) of the group of immigrants who perform irregular economic activities in the Czech labour market. It concerned altogether 159 respondents (135 Post-Soviets and 24 Vietnamese). We were primarily interested in irregular migrants themselves; conditions in their countries of origin, reasons for migration, and their living and working conditions in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, to some extent, we were interested in the role of the Czech state and its migration policy, as well as the impacts of migrants' irregular work on the different levels of society and local authority (on the Czech state, on employers etc.).

Results of the questionnaire survey clearly show us that majority of irregular immigrants come to the country for economic reasons. When looking at the overall satisfaction as expressed by immigrants who stay and operate in the Czech Republic, a dominant role of an amount of income and of other working conditions appeared. Other spheres like a type of housing, free time activities and the like are by far not so important. All seems to be, to large extent, driven by financial profits.

The most frequent way for immigrants to enter the black market in the Czech Republic is a legal arrival with a tourist visa. Only then, in the course of time, immigrants get involved in irregular (completely irregular and quasi-regular) economic activities. In our survey we have identified two quite different immigration groups – immigrants from the former Soviet Union and from Viet Nam. Besides obvious socio-cultural differences, based on statistical analysis we have found significant differences as to how these two groups function in the Czech irregular labour market. Vietnamese immigrants work mostly in a small company in a business sector. In contrast to Post-Soviets, they do not work as many hours and live in their own apartments or rent them. Post-Soviet immigrants tend to work in construction or industrial sector for a bigger company, they work more hours a day and usually live in a dorm.

A specific system of work organization for migrants via middlemen/agents or “Clients” has become an important phenomenon within the black or grey foreign labour market in the Czech Republic. Such Client System plays an important role mostly in the

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case of Ukrainian economic migrants. The system functions more or less outside the boundary of the law. The importance of this system is being proved by a fact that some 50 per cent of our respondents who came from Post-Soviet countries stated that their work is organized via a Client. The evaluation of the Client system by our respondents is ambiguous. On one hand, the system helps immigrants when substituting inefficient official state structures, on the other hand, imbalanced relationship between a migrant and a Client often leads to exploitation and discrimination.

Besides other results, T-test revealed logical, indeed, important facts. The situation (certain principal parameters of living conditions) of quasi-regular vis-à-vis completely irregular immigrants, as well as immigrants outside the Client system versus those involved in it, is better. Thus, also via this micro-level perspective, it has been proved that combating “irregularity” in the migration field must permanently be one of the priorities on the state agenda.





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## 5. Conclusions

The studies/chapters above (based on qualitative and quantitative approaches and tackling different agents/subjects involved in the given field, both migratory experts and migrants themselves) proved that immigrants have become an important part of the Czech economy and even society as such. It seems apparent that permanent demand for a cheap foreign labour force along with some administrative barriers of the Czech visa policy and foreigners' employment policy may lead to "stabilisation" or even an increase in numbers of irregular migrants and especially of migrants' irregular economic activities on the Czech labour market (at least in some economic sectors).

In a comparative perspective the results of the studies lead to an important conclusion. Besides many other migration and integration aspects, the situation in the field of transit migration and migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic is, in many ways, similar to what happens and how it happens in the traditional countries of immigration (see the previous discussion). This pertains to the character of the overall environment (labour market segmentation, forms and mechanisms for including the informal economics of migrants into the socioeconomic structure of the destination country, as well as to positions that individual migrants occupy in society, in general, and in the labour market, in particular). Let us pinpoint in this regards "migrants' tough and challenging lives" mostly on the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, typical of discrimination and exploitation (whilst the worse situation is tied to completely irregular as compared to quasi-regular migrants). As the studies show us, however, the immigrant community as such is not a homogeneous unit. As it has been demonstrated by the example of Post-Soviets and Vietnamese, immigrants create a wide mosaic of various behavioural modes and strategies that may differ significantly from one another.

The studies also confirmed that the existing "Client System" – the mode through which a job/work is organized for Post-Soviet immigrants by middlemen/agents – in the Czech Republic seems to be rather specific to the country. Unlike in other countries, the activities of Clients in the Czech Republic seem to be much broader. A migrant is often in an intensive touch with a Client who, besides organizing work, may also provide him/her with other services (like housing, visa, work permits, transportation, payment of wages or ensuring protection). In return, a migrant is often heavily exploited by his/her Client. It has been found that Post-Soviet immigrants that operate in the Czech Republic freely – without a Client – evaluate their situation more positively than those in a bondage to Clients.

When summarizing the "remedies" as to how to combat migrants' irregular economic activities in the Czech Republic (and, indeed, also irregular immigration) several key factors appeared to be the most important: 1) more effective controls and sanctions against migrants' irregular economic activities; 2) more information for would-be migrants as to what is available mainly in terms of possibilities of employment; 3) more flexibility (and transparency), more open environment (less bureaucracy) including more "channels" for immigrants to enter the Czech regular labour market; 4) more welcoming environment (not so tied up by the state) for businessmen to run their jobs and, last but not least; 5) systematic attempts to generally establish a more "moral/ethical environment" within which "irregular" is considered to be a bad thing.



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