

Migration in an Enlarged

Prague Castle Conference

Europe

12–14 September 2002



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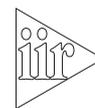
Under the patronage of Václav Havel,

President of the Czech Republic

and Tony Blair, Prime Minister

of the United Kingdom of Great

Britain and Northern Ireland.



ÚSTAV MEZINÁRODNÍCH VZTAHŮ
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Foreign Policy Centre



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Contents

Introduction	6
Migration in an Enlarged Europe	8
Andrew Geddes, The Foreign Policy Centre, London	
Introduction	10
I. Opening the Door to New Immigration	12
II. An Inclusive Society	18
III. A Safe Refuge	22
Conclusions	27
Migration in an Enlarged Europe	29
Ivan Gabal & Lenka Václavíková Helšusová, Gabal Analysis & Consulting, Prague	
Does the Czech Republic pose a threat to the European Union through Migration?	
1. A Modern History of Czech Society	30
2. The Development and Level of Migration in the Czech Republic	34
3. The Roma Minority and its Position in Czech Society	38
4. Asylum Seekers and Their Chances in the Czech Republic	41
5. The Czech Attitude towards Foreigners	42
6. The Grounds for EU Fears of Czech Migration to Member States	46
7. Conclusion	48

Introduction

The European Union's long-awaited enlargement to the east steps closer and closer.

Often, anticipations of how the EU will work after enlargement focus on technocratic and institutional questions. They deal with the effects that the addition of 110 million people will have on the effectiveness and the economics of the single market. However, the incorporation of central Europe into the EU will open up significant cultural debates in Europe too, as a few new languages, many more minorities and thousands more identities are added to the EU mix.

One of the longer shadows to fall over the process has been the fear of opening up population movements within Europe. Fears are expressed on both sides – while the Polish Prime Minister warns of foreigners coming to pick over the Polish economy 'like crows', his German counterpart refers to the threat of millions of Eastern Europeans going west in search of work.

These fears seem exaggerated. The enlargement of the European Union is not going to involve wholesale population movements on a par with 1945 or 1918. But the existence of those fears, along with the rise of anti-immigration parties in Western Europe, particularly France and the Netherlands, shows how important it is to unpick the issue of migration in an enlarged Europe, and to start dealing with the politics of the debate.

To this end, The Foreign Policy Centre, the Institute for International Relations and the British Council commissioned Andrew Geddes and Ivan Gabal to explore the issue of migration in an enlarged Europe, from a British and a Czech perspective respectively. Andrew Geddes is a leading expert on European and international immigration and is Senior Research Associate at the Foreign Policy Centre. He is currently involved in a major comparative European study funded by the European Commission in collaboration with research teams in five other European countries that examines patterns of labour migration within the EU. Ivan Gabal is Managing Director of Gabal Analysis and Consulting which is a Czech private consulting company working in the area of NATO enlargement security and defense, and EU enlargement including migration and ethnic minority issues (www.gac.cz). Lenka Václavíková Helšusová is senior researcher at Gabal, A & C.

They were asked to explore the economic, humanitarian and security dimensions of the migration issue. First, we asked them to think about the economics of migration. In a Europe of free movement, people will be under different pressures to stay or to move. Will an enlarged Europe see new patterns of migration, either within the EU's external borders or across them?

Second, we asked them to consider questions of integration and the idea of the 'inclusive society'. Enlargement of the EU may raise a new set of identity and discrimination issues. How well are both societies equipped to deal with these changes? What approaches are being pioneered?

The third item on the agenda was asylum, an issue which raises high political tensions in both countries. As travel becomes easier and communications become swifter, will there be significant changes in flows of refugees into the Czech Republic and the UK? What are the political constellations that will form around these migrants, and how might domestic public opinion react?

Among the many issues raised by the two essays in this pamphlet, three stand out. First, the two countries are bound by two very different geographical and historical contexts. Britain's attitudes to migration are fashioned by a colonial history; the Czech Republic's, on the other hand, are defined much closer to home, by its constantly changing borders and the resultant population shifts. Gabal points out that the demise of Czechoslovakia in 1993 practically completed the process of the ethnic homogenisation of Czech society. He argues that it confirmed the difficulties Czech politics and state identity have in handling multi-nationality, and points to a strong inclination to promoting assimilation or even xenophobic attitudes to cultural, ethnic and national differences. In the UK on the other hand, policymakers are looking at how to create social cohesion and a sense of Britishness which accommodates people's multiple identities.

Second, both pieces address how far enlargement will lead to waves of economic migration in Europe. Both point out that the European Union, despite the removal of internal borders, remains a theatre of very low mobility. Geddes argues strongly that 'replacement migration' policies, which see migrants as a solution to a declining working age population, are counterproductive and flawed. Gabal, on the other hand, points to the reluctance of potential migrants from the Czech Republic to move for work, even from one Czech region to another. Questions remain on both sides as to whether enlargement will unleash a new set of population flows – but both pieces argue that these fears are overstated.

Third, the impact of enlargement in this area will not just be the opening up of borders, but also through the development of a single European approach to many of the issues raised in these papers. Geddes points to the new anti-discrimination directives passed in 2000, as well as the gradual development of a common framework for dealing with asylum. These form a distinct part of the *acquis communautaire* that have to be adopted as part of the enlargement deal, and the scope for learning from others' experience in both directions is very clear.

For their help in developing this pamphlet, which formed the basis for discussions at the 2002 Prague Castle conference, we would like to thank Tom Arbuthnott, Kate Arthurs, Rob Blackhurst, Veena Vasista and Claire Wring at The Foreign Policy Centre, HE Pavel Seifter, Czech ambassador to the UK, Miroslav Nožina at IIR, and Helena Sojkova at the British Council. Most of all, we'd like to thank Ivan Gabal and Andrew Geddes for producing two fascinating perspectives on migration in an enlarged Europe.

Mark Leonard
The Foreign Policy Centre,
London

Jiří Šedivý
Institute of International
Relations, Prague

Paul Docherty
British Council
Czech Republic, Prague

Migration in an Enlarged Europe

Andrew Geddes
The Foreign Policy Centre, London



KEY QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

I. Opening the Door to new Immigration

- What causes the perception gap between the perceived extent of immigration and the actual extent of immigration?
- How far should the UK go in encouraging further permanent immigration?
- What are the migration implications of eastwards enlargement?

II. An Inclusive Society

- What should the objectives of race relations policies be?
And how do you measure their success?
- What values unify people and what do we mean by integration?
- Could UK policies be successfully adopted in other European countries?
- What are the implications of the EU anti-discrimination directives for accession states?

III. A Safe Refuge?

- Should asylum seekers be allowed to work?
- Are common European asylum policies feasible?
- What contribution can a 'roots causes' approach based on trade and aid make to immigration policy? Should this approach also contain punitive elements that punish countries that send 'unwanted' immigrants?

Introduction

Few other political issues raise the same tensions as immigration. It strikes at three core sovereign concerns: national borders, membership of the national community, and ideas about national identity. It fundamentally shapes how “we” think about ourselves, about “others”, and about how social and political relationships are negotiated and re-negotiated within and between European countries.

The immigration issue has simmered in British politics for more than 40 years. Recently, though, it has become more and more salient. In May 2002 nearly 40 per cent of respondents to a MORI poll saw immigration as one of the most important issues facing Britain, placing it second only to perennial concerns about health care. This compares to most of the 1990s when the numbers seeing immigration as an important issue usually hovered at around 10 per cent.

The landmarks on this path to politicisation include the Sangatte refugee camp fiasco; the September 11th attacks; urban unrest involving white and Asian youths in the summer of 2001 in the northern English towns of Oldham, Bradford and Burnley; and the resurgence of the extreme Right. The UK government responded in February 2002 with a White Paper, called “Secure Borders, Safe Haven”, which outlined the government’s approach to immigration, asylum, nationality and citizenship (see APPENDIX ONE for details – page 28).

Discussions tend to centre on three linked themes:

- **Opening the door** What are Britain’s future migration needs? Will continued high levels of immigration be necessary if labour market gaps are to be filled and welfare state problems averted? What are the public policy implications of immigration? How do these debates about UK needs connect with broader European debates? What difference is EU enlargement likely to make? These are the subjects of the paper’s first section.
- **Building an inclusive society** How have UK governments sought to strike a balance between rights and responsibilities for immigrants and members of the host society? The government has suggested a re-ordering of the relationship with increased onus placed on immigrant newcomers to adapt. What has influenced this changed UK approach? Can lessons be learnt from the UK approach? Can UK ideas and practices be applied in other European countries too? These issues are considered in the paper’s second section.
- **The asylum crisis** Perhaps the most politically sensitive issue. What happens when an ethic of global responsibility towards asylum seekers and refugees enshrined in international law meets a strong reassertion of the sovereign authority of the state to control ‘unwanted’ immigration, as has been the case in UK and European asylum politics for the last ten years

or so? What political constellations have developed around the asylum issue and with what effects? This is the subject of the paper's third section.

Linking all three sections are the core themes that underlie immigration policy: the attempt to reconcile economic, humanitarian and security concerns in a coherent policy framework.

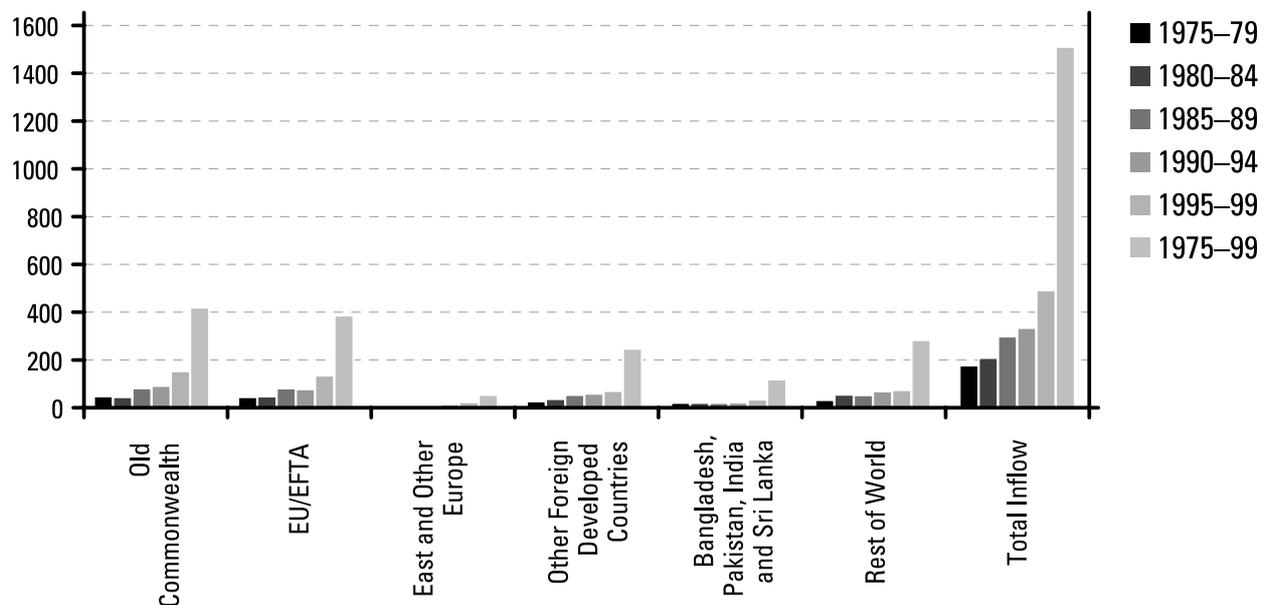
Immigration issues have clear domestic social and political resonance, but the context has changed since immigration first came onto the British political agenda in the late 1950s and 1960s. Then, immigration was primarily a domestic concern. Now, immigration is a pan-European concern and a regular agenda item in the councils of Europe. European frameworks affecting the area addressed in this paper are being developed, common EU immigration policies are on the horizon (albeit perhaps a distant horizon), EU anti-discrimination laws were agreed in June 2000 (and must be incorporated into the national laws of the member states by 2003). Immigration affects politics within states and politics between states as never before.

I. Opening the Door to New Immigration

A conspicuous feature of British public opinion on immigration is a feeling that there is more of it than there actually is. A MORI opinion poll published in the autumn of 2000 under the heading of *Are We an Intolerant Nation?* found that, on average, respondents thought that 20 per cent of the British population were immigrants. In reality, the figure is 4 per cent. Perhaps not surprisingly, 66 per cent of respondents also felt that there were too many immigrants. Hardly propitious circumstances for an immigration policy rethink which might open the doors to new immigrants. The UK already has the third largest foreign population and labour force in Western Europe, although, as a proportion of its total population, the numbers of foreign citizens are low. Between 1975 and 1999 around 1.5 million migrant workers entered the UK, of which the two largest groups were from the Old Commonwealth (420,100) and EU/EFTA countries (386,500). Although there has been growth in the numbers of people entering the UK from central and eastern Europe, it remains one of the smallest categories of aggregate inflow, as Figure 2 shows.

Figure 2:

Inflow of Employed Migrants by Citizenship (thousands); five year periods 1975–1999



Source: J. Dobson et al. *International Migration and the UK: Recent Patterns and Trends*, Home Office RDS Occasional Paper No. 75, 2001, p. 108.

In recent years, government leadership has been a pivotal factor in a re-opening of the door to immigration, compared to the 1950s and 1960s when immigration was largely unplanned. Since 1993 the annual rate of increase of the UK foreign population has been faster than the rate of growth in western Europe overall. The UK population is expected to increase from 59.8 million in 2000 to around 65 million by 2025. Around two-thirds of this projected increase is attributed to immigration with the remainder from natural increase¹⁾.

Most observers assume that this immigration will have beneficial economic effects. One of the best placed experts, Professor John Salt of the Migration Research Unit at University College, London put the effects at broadly neutral to mildly positive²⁾. Recent Home Office research estimates the net direct fiscal effects of immigration to be around £ 2.5 billion, or equivalent to a 1p saving on income tax³⁾.

• **The greying of Britain: is immigration the magic bullet?**

The arguments that have supported the government's enthusiasm for more immigration are beguilingly appealing. They latch onto a longer-standing discussion about 'replacement migration' instigated by a 2000 UN report⁴⁾, which responded to concerns about ageing populations, and the resultant difficulty in funding pension systems. In the UK, the population of state pensionable age is projected to increase from 10.8 million in 2000 to 11.9 million in 2011 and to peak at around 16 million in 2040. According to the 'replacement migration' argument, the effects of an ageing population on the labour market and welfare state require immigration because immigrants can fill labour market gaps and sustain pensions and health care.

But the replacement migration argument has a flaw: immigrants themselves will eventually require replacements given that they settle down, have children, and get old too. More and more immigration is then needed. Maintaining the support ratio that matches the working age population to the elderly population would require net migration into the UK of around 1 million people a year and increase the population to around 120 million by 2050. This is an unrealistic proposition for obvious social, political and economic reasons.

Over-dramatisation of the effects of population change and simplistic assumptions that continued immigration can be the magic bullet that resolves labour and welfare problems

¹⁾ C. Shaw, *2000-Based National Population Projections for the United Kingdom and its Constituent Countries, Population Trends 107, Spring 2002, pp.5–13.*

²⁾ *The Economist, 29 June–5 July 2002.*

³⁾ C. Gott and K. Johnston, *The Migrant Population in the UK: Fiscal Effects, RDS Occasional Paper No.77, London: Home Office, 2001.*

⁴⁾ *OECD, Migration: The Demographic Aspects, Paris: OECD, 1991; United Nations, Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?, available on-line at www.un.org/esa/population/migration.htm.*

neglects other remedies such as improved labour market participation, increased productivity and greater mobility within the EU.

• **Can immigration solve labour market shortages?**

If the UK were to maintain a constant working age population and a constant total population then UN estimates suggest that this would require 48,000 and 114,000 new immigrants each year, respectively⁵⁾. However, net migration into the UK currently outstrips this latter figure and is projected by the National Statistical Office to be around 160,000 a year until 2007. The effect of this immigration, and the difficulty in monitoring and controlling it, is manifested in the uneven distribution of these immigrants across the economy, caused by the significant 'pull' effect generated by labour market shortages, which tend to operate in specific sectors rather than across the board.

Three sectors illustrate this point.

The construction sector. Increased government expenditure on public services coupled with changes in the housing market have generated a construction boom that is particularly focused on the South East of England, but sends ripples to the Midlands and the North. From high skilled to low skilled occupations, there is an increased construction industry reliance on foreign workers (employed both legally and illegally)⁶⁾. Labour shortages in the construction sector are exacerbated by a dearth of young people entering the industry. Fewer and fewer students are opting for construction and engineering-based subjects at British universities while areas such as media studies continue to boom. Britain could have a surplus of graduates able to read the weather bulletin on local radio, but few people able to build anything. Attempts to improve the construction industry's image and attract more youngsters are longer-term ventures. But the need for workers is pressing and will be filled in the short to medium-term by foreign workers. According to one senior construction industry figure, it's not unusual to go onto a site in London and find that 70–80 per cent of the workforce can speak little or no English. According to another, the simplest solution could be to hire a bus, go to Sangatte, and return with some able and willing construction workers⁷⁾.

⁵⁾ See the discussion in J. Dobson et. al *International Migration and the United Kingdom: Recent Patterns and Trends*, Home Office RDS Occasional Paper No. 75, 2001, pp.1–5.

⁶⁾ *In the past, the UK could rely on a reserve army of workers from the Republic of Ireland conveniently available because of the UK and Ireland's 'common travel area', but now that Ireland is enjoying an economic boom there is no longer this ready supply of labour.*

⁷⁾ *Information derived from interviews conducted by the author as part of a European Commission funded "Political Economy of Migration in an Integrating Europe" research project that analyses labour migration in the IT, health care and construction sectors in 6 European countries, see: www.liv.ac.uk/ewc.*

Skilled workers in the IT sector In a comparative study of policies in nine countries towards high skilled migrants, it was found that Britain had moved faster and further than its principal competitors in opening the door to increased migration by skilled workers. The migration of high skilled IT workers is also illustrative of important trends in international migration that defy a traditional understanding of migration centred on movement from one country to another with an expectation of permanent settlement. The sheer diversity of movement by high skilled workers belies this representation. As a Home Office study put it, when analysing the movement of highly skilled workers:

“These take the form of new types of collaboration between firms in different countries, shorter-term secondments, weekly commuting and the electronic transmission of knowledge. Any policy to increase the national capital bank of skills needs to take these new trends into account⁸⁾.”

Essential workers in the public sector Labour needs are closely linked to government spending and political priorities, but attempts to solve one problem can beget others. Where shortages of teachers, doctors and nurses have arisen, it is often because of the unavailability of affordable housing rather than from a lack of potential applicants. Much of the demand for immigrant workers is in London and the South East where the regional economy is at risk of over-heating. Whether apocryphal or not, stories about nurses from Australia and New Zealand who sleep five or six to a room in the Earls Court district of London highlight the chronic lack of affordable housing in some parts of the UK.

Replacement migration is not a magic bullet that will miraculously resolve labour market and welfare state problems. That said, there is likely to be a need for immigrants in certain key sectors. The social and political constellations that develop around this migration create a key policy dilemma for the British government with national, European and international implications.

The contours of this dilemma are mostly clear and centre on a series of public policy concerns:

- The settlement of immigrants
- The implications of settlement and family formation for housing and the provision of public services
- The lengths to which government wishes to go in encouraging and attracting new permanent immigration
- The responsibility that could be given to employers for foreign labour recruitment. Add to this the recognition that these debates go beyond ‘our’ labour market needs. Continued immigration has implications for sending countries and needs to be placed in the context of overseas developments policies that seek to promote economic and political development.

⁸⁾ J. Dobson et al. *International Migration and the UK: Recent Patterns and Trends*, Home Office RDS Occasional Paper No. 75, 2001.

• **Why don't Europeans move?**

UK migration policies also have to be seen in the context of wider European migration and mobility (or the lack of it), and to patterns of migration and mobility that link the EU with surrounding states and regions. In 2000 only 16.4 per cent of workers in the EU had been in their job for less than one year, compared with 30 per cent in the USA. Only 1.2 per cent of the EU population changed region to live during 1999, compared with 5.9 per cent of people in the USA who moved between states⁹⁾. The EU has resolved to tackle this insufficient occupational mobility as part of the 'new European economy' agenda, agreed with caveats at the 2000 Lisbon summit.

Resolving this relative immobility may be easier said than done.

First, labour market inflexibilities and high unemployment can co-exist with continued immigration because immigrants often do the work that native workers are unwilling to do. Second, ("good") mobility swiftly elides into ("bad") immigration in public debates, particularly when surrounding states and regions in the east and south seem to threaten mass emigration. For instance, in the early 1990s, the backdrop for debates at the time of the Maastricht Treaty was a set of predictions about the vast potential scale of post Cold War east-west migration. Numbers of up to 25 million potential migrants were mentioned. Even though the total number of migrants in the first half of the 1990s amounted to around 2.5 million people, the claims about much larger-scale migration helped justify the development by the EU of restrictions on migration from former Soviet bloc countries¹⁰⁾.

• **Why fear eastward enlargement?**

Even now, similar fears provide the backdrop for the next EU enlargement to central and eastern Europe. The accession negotiations have been riddled with mistrust, not least because of assumptions from existing states about the potential for large scale migration from central and eastern Europe. Recent research on the potential scale of post-enlargement migration has clarified the picture. This research put the figure at around 500,000 people metaphorically 'sitting on their suitcases' with around another 5 million adjudged likely to move during the next 18 years (around 277,000 a year)¹¹⁾. According to OECD figures, migrants from CEECs have accounted for around 15 per cent of the EU's total migrants since 1989.

This picture is superimposed on a 'complex mosaic of relatively short-term movement based on "labour tourism" and petty trading and comprising a highly intensive shuttling back and forth

⁹⁾ *European Commission, Action Plan on Skills and Mobility, 2002.*

¹⁰⁾ *A. Geddes, Immigration and European Integration: Towards Fortress Europe?, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.*

¹¹⁾ *Research conducted by the Institute for Migration and Intercultural Studies at the University of Osnabruck and cited in The Guardian on July 1 2002.*

across international borders to make a living'¹²⁾. As the OECD put it, central and eastern Europe is becoming a 'a theatre of much more complex movements' rather than just a straightforward move to the west, although this remains the prevailing perception.

The UK is likely to experience continued immigration in the years to come that is strongly linked with labour market shortages. Immigration is likely to account for a major part of population growth. This raises the question of immigrant integration and the development of policies designed to secure the inclusion of immigrant newcomers, which will be dealt with in the following section.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What causes the perception gap between the perceived extent of immigration and the actual extent of immigration?
- How far should the UK go in encouraging further permanent immigration?
- What are the migration implications of eastwards enlargement?

¹²⁾ *OECD, Trends in International Migration, The SOPEMI Report, 20001, Paris: OECD; Iglicka, Krystyna, Poland's Post-War Dynamic of Migration, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.*

II. An Inclusive Society

The MORI poll referred to in the previous section asked people to estimate the number of people in Britain that belong to an ethnic minority group: the average guess put the figure at 26 per cent, massively inflated from the real figure of 7.1 per cent.

The term 'ethnic minorities' is a broad brush characterisation of highly diverse communities whose origins predominantly lie in Africa, south Asia and the Caribbean. There can also be diverse patterns of attainment within and between ethnic minority communities linked – to borrow the American academic Robert Putnam's terminology – to the social capital that they brought with them and to that which they have been able to develop while in the UK. Social capital refers to the extent to which individuals are connected to their communities and to society more generally¹³⁾.

Britain's ethnic minorities are mainly located in the South East of England (47.6 per cent in Greater London) and in the ex-industrial conurbations of the West Midlands and the North (which led to high levels of unemployment when these areas declined). Settlement patterns were linked to employment opportunities. But these could backfire. In the North of England, for instance, a flourishing textile industry attracted immigrant workers from Pakistan. The decline of textiles in the face of tough international competition led to high unemployment in northern English towns such as Burnley and Oldham. These were the scene of conflict between white and Muslim youth in the summer of 2001. The clashes were represented as 'racial' or 'cultural', but the origins of these social divisions are linked very strongly to long-term socio-economic decline.

• The quest for 'integration'

The over-arching term that looms over debates about responses to immigration and settlement is 'integration'. Along with 'social inclusion' and 'social cohesion', it tends to be recognised in its absence – as disintegration, as exclusion, as social breakdown. It is easier for politicians to talk about the need for integration than it is for them to define what it means in practice. In complex and diverse European countries, there isn't necessarily a clear social, political or economic unit into which this integration is supposed to occur. Across Europe, governments are wrestling with similar dilemmas, albeit in ways that are usually closely linked to their own history and institutions.

In broad terms, it is possible to say that there are some basic points of comparison. Immigrant integration policies have an impact on two levels. First, there are the organisational challenges, including labour market, welfare state and political systems. These key areas strongly influence

¹³⁾ See R. Putnam *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

inclusion and exclusion (for all of us it should be remembered, not just immigrant newcomers). Secondly, they also entail a redefinition of national identity.

The question then becomes how to advance public policy remedies that balance rights, duties and obligations for immigrant newcomers and for members of the host society. The British government's 2002 White Paper 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven' is a significant milestone in this debate in two senses. First, it places increased emphasis on newcomers to adapt to British 'norms of acceptability'. Second, it is also strongly linked to a more general public policy orientation in areas such as the labour market and welfare state that places more emphasis on the responsibilities of individuals and far less on the rights of groups. Britain is clearly a multicultural society, but there seems to be little enthusiasm for group-based multicultural policies.

• **The persistence of discrimination**

There is, however, a core, long-standing and persistent problem. Since black and Asian immigrants began to arrive in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s, there has been clear evidence of racism and discrimination. One of the first reports into the social position of ethnic minorities found substantial evidence of discrimination while one of the most recent also found that racism and discrimination continued to affect ethnic minority participation in the labour market¹⁴.

That said, the UK has also put in place some of Europe's most progressive anti-discrimination legislation. Immigration control legislation in the 1960s was accompanied by measures aimed at tackling the racial discrimination experienced by immigrant newcomers. The 1965, 1968 and 1976 Race Relations Acts developed the legislative and institutional framework of British race relations. The 1976 Act was particularly significant because it addressed direct and indirect discrimination, allowed positive action, and created the Commission for Racial Equality with powers of investigation. In response to the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, a public enquiry was set up which suggested the extension of the race relations legislation into new areas, including with reference to the police force. This provision was included in the 2000 Race Relations (Amendment) Act¹⁵.

There are two particularly significant elements of UK race relations. First, legislation is based in the civil code where the burden of proof is lower. Other European countries have anti-racist laws too, but if they are in the criminal code then the burden of proof is so high that it is very difficult to secure a conviction. Second, UK legislation attempts to counter both direct and indirect discrimination. Indirect discrimination is the more pernicious, but was omitted from the 1965 and 1968 legislation. The 1976 Act introduced provisions to counter indirect discrimination, which

¹⁴ E.J.B. Rose et. al. *Colour and Citizenship: A Report on British Race Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; London, 1969.
Cabinet Office performance and Innovation Unit, *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market: Interim Analytical Report*, London: PIU, 2002.

¹⁵ W. Macpherson, *The Stephen Lawrence inquiry*, London: HMSO, 2000.

arises when an apparently neutral provision would put persons of a particular racial or ethnic origin at a disadvantage (because of, for instance, work time requirements or dress codes).

This UK approach has also found a strong echo in the two EU directives adopted in June 2000 covering racial discrimination and discrimination in the workplace. British experience has informed European developments and provides an example both of British positive engagement with the EU and the possibility for EU measures to be adopted that are not simply a watered down lowest common denominator.

• **How are British and European policy responses developing?**

The successful export of the UK approach to EU level combines with some domestic agonising about race relations policies that in some parts of Britain seem to have failed. In the northern English towns of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham that were the scenes of urban disorder in the summer of 2001, there is evidence of residential and educational segregation that has created divided communities. The result is that even though there are objective socio-economic similarities across these divided communities, cultural differences and racism have poisoned the political debate. The extreme right-wing British National Party also stirred up these divisions for their own electoral purposes. These events crystallised some existing concerns about British race relations policy and provided part of the backdrop for the 2002 White Paper 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven'.

The policy proposals in the White Paper reflect a more general trend across 'older' north west European immigration countries towards increased emphasis on socio-economic adaptation. Sweden, for instance, moved away from its own version of multicultural policies in the mid 1980s. The Netherlands had a policy re-think in the mid 1990s and introduced compulsory 650 hour inburgering (or 'how to be Dutch' courses) for immigrant newcomers¹⁶⁾.

Recent UK legislative proposals can be linked to these changes in other European countries. The British government proposes to place more emphasis on adaptation by immigrant newcomers, perhaps even, as the American sociologist Rogers Brubaker put it, with a 'return to assimilation'¹⁷⁾. In the 1960s, the Home Secretary Roy Jenkins cast UK relations in firm opposition to assimilation, which he characterised as a flattening process. Rather, he saw the UK model as based on equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity. This remains the hallmark of the UK approach, but there has been a re-ordering of the relationship between immigrant newcomers and British society with more emphasis on socio-economic adaptation by newcomers. To some extent, this does involve 'making similar', which is the dictionary definition of assimilation, but the term remains a policy taboo because of its unwelcome air of compulsion and forced adaptation.

¹⁶⁾ A. Geddes, *The Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe*, London: Sage, 2002.

¹⁷⁾ Brubaker, W. Rogers 'The Return of Assimilation: Changing Perspectives on Immigration and its Sequels in France, Germany and the United States', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 24, no. 4, 2001.

The 2002 White Paper 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven' confirms the openness to new immigration, but recasts the relationship between new immigrants and the host society. It spoke of 'integration with diversity' and re-opened a debate about the importance of common values and the need for newcomers to speak English. It also proposed to introduce allegiance oaths for new citizens.

There are two reasons for this. As already mentioned, urban unrest in the northern English towns of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham revealed communities starkly divided between White and Muslim populations. Common socio-economic problems that linked the White and Muslim communities in these towns were viewed as cultural and racial concerns and in such terms became far more difficult to resolve. Secondly, these legislative changes are driven by the UK's economic and welfare reforms, which have placed more emphasis on individual responsibility in the labour market and welfare system. This underlying and more general policy ethos has translated into greater pressures on newcomers to adapt. The hoary questions of 'from what' this integration is supposed to occur and 'into what' remain, given the heterogeneity of modern British society on both sides of this equation. The issue of 'by whom' has been at least partly resolved: by the state, which resolves to inculcate certain 'British' values in a way that is in accordance with a more general economic and social policy orientation and all that this brings with it.

The June 2000 EU Directives covering racial discrimination and discrimination in the workplace put into EU law provisions to counter direct and indirect discrimination which strongly reflect UK policy. These must be enacted by member states by 2003 and will be incorporated into the national law of accession states as part of the Union's *acquis communautaire*. Despite some domestic agonising about the effects of race relations and the persistence of inequalities that continue to divide some ethnic minority communities from mainstream society, the UK model appears to have inspired a European approach to anti-discrimination that has major effects on existing and prospective EU member states. This will have implications for racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities across the EU.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What should the objectives of race relation policies be?
And how do you measure their success?
- What values unify people and what do we mean by integration?
- Could UK integration policies be successfully adopted in other European countries?
- What are the implications of EU anti-discrimination directives for accession states?

III. A Safe Refuge?

The third aspect of the immigration debate is asylum and refugee policy. There is a perception gap here too. A June 2002 MORI poll conducted just before Refugee Week found that respondents in the UK seriously overestimated the numbers of asylum seekers in the UK. The UK hosts around 1.98 per cent of the world’s asylum seekers, but respondents to the MORI poll put the figure at 23 per cent. The poll also found words such as ‘illegal immigrant’ to be strongly associated with asylum seekers, even though asylum seekers are not in the country illegally. Words that were also found to be strongly associated with asylum seekers were ‘desperate’, ‘foreigners’, ‘bogus’ and ‘scroungers’¹⁸⁾.

During the 1990s, asylum seekers accounted for between one-sixth and one-third of the annual UK immigration in-flow. Table 1 shows the numbers of asylum applicants entering the UK between 1990 and 2001 while Table 2 shows the main countries of origin in 2001. There was a gradual increase in applications in the 1990s, with an all-time record number of applications in 2000 (83,215)¹⁹⁾.

Table 1

Asylum Applications in the UK 1990–2001	
Year	Number of asylum applications
1990	26,205
1991	44,845
1992	24,605
1993	22,370
1994	32,830
1995	43,695
1996	29,645
1997	32,505
1998	46,015
1999	71,155
2000	83,215
2001	71,700

Table 2

Top Ten Origin Countries for Asylum Applicants in the UK (4 th Quarter 2001)	
Afghanistan	2,280
Iraq	1,835
Sri Lanka	1,425
Somalia	1,380
Turkey	830
China	805
Zimbabwe	775
Pakistan	695
Iran	690
Fed. Rep. Of Yugoslavia	545
Other nationalities	6,735
Total	18,005

Source for both tables: *Asylum Statistics, Fourth Quarter 2001, National Statistics.*

¹⁸⁾ MORI poll, 17 June 2002, at www.mori.com.

¹⁹⁾ *Asylum Statistics. First Quarter 2002, London: National Statistics.*

Asylum seekers are predominantly male and of working age, but cannot work for the first six months after an application has been made. Despite the government's declared intention being to adjudicate asylum claims within 6 months, the process actually averages 14 months for a decision to be reached. Around 10 per cent of applicants are granted refugee status, another 20 per cent are given Exceptional Leave to Remain (a renewable status short of full refugee status) while the remaining 70 per cent are rejected. Asylum applicants can appeal. There were 47,015 appeals against an initial decision in 2001–2, of which 75 per cent were rejected. Appeals added an average of 17 weeks to the process. Including dependents, 11,515 rejected asylum applicants were removed from the UK in 2001–2. Plans to increase the annual number of processed asylum applicants to 30,000 a year were shelved in July 2002 when it became apparent that such targets were unrealistic.

In recent years, asylum has become a very politicised area, linked into, and often confused with, the debates about immigration and integration. This politicisation has been exacerbated by the inefficiency of the system in the UK and the resultant backlog. UK governments have invested a lot of political capital in getting tough, but too little in getting it right.

A particularly powerful symbol of policy failure has been the Red Cross reception centre in the northern French town of Sangatte, a few kilometres from the French end of the Channel Tunnel. An agreement between the French and UK governments in July 2002 seemed set to close the centre. The French agreed to the closure of the centre so long as the UK agreed to take tougher measures against illegal immigration. The 'entitlement card' (compulsory ID cards) is part of this commitment.

The Sangatte centre was opened following a regional decree in 1999 that sought to get migrants off the streets of French port cities. Many of the people housed in the centre then left the camp and tried to board the channel tunnel trains bound for the UK. Those who failed were returned to the camp from where they could try again – and continual media stories/television pictures in Britain showed them trying. In September 2001, British Home Secretary David Blunkett asked the French government to shut down Sangatte while Eurotunnel sued the French government to achieve the same result. However, a French court refused to shut down the Sangatte camp, which is operated by the Red Cross. The situation at Sangatte has worsened in late 2001 and early 2002. In January 2001 Eurotunnel filed a new court action in France in an attempt to close the camp after some 500 refugees breached security and entered the Eurotunnel terminal at Coquelles on Christmas night 2001. By January 2002, the Sangatte camp was holding more than 1,500 asylum seekers (it was built for around 650), mainly from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.

- **State sovereignty versus international law**

Asylum is a point at which the sovereign authority of nation states meets international law.

- **International Law** stipulates that provisions that were put in place by the Geneva Convention after the Second World War safeguard the rights of asylum seekers and refugees.
- **National governments**, on the other hand, in the form of immigration authorities, suspect that many of these asylum seekers are 'bogus' in the sense that they are really economic migrants seeking to circumvent strict immigration controls.

This encounter between the sovereign authority of European countries and international legal standards has generated an intriguing outcome in the way that the EU's common asylum policy has developed. EU member states have discovered that, working individually and within a multilateral framework, they are able to attain their domestic policy objectives to restrict the ability of asylum seekers to enter the state territory.

- **Reasserting controls in Britain and Europe**

In the wake of increased numbers of asylum seekers and the Sangatte affair, the UK government has become a leading advocate of a common European response. To do so necessarily invokes ideas about distributive solidarity and burden sharing, which work more or less well when the EU distributes regional aid, but break down when the subjects for redistribution are asylum seekers. That said, common European asylum policies would indicate that European states acting collectively have been able to redefine their relationship to international legal standards when there is a strong domestic political case for doing so and when the subjects of this shift (asylum seekers) are a small, unpopular minority with few rights and few powerful advocates.

Evidence for this is the expansion of the range of control measures available to European states:

- **External controls** at the national borders, but also increasingly beyond these national borders to include other states. Immigration controls have tended to centre on the policing of the national frontiers. But they have developed quite rapidly since the 1990s to include ties between sending and receiving countries. Title IV of the Amsterdam Treaty brings free movement, immigration and asylum together within one chapter of the Treaty of Rome and could herald a common EU immigration and asylum policy. The UK opted out of Title IV because of a determination to maintain external frontier controls that would have to be relaxed if Britain fully participated in the EU free movement framework. These EU developments do not centre solely on national frontiers. In a sense, the borders of Europe have moved. By this I mean that immigrants are likely to encounter the immigration control authorities of their intended destinations in their country of origin or in transit countries (when they make a visa

application, when they try to get on a plane, or when they try to pass through a third country). A particularly relevant example of this was the introduction of pre-entry clearance by UK immigration officers at Prague airport. This is part of a wider trend. Throughout the EU a complex web of bilateral and multilateral agreements have developed that seek to shift responsibility for unwanted migrants to points south and east.

- **Internal controls** have developed apace to include a strong welfare state dimension. The underlying rationale is that there is a welfare state pull effect that draws asylum seekers to the UK. Thus, changes in the welfare state arrangements for asylum seekers will have a deterrent effect. If we explore recent UK asylum legislation in 1993, 1996, 1999 and 2002 then an attempt to elaborate a system of internal controls with a strong welfare state element can be identified. This has included the introduction of dispersal systems that send asylum seekers around the UK and the use of vouchers (phased out at the end of 2002) instead of cash paid welfare benefits. The 2002 legislation further refines the system with the introduction of reception, accommodation and detention centres for asylum seekers. There is another underlying and more implicit rationale. This framework of internal controls helps ensure that this form of migration can be reversible when earlier immigration was not. The internal mechanisms of control ensure social exclusion and inhibit the development of ties between asylum seekers and the host community. Thus, the objective of policy is the opposite of integration in order to ensure that at the end of the 6 month adjudication process rejected applicants can be returned to their country of origin.
- **Privatised controls** with private actors such as truckers, airlines and ferry operators incorporated as agents of the immigration control authorities and subject to hefty fines if they fail to comply. 'Carrier sanctions', as they are known, seek to strike at the people smuggling and human trafficking industries that have developed around tough immigration controls in European countries. They make the carriers – witting or unwitting – of illegal immigrants liable for heavy fines. This is another aspect of the attempt by European countries to use every tool in their arsenal against forms of migration that their policies define as unwanted.

Asylum as an issue will not just go away. The world is not a terribly safe place. War, oppression, famine and other calamities are likely to continue to prompt some people to try and improve their life chances by moving to another country. But the texture changes in unpredictable ways: since the 1990s a migration industry has developed to facilitate this movement with the growth of people trafficking and human smuggling networks.

Finally, it is worth considering the extent to which 'control' policies actually exacerbate the phenomena they are designed to prevent. 'Illegal immigration', for instance, becomes a problem when people are placed into the category of illegality by state policies. Do controls really work or do they intensify the phenomena that they were supposed to address? Restrictive immigration

policies have increased the costs of migration and the rewards for 'entrepreneurs' that enter the migration business. The result is that 'illegal immigration', 'bogus asylum seeking' and people-smuggling become major problems as an unintended consequence of restrictive policies.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should asylum seekers be allowed to work?
- Are common European asylum policies feasible?
- What contribution can a 'roots causes' approach based on trade and aid make to immigration policy? Should this approach also contain punitive elements that punish countries that send 'unwanted' immigrants?

Conclusions

Immigration policies centre on balancing economic, humanitarian and security concerns. British immigration policy has been particularly skewed towards security concerns with attempts to develop national and international approaches to regulate 'unwanted' forms of immigration such as asylum seeking and illegal immigration. This also tends to imply a perception of international migration as a threat to national borders, to the organisational and conceptual foundations of the national community and to national identity.

There are, however, some openings to new immigration in the UK to counter labour market gaps in crucial sectors such as construction, IT and key public services. Immigration has also been identified as a partial solution to the welfare state effects of an ageing population. Compared to past migration in the 1950s and 1960s that was largely unplanned, government has attempted to manage and lead this new opening to immigration. To sum up the main points of this paper:

- Although arguments about the effects of population change can be over-dramatised, Britain will continue to need migrant workers to fill labour market gaps. These gaps are likely to be specific and focused on key sectors rather than general.
- The British government has proposed to re-order the relationship between British society and immigrant newcomers and place increased emphasis in its citizenship and nationality laws on adaptation by immigrants.
- British asylum policy has centred on getting tough, but this may have exacerbated rather than solved 'the asylum problem'. In a broader European context, British asylum policy can be seen as an attempt to redefine relations between states and international legal standards and an assertion by states of the ability to determine who enters the state territory.

In a global economy within which freer movement of goods, services and capital are central elements, the free movement of people remains a taboo. The functionaries of the global economy can move freely, but economically developed countries still make a strong distinction in their immigration policies between opening the door to wanted immigration and closing the door to unwanted immigration. This serves to re-emphasise a point made by a leading scholar of international migration that when we analyse immigration policies then we must account for the walls that states build and the small doors that they open in these walls²⁰. The basis for this distinction remains the stark division between the world's richer and poorer countries. Any discussion of UK immigration policy cannot be based solely on discussion of 'our' needs, but also needs to be based on an awareness of the global economic, social and political factors and responsibilities that underlie international migration.

²⁰ A. Zolberg, 'The Next Waves: Migration Theory for a Changing World', *International Migration Review*, vol. 23, no. 3, 1989.

Appendix One

Main features of the 2002 White Paper 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven'.

Immigration

- The working holidaymakers scheme, under which 40,000 mainly Australian and New Zealand single 17-to 27-year olds come to the UK for two years, extended to include other Commonwealth citizens and eastern Europeans.
- Extended seasonal agricultural workers' scheme across the economy with quotas for industries short of labour. Under the scheme a worker could stay up to six months but would have no right to bring dependants.
- A highly-skilled migrant programme.
- The work permit scheme (104,000 permits issued in 2001) extended to those with medium skills from outside the EU coming for a specific job. Permit holders could stay for four years. Charges would be introduced for work permits, and those providing them would be regulated.

Asylum

- Overall capacity in secure removal centres would be expanded by 40 per cent to 4,000 places by Spring 2003.
- An EU and United Nations High Commission for Refugees scheme would allow a quota of asylum seekers to enter Britain each year.
- Vouchers phased out by the end of 2002.
- Eight sites identified for induction, accommodation, reporting and removal centres. The dispersal scheme outside London and the South East would continue but based on language cluster areas.
- There would be 10 days to appeal against refusal of a claim for asylum and no appeal against removal. The programme assisting those who want to return home before their asylum claim is determined would be expanded.
- A refugee integration programme.

Citizenship

- Applicants for citizenship would have to demonstrate they had a certain standard of English, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic.
- A ceremony would be held to celebrate new citizens. Applicants would have lived in Britain for at least three years and would be asked to swear an oath of allegiance to the Queen and to uphold democratic values and respect human rights.

Illegal Immigration

- Fine for employers of illegal workers of up to £5,000 for each illegal worker.
- "Entitlement cards" would be used as means of identification for potential employees to curb fraud.
- The maximum penalty for people smugglers (including trafficking for sexual exploitation) would be increased from 10 to 14 years.

Border Controls

- A pilot scheme at Prague airport for checking passengers against an immigration service database before they travel to the UK would be extended to other countries. Airlines would be able to check passenger details before flights.

Migration in an Enlarged Europe

Ivan Gabal, Lenka Václavíková Heřusová
Gabal Analysis & Consulting, Praha



Does the Czech Republic pose a threat to the European Union through Migration?

Ivan Gabal, Lenka Václavíková Helšusová

This essay is about migration and the Czech Republic¹. It deals with the two central issues in this area: the movement of foreign nationals into the CR, and Czech nationals into EU member states. The essay puts migration into a historical context on the territory of what is now the CR. It offers a breakdown of the population by nationality and provides an analysis of continuing migration from certain ethnic groups. The text also focuses on the situation of asylum seekers entering the CR and the potential increase in their numbers, as well as on the attitude of the CR's citizens to migrants. It provides an assessment of whether or not the fears of EU countries are justified concerning waves of migrants from the CR as a prospective new EU member state.

The Czech Republic has been intensely preparing for EU accession and the European Union has in turn been preparing itself to accept new members. Both with varying degrees of success. Both parties to this important development stand to be greatly enriched, whilst putting certain things at risk. Migration is one of the issues which arouses anxiety on the part of both parties to accession. How far are the fears justified?

1. The modern history of Czech society is characterised by a development from ethnic heterogeneity to homogeneity with migration and changes in the content of its national identity playing a substantial role.

1.1. The territory which is now the Czech Republic has been affected by numerous historical developments which have given rise to different waves of migration. The geo-politically attractive and strategic position of the Czech basin in Central Europe, providing important trade and cultural links between the Germanic and Slavic worlds with Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Jewish elements², has attracted the attention of powers in the West, East and South. They exerted their sovereignty over, and not infrequently also imposed their nationality, language and faith or ideology upon the population. This fluctuating national and state identity with no change in the people's place of residence is a typical Central European phenomenon³.

¹ *In view of the fact that the territory of the current Czech Republic has been changing throughout history, the terms Czech Republic, Czech lands and Czech basin will continue to denote Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia as they constitute the CR as a state entity at present.*

² *Initially, the fluctuation of ethnic groups coming to settle and mix in the Czech basin was larger. From about the 6th century the population base established itself as Slavic. In the 12th and 13th centuries, i.e. the height of the Middle Ages, Germans gradually settled in the border areas with the support of Czech rulers and laid the foundations for a large German population in our territory. Jews also gradually appeared and from about the 15th century there were small waves of Roma settlers.*

³ *In the 20th century alone inhabitants of some Czech villages could change their citizenship and sometimes even nationality five times without having to move. Such changes were, of course, accompanied by profound changes in the content of the education curricula related to citizenship and national identity, language pressures and the imposition of values.*

- 1.2 The changes in power were accompanied by waves of emigration and the exiling of political, religious or national opponents of the new regimes, and often, in particular, by the physical liquidation of elites. From the forced restoration of Catholicism in the 17th century, which exiled or eliminated pro-reform nobility, clergy and intelligentsia, to the massive emigration waves, exilings and executions of opponents of fascist, communist or Soviet supremacy in the 20th century, the Czech population lost its elite and the more active strata of society in sudden bursts⁴⁾. For a long time, emigration with no possibility of return became one of the solutions to the conflict between national pride and alienated political circumstances. Emigration was an alternative to life in humiliation or collaboration with hostile regimes. Internal resistance, dissidence and willingness to undergo persecution or imprisonment were more exceptional heroism than the rule. This contributed to weakening the national and state identity of Czechs. It is no coincidence that, for a long time, the citizens of Czechoslovakia voted for democracy with their feet (i.e. emigration) and not at the polls.
- 1.3 On a number of occasions a Czechoslovak army was fighting abroad before they were able to do so for the Czechoslovak State. The Czechoslovak army and soldiers gained combat experience almost exclusively abroad, after emigrating, rather than in defending their own country. The emigration and government-in-exile model became a reality for politicians both when Czechoslovakia emerged in opposition to Austria and when it succumbed to Hitler's pressure, or when democracy was destroyed by the joint efforts of Czech and Soviet communists.
- 1.4 Political emigration – leaving and accepting exile from one's own country because of unwillingness to give in to foreign extortion and power pressure – is much stronger in the Czech tradition than economic emigration. This is one of the reasons why, in the present democratic and market conditions, the Czechs give the impression of being migration "stay-at-homes" who adapt to the domestic economic situation rather than heading elsewhere to find work and a better standard of living.
- 1.5 Many cases of migration in Czech history were related to ethnicity and a consequence of unsuccessfully or hastily resolved conflicts between nationalities. The establishment of an independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 was the result of Czech national, political and economic pursuit of independence within the Habsburg monarchy⁵⁾. The creation of Czechoslovakia was also one of the decisions taken by the victorious powers after the First World War. They intended to weaken Germany and to subjugate the peripheral areas of German settlement to the newly established Central European states. Czechoslovakia was set up as a multi-national state with a large German minority. Most Czechs considered the

⁴⁾ *Estimates derived from a secondary analysis of migration data in the late 1980s showed that approximately 350–500 thousand people left Czechoslovakia in the wake of the Soviet military occupation alone.*

⁵⁾ *The Czech lands were the most industrialised part of the monarchy.*

⁶⁾ *This politically induced identity was later abandoned under the pressure of complex nationality-related problems in the state.*

creation of Czechoslovakia to be a final solution to the question of their self-identify. Czech policy supported this by attempting to inculcate a contrived Czechoslovak nationality by political means⁶⁾. In the new state, Germans and Hungarians found themselves to be outside their own countries in a minority position and, for a long time, were not willing to accept Czechoslovakia's existence. Czechs no longer identified themselves in opposition to the German State. They focused predominantly on the overall improvement of underdeveloped Slovakia with a strong Hungarian minority and many Czechs migrated there⁷⁾. In addition to the nearly 10 million Czechs, Czechoslovakia was inhabited by 3 million Germans and some 2 million Slovaks, who, unlike the more numerous Germans, had the status of a state-forming nation. Moreover, there were 800,000 Hungarians, 500,000 Ruthenians, 300,000 Jews and some tens of thousands of Poles.

- 1.6 In spite of the growing openness of Czechoslovak policy towards national diversity and its undoubtedly advanced democratic principles, peace between nationalities was impossible to maintain. Under the pressure of internal national conflicts prompted by a German minority galvanised by Hitler, and under external pressure exerted by Germany and other European powers, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist (1938–1939). First the Sudeten borderlands were lost with the immediate expulsion of Czechs, then the German controlled Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was set up. German power exterminated the Jewish and Roma minority and executed a large number of Czech patriots. Slovakia established its own, so-called clerico-fascist state in 1939.
- 1.7 The restoration of Czechoslovakia after the Second World War (minus its most eastern territory, Trans-Carpathian Ukraine, which was annexed by the Soviet Union) also involved efforts to find a final solution to the nationality issue as a key to the country's stability and security. Only the Czech and Slovak nations were recognised as state-forming. In relation to the two strongest national minorities, almost all the Germans and many of the Hungarians were forcibly expelled⁸⁾ as a consequence of wartime events.
- 1.8 The result of the war tragedy was a considerable reduction in ethnic diversity and a progressive ethnic homogenisation of the population composed of a majority of Czechs and Slovaks related by language and culture⁹⁾. Extensive internal migration occurred after

⁷⁾ *Over the entire period of Czechoslovakia's existence, including the Communist era, massive re-allocation of financial, economic and human resources in favour of Slovakia, including education and employment opportunities, was a solid part of economic development. As a consequence of this a considerable number of Czech skilled workers migrated to Slovakia, whilst Czechoslovakia was more directed by political decisions taken in its Czech part and, particularly, in Prague. This led to a weaker identification of Slovaks with this entity in comparison with Czechs. However, there was strong migration in both directions – mixed marriages, Slovaks studying at Czech universities, work in central offices in Prague etc.*

⁸⁾ *The expulsion of Germans and some Hungarians was legalised by the so-called Beneš Decrees and Article XII of the Postupim Conference Protocol.*

⁹⁾ *A small minority of Germans remained in the Czech lands, a Polish minority in North Moravia, a Hungarian minority in the Southern part of Slovakia and a Roma minority particularly in central and eastern Slovakia.*

the expulsion of the Germans. The vacated border areas were re-settled by people from further inland and Slovakia including a part of the Slovak Roma formed the basis of a new Roma population after their wholesale slaughter during the war.

- 1.9 The Communist takeover was followed by another forced political and social homogenisation of Czech society. It was compounded by several waves of emigration and supported by the political and physical repression of opponents, elimination of the private sector by nationalisation and collectivisation, closure of state borders, a ban on travelling and on the import of foreign cultural, political and intellectual influences. Social uniformity came to a head in the 1970s and 1980s with an intensive levelling out of pay and homogenisation of social differentiation and lifestyle. Czech and Slovak society was transformed into a homogeneous middle class of employees with largely unified lifestyles differentiated more in terms of demography than occupation and education. The process of the homogenisation of society was strengthened by insufficient educational attainment at the level of tertiary education, which gradually stagnated from the 1960s onwards.
- 1.10 The level of territorial mobility in socialist Czechoslovakia was low. So-called permanent residence along with the obligatory police registration and housing shortages effectively anchored people in one place, something which was permanent and often involuntary. Under socialism the possibility of moving a permanent place of residence to other parts of the republic was limited for people living in some industrial regions. A lifestyle leading to low mobility has been preserved in certain respects up to the present day.
- 1.11 The demise of communist regimes led to cultural and migration-related changes and a gradual differentiation of society brought about by internal as well as external sources. Migration began to change course. The whole of central Europe became a target or transit destination.
- 1.12 Political and economic reforms greatly affected the social and economic position of some social groups and ethnic minorities. Political articulation of this issue often took the form of nationalistic economic or territorial claims for self-determination, national independence or ethnic homogenisation of the state, including xenophobic self-definition against other ethnic groups or a multi-national state¹⁰⁾.
- 1.13 One of the implications of the radical transformation of Czechoslovakia's political and economic system was its break-up in 1993 into two nation states, which was the result of

¹⁰⁾ *In some countries this development resulted in extreme forms of break-up of the cultures of national states, ethnic military conflicts and ethnic cleansing or massacres of ethnic groups with the use of armed forces (Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union).*

¹¹⁾ *Slovakia was severely affected by the collapse of Eastern and arms markets because it had been intensively focused on industrial production. Increasing unemployment, unknown before, limited financial resources allocated within the Czechoslovak Federation and a colder political attitude to the new reality and radical changes were used by nationalist forces to wage an aggressive anti-Czechoslovak and anti-Czech campaign. Neither the federal, nor the Czech politicians were able to face this effectively and virtually gave in to Slovak nationalists in 1992.*

stark differences in the process and impact of transformation between the Czech lands and Slovakia¹¹⁾. The split agreed by politicians was remarkable not only for its peaceful, quick and, consequently, extremely costly implementation, but also for the lack of support for it on the part of the majority of population. The demise of the state was not put to a referendum. As had already happened several times in the past, it was the politicians who addressed national tensions by a change in state identity and a “reduction” in the territory and national structure of the population without popular consent.

- 1.14 The demise of Czechoslovakia effectively completed the process of the ethnic homogenisation of Czech society. It confirmed the difficulties of Czech politics and state identity in handling multi-nationality, as well as its tendency to purify the national structure of the country. After Czechoslovakia ceased to exist, problems arose in both new states, prompted by this very national and cultural homogeneity and strong inclination to promote assimilation or even xenophobic attitudes to cultural, ethnic and national differences.
- 1.15 The new Czech identity began to crystallise in conditions of ethnic, cultural and language homogeneity and in a society marked by social differences that were still insufficiently legitimate¹²⁾. This society began to face, as part of the preparation for EU accession, a multi-cultural and multi-national Europe which went beyond the scope of its economic values and consumer lifestyle.

2. The Development and Level of Migration in the Czech Republic

- 2.1 Until 1989 Czech citizens emigrated from their own country without the possibility of return. A two-way migration process started in 1990. Significant migration was brought about by the departure of Soviet occupation forces from Czechoslovakia in 1990–91, a process which concerned over 100 thousand soldiers including their family members. Later a considerable number of young Germans left for Germany. From the mid 1990s a cyclical summer migration of a part of the Roma community began to occur. Those people who defected from communism in a number of waves returned to the restored democracy relatively quickly. The foreign business community was enlarged, particularly in Prague, and there were newcomers arriving in the unknown post-communist world of new opportunities¹³⁾. The CR also became a destination of war refugees from countries of the former Yugoslavia. However, this immigration disrupted cultural uniformity rather than changing the predominating ethnic homogeneity.

¹²⁾ *One of the consequences of privatisation in the CR, which was marked by large problems and a lack of transparency, is a low legitimacy of the emerging wealth-related and social differences. The owning of assets is to a degree associated with illegal or dubious property transfers and machinations in privatisation. The same atmosphere surrounds the wealthier strata of society.*

¹³⁾ *For example, according to estimates there were between 10 and 20 thousand young Americans in Prague in the early 1990s.*

- 2.2 Out of the current 10.3 million inhabitants of the CR 94% claim Czech, Moravian or Silesian nationality and as such form a majority population speaking the Czech language. Slovaks form 2% of the CR population (193,000) and the remaining 4% belong to other nationalities, particularly Polish (52,000) and German (39,000). Only 0.1% of the population claim the often discussed Roma nationality (i.e. 12,000)¹⁴⁾. Qualified estimates speak of nearly 200,000 Roma inhabitants of whom most claim Czech nationality.
- 2.3 According to Ministry of Interior statistics, as at 30 March 2002 there were 222,000 foreigners in the Czech Republic, of which 151,000 had long-term residence and 71,000 permanent residence. Slovaks (57,000), Ukrainians (55,000)¹⁵⁾, Vietnamese (26,000), Poles (17,000) and Russians (13,000)¹⁶⁾ are the most numerous nationalities with permanent or long-term residence. However, in view of illegal migration and the high number of countries without a visa obligation the actual figures are likely to be somewhat higher. Still, it is evident that Czech society remains largely homogeneous and Czech.
- 2.4 With the demise of Czechoslovakia in 1993 internal migration (for study, marriage, employment) became international. People still move between the CR and SR, but in lower numbers and in an asymmetric manner, the CR being a more common destination than Slovakia. After the split of Czechoslovakia there was a one-off wave of migration from Slovakia to the CR (Slovak Roma and Slovaks), which was often motivated by the rise of xenophobic nationalism in the new Slovak Republic. The current strong motives for migration include education, skilled job opportunities and unskilled, but better paid, manual work.
- 2.5 Slovak students are traditional migrants to the CR. Unlike other foreigners, they may study at Czech universities for free. Their number is several times higher than that of Czech students in Slovakia¹⁷⁾. Approximately 70% of them do not intend to return to Slovakia immediately after their studies and want to take on a job. The Czech Republic benefits from Slovak intellectual potential. Slovakia will undoubtedly remain one of the most important sources of migration to the CR.
- 2.6 Most Slovaks currently living in the CR are those who settled on Czech territory before 1993 and, in a true sense, they are not foreign immigrants. The number of Slovaks applying for a permanent residence permit is likely to increase if the SR is not admitted to the EU in the first wave. A better economic and social situation in the CR¹⁸⁾, the almost

¹⁴⁾ *According to the Census of people, houses and flats, 2001*

¹⁵⁾ *In 2001 there were more Ukrainians than Slovaks in the CR.*

¹⁶⁾ *See the web sites of the Interior Ministry, <http://www.mvcr.cz/index.html>*

¹⁷⁾ *There are around 4, 000 Slovak students in the CR, while 300 Czech students study in Slovakia.*

¹⁸⁾ *An indicator that clearly shows the different social environment in the CR is unemployment. In the 1st quarter of 2002 the rate of unemployment in the CR was 8.6% and 19.4% in Slovakia. Also, the original parity between the Czech crown and the Slovak crown has now changed to a ratio of 3 to 2 in favour of the Czech currency.*

non-existent language barrier, a common history and cultural proximity make the CR a natural destination for Slovaks. Slovaks in the CR are currently spread across the layers of the social structure and form an important part of the cultural and economic elite of Czech society. There is a continuing stream of Slovaks coming to the CR who are both educated and manually skilled. Due to the earlier common state some Czech people still do not consider them to be immigrants.

- 2.7 As regards immigrants from Slovakia, ethnic distinctions must be made. Two quite different groups have come to the CR with a different degree of acceptability to the majority Czech population. Unlike Slovaks, the migration of Roma from Slovakia is not likely to be considered desirable. As far as Roma migration is concerned, the CR perceives the situation in Slovakia to be similar to that of migration of Czech Roma, for example, to Great Britain¹⁹⁾. Potential upheavals in internal Slovak politics and the inappropriate level of Roma integration in Slovakia may be the sources of a growing migration of Slovak Roma into the CR. This is even more so in view of the fact that the situation of Roma in Slovakia is different from that in the CR. Slovak Roma are more separated from the majority population and many live in settlements without basic infrastructure and hygiene. They conform less to the norms of mainstream society and have worse education and qualification structures.
- 2.8 In the case of Poles with long-term or permanent residence their arrival was more a “one-off” decision induced by economic reasons. Their core consists of manual workers who came to the CR in the 1970s and 80s²⁰⁾. Many of them were women who married Czechs and their integration does not pose any problems. In view of the specific reasons for this migration it is not expected that it will increase considerably in the future²¹⁾.
- 2.9 The arrival of the Vietnamese also has economic roots. However, it was a migration organised by the state from communist North Vietnam to communist Czechoslovakia. The first wave came as early as the 1960s. The main inflow took place in the 1970s and 1980s. This was the Vietnamese government’s way of repaying Czechoslovakian assistance during the Vietnam War. After 1990 a group of Vietnamese emigrated to the CR from Germany. Due to cultural differences, the Vietnamese community is inclined to isolation. Their relationships with Czechs, if any, are business-related. Because of the relatively low number of Vietnamese in our country²²⁾, their presence has not caused any major problems. The second generation of Vietnamese pursues education and integration into the Czech

¹⁹⁾ *In the past the CR also considered and rejected applications for asylum from a significant number of Slovak Roma.*

²⁰⁾ *A distinction must be made between them and the Poles living traditionally in the Těšín area bordering Poland and who are Czech citizens.*

²¹⁾ *Official figures put the number of Poles living in the CR at 52,000.*

²²⁾ *According to the Census of people, houses and flats of 2001 it is 17 586 people- i.e. 0.2% of the total population of the CR.*

environment. In view of strong family ties in the Vietnamese community this group may be expected to expand gradually.

- 2.10 Citizens of the former Soviet Union form another group of migrants²³⁾ who are currently among the most frequent long-term residence or asylum seekers. In the case of Russians and Ukrainians the reasons for seeking asylum are primarily economic²⁴⁾. Citizens of republics in the Caucasus region often leave because of an unstable political situation, war conflicts or persecution on ethnic or other grounds. A further increase of migrants from this group may be expected particularly concerning citizens from Western parts of the former Soviet Union. As in the case of other countries, the Czech Republic has been affected by infiltration by organised crime from the countries of the former Soviet Union, specifically Ukraine and Russia.
- 2.11 Furthermore, there are almost 8,500 citizens from the former Yugoslavia of whom over 3,000 people are from the current Federal Republic of Yugoslavia²⁵⁾. A significant proportion of them came to the CR as a result of the various stages of Balkan wars in the course of the 1990s. During these stages of fighting the CR granted asylum to a number of people from the affected countries. Many of them later returned. The relationship between the CR and the countries of the former Yugoslavia has traditionally been good and dates back to the period before the First World War and later to the communist period. Many nationals of these countries had already lived or studied in the CR. Their integration was usually smooth, although during the conflict not even the CR was spared the impact of organised crime originating particularly in Bosnia and Kosovo.
- 2.12 Temporary migrants in the CR also include foreigners from Western Europe and North America. They work in international companies based in the CR. Others came to the CR in the early 1990s to experience a different culture and social environment. Those who stayed form a specific community making their living predominantly by teaching English²⁶⁾.
- 2.13 In terms of regional distribution, immigration into the CR is largely concentrated in Prague, which is a truly European multi-cultural city. It is primarily a destination for those foreigners who are beneficial to the CR. An entirely different situation exists in other regions. The foreigners coming there, if any, are often less accepted from the point of view of assimilation requirements. On the whole, other regions have less experience with foreign nationals than Prague. The exception is the area bordering Germany and Austria with short-term shopping or

²³⁾ *Since 1990 asylum applications have been registered from over 2,000 Russians, over 6,500 Ukrainians, over 5,500 Afghans and nearly 3,000 Armenians.*

²⁴⁾ *One specific feature of Ukrainian nationals is their relatively high level of education (over 2/3 have university degrees). It is not uncommon for a Ukrainian doctor to dig ditches. High unemployment in some Ukrainian regions not only causes migration to our country, but also creates room for extensive illegal and criminal activities which go beyond the Ukrainian borders.*

²⁵⁾ *I.e. Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.*

²⁶⁾ *A long-term residence permit is held by over 3,000 US citizens, 5,000 Germans and 1,500 citizens of the UK.*

entertainment-related visits. Border regions also show a higher concentration of prostitution and the problem of quasi-legal trade and tax-free zones, which are associated with short-term cross-border visits by Germans and Austrians.

2.14 In general terms, however, the present scope of migration is very small in comparison to the prospective influx of immigrants into the CR after its accession to the EU.

3. The Roma Minority and its Position in Czech Society

3.1 The Roma minority is a controversial part of Czech society. In most cases its presence is the result of several post-war waves of immigration from Slovakia and it is being extended by newcomers from Romania and Bulgaria. This ethnic group is significantly different in terms of the colour of skin, lifestyle and social position. The relationship between the majority population and the Roma minority has traditionally been controversial, and shows a tendency towards the assimilation and, if that fails, the segregation of Roma citizens.

3.2 Together with Slovaks, the Roma population is the largest national and ethnic minority. However, they do not claim Roma nationality and generally declare and seek Czech nationality. This situation is largely the result of the advanced assimilation of Roma and, particularly, a growing separation from their own language and identity. Roma people who successfully integrate into majority society in terms of language, education, profession and lifestyle distance themselves from the Roma minority, since they often view it from the majority perspective²⁷⁾. In the Czech environment, which is homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, culture and language, integration into society is conditioned by education and an appropriate position in the labour market. Educational attainment is conditional upon good knowledge of the Czech language. Mastering Czech and the achievement of education and a career result in abandoning the Roma language, identity and culture²⁸⁾. A number of members of the Roma community also fear discrimination if they fill in Roma nationality in an official questionnaire.

3.3 The Roma minority lacks cohesion. Roma are scattered across local communities and lack internal support for maintaining or developing their identity and furthering their own integration-related interests. The fragmentation of the Roma minority is a drawback in communication both among the Roma themselves and between them and mainstream society. Consolidation of the Roma minority as an independent, organised entity is unlikely.

²⁷⁾ *To be a Roma in Czech society is considerably disqualifying and even the Roma are aware of this.*

²⁸⁾ *Gabal Analysis & Consulting, "Kvalifikovaný odhad počtu příslušníků národostních menšin se specifickým zřetelem k rómské menšině". (Qualified estimate of numbers of members of national minorities with a specific focus on the Roma minority). An internal study for the Czech Government Council for National Minorities, Prague 2001.*

- 3.4 Under communism, the Roma minority faced direct assimilation pressures. This targeted pressure combining welfare benefits and repression has had severe effects. The traditional Roma social structures have broken down and a number of cultural elements have disappeared, leading to a total confusion. One example of the disintegration of Roma identity is the gradual disappearance of the Roma language as the main language of communication, the creation of a Roma ethnically based dialect of Czech and the full adoption of the Czech language by educated Roma members.
- 3.5 A major part of the Roma community failed to respond to the demands of dynamic transformation from communism to a market economy and fell to the bottom of the social and economic ladder. The Holocaust, 50 years of socialism and an education deficit have hampered their capacity to adapt to an open society. The Roma find themselves in a marginalized position characterised by the combination of social and ethnic disqualification, high unemployment and dependency on welfare benefits coupled with social frustration and tensions in relation to the surrounding community. In liberal circumstances the Roma have shown an above-average rate of crime, prostitution and drug abuse as well as the exploitation of welfare benefits. This further exacerbates the problems of their co-existence with mainstream society. One feature that marks the tough and, in a way, naive nature of Czech transformation is the lack of mechanisms designed to take account of and actively address specific Roma problems. Until the mid 1990s the accumulated problems of the largest ethnic minority had no place in the transformation policy²⁹⁾.
- 3.6 After 1990 the Roma population got the opportunity to participate in public policy matters. Roma representatives got into Parliament immediately in 1990. In the next general election the situation did not reoccur and the Roma have gradually disappeared from politics, the local level included. The Roma minority plays virtually no role in public life. This is the result both of its internal disintegration, and of the dilatory and closed nature of the public and political life of the majority population. Czech political parties are also closed to Roma members and do not encourage their involvement. This means that the Czech Republic fails to live up to one of the principal pillars of modern European policy – the participation of minorities in public life. It is in this respect that the Roma are more or less in the same position as foreigners and, what is more, do not show much opposition to this.
- 3.7 The Roma population shows very high levels of unemployment. Unfortunately only estimates are available, as identification of ethnic Roma is prohibited by law. Their rate of unemployment is estimated to exceed 50% and is even up to 80% in some regions.
- 3.8 The Roma population has considerably lower educational attainment, primarily as a result of major language, educational and cultural handicaps on the part of the parent

²⁹⁾ *Only in 1998 was Václav Klaus's government willing to admit the existence of the problem and the fact that, as things stand, the Roma minority is unable to resolve their difficulties and decline.*

generation, which hamper the educational mobility of children. Furthermore, the Czech education system lacks good schemes offering specific support for improving educational chances of Roma children³⁰⁾. A clear majority of children do not complete elementary education (precise data is again unavailable), fail to attain a qualification and have no direct chance of employment. The route to secondary education is virtually closed to Roma children due to inappropriate elementary education achievement.

- 3.9 There are projections of a further increase in the Roma population in the CR as a consequence of immigration, mainly from Slovakia and, potentially, the Balkans. The solid ties within Roma families result in a gradual inflow of other members of the large families. If the CR becomes a member of the EU before Slovakia, there will be an increase in Slovak Roma migrants who have relatives in the CR.
- 3.10 In the mid 1990s Roma began to migrate to Great Britain and other western European countries and Canada. The cause includes a number of domestic as well as foreign factors. The Roma themselves see the main problems as unemployment, bad housing, a feeling of being threatened and increasing living costs. The factors conducive to migration also include an across-the-board and soft welfare system in the CR, which makes it possible for families to accumulate welfare benefits in their absence³¹⁾.
- 3.11 In addition to the “push” factors, which make them leave the country, there are also “pull” factors attracting the Roma to Western Europe. The wealthier, ethnically more diverse and culturally more open environment is enticing. This is why the cyclical summer migration of the Roma to Western Europe has, to a certain degree, the characteristics of economic and culturally inquiring tourism, which is not affected by the low chances of getting asylum and tough immigration controls.
- 3.12 After the CR joins the EU, Czech and Slovak Roma are likely to be a source of problematic migration to the EU – perhaps in hundreds or thousands. One alternative is a robust promotion of the opportunities for integration of Roma children into the education system and active and specific support for them, albeit at the cost of strengthening assimilation trends. This is the only way of slowing down migration of entire families. However, there is a lack of resources and teaching capacity as well as power and political will at the Ministry of Education. Czech governments have so far invested as little in the development of the education of Roma as in that of Czechs – though this is more evident in the former case.

³⁰⁾ *Most support programmes are implemented by non-government organisations and the state education sector is wavering in its support.*

³¹⁾ *Analýza migračního klimatu a migračních tendencí do západoevropských zemí v romských komunitách ve vybraných městech ČR“ (An analysis of the climate and trends related to migration to western European countries in Roma communities in selected cities of the CR), Gabal, Analysis & Consulting, Prague, 2000*

4. Asylum Seekers and Their Chances in the CR

- 4.1 Before 1989 there was no reason to apply for asylum in the CR. Only after 1990 did the first immigrants arrive and their number has been constantly rising ever since. The Czech Republic regained its tradition of being an asylum country, which it last demonstrated in the 1930s in relation to persecuted citizens of Nazi Germany.
- 4.2 Although the numbers of asylum applicants in the CR have been increasing since 1990, only a small number of them have been successful. From 1990 to the end of April 2002 asylum was granted to only 2,123 people compared to over 56,000 applications. Only 89 applicants have been successful in 2002 so far.
- 4.3 After the CR accedes to the EU the number of migrants from the EU is likely to grow. This will be reflected in a new ethnic and cultural composition of migrants and in a rising number of immigrants. The pressure threatening to break the current ethnic structure and cultural uniformity will be higher. The question is how the CR will be able to cope with this situation³²⁾. EU linked immigration is already evident in the growing number of asylum seekers³³⁾. After its integration into the EU, the ethnic structure of the CR will differ from that of comparable EU countries and its heterogeneity will increase. One critical aspect, besides EU politics and the internal situation, will also be the situation and developments in neighbouring countries, particularly in Germany. The immigration policy of neighbouring states will play a central part in the CR's migration development.
- 4.4 As in the EU countries, the CR is experiencing demographic stagnation³⁴⁾. According to some estimates the CR can reckon on a higher proportion of immigrants in the active population. The CR is also currently working on a new approach to economic migration. A pilot project concerning the employment of foreigners has been carried out. Within this project applicants for permanent residence were singled out according to Czech labour market needs. On the basis of an agreed contract of employment and a residence permit, certain applicants were preferentially granted permanent residence. This approach is also viewed as a possible solution to demographic stagnation³⁵⁾.
- 4.5 The Czech Republic will soon face a decision as to whether it will use its large cultural homogeneity and low level of language skills as a natural barrier against non-regulated

³²⁾ For example, an overwhelming majority of people are against building asylum camps near their residence.

³³⁾ In 2001 the number more than doubled compared to 2000! There were 8,788 asylum applicants in 2000, while in 2001 it was 18,093.

³⁴⁾ The natural increase in 2001 was negative at -17,040 people, i.e. a decrease.

³⁵⁾ See M. Vavrečková, "Ekonomická migrace. Nový přístup ČR a jeho srovnání se státy EU" (Economic migration. The CR's new approach.): *Parliament Bulletin*, 3/2002, pp 23–26.

migration from EU countries, or whether it will support openness towards foreigners by means of various educational programmes. Under present conditions, without good knowledge of the Czech language, culture, values and standards, immigrants only become incorporated in their new environment with difficulty or remain isolated in their communities.

- 4.6 When the CR joins the EU the problem of whether the external EU border will be between the CR and Slovakia or between Slovakia and Ukraine will arise. If Slovakia is not included in the next wave of EU enlargement, considerable changes will have to take place on the Czech-Slovak frontiers making the mutual relationship of the two countries at least more complex, if not worse. Unrestricted cross-border movement between Slovakia and the CR makes the inflow of illegal migration from third countries more difficult to control. In terms of immigration control, the precautions at the Eastern Slovak and Polish borders with Ukraine are unsatisfactory.

5. The Czech Attitude towards Foreigners

- 5.1 Czech society distinguishes between three categories of foreigners by their assimilation capacity and therefore acceptability as neighbours, and by their positive or negative contribution³⁶⁾. The first group, which is beneficial and easy to assimilate, consists of foreigners from the Euro-Atlantic area. They bring along cultural and economic capital and do not present any problems. The Czech public considers them as “civilised” and respectable. As such they are welcome, although they are also expected to adapt as much as possible to our lifestyle and language. The second group are the imaginary “relatives”. They are close to us in terms of the national, language and historical origin, but, on the whole, there is no rich capital behind them. This group includes Slovaks, Poles and Czech emigrants. The core of their acceptability is a full assimilation to the Czech environment, although there is no uniform view of their possible contribution. The third group comprises ethnic groups and nations entirely different, such as Vietnamese, Arabs, Chinese, but also Ukrainians, Russians and, due to the war, also people from the former Yugoslavia³⁷⁾. This group also includes Roma who are overwhelmingly perceived to be foreign. Resentment prevails towards foreigners belonging to this group in the neighbourhood and their presence is rated as negative.
- 5.2 Moreover, Czech society has its standards of unacceptability made evident through social distance from those who are perceived as incompatible with the Czech environment and its own neighbourhood. Czechs do not object to having as neighbours foreigners from

³⁶⁾ *The assimilation approach to foreigners is illustrated by the following figures: 60% of Czechs believe that foreigners and ethnic groups should adapt as much as possible to our way of life, 30% think that they should partially adapt. Only 5% are in favour of letting foreigners live entirely their own way of life. See “Postoje občanů k problematice uprchlíků” (Attitudes of citizens to the issue of refugees), CVVM (formerly IVVM), 2000.*

³⁷⁾ *I.Gabal et al., Etnické menšiny ve střední Evropě (Ethnic minorities in Central Europe), G plus G, Prague, 1999, pp 77–79*

close cultures (Slovaks, Poles) or “western” foreigners, although their cultures, languages and life styles are sometimes different and constitute a source of insecurity, caution or even xenophobia³⁸⁾. Culturally and ethnically incompatible foreigners raise xenophobic fears and insecurity in most people. A considerable part of the Czech population would apply the rule of segregation and protection of the Czech environment and public order from those who, in their eyes, are unwilling or unable to adapt³⁹⁾. The segregationist or even racist attitudes in Czech society are founded on little faith that, for example, the Roma will manage to overcome their education deficit and problematic forms of social interaction. This is why segregation appears to be a more efficient solution – and one favoured by a majority – than integration, for example, by means of education, something which is supported by less than half of the population. On the other hand, it is the state which most people charge with the duty of “protecting” public order and the Czech environment. Only some 10–13% see an alternative in racial violence and intimidation of Roma by extremists such as skinheads. Segregation is for Czechs an increasingly realistic alternative to state policy, as distinct from the clear promotion and implementation of integration programmes with which the broader public has no experience.

5.3 In terms of ethnic and national dimensions, Czech politics has had a very bad historical experience in terms of conflicts with nationalism. Historic defeats suffered at the hands of nationalists and populists, the last being that delivered by the Slovak nationalist Mečiar in the struggle to maintain Czechoslovakia, make Czech politicians largely cautious and moderate in employing populist, nationalist or even racist arguments. Only in this year’s pre-election period did Prime Minister Zeman and conservative leader Klaus succumb to provocations by Austrian regional governor Heider and employ strong anti-Austrian and anti-German rhetoric. In his election campaign Václav Klaus used concepts associated with the protection of national interests but, as in the case of Viktor Orbán with his anti-Czech campaign in Hungary, for example, Klaus’s nationalist rhetoric also failed in the elections. It is symptomatic that it was communists who benefited most from the anti-German campaign in the Czech lands.

5.4 Extreme racism and nationalism had already been firmly rejected by the Czech public in the 1998 elections when, after their racist campaign, extremist Republicans were not admitted to Parliament. Despite continued high levels of xenophobia and an above-average tendency towards segregation, the Czech people show solid resistance to nationalist or racist extremism and deprecate their existence in the parliamentary system.

³⁸⁾ *For a long time the CR has not conducted a profound sociological study into its ethnic climate including the attitude to foreigners. It is therefore impossible to assess the extent to which social distance may be more important than cultural distance in view of the fact that westerners settled in the CR, particularly in Prague, belong to the best paid and wealthier groups of population. Still, they will probably continue to be viewed as beneficial to Czech society.*

³⁹⁾ *This very attitude was the reason why the building of the notorious segregation wall separating socially problematic Roma from ordinary citizens of the town of Ústí nad Labem was supported by a majority of the Czech public.*

- 5.5 This view of different ethnic groups and immigrants from the perspective of their economic contribution or assimilation has yet to be matched by experience of positive integration or programmes which deal with increasing participation of minorities in the public and cultural life of municipalities, regions and the state and co-existence with the Roma. The restraint exercised in Czech politics in the face of populism, nationalism or racism is complemented by a resounding and long-term lack of focus, incompetence and passivity in relation to support for integration-focused, multi-cultural and educational strategies designed to promote the integrity, cohesion, culture and the social structure of Czech society. During transformation attention was centred on banks and privatisation and later, under pressure from the European Commission, on administration, legislation and state institutions, rather than on people, their education and cultural capital.
- 5.6 The deficit in educational and cultural capital and the low level of multi-cultural absorption could pose a serious problem when Czech society is faced with internal migration within the EU, including ethnically and culturally different immigrants from outside Europe. In such circumstances it is impossible to rule out a growth in anti-immigration militant sentiments and their transposition to the political life of the country. If such developments occur in France or the Netherlands with their greater educational and cultural capital and a longer tradition of multi-ethnic co-existence, the likelihood of the occurrence of similar phenomena in a significantly less well-equipped Czech society is obvious.
- 5.7 The assimilation issue and even xenophobic attitudes towards immigrants will play a negative role in the referendum on the accession of the CR to the EU. This argument will be exploited by Czech eurosceptics in their effort to use the referendum to block the CR's membership. Anti-German campaigning of this kind was tested in this year's parliamentary election and the result was a demonstrable fall in support for the CR's membership of the EU owing to fear of an influx of Sudeten Germans and their property claims after accession. There are considerable concerns in Czech society about internal security⁴⁰⁾, competition in the labour market and differences in economic standards and efficiency. Furthermore, Czech society is struggling with a certain scepticism as regards language skills and educational achievement, which are weaker in comparison to Western Europe. Already there are concerns about an increased inflow of foreigners after our accession to the EU. The efforts on the part of Germany and Austria to curb the movement of Czechs workers – which appear to be political, case-specific and without factual grounds – are perceived as negative and discriminatory. The weakening of the authority of the Czech state in favour of the European Commission will also play a negative role, as it is precisely from the state that Czechs expect protection of their national interests as well as national identity. The notion of the threat of immigration

⁴⁰⁾ *There is a significant rate of crime and organised crime among certain groups of migrants, particularly those from the former Soviet Union.*

weakening or diffusing Czech identity in the EU is dangerous because it is embedded in the irrational, emotional and xenophobic components of public opinion.

- 5.8 Czechs undervalue the number of foreigners with a residence permit in the CR. 57% of people believe there are between 10,000 and 150,000 of them. Only around 15% of Czechs put the figure appropriately at around 200,000⁴¹⁾. As regards asylum applications granted, a larger part of the public has the right idea – nearly half of the people think that the number of asylums granted over the last ten years is only in the thousands⁴²⁾. The ordinary Czech citizen is happy with the tough asylum procedures.
- 5.9 There are organisations of skinheads and Nazis in the Czech Republic. They have international links. However, they are followed both by intelligence services, and by the police and the judiciary. In the past the police approach to these groups was benevolent. After extremist race related crimes of violence, including racial murders in the late 1990s, the police finally took a tougher line on extremist organisations and events. The judiciary experienced similar developments – only in the late 1990s were the appropriate criminal categories applied, under pressure from the government and non-governmental organisations. Publicly declared tolerance of citizens with extremist views is marginal and in marked decline⁴³⁾. A nationalist political party, which had striven for parliamentary seats using militant rhetoric failed entirely.
- 5.10 Although there is no systematic, long-term sociological analysis of the ethnic climate, the available data and results of opinion polls suggest a gradual opening of Czech society and increasing diversity and differentiation, including increased activity on the part of some minorities⁴⁴⁾. On the other hand, some issues are deadlocked and stagnate – particularly the position of the Roma minority. Upon joining the EU the climate and condition of Czech society is not likely to be very different. The situation may change as a result of a national debate and campaign prior to the referendum, which is bound to influence the mood in which the Czechs enter the EU. Whether the EU is to be perceived as a new opportunity to enrich Czech identity, culture and the level of education, or a new threat to Czech identity and culture will be highly topical in the CR, as in other European and EU countries.

⁴¹⁾ See *"O vztahu k cizincům pracujícím a žijícím u nás"* (On the relationship to foreigners working and living in our country", CVVM, 2001.

⁴²⁾ See *"Názory české veřejnosti na uprchlíky"* (Czech public opinion on refugees), STEM for UNHCR, January 2002.

⁴³⁾ In 1999 15% of Czech citizens still agreed with shorthaired youths – "skins" – "showing Roma their proper place". In 1991 34% of people agreed with this claim. According to *"Veřejnost o Romech a zájmu médií o situaci Romů"* (Public attitudes to Roma and media interest in the Roma situation), IVVM, December 1999.

⁴⁴⁾ For example, the Vietnamese minority has been involved in higher education, but also in local politics (e.g. in Cheb).

6. The Grounds for EU Fears of Czech Migration to Member States

- 6.1 The European Union and particularly some countries bordering candidates for membership are concerned about migrants from new member states. In the case of the CR these are mainly Austria and Germany. The debate on restricting free movement of persons from new member countries is, inter alia, prompted by exaggerated fears of the high competitive advantage of new members' populations in the EU's labour market. However, high EU standards are a motivation for the CR to accede as a whole, and not a target 10 million Czechs are going to aim for individually.
- 6.2 The willingness of Czech citizens when the CR is admitted to the EU to leave the country for work or economic prosperity is low. Most of those who wanted to live or work abroad have already done so in one way or another. The idea of mass economic migration from the CR to EU countries is exaggerated. It is an artificial political problem, which has the capacity to arouse fears, which may be further manipulated and politically exploited.
- 6.3 Despite social changes Czech society shows considerably low mobility and readiness for territorial mobility. This is largely the result of previous conditions, bad housing situation and the atrophying of mobility habits. A relatively small part of the Czech population shows willingness to move for work, even if only to a different region of the CR. If anything, the work-related migration that does take place concerns top professionals and managers whose pay is very close to Western European standards.
- 6.4 The most common types of possible migration include temporary migration or cross-border commuting⁴⁵⁾. This is possible – and actually practised by some people – in regions bordering Germany and Austria. The question remains of the extent to which short-term migration can increase. Expert analyses do not suggest any significant increase in this respect. Commuting is motivated above all by the differences in the level of pay and living costs. As in the case of temporary migration, it is also linked to the supply of specific jobs at any given time⁴⁶⁾.
- 6.5 Higher pay constitutes the strongest motivation for migration to EU member countries. It is a strong motivation if the pay in the mother country is 50% lower than that in the target country. Once it becomes higher, there is a considerable decline in the number of cross-

⁴⁵⁾ *A typical example is nurses. In Austria and Germany, for the last ten years Czech nurses have been recognised as a highly qualified and relatively cheap labour force. Many women with this qualification have made use of this opportunity and commuted for work abroad. Still, it has not been a large-scale phenomenon, although it was the subject of extensive media coverage.*

⁴⁶⁾ *Ivo Baštyř, "Důsledky vstupu ČR do EU na vztahy s Rakouskem se zaměřením na zaměstnanost, trh práce a migraci" (The implications of the CR's accession to the EU for the relationship with Austria with a focus on employment, the labour market and migration), the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR, Prague, 2001, p. 42.*

border commuters⁴⁷⁾. A gradual increase in the living standards in the CR will make cross-border commuting less advantageous and the CR's accession to the EU will, paradoxically, constitute an important step in this direction.

- 6.6 An overwhelming majority (86%) of people living in regions bordering with Austria say they do not plan either a short or a long period of life or work abroad. The reasons are traditional: strong family ties, friends, property and, also, a language barrier. However, those who consider migration to EU countries as an alternative mostly do not go any further than thinking about it - 60% of those who declare that migration is an option do not do anything to realize it, 30% are prepared to take some action, 8% obtained information about vacancies and 3% have already been promised a job⁴⁸⁾. This is illustrative of the fact that the proportion, small as it is, who admit to considering migration to Austria, consist mostly of people for whom this is only a hypothetical option.
- 6.7 In the Czech-German borderland the willingness to work in the neighbouring country is similarly low. 93% of people in this region do not plan migration. Only 9% of those who do consider it have taken steps in order to travel and work abroad (finding a place to stay, job, filing an application for a residence permit)⁴⁹⁾.
- 6.8 One obstacle to occupational migration to EU countries is continued poor language skills. Although language competence has improved significantly since the early 1990s - for example, almost one third of adults can speak English and 40% German – they are unevenly distributed in favour of young people who obtained education after the fall of communism. The language competency affects the primary decision concerning whether an individual considers migration abroad at all. The language also influences the preferred destination.
- 6.9 The younger generation will migrate to carry out short or long visits for study or work. This is desirable migration in terms of acceleration of cultural, educational and economic development after the CR joins the EU. By this we mean – from the perspective of Czech society and the Czech economy – a necessary and healthy migration process. It is already taking place on a smaller scale. Young people, mostly university students, complete their degrees or part of them abroad and in doing so gain a particular work and life experience of

⁴⁷⁾ Ivo Baštýř, *The implications of the CR's accession to the EU for the relationship with Austria with a focus on employment, the labour market and migration, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR, Prague, 2001, p. 45*

⁴⁸⁾ J. Vavrečková, D. Fischllová, Z. Janata, *Migration potential the Czech Republic citizens to Germany, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR, Prague, 2002, p. 14*

⁴⁹⁾ *In 1999, 879 students travelled abroad within the Socrates-Erasmus programme alone. In 2000 it was 1241 students and the numbers are expected to rise further. Overall there were many more students taking courses at foreign universities if various exchange programmes of universities or research organisations are taken into account.*

which their parents' generation was deprived. Consequently, this older generation has no cultural capital to impart and cannot set an appropriate example for their children to follow. Most of these temporary stays abroad end with a return to the CR. Although some of these students may be expected to find temporary employment in EU countries, a majority of them are likely to come back. However, this – from the perspective of the CR desirable migration – has its limits as the Czech economy goes on to offer far more dynamic conditions for rapid career development, entrepreneurship and pay rises. Young professionals with foreign experience have above-average opportunities to fill management posts in the Czech economy⁵⁰⁾. By supporting short-term study and working visits by young university graduates EU member states can assist in this process of economic recovery, since a strong and dynamic domestic economy is the best way of creating a stable labour force.

- 6.10 Overall, migration from Czech lands will be predominantly short-term and cross-border provided that the benefits make it worthwhile. Only in a minimum of cases will it be long-term, tightening the competition in the labour market at the level of middle and higher-level professional positions. Migration of middle-and higher-level professionals will decline as the Czech economy moves more into line with that of the EU and Czech pay demands increase. Consequently, the demand for Czechs with middle and higher qualifications will decrease, particularly in Germany.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Historically the Czech lands were for a long time exposed to strong pressures from foreign powers which, to varying degrees, imposed their own sovereignty, political regime, religion, language and nationality on the population. The result was, as a rule, the economic exploitation of the Czech lands and a conflict between national, state and language identities gradually leading, often in very tragic circumstances, to ethnic, language and cultural homogenisation and the imposition of national uniformity upon Czech politics. Thanks to communist repression Czech society underwent a forced unification and, for a long time, it lost the possibility of influencing its own cultural, social, political and economic development on its own territory.
- 7.2 In terms of historical trends emigration from the Czech territory has prevailed over immigration. Throughout history, emigration was primarily political or national, motivated more by thinking and conscience than economic benefits and wealth. In this process emigrants (not only Czechs and Germans) lost their property rather than benefited economically from it.

⁵⁰⁾ *The weak response to the German call for Czech computer experts was disappointing. Dynamic young professionals engaged in new technologies even prefer the USA to EU countries. This also holds true of students at secondary schools and universities.*

- 7.3 The restoration of democracy and economic freedom reinforced the links between, and the unity of, the population in the Czech lands and fixed the position of Czechs in their own country. The Czechs displayed a preferential interest in domestic political and economic developments rather than in being “drawn” by the opening of the borders to seek better living conditions in western European countries.
- 7.4 The conservative approach to migration and the static nature of the population of the Czech lands is, in addition to renewed patriotism, reinforced by weaker language, multi-cultural skills and education. The Czech population is well aware of this and does not intend to risk a personal or working failure “abroad” as a result of their own incompetence.
- 7.5 The CR’s accession to the EU will not constitute an emigration, but an immigration problem. Czech society is insufficiently open to immigration and prepared in terms of culture, language and education. Immigrants continue to be feared by Czech society, particularly those coming from different environments outside Europe, who are seen as incongruous and incompatible with the Czech environment. Czech society values its homogeneous national and linguistic environment and will require immigrants to adapt and assimilate, and not vice versa.
- 7.6 Potential immigration and the threat to national homogeneity and cultural identity will probably be the subject of an anti-European campaign launched by euro-sceptics prior to the referendum on the CR’s membership of the EU. This may worsen the ethnic climate and sentiments towards the EU. The actual inflow of immigrants is likely to provide space for the formation of nationalist or extremist political entities on the Czech political scene, regardless of the until now moderate and democratic character of Czech politics and the insouciant and reserved Czech voter. It is therefore unlikely for such new extremist or nationalist formations to reach a higher level than that of a marginal parliamentary opposition.
- 7.7 As regards emigration to the EU, the Roma minority constitutes a real threat, as its members will wish to leave in large numbers. Their alienated, marginalized and educationally and professionally disqualified position on the bottom rung of Czech society establishes conditions for their weakened or even negative identification with the Czech environment and state. Czech politics currently does not have appropriate instruments which could achieve the stabilisation of the Roma in the Czech lands in terms of migration.
- 7.8 The fears of massive cross-border migration, which have strong representation in Bavarian and Austrian domestic politics, are not realistic. Temporary migration for work already exists and will become less worthwhile as the Czech economy gradually integrates into the EU.

- 7.9 One positive impact of EU accession on migration will be the increased opportunities for short-term study or work-related foreign visits by the young generation, particularly university students. In this way, the education, language and cultural deficit caused by communism will be more quickly eliminated and the overall upturn of Czech society and the Czech state may be accelerated. This is migration which may be regulated and controlled. We have a particular interest in expanding it and expect understanding on the part of EU member countries.
- 7.10 The principal risk associated with the CR's joining the EU is the impact on domestic politics of massive immigration into the CR, rather than economic emigration. What does pose a risk is the potential massive outflow of Roma which, however, could be slowed down and reduced by Czech government policy.