



# Migration of Ukrainian Students to the Czech Republic: human capital perspectives

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## List of abbreviations

AMU	Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
BUT	Brno University of Technology
CTU	Czech Technical University
CU	Charles University
CULS	Czech University of Life Sciences
CZSO	Czech Statistical Office
DZS	Centre for International Cooperation in Education
IHM	The Institute of Hospitality Management
ILPS CU	The Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies, Charles University
KZPS	Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations
MENDELU	Mendel University in Brno
MEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic
Mol	Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic
MoLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic
MU	Masaryk University
MUP	Metropolitan University Prague
UCT Prague	University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague
UMPRUM	Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague
VŠE	University of Economics in Prague
VŠFS	University of Finance and Administration



## Introduction

In today's interconnected world the knowledge of at least one foreign language is considered to be a prerequisite for the highly competitive international labor market. Not only language skills but also experience in intercultural communication and an ability to understand global connections are often required to build a successful career. International education is therefore seen as a good way of obtaining valuable skills and experiences. A foreign diploma is perceived as a matter of prestige and an important means of obtaining high socio-economic status in the countries of origin. In the destination countries foreign students are often treated as highly-skilled immigrants. Universities, language schools, and other educational institutions all around the world promote their services and educational programs and compete for international students. Having a high share of international students is a matter of prestige and many universities in non-Anglophone destinations make efforts to establish more courses and programs in the English language so that they can compete on the global education market with such key destinations as the USA, Great Britain and Australia.

The conditions for entering the country, accessing education and staying in the country after graduation differ from country to country. Generally, student migration is considered less problematic by both public opinion and politicians, therefore immigration laws are usually more favourable towards this type of immigrants, partly because the stay of students is often considered temporary. Migration of students is often problematized as a "brain drain" for source countries and the debate about migration aspirations and strategies of students after graduation is very intensive all around the world as foreign graduates are considered to be a part of the global mobile elite many countries are competing for.

Recent developments suggest that the Czech Republic is gradually becoming a very attractive destination for foreign students, especially for Slovaks and students from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Growing interest in foreign students on the side of Czech universities is often put in connection with a demographic development resulting in a lack of Czech students. But the demographic situation is apparently not the main reason for the growing demand for foreign students and the need for internationalization of tertiary education is nowadays recognized at the strategic level.

Student migration around the world has been addressed and described by many academics, politicians, and by both governmental and non-governmental organizations. Though in the Czech context, despite the increasing number of international students, this type of migration hasn't received the deserved attention from scholars yet. Foreign students are often incorporated into studies of different migrant groups (predominantly from non-EU countries) or in larger studies of students and graduates (but here the nationality is often not followed). There are a few relevant studies focused on student migration to the Czech Republic and dealing with the processes of adaptation of young immigrants to the host country and the new educational system. Most of the mentioned studies are however bachelor, master and doctoral theses written by foreign students themselves and mostly dedicated to student migration from Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. Although there are a number of scientific publications dedicated to Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic, student migration from this country remains insufficiently researched and described.

This report hopes to fill the gap. Its aim is not only to describe the legal and institutional settings in the Czech Republic related to student migration in general but most importantly to explore the main characteristics and the strategies of Ukrainian students. The report is based on secondary analysis of available documents and literature and also on qualitative and quantitative data gathered during the project. In the course of the project we conducted a brief



survey with Ukrainian students and graduates and also several in-depth interviews with other relevant actors involved in the process. The project and the research have a rather explorative character since the topic of interest is relatively new. By this report we hope to open up discussion about the role and the potential of Ukrainian student migration to the Czech Republic.



## Executive summary

→ This report **describes the legal and institutional settings** in the Czech Republic related to student migration in general and **explores the main characteristics and strategies of Ukrainian students** in particular.

→ Secondary analysis of available documents, statistics and literature was combined with the **analysis of qualitative and quantitative data gathered during the project**: 16 in-depth interviews with relevant actors involved in the process and an on-line survey with 259 Ukrainian students and 48 graduates from Czech universities. Data on graduates is sufficient to serve only for orientation purposes.

→ Ukrainians represent the largest group of immigrants in the Czech Republic. Despite the growing trend, **student migration seems to be rather a marginal component in Ukrainian migration to this country**: out of 120 thousand Ukrainian citizens registered in the Czech Republic only slightly more than 3 thousand were studying at Czech universities in 2017.

→ Given the ongoing and emerging push factors in Ukraine and pull factors in the Czech Republic combined with limited alternative migration strategies **Ukrainian student migration is expected to grow in importance in the following decades**. Despite the upward trend Ukrainian student migration hasn't received the deserved attention from scholars yet.

→ Ukrainians represent about 7% of all foreign students (outnumbered by Slovaks and Russians). **More than three quarters of Ukrainian students attend public universities** and the vast majority of those at public universities do not pay for their studies because they are attending Czech language study programs.

→ The share of Ukrainian students enrolled in private universities and those studying programs in foreign languages is growing slightly but **free of charge access to public education in the Czech Language is one of the most important pull factors**: it was mentioned as the main reason to come and study in the Czech Republic by 59% of the survey respondents.

→ None of the strategic documents on Czech education or migration policies sets priorities towards certain countries or types of foreign students and **a bottom-up approach defines current needs**.

→ Most **Czech universities don't have special recruitment strategies for Ukrainian students** but they **do recognize the potential of Ukrainian student migration** (i.e. similar education system and adequate knowledge of applicants, as well as smooth integration due to language and cultural proximity) and mostly report a good experience with Ukrainian students.



→ Ukrainian students who study in the Czech language at public universities are treated as Czech students not only in terms of access to education and related services but also for the purpose of statistics. The **data about Ukrainian students are poor** and **data about graduates are virtually non-existent**.

→ Ukrainian students have very **advanced Czech language skills** but a significant part of them **rely on communication with compatriots and other foreigners** (not Czechs).

→ There are no statistics concerning the transition of Ukrainian graduates from education to the labor market in the Czech Republic. According to the survey, **Ukrainian students are mostly economically active** already during their studies: 67 % of current students were working at the moment of the survey and 13 % of them had at some point combined their studies and work.

→ Ukrainian students seem to grow roots in the Czech Republic. Not all of them were able to express their plans for the future but inclinations towards remaining in the country of studies seem to be strong: 36 % of current students were not decided about their future yet, **37 % of them plan to stay in the Czech Republic** and 19 % plan to move elsewhere (mostly within the EU). **The length of stay in the Czech Republic seems to be strongly correlated with the preference to remain here**: after 5 and more years of studies almost half of surveyed students plan to stay in the country after graduation. **Only less than one tenth (8 %) of surveyed students intend to return to Ukraine** and after 5 years of studies the preference for return became even less.

→ Those who plan to stay in the Czech Republic after graduation, as well as the graduates who already stayed here, mentioned **better living conditions** in the Czech Republic, **higher salaries and better job opportunities in their given professional field** as the main reasons for remaining in the country.

→ **Free access to the labor market** for full-time students and graduates in the Czech Republic **is an important advantage but the legal status of non-EU citizens after graduation remains uncertain**. Especially disadvantageous is the fact that the length of studies is calculated to be only one half of that required for permanent residence applications.

→ Growing interest in foreign students (including those from Ukraine) on the side of Czech universities is not only the consequence of socio-demographic development and the lack of Czech students. The importance of the internationalization of tertiary education is acknowledged on the strategic level. Yet, **political and public debate about the benefits of student migration** (including those from Ukraine) **and the human potential of foreign graduates seems to be at a very early stage**.



## Basic facts and numbers about Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic

Geographical, cultural and historical closeness between Ukraine and the Czech Republic are often listed as the main explanatory factors behind both a long history of Ukrainian migration to the Czech lands and the current situation where Ukrainians represent the largest group of immigrants. The socio-economic situation in Ukraine in recent years in the aftermath of the global economic crisis and especially the occupation of Crimea and ongoing military conflict with Russian involvement in Eastern Ukraine obviously produces additional push factors for significant number of Ukrainians.

The number of Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic has grown rapidly during the last quarter of a century. From less than 10,000 in the early 1990s, the official number of Ukrainian citizens who reside in the Czech Republic today (end of March 2018) has risen to 120,431 people. Ukrainians constitute about 22% of all immigrants and about 40% of immigrants from countries outside the European Union. Today's number of Ukrainians registered in the Czech Republic is slightly less than it was back in 2008 when the statistics for Ukrainian citizens reached a peak. (CZSO 2018; MoI 2018)

In addition to the official number on Ukrainian citizens residing in the territory of the country it could be useful to have a look at the number of immigrants with Czech citizenship. More than 11,000 Ukrainians have become Czech citizens within the last 25 years: 11,204 acquired citizenship between 1993 and 2017 (CZSO 2018). Although earlier studies (Leontiyeva and Nečasová 2009) suggest that many Ukrainians did not apply for Czech citizenship because they did not want to lose their Ukrainian nationality, the naturalization trend of Ukrainian immigrants has been growing significantly in recent years as a result of the new citizenship law introducing the possibility of dual citizenship (Act No. 186/2013 Coll. came into force on the 01.01.2014).

The change in the approach of the Czech state to the employment of newly arrived unqualified immigrants after the economic crisis (namely restricting work permits for unskilled immigrants and regulating visa applications via the Visapoint system) resulted in a slight drop-off and stagnation of Ukrainian immigration to the country (Leontiyeva 2016). Immigrants who had stayed in the country for more than 5 years were entitled to apply for a permanent residence permit. Due to rigid policies towards the new comers obtaining this stable residence status was apparently perceived as a good strategy even by those Ukrainian immigrants who originally did not have plans to settle down (since their chances for repeat migration became rather uncertain). As a result, there was a significant increase in the share of permanent residence permit holders among Ukrainians: in 2000 it was less than one-fifth, while by the end of 2017 it was almost 70%. (CZSO 2018)

Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic is quite young. Almost nine in ten (85%) Ukrainian nationals residing in the Czech Republic are of productive age (between 15 and 59 years of age), while the share of older Ukrainian migrants (aged 60 and above) is negligible (less than 5%) and just over one in ten (11%) migrants officially registered in the country are under 15 (CZSO 2018). Since the 1990s the share of women among Ukrainian migrants has fluctuated around 40%, with a slight increase during the last couple of years. In 2018 the share of women among Ukrainian migrants was almost 47%. More than half of Ukrainians officially registered in the country live in Prague (43%) and the Central Bohemian Region (15%). (MoI 2018)

Contemporary Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic is characterized by its economic nature. Ukrainian citizens have one of the highest employment to residence ratios among all third country nationals: about 70% of all Ukrainian citizens registered in the country are economically active. According



to the estimates<sup>1</sup> by the end of 2016 there were 76,721 economically active Ukrainians, of whom almost one third (29%) were self-employed with the other two thirds (71%) employed under a regular contract.

Most Ukrainian immigrants are employed in the secondary labor market. The most recent detailed statistics available for the end of 2011 show that about a half (52%) of employed Ukrainians occupied elementary jobs (ISCO 9); while 41% of them were employed in semi-skilled jobs (ISCO 4–8, most often as craft and related trade workers) and only 7% succeeded in securing managerial, professional or other skilled jobs (ISCO1–3). When it comes to economic sectors, Ukrainians were mostly employed in construction (44%), manufacturing (21%), wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, personal and household goods (8%), and transport, storage and communications (6%). The occupational structure of settled Ukrainians with free access to the labor market (a majority of whom hold permanent residence permits) was fairly stable between 2004 and 2011 regardless of the economic developments. Though during the same period the employment of Ukrainians regulated by the state (by means of job permits) experienced striking changes: during the economic boom there was rapid growth (especially in elementary occupations), while in just two years after 2009 one could observe a significant decline from almost 49 thousand job permit holders to less than 23 thousand. (CZSO 2018)

According to qualified estimates collected by the labor offices, by the end of 2016 there were 54,571 Ukrainian citizens of employee status, of which 47% were women and 77% had free access to the labor market. (CZSO 2018) Preliminary data for mid-2017 suggest a slight growth in the number of employed Ukrainians, especially men and employee cards holders: by the end of June 2017 69,876 Ukrainians were officially employed in the Czech Republic, of which 43% were women and 69% had free access to the labor market<sup>2</sup>. The recent slightly growing employment trend for Ukrainian immigrants could be associated with the success of special governmental projects designed for Ukrainian citizens. The first is called Special procedures for highly qualified employees from Ukraine<sup>3</sup> (Project Ukraine). Between its launch in November 2015 and mid-September 2017 this project, designed primarily to ease the visa procedures for Ukrainian immigrants employed in highly qualified professions listed in the ISCO 1-3 main groups, had brought only 680 applicants. The second project called Special treatment regime for qualified workers from Ukraine<sup>4</sup> (Regime Ukraine), launched at the end of July 2016 and is designed for Ukrainian qualified workers employed in a wide range of semi-qualified professions listed in the ISCO 4-8 main groups, with a special focus on technical professions in manufacture, services, and also in the public sector. Though launched half a year later, Regime Ukraine is much more used by Ukrainian immigrants and their employers: by mid-September 2017 it had 10 170 successful applicants. In response to a growing demand from Czech employers<sup>5</sup>, the initial annual quota set for 10,000 applicants was doubled at the end of January 2018.

Though there are no special pro-active projects for unskilled and auxiliary Ukrainian workers, a considerable number of Ukrainians come to the Czech Republic to work in jobs, which are often described as “3Ds” (dirty, dangerous and demanding). According to the data from the Information System on Average

<sup>1</sup> After 2011 there are no detailed data on the employment of immigrants and more recent statistics are based only on the rough aggregated estimates provided by MoLSA.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary data for 2017 was presented by MoLSA representatives on the regional counselling platforms for integration in the city of Prague on the 14. of November 2017.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.czechinvest.org/projekt-ukrajina>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.czechinvest.org/rezim-ukrajina>

<sup>5</sup> The increase of the project capacities was strongly advocated by the Czech Chamber of Commerce: [https://www.komora.cz/tiskova\\_zprava/vlada-vyslyselo-vyzvu-hospodarske-komory-schvalila-navyseni-kvot-rezim-ukrajina/](https://www.komora.cz/tiskova_zprava/vlada-vyslyselo-vyzvu-hospodarske-komory-schvalila-navyseni-kvot-rezim-ukrajina/)



Earnings of the MoLSA the average gross monthly wage of Ukrainian employees in the Czech Republic was 22,2 thousand Czech crowns, which is the lowest wage among the top 5 employee migrants groups and about 23% less than the average wage in the country. (CZSO 2018) Although there are no reliable estimates, the irregular component of Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic is often discussed by researchers and migration experts, especially in connection to the exploitative practices of ethnic intermediaries (Čermáková and Nekorjak 2009; Drbohlav ed. 2009) and also recent practices of irregular employment on Polish visas (Trčka et al. 2017).

As has been mentioned, the share of permanent residence permit holders has especially grown since 2008 when the Czech state implemented strict policies (and practices) towards new arriving labor migrants. Table 1 illustrates the statistics for the types and the purpose of residence permits for Ukrainian citizens living in the country<sup>6</sup>.

**Table 1. Ukrainian citizens in the Czech republic by type of residence permit and purpose of stay in 2011-2017**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Permanent residence permit	50 130	57 683	68 547	73 923	77 492
Asylum status	89	93	101	232	405
Long-term residence permit (by purpose of the stay)					
Humanitarian and other	-	-	-	1 967	2 223
Family reunification	-	-	-	6 643	6 934
Study	-	-	-	1 743	2 188
Employment and business	-	-	-	19 880	16 777
<b>Total</b>	<b>119 021</b>	<b>112 642</b>	<b>105 239</b>	<b>104 388</b>	<b>106 019</b>

**Source:** Mol 2018, CZSO 2018, own calculations

A brief look at the data in Table 1 brings two basic findings when it comes to Ukrainian student migration: a) the number of long-term residence permits granted to Ukrainian citizens for the purpose of study is growing, b) student migration to this country however is still rather rare since the share of Ukrainians with a student visa or residence permit is less than 3% of all Ukrainian citizens in the country.

Of course, Ukrainians studying at Czech universities could hold other types of residence permits; for example they could be permanent residence permit holders or they could stay in the country on the basis of family reunification. Therefore in order to estimate the role of student migration of Ukrainians to this country it is more appropriate to consult the statistics provided by Czech universities and collected by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS). According to annual data published by MEYS the number of students with Ukrainian citizenship has in fact grown significantly since the beginning of the millennium: from less than 300 in school year 2000/2001 to more than 3 000 in 2017/2018. As of today there are 3 082 Ukrainian students attending

<sup>6</sup> While interpreting these numbers one should keep in mind that it provides stock data and that the return of immigrants with permanent residence permit might be underestimated (the permit is given for 10 years and prolonged more or less automatically).



Czech universities and 2 383 of them are enrolled in full-time studies. Six in ten of all Ukrainian students are women. (MEYS 2018; CZSO 2018)

Ukrainians represent about 7% of all foreign students (outnumbered by Slovaks and Russians, who represent 51% and 14% of all foreign students respectively). More than three thirds (77%) of Ukrainian students attend public universities and the vast majority of those who study at public universities (95% of all the students at public universities) do not pay for their studies because they are attending Czech language study programs. Apart from Slovaks (who predominantly do not pay for their education), Ukrainian students currently enrolled in Czech universities have the lowest share of the self-payers (4%) among other foreign students<sup>7</sup>. Table 2 provides the statistics of Ukrainian students enrolled in full time studies at top public and private universities in the school year 2017/2018.

**Table 2. Ukrainian students enrolled in full-time studies at Czech universities in academic year 2017/2018**

Name of the university	Bachelor's degree program	Master's degree program	Follow-up Master's degree program	Doctoral degree
All public universities Including top universities*:	1569	147	463	209
Charles University, Prague	147	120	70	82
Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague	254	0	58	3
University of Economics, Prague	213	0	94	5
Czech technical university in Prague	226	0	50	22
Brno University of Technology	127	0	40	11
Masaryk University, Brno	75	15	36	13
Mendel University in Brno	80	0	8	0
University of West Bohemia, Pilsen	59	2	13	2
University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague	45	0	15	13
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice	45	0	11	14
Technical University of Liberec	48	0	17	4
Palacký University Olomouc	38	3	12	15
University of Pardubice	39	0	7	8
All private universities Including top universities*:	520	0	188	3
University of Finance and Administration, Prague	106	0	69	2
Metropolitan University Prague	84	0	27	1

<sup>7</sup> In fact, Belarusian students are the only other group with the same share of self-payers; compare with the share of self-payers among other top 10 non-EU countries like Russia (6%), Kazakhstan (7%), Viet Nam (22%), India (69%), Israel (89%), Ghana (51%) and USA (56%)



The Institute of Hospitality Management in Prague	52	0	18	0
University College of Business, Prague	39	0	15	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2078</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>212</b>

**Source:** MEYS 2018, authors calculations

**Notes:** \* Top private and public universities with more than 50 Ukrainian students are listed here.

Unfortunately there are no reliable statistics concerning the field of studies for Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic. CZSO publishes annual data provided by MEYS concerning university students by groups of fields of education but these data are available only for all foreign students<sup>8</sup>. Though these data are not detailed and can only serve rather for orientation purposes<sup>9</sup>, it seems that foreign students, more than Czech students, are attracted to health care and pharmaceutical sciences, natural science and also business and administration.

Aside from currently enrolled students, MEYS also publishes annual information about Ukrainian graduates. It is impossible to get accurate estimates for all Ukrainian graduates in the Czech Republic since detailed data is available only after 2000. According to official records almost three thousand (2 946) Ukrainian citizens graduated from Czech universities between 2001 and 2017 and 67% of those graduates were women. (MEYS 2018; CZSO 2018)

<sup>8</sup> The table provided by CZSO for the school year 2016/2017 is available here:

[https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/67293687/29002717\\_t4-13.pdf/5f687cb6-25be-471e-8f7b-f9a7do2b76f4?version=1.1](https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/67293687/29002717_t4-13.pdf/5f687cb6-25be-471e-8f7b-f9a7do2b76f4?version=1.1)

<sup>9</sup> The key MEYS expert we contacted, Ing. Jan Hraba, claimed that these data are not very reliable since the coding into groups of fields of education is done ex-post (after collecting the data from the universities) and without crosschecking, therefore sometimes it is judged only on the basis of the name of the study programs.



## Legal and institutional settings related to foreign students

In order to understand the potential of human capital of Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic it is important to begin with an analysis of institutional settings, especially migration and integration related policies and practices towards foreign students in this country in general. This part of the report summarizes the information gathered by means of a secondary analysis of available literature and official documents, as well as the qualitative research of the main actors involved in the process. For the purpose of the project we conducted 16 in-depth interviews: with representatives of 3 relevant ministries (Education, Interior and Labor) and the semi-budgetary organisation Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS), also, the Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations (KZPS), the Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies, Charles University (ILPS CU), and 10 Czech universities. We collected information from the 8 biggest public universities in Prague and Brno: Charles University (CU), University of Economics in Prague (VŠE), Czech University of Life Sciences (CULS) Czech Technical University (CTU), University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague (UCT Prague), Masaryk University (MU), Brno University of Technology (BUT) and Mendel University in Brno (MENDELU). The research team also gathered information from two private universities<sup>10</sup> based in the city of Prague: The Institute of Hospitality Management in Prague (IHM) and University of Finance and Administration (VŠFS). The selection of the universities for interviews was based not merely on the size of the university itself but also on the number of Ukrainian students currently enrolled in full-time study programs. As can be seen in Table 2 (earlier in the text), in-depth interviews covered the majority of top universities with a total number of Ukrainian students of more than 50.

The analysis in this part of the report is focused on recent developments and intended changes in policies and practices related to student migration. Here we discuss the (in)coherence between migration, education, and labor market policies relevant for foreign students in two key areas 1) selection of human capital (focused on promotion strategies, selection of target groups, and admissions policies and practices), 2) enhancement of human capital potential (focused on integration of foreign students and graduates, their transition from education to the labor market and plans for the future in the host country).

### Migration policies and access to education for foreign students

There are three types of higher education institutions in the Czech Republic<sup>11</sup>: public, state<sup>12</sup> and private. According to the Higher Education Act<sup>13</sup> (Act No 111/1998 Coll. as amended) access to public education is free of charge and the conditions for the admission of foreigners to study in degree programs are the same as for Czech students. The cited law prescribes that the obligations resulting from international agreements that are binding on the Czech Republic are

<sup>10</sup> In addition to conducted interviews the representatives of ŠKODA AUTO University sent us brief answers to several research questions.

<sup>11</sup> Comprehensive information in English is available here:

[https://www.studyin.cz/soubory/clanky/0021\\_publications/StudyIN-EduSystem-2017.pdf](https://www.studyin.cz/soubory/clanky/0021_publications/StudyIN-EduSystem-2017.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> The only two state universities are the Police Academy and University of Defence.

<sup>13</sup> English version of this Act is available here:

[http://www.msmt.cz/uploads/odbor\\_30/TF/Legislativa\\_a\\_metodicke\\_pokyny/Novela\\_2016/Zakon\\_o\\_vysokych\\_skolach\\_AJ.pdf](http://www.msmt.cz/uploads/odbor_30/TF/Legislativa_a_metodicke_pokyny/Novela_2016/Zakon_o_vysokych_skolach_AJ.pdf)



to be met<sup>14</sup>. Public universities receive support from the state. There is a special financial contribution for each student enrolled in foreign language programs (regardless the nationality of the student) and the total number of students also influences the support.

In order to understand the role of international students it would be useful to shed some light on recent developments in tertiary education in the country. Several studies (for example Koucký and Bartušek 2011; Páleníčková and Jakubcová 2015) suggest that the dynamics of the quantitative development of higher education in the Czech Republic in the first decade of the century have been very rapid. A steep increase in the number of university students (from 200 thousand in 2001 to almost 400 thousand in 2010) is often criticized as not corresponding to either the economic situation in the country or the capability of higher education to adapt to new needs of students and the labor market. The increase can hardly be explained merely by the growing number of private schools or the inflow of foreign students, as Czech students represented the vast majority (96 % in 2001 and 91% in 2010) and their number almost doubled during the period (CZSO 2018).

Koucký and Bartušek (2011) noted that due to demographic change, future cohorts of university students will be significantly weaker in the second decade of the century; they warned that even if the number of those supposed to be enrolled in tertiary education stagnates, their proportion in 2015 will be significantly close to 90 % of the corresponding age cohort. Therefore, the cited authors (among others) advocated for a significant decrease in the number of students and a need for deep structural and institutional reforms aimed at preventing the inflation of higher education. The total number of students has in fact been constantly decreasing since 2010 and in 2017 it dropped slightly under 300 thousand. Migration of Slovak students slowed down a little bit (the number dropped off from about 24 thousand to about 22 thousand) but students from many non-EU countries, especially Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan became more interested in studying at Czech universities and their numbers have doubled since 2010 (CZSo 2018).

Given the described developments it is clear that Czech universities do have an interest in foreign students. The socio-economic situation in Ukraine makes the financial issue of studies often crucial for potential Ukrainian students; therefore free of charge access to public education in the Czech language is clearly an important pull factor. However, even students at public universities, who do not pay for their studies, have to think about covering their living costs in the Czech Republic. Given the average salaries in Ukraine and the rate of the Ukrainian hryvnya, the financial status of most Ukrainian students is not high. Generally students in the Czech Republic do not receive scholarships for just being enrolled in studies. The only exemptions are full-time doctoral students, who receive a monthly scholarship for a standard period of studies (mostly 3-4 years) regardless of citizenship. The support for doctoral scholarships is provided to universities by MEYS. The minimum monthly sum for doctoral students in 2017 was about 7500 Czech crowns (a bit less than 300 Euro) though some universities pay bigger sums from their own budgets. There was a public debate about doctoral scholarships not being able to compete even with a basic salary in the country and in the beginning of 2018 MEYS announced a 50% increase of this scholarship<sup>15</sup>.

Aside from doctoral programs, there are only a few scholarship programs available for Ukrainian students who want to study in the Czech Republic. A few

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<sup>14</sup> Including the EU Directive (2016/801) on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016Lo801&from=EN>

<sup>15</sup> The press conference of the Ministry of education in Czech is available here: <http://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/msmt-navysi-prispevek-na-stipendia-doktorandu-o-50?lang=1>



scholarships are available within the framework of the Foreign Development Assistance Program. These scholarships are awarded to citizens of states receiving foreign development assistance from the Czech Republic and are provided for a) study in the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral study programs in the Czech language (preceded by a one-year Czech language course and preparatory training), and b) a study in follow-up Master's and Doctoral study programs in English. Government scholarships are provided only for the standard length of studies; students receive about 540 Euro monthly, from which they have to cover their transport, living and accommodation costs. The provision of these scholarships is based on the decree of the Czech Government within the framework of a special project of MEYS and MFA; notice of the scholarships for a given year is publicized annually via Czech embassies. Some studies (Jelínek, Dessieová, and Náprstek 2004; Horký et al. 2011) discuss the development impact and the effectiveness of this type of scholarship in the light of the significantly high share of students who do not finish their studies and the high probability of no returns to the country of origin.

Ukrainian students can also apply for scholarships from the International Visegrad Fund<sup>16</sup> and the South Moravian Center for International Mobility<sup>17</sup>; certain opportunities for mobility of individual students are also possible within the Erasmus+ program<sup>18</sup> and some universities offer special scholarships for socially weak and talented students (mostly also available for students from Ukraine).

The interviews we conducted suggest that the representatives of Czech universities seem to realize the relative financial weakness of Ukrainian students and they mostly encourage their employment. Interesting examples of targeted humanitarian scholarships were the programs announced by Charles University in Prague<sup>19</sup> and Palacky University in Olomouc<sup>20</sup> 2014. The programs provided support to several selected students from Ukraine due to the political situation in the country. In the interview we conducted, special scholarships for Ukrainian students in the aftermath of the Maidan protests were also mentioned by CULS; the university received about 20 visiting students for the winter semester in 2014 in English degree programs.

To sum up, Ukrainian students do not have any special treatment when it comes to scholarships and they are entitled only to a limited number of special scholarships for socially weak students and scholarships for excellent study results provided by different universities. There are also some scholarships and waivers of school fees available at both paid foreign language programs at public universities and at private universities. The offer varies from university

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<sup>16</sup> IVF supports short-term studies (up to 4 semesters) within Master's and PhD programs and also short research stays at universities in the Visegrad region, including the Czech Republic. In 2018 5 master and 5 doctoral students from Ukraine received scholarships from the Visegrad fund to spend up to 4 semesters at different Czech Universities or Institutes of the Academy of Sciences. Website of the program: <http://visegradfund.org/scholarships/visegrad-scholarship-program>

<sup>17</sup> South Moravian Centre for International Mobility is a specialized non-profit organization providing support to talented students and researchers based in the South Moravian Region of the Czech Republic. This scholarship scheme supports foreign students from countries outside the EU who are interested in Master or Doctoral studies at universities in Brno. Study programs in technical and natural sciences are preferred and it is also expected that applicants will have a good knowledge of Czech language as they must be able to pass the entrance exam at university and start studying in Czech. More on the web of the organization: <http://www.jcmm.cz/en/scholarship-for-foreign-university-students.html>

<sup>18</sup> Erasmus+ is aimed at funding study visits to students from all over the world. Erasmus+ helps organise student and doctoral candidate exchanges within Erasmus+ Program countries and to and from Partner countries. Program countries (like the Czech Republic) are eligible for all actions of Erasmus+. Ukraine is a partner neighboring country; therefore some student exchanges between the CR and Ukraine could be realized.

<sup>19</sup> 17 Ukrainian students were awarded with Václav Havel scholarships in 2014 in a response to the situation in the country: <https://www.cuni.cz/UK-5636.html>

<sup>20</sup> 7 Ukrainian doctoral students received humanitarian scholarships as support for travel, accommodation and living costs for one year of their research and studies at the faculties of philosophy, law and medicine at Palacky University.



to university and there is no complete data available. In general, the research of available scholarship programs suggests that, only a small part of Ukrainian students<sup>21</sup> might receive some financial support from any source.

In order to study in the Czech Republic Ukrainian students have to obtain a visa or a residence permit. There is no special regulation concerning the applicants and normally “third country” nationals who want to come to the Czech Republic for the entrance exam should apply for a short-term visa for a stay of up to 90 days (visa “C”). A big advantage of Ukrainian students is a visa-free regime, which has been in force since June 2017 and applies to citizens of Ukraine who have biometric passports<sup>22</sup>.

Successful applicants enrolled in the accredited study programs at Czech universities<sup>23</sup> can apply for a long-term visa or long-term permit for the purpose of studies. A long-term residence permit for the purpose of studies can be provided not only to students enrolled in accredited study programs at public and private higher education establishments but also to those who participate in language and professional preparation for studies under an accredited study program organized by a public (not private) higher education establishment, and also for the purpose of non-remunerated professional training. A long-term visa for the purpose of “studies” has similar conditions but in addition, it also concerns cases of remunerated professional training carried out during the studies or 5 years after graduating at a higher education establishment. New comer students may also apply for a long term visa for the “other” purpose, which is intended for the foreign national’s education in an unaccredited study program at a public or private higher education establishment or attending language and training courses and programs that do not serve as preparation for studying in a higher education establishment’s accredited study program, as well as education in a school that is accredited or has an accredited study program in a state other than the CR<sup>24</sup>.

An application for a long-term visa is filed in person at a Czech Embassy and prior registration is needed to file the application. Until recently the registration services were outsourced and all applicants had to apply for an appointment via the widely criticized Foreign Ministry’s on-line system for foreigners’ registration called Visapoint. Experts warned that the system is not transparent (quotas were unknown) and often it did not allow registration due to the unavailability of appointments while several commercial structures offered registration for a charge<sup>25</sup>. Visapoint was also very critically evaluated by the Czech Ombudsman who (based on observations in Vietnam, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan) claimed that the system was inoperable and found particularly alarming the long-term impossibility to register in order to file an application for a long-term stay for the purpose of family reunification and studies, as these types of stay represent a transposition of EU Directives<sup>26</sup>. The Public Defender of Rights initiated a series of personal meetings with representatives of the MFA and MoI. Since the results of these interventions were unsatisfactory, on the initiative of the Czech Ombudsman the European Commission has launched EC action against the Czech

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<sup>21</sup> Other than doctoral students

<sup>22</sup> Detailed information about the visa-free regime are available in Czech on the web site of the Czech Embassy:  
[https://www.mzv.cz/lvov/cz/viza\\_a\\_konzularni\\_informace/aktuality/zavedeni\\_bevvizoveho\\_rezimu\\_pro\\_obcany.html](https://www.mzv.cz/lvov/cz/viza_a_konzularni_informace/aktuality/zavedeni_bevvizoveho_rezimu_pro_obcany.html)

<sup>23</sup> The list of accredited study programs is available on the website of MEYS:  
<https://aspvs.isacc.msmt.cz/>

<sup>24</sup> Detailed information about the conditions for permit for the purpose of studies is available on the web site of the Ministry of the Interior: <http://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/document-on-the-purpose-of-stay.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> Discussion of problems connected with Visapoint system for foreign students can be found here:  
<http://migraceonline.cz/cz/e-knihovna/komentare-k-debate-o-studiu-zahranicnich-studentu>

<sup>26</sup> Namely Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification, and Council Directive 2004/114/EC of 13 December 2004.



Republic over Visapoint<sup>27</sup>. According to recent information Visapoint was terminated at the end of October 2017<sup>28</sup>. Today Ukrainian applicants register their date for the visa application via e-mail.

Meanwhile as a reaction to the critics of Visapoint and the growing demand for foreign students from universities a special project, Regime student, was launched in May 2017<sup>29</sup>. Regime student is the result of cooperation between the MoI, MEYS and MFA and it is supposed to ease the process of applying for a student visa for third-country nationals. Students admitted to Czech universities included in the project<sup>30</sup> no longer have to apply for visas through Visapoint but can ask for the appointment directly at the embassy, which in turn has to try to arrange the appointment with the applicant so that the starting date of the residence permit and the beginning of his studies coincide. Participation of students in the project is however limited by strict quotas and available only to students from selected countries. According to official information the annual quota for Ukraine in 2018 is rather generous: the monthly quota for the consular department in Kyiv is 36 and for Lvov it is 13 student applicants. Given the cancellation of Visapoint the effectiveness of this regime for Ukrainian students is questionable and participation in it is not connected with other bonuses.

According to the interviewed representatives of MoI student visa applications nowadays have over a 90 % success rate, which is one of the highest compared to other visa applications. Yet it is not the success rate but the complicated process itself and the delays which are often criticized. There is no hard data or in-depth research on visa problems for newly enrolled students but apparently the process is not going smoothly even for this group of relatively unproblematic immigrants. Administrative complications and delays in issuing student visas were acknowledged by Horký et al. (2011) even in the case of students awarded with governmental scholarships and are also discussed in many other wider studies dedicated to Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic. In the interviews we conducted several university representatives and MEYS pointed out that the strict visa policy reduces the number of incoming foreign students and academic staff.

According to the Employment Act (No. 435/2004)<sup>31</sup> students enrolled in full-time studies at accredited study programs at Czech universities and also graduates from these programs have free access to the labor market. Free access means that these students and graduates have the same rights as Czech citizens, i.e. they do not have to obtain any special work permit and can sign all kinds of working agreements without any limitations concerning working hours. Students can also work during the holidays within the academic year they are enrolled into. Free access to the labor market does not apply to those who study in unaccredited programs and have the permit for “other purpose”.

In order to work after graduation non-EU citizens have to have a valid residence permit. A student residence permit is valid only until the end of the studies and if foreign students want to stay in the Czech Republic after graduation, they have to prove their purpose of stay in order to change the type (purpose) of their permit. They do have free access to the labor market but in order to stay and work in the country after graduation they have to find a job and to arrange all necessary documents before the end of the studies so that they can

<sup>27</sup> The press release of the Public Defender of Rights in connection to Visapoint is available here: <https://www.ochrance.cz/en/news/press-releases-2013/ec-launches-action-against-czech-republic-over-foreigners-registration-1/>

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.mzv.cz/kyiv/cz/viza\\_a\\_konzularni\\_informace/informace\\_pro\\_cestu\\_a\\_pobyt\\_cek\\_a\\_povoleni\\_k\\_dlouhodobemu\\_pobytu/nastaveni\\_systemu\\_visapoint.html](https://www.mzv.cz/kyiv/cz/viza_a_konzularni_informace/informace_pro_cestu_a_pobyt_cek_a_povoleni_k_dlouhodobemu_pobytu/nastaveni_systemu_visapoint.html)

<sup>29</sup> Official information in Czech is available at the website of MEYS: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/vysoke-skolstvi/rezim-student?lang=1>

<sup>30</sup> Today 18 Czech universities participate in this regime.

<sup>31</sup> The English text of the Employment Act is available on the website of MLSA:

[https://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/obecne/prav\\_predpisy/akt\\_zneni/zoz\\_od\\_1-4-2012\\_en.pdf](https://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/obecne/prav_predpisy/akt_zneni/zoz_od_1-4-2012_en.pdf)



apply for an Employee card<sup>32</sup>. The employee card is a new type of single permit (dual document) authorizing foreigners to both stay (longer than 3 months) and work on the territory of the Czech Republic<sup>33</sup>. It also exists in the form of a non-dual document (basically only a residence permit) for those who have free access to the labor market and it can be issued for a maximum 2 years (or shorter period mentioned in the contract) with the possibility of repeated extension of validity<sup>34</sup>. Graduates who want to start their own business, can also apply for a trade licence and entrepreneurial stay permit. Again, a trade licence has to be arranged in advance (during the studies) and an application for a change of purpose of stay should be done before the end of the student residence permit.

An important disadvantage of non-EU students is rather limited access to health care. All foreigners staying in the Czech Republic on a long-term basis are legally obliged to participate in health insurance immediately after entering the country and throughout their stay. Foreigners may meet this obligatory requirement via general or commercial health insurance. If foreign students are not employed in the Czech Republic they don't have access to public health care and they have to buy commercial health insurance, which has a lot of limitations and exceptions, such as, for example, treatment of chronic diseases, dental care (if it's not an emergency) and preventive health checks<sup>35</sup>. Students represent a potentially less risky group of so called "healthy migrants" because they are relatively young and mostly not at risk of dangerous working conditions. Nevertheless, given the overall socio-economic status of many Ukrainian students who could hardly afford to pay for costly medical treatment, the full access to medical care covered by public health insurance seems to be an important precondition for successful integration. Lack of access to public health insurance for a considerable part of immigrants and an insufficient guarantee of legal entitlement to health care is often criticized by NGOs, researchers and experts as one of the most urgent problems of Czech health policy in relation to immigrants (see for example Dobiášová and Hnilicová 2011).

## Recruitment and promotion strategies

Internationalization of tertiary education is set as one of the priorities in the Czech long-term strategy for university education for the period 2011-2015 and it is further elaborated upon and specified in the current strategic document for 2016-2020<sup>36</sup> and relevant Action plans. Attracting foreign students to Czech universities is a part of the internationalization strategy, but clearly, it is not the only goal of it. The long term strategy for 2016-2020 mentioned the following subtasks among others related to the priority of internationalization: to reflect internationalization in the financial support provided to public universities,

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<sup>32</sup> A signed contract (or agreement on the future contract with the potential employer) for at least 15 hours per week is required for an Employee card.

<sup>33</sup> Before 2014 foreign nationals had to make applications in two places, i.e. first to apply for a work permit at the Employment Agency of the CR and then to apply for a working visa (residence permit) at the Ministry of the Interior (or earlier, the Foreign Police).

<sup>34</sup> Detailed information in English about the Employee card can be found at the website of MoI: <http://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/employee-card-682810.aspx?q=Y2hudWogMQ%3d%3d>

<sup>35</sup> All of these and many other services are not part of commercial health care and if students need something "extra", they have to pay for "an extra services" quite a big sum, even though they pay from 5000 to 12000CZ per year for this obligatory commercial insurance.

<sup>36</sup> The full Czech text of the document named *Dlouhodobý záměr vzdělávací a vědecké, výzkumné, vývojové a inovační, umělecké a další tvůrčí činnosti pro oblast vysokých škol* is available here: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/vysoke-skolstvi/dlouhodoby-zamer>. The need for internationalization is also mentioned in the more general Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020 available in English here: [http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images\\_obsah/dokumenty/strategy\\_web\\_en.pdf](http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images_obsah/dokumenty/strategy_web_en.pdf)



to support mobility of students and academic staff, to support joint study programs, to create a joint portal for international representation of Czech universities. The strategic document also recommends Czech universities to a) improve integration of foreign students and academic staff and to use their potential more effectively, and b) to focus international cooperation on priority regions based on an evaluation of previous cooperation.

In order to perform the tasks involved with ensuring educational, training and other relations with foreign countries MEYS established a semi-budgetary organisation The Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS). This organisation is carrying out a number of activities relating to the promotion of education. DZS provides services to a wide range of relevant actors, like individuals, students, teachers and directors of all types of schools, other professionals, and organisations involved in education as well as local authorities and MEYS.

None of the above mentioned strategic documents on education policy sets priorities towards certain countries or types of students. In the interviews we conducted both MEYS and DZS mentioned the importance of a bottom-up approach. The demand for foreign students (as well as the priorities towards certain countries or students in given study programs) is determined by universities themselves based on their experience with current students and cooperation with universities abroad. When it comes to the recruitment and selection strategies implemented by universities, our research suggests that most Czech universities don't have special recruitment strategies for Ukrainian students. Usually a standard recruitment process is applied for attracting foreign students regardless of the country of origin. Among those general promotion practices are international student fairs abroad and in the Czech Republic (the Gaudeamus exhibition was explicitly mentioned by VŠFS), online and social media promotion and some targeted advertisement.

The majority of contacted universities are concentrated predominantly on the promotion of English degree programs. This is usually done through general practices of the Marketing and PR office (BUT) or the Admission and Marketing office (VŠE) or through the PR office and the office for International Relations (CTU). There are two special web page projects promoting university education in the Czech Republic. Prague universities, such as CU, VŠE, UCT Prague, CTU, CULS, UMPRUM and AMU promote the possibility to study at their universities in the frame of a university consortium and through the **studyinprague.cz** web page in the English language. This project is financed by the Ministry of Education. Another web page, which promotes the possibility to get a university degree in the Czech Republic and involves information about universities in the whole country, not only in Prague, is the **studyin.cz** webpage, which is also in English. This web page is operated by the Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS).

In terms of language strategy, all contacted universities have their web page not only in Czech, but also in English. Only UCT Prague and VŠFS also have a Russian version of their web pages. MU once had a brochure in Russian for a big educational fair and the Bachelor degree study program of Ukrainian Studies at the Faculty of Arts also had a leaflet in Ukrainian for potential students. Given the similarities of the languages, it is logical that the majority of Ukrainian students at public universities attend Czech language programs. The language barrier is clearly not that challenging for Ukrainian immigrants. In fact, previous studies suggest that Ukrainians in the Czech Republic are mostly self-taught (Leontiyeva, Ezzeddine, and Plačková 2013; Leontiyeva 2015). However, those who plan to apply to Czech universities can attend different language and preparatory courses, both in Ukraine and in the Czech Republic. Some universities (for example UCT Prague, VŠFS, VŠE, CU) offer self-paid 1 or 2 semester Czech language classes. In some cases these language classes are combined with preparatory courses called "zero academic year". During this year foreign students often have orientation



lectures for the given university and a combination of some degree courses. By attending the “zero academic year” a potential student is not only preparing for the entrance exams but also receives certain benefits, like for example recognition of courses (credits) or even acceptance to the second academic year. These preparatory courses target not only potential foreign students but also unsuccessful applicants.

As has already been mentioned, some universities promote their study programs directly in Ukraine and recruit students there. Cooperation with partner universities in Ukraine was mentioned as one of the ways to reach out to potential foreign students. This promotion strategy can be especially effective for follow-up master or doctoral study programs, when the Czech university selects and attracts outstanding graduates from the partner universities abroad. This recruitment strategy was especially emphasized by CULS as a means of getting “preselected, good quality” applicants. Some Czech universities have singled out bilateral agreements with partner universities in Ukraine. For example a CU representative mentioned 4 bilateral agreements with Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Uzhhorod National University and Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University. Bilateral agreements allow Ukrainian students to participate in student exchanges. Cooperation with local high schools in Ukraine and short study visits were also mentioned as a promotion strategy by MENDELU, which has accepted up to 50 of the best students from a Kharkiv high school, who have an opportunity to visit Brno and MENDELU as a prize for their study achievements.

Another important means of promotion is participation in the international education exhibition in Ukraine. The Czech delegation to the education fair in Kyiv in March 2018 consisted of representatives from the Centre for International Cooperation in Education (project Study in the Czech Republic) and 11 public and 2 private universities<sup>37</sup>. In the interviews we conducted, representatives of 5 universities explicitly mentioned participation in Kyiv's international education fair as a method of propagation and recruitment.

The Czech Centre in Kyiv<sup>38</sup> is an important player in the promotion of Czech university education in Ukraine. Czech Centres are a contributory organisation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and their mission is to promote the Czech Republic abroad. Apart from assistance to relevant partners during the educational fairs in Ukraine, the Czech Centre in Kyiv provides counselling to those who want to know about education in the Czech Republic and they even assist some potential students in selecting appropriate universities. The web pages of the Kyiv Centre also publish success stories of enrolled Ukrainian students sharing their experience and advice about applying for and studying at Czech universities. However, the most important contribution of the Czech Centre is connected with its activities within the wide network of Czech language courses organized in 9 Ukrainian cities (including the important university cities of Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv and Dnipro).

As was mentioned, most of the Czech universities do not have any special promotion strategy for Ukraine and they often employ a broader strategy towards ex-USSR countries, as a region with a significant Russian speaking population (including Russia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan etc.). This was mentioned in many interviews; representative of VŠFS pointed out that the Ukrainian educational market is generally treated as a part of the Russian speaking educational market. A VŠFS representative mentioned the importance of cooperation with educational

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<sup>37</sup> Brno University of Technology, Charles University (The Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies), Czech Technical University in Prague, Masaryk University, Mendel University in Brno, Palacký University Olomouc, Technical University of Liberec, University of Ostrava, University of Pardubice, University of West Bohemia, VŠB - Technical University of Ostrava, College of Business and Hotel Management, and Unicorn College.

<sup>38</sup> <http://kyiv.czechcentres.cz>



and travel agencies abroad (not only in Ukraine). These are local agencies in the students' country of origin, which promote education abroad, recruit students and help them with administrative and visa processes. These agencies are very often oriented to the Czech Republic and have all needed know-how for the whole process of sending students to study abroad.

In fact, the global competition and internalization of higher education has led to a rise in the number of international students and education abroad has become big business also in the Czech context. Universities, language schools, and other educational institutions work to entice international students and the Czech Republic is no exception. As free of charge access to university education requires knowledge of the Czech language, an important gateway for foreign students is through Czech language preparatory courses provided by different actors: the Czech centres abroad, the Czech universities themselves and also private language schools in Ukraine and in the Czech Republic. There is a wide range language courses (of different intensity and duration) available in the Czech Republic<sup>39</sup>. And obviously Czech language schools are financially interested in the inflow of foreign students to Czech degree programs at universities. At the same time, in the interviews we conducted universities acknowledged that they are most interested in students for English degree programs (as this means money from tuition fees and subsidies from the government). And while universities put more effort into marketing activities which are targeted at English speaking students, language schools usually are more oriented to groups of students who are more linguistically close to the Czech Republic, such as, for example, students from the so called Slav group, including Ukrainian students.

There are private Czech language schools, which offer Czech language classes often in cooperation with some universities and faculties. One such is UniPrep, a private school cooperating with the Faculty of Humanities, CU in Prague and offering some courses at the faculty during the preparatory language courses. The Prague Education Centre doesn't offer the possibility to take some courses at a particular university or faculty, but in Brno it has Czech language classes in BUT. The preparatory business is evidently successful enough that some of the private schools offer the financial guarantee of being accepted to a Czech university. A moneyback guarantee is offered to those who attend the courses (sometimes there is an extra charge for this kind of guarantee) and there is even a list of guaranteed educational programs/majors (mostly with a shortage of students) at public universities for a given year<sup>40</sup>. This striking example of a marketing tool used for enticing international students reflects not only the success of the migration business but also the nature of structural opportunities in the Czech context. The role of private preparatory schools seems to be important<sup>41</sup>, though it seems that their business is targeting wealthy students mostly from Russia and Kazakhstan. In any case, more in-depth research of the practices of these private schools and the interconnections with Czech universities would be desirable to get a full understanding of the situation.

Moreover, many universities, as has already been mentioned, offer Czech language preparatory courses themselves. These courses were explicitly mentioned

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<sup>39</sup> The price for most of the courses varies between 3 000 and 5 000 euros per academic year (however there are some more expensive solutions) and in most of the cases future students have to pay the whole sum in advance while they are still in the country of origin.

<sup>40</sup> An example of the detailed description of conditions for the mentioned financial guarantee is available here (in Russian): <https://www.educationcenter.cz/garantii-postupleniya/> The list of guaranteed study programs for 2016/2017 is available here: [https://www.educationcenter.cz/assets/files/Garantiruemye\\_specialnosti\\_2016.pdf](https://www.educationcenter.cz/assets/files/Garantiruemye_specialnosti_2016.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Three years ago the private language and preparatory school GoStudy CZ even co-organized a conference on student migration in the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. The conference problematized and discussed some relevant issues; conference proceedings in Czech are available here: <https://www.gostudy.cz/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Sborn--k-z-mezin--rodn---konference-Migrace-student---do---R.pdf>



by the representatives of VŠE and CTU in cooperation with The International Union of Youth and The Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies (further ILPS) at CU. It's possible to say that ILPS is one of the biggest players on the market, as it offers language preparatory courses not only in different places in Prague but also in Poděbrady, Mariánské Lázně and Liberec. Among the main activities of ILPS belong preparatory courses for university studies, including preparation of students who study in the CR in the framework of governmental scholarships. The courses include intensive Czech language courses and courses that prepare students for entrance examinations at Czech universities (by different fields of study). Besides that, ILPS offers preparatory courses for studies at Czech universities in English, non-intensive Czech language courses, summer schools of Czech language, Czech language courses for doctors, courses for foreigners who want to pass the test necessary to obtain Czech citizenship, preparation for Czech language exams, individual courses and foreign language courses<sup>42</sup>.

In addition, ILPS helps with recognition of foreign education and provides accommodation. Besides having a representative in Ukraine who helps prospective students with the application process (the same services are provided for Russian students in Moscow), there are no special services for Ukrainians. ILPS advertises its services on its webpages available in English, Russian and Czech and cooperates with firms in Ukraine that assist Ukrainian students who intend to study abroad.

A private company "Home in Prague"<sup>43</sup> is one of the most important contractors of ILPS and it supplies the highest number of students. They focus on countries where Russian is spoken and understood – besides Russia, this means Ukraine, Kazakhstan etc. This year, out of 667 students in preparatory courses 276 were recruited by the firms. The firms receive for each recruited student a provision. They run campaigns at Ukrainian high schools presenting ILPS services and providing an introduction to the Czech higher education system. ILPS also cooperates with the Czech embassy. Czech language students at the Czech Center often take preparatory courses at ILPS. ILPS has its representative in Ukraine, who helps prospective students with the application process and represents ILPS at education fairs there. According to interviewed representatives ILPS is more oriented to middle class students and the current socio-economic situation in Ukraine has resulted in a slight drop off in the number of students. At the same time they noted the importance of migration regulations and stated that the cancellation of Visapoint was a relief and it coincided with a rise in the number of Ukrainian students.

ILPS visits the regular meetings for providers of education, organized by the Ministry of Interior who informs about current policies and changes in legislature. Although ILPS is influenced by them, it does not question the migration policies of the state. It cooperates with the Ministry of Interior and tests applicants for permanent residency in their proficiency in Czech and serves as an arbiter if doubts on the applicants' proficiency in the Czech language arise. An ILPS representative mentioned an unsuccessful attempt to cooperate with the Ministry of Health on preparation of courses for foreign health personnel who are preparing for practising their profession in the CR and need to have their qualifications recognized in the CR<sup>44</sup>.

In general, ILPS's representative expressed his dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, as there is a lack of cooperation between respective actors involved in recruiting foreign students and that hinders ILPS's work. He implored the project to do something about it. For example, he mentioned that requirements for entrance examinations are not unified. Some schools require B1

<sup>42</sup> ILPS has a certification of ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) which allows it to issue internationally recognized proofs of language proficiency.

<sup>43</sup> <http://partnercz.ru/he>

<sup>44</sup> Instead in 2018 the Czech Centre in Kyiv advertised summer language courses with a native speaker for Ukrainian health personnel in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Ivan-Frankivsk and Dnipro.



level, others B2 level. Among faculties of the same field the requirements are also not unified. ILPS also complained about the lack of interest from the side of the Ministry of Health to cooperate on the courses for foreign health professionals etc. Such cooperation would be very useful, as the popularity of preparatory courses for studies of medicine and technical subjects have risen recently and surpassed the popularity of preparatory courses for humanities and economics. According to the ILPS representative, it is because students found out that it is much harder to succeed as a foreigner in humanities than in technical subjects. The ILPS representative believes that employment opportunities are much higher in medicine and technical subjects but there is no data to confirm this trend among Ukrainian graduates.

According to the ILPS representative, Ukrainians are usually well suited to study in the CR. They are able to learn the language quickly and there are no crucial differences in syllabi at Ukrainian high schools and Czech high schools, especially in technical subjects. Therefore, Ukrainian students prepare easily for the entrance examinations at Czech universities. However, it is hard to assess how successful students are at the entrance examinations and in the course of their studies. As Universities are forbidden to provide information to third parties ILPS depends on the information provided by the students themselves. Unfortunately, the return rate of questionnaires is low, because ILPS usually has students' addresses in Ukraine as contact addresses and it's hard to reach them there, as many of them no longer live in Ukraine.

### **Enhancement of human capital potential and coherence of relevant policies**

Coherence between migration and education policies seems to be a challenging issue in the Czech context. Migration regulations clearly pose barriers to efforts towards internationalization, which is one of the priorities of education policies. Representatives of MEYS, DZS, and several universities acknowledged that due to complicated and long visa procedures in the Czech Republic foreign students are often unable to start their study program on time, i.e. they receive a visa after the start of the academic year. Ukraine is however considered to be less problematic. The obstacles caused by Visapoint were partly solved by introducing Regime Student, which was kind of a compromise between keeping the strict regulations on the entrance to the Czech Republic for Ukrainian citizens (especially labor migrants) and solving the problem of too strict visa procedures for Ukrainian students, as a demanded, indeed the third most popular source country (after Slovakia and Russia).

There seems to be a certain clash of interests between the MEYS on one side and MoI on the other side. The priority of MoI is securitization; while the priority of the MEYS is the internationalization of higher education preconditioned by liberal policies concerning the entrance of foreign students. In the interview, representatives of MoI pointed out that some young immigrants misuse their student visa as they change university after just one year or they do not attend classes because the main purpose of their visit is economic activities rather than studies. MoI could not estimate the extent of such practices but they have clearly problematized the issue for a while, since similar concerns could be found in a brochure dated three years ago (Černá 2015). Representatives of MEYS however believed that Ukraine is not one of the countries with massive abuse of student visas.

In fact, migration policies have a twofold effect on the recruitment of foreign students and if the regulations towards a given country are too strict, both universities and students lose interest. Universities cannot afford to lose many prospective students who have already been accepted, but after some unsuccessful



attempts to obtain the required visa, they simply reorient towards other countries. Students also calculate their potential risks and efforts and if it is too hard to obtain a visa for a given country, they look for more accessible destinations.

The report by the Education policy centre at Charles university (Koucký, Ryška and Zelenka 2014) suggests that graduates from Czech universities have one of the highest rates of employment. According to the results of the Czech surveys conducted within the comparative European research project REFLEX focused on higher education, the average length of transition from education to first job in the Czech context shortened between 2006 and 2013 from slightly more than 5 months to slightly less than 3 months. Almost one half (48 %) of more than 27 thousand graduates from Czech universities included in the survey of 2013 claimed that they were already working before graduation; only 2 % of them had never had a job after graduation while the rest reported starting working either up to three months after the end of the studies (28 %) or in a longer period of time (21 %). The study also suggests a slight decrease in graduates who are employed exclusively in the field of their studies and the growing importance of those working in related fields (self-reported by the graduates). The share of those who reported to be working in a completely unrelated field (or in jobs without any special requirement concerning the field of studies) was relatively high among those who studied social sciences and humanities, culture and arts and also agriculture, forestry and veterinary medicine; the highest rate of a perfect match between the field of work and studies was reported by graduates with a degree in medicine or law, while graduates with degrees in economics, natural sciences and technical study programs were mostly employed in other related fields. At the same time graduates with master and doctoral degrees were more successful in matching their jobs with their education. (Koucký, Ryška and Zelenka 2014)

The problem of incoherence between the educational system and labor market needs was discussed in the interview with representatives of MEYS and DZS, who noted that the shortage in domestic labor in particular sectors in fact does not influence promotional or recruitment campaigns. Strategies in the sector of higher education are long-term, whereas shortages in the labor market are usually short-term problems that cannot be solved merely by changes in the sector of education. This of course does not mean that labor market needs do not influence higher education at all, just that this connection is not straightforward. Contacted MEYS experts acknowledged some demand to focus more on skills and problem-solving than on encyclopaedic knowledge; however, this was seen as a general issue, not specific to particular sectors or degree specializations. It was mentioned that in comparison to other European countries, in CR business is not well connected with public institutions of higher education and this lack of connection is seen as a weakness. There have been a few attempts to connect labor market needs and public higher education. Practical training sessions done within the Erasmus+ program are one of them. Some technical faculties also develop applied research in which they engage doctoral students. Nevertheless, undergraduate and postgraduate students are not usually involved in these kind of programs and none of these activities significantly influence promotional campaigns.

Some attempts to connect business and education are done by private institutions. An interesting and, in the Czech context, unique example of practical overlap between industry and education could be Skoda Auto University (SAVS), a young private university founded by the automobile company. According to information obtained from SAVS, internationalization is also one of their priorities. They offer bachelor's and follow-on master's degree programs (both full-time and part-time) and claim to regularly update their study programs to meet the requirements of today's professions. At the moment there are only 28 Ukrainian students at SAVS, which is about 8 % of foreign students and 4 % of all the students. SAVS has English and Russian versions of the website and they also



cooperate with “agent companies” that contact prospective students. SAVS follows the careers of their graduates and has practical internship as an obligatory part of the bachelor’s study program.

Last but not least, the mentioned incoherence between education and integration policies lies in the problem of enhancing and utilizing the human capital of foreign graduates. Clearly, the transition from education to labor market is a challenge for all graduates, but Ukrainian students (as well as students from other non-EU countries) might experience even bigger problems due to their uncertain legal status. The dual vulnerability in the status of foreign graduates is given by the fact that they are mostly not entitled to unemployment benefits not only if they have not worked before (at least six months of employment within the last three years is required) but also due to their legal status (unless they have a permanent residence permit in the country). MLSA does have statistics on unemployed Ukrainian citizens registered at labor offices but these records do not provide information on the number of unemployed foreign graduates (according to the interview with MLSA, in the case of foreigners this information is not recorded).

Czech Republic does not seem to articulate any special interest in keeping foreign graduates in the country. Apart from free access to the labor market, a further advantage for graduates comes with the requirements concerning language tests for permanent residence permits and citizenship application as graduates from study programs in Czech do not have to pass these compulsory tests. Nevertheless, a significant disadvantage for Ukrainian graduates (even compared to low-skilled labor migrants) is the fact that they cannot apply for a permanent residence permit even after 5 years of studying in the country. Immigrants who stay on the territory of the Czech Republic for at least 5 years are normally entitled to apply for this stable residence permit status associated with many advantages, including access to public health insurance, unemployment and social benefits. However, the duration of studies for the purpose of permanent residence permits is calculated only with a 0.5 coefficient. Therefore, even graduates with a degree in a field with a current deficit of professionals, who spent almost 10 years in the Czech Republic on a student permit have absolutely no guarantee of being able to stay after graduation and if they fail to change the purpose of their stay immediately after graduation they have to leave and to reapply for another type of residence permit from abroad and therefore they lose their “continuous residence record” for the purpose of future permanent residence permit application. These regulations go against the assumption that skilled foreign graduates with a Czech diploma and knowledge of the language are one of the most appropriate and easy target groups of any integrational policies. The amendment to the Alien law, which is still under preparation, plans to introduce some kind of transition period, enabling foreign graduates to remain in the country for 9 months after graduation in order to find a job. This would definitively improve the situation of foreign graduates who decided to stay in the country, yet a discussion of the possibility of eliminating the described disadvantages for graduates applying for permanent residence permits still appears very desirable.



## The survey of Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic

This part of the report analyses the data from the on-line survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, which lasted for about 7 weeks between March 29 and May 16. The details of the survey process and its promotion are described in the methodological annex to this report. As a result of the survey we collected data from 307 respondents, comprised of 48 graduates and 259 current students from Ukraine. Graduates and students answered slightly different sets of questions, therefore these two groups were analysed mostly separately. While reading the results and the interpretations further in this report, one should keep in mind the small number of graduates involved in the survey. Although we provide some percentages not only for students but also for graduates here, those figures should be interpreted with great caution since they have very low statistical power. The results for graduates should rather serve for orientation purposes also because of the process of recruitment for the survey, which was more focused on current students (particularly targeting Czech universities).

### The profile of Ukrainian students and graduates

The proportion of men and women among students and graduates is very alike with a preponderance of women (69% among students and 65% graduates); as is to be expected, current students in the survey are significantly younger (more than 75% of them are younger than 24; while the majority of graduates are older than 26). Statistics for students attending Czech universities for the past 10 years also reflect the predomination of women among Ukrainian students; though the share of them in official records is somewhat lower (stable at about 60%). Table 3 provides a comparison of the age and gender composition of survey respondents and Ukrainian students and graduates in official records.



**Table 3. Comparison of age and gender composition of the survey respondents with official statistics, column percentage**

	Students		Graduates	
	Survey	Statistics*	Survey**	Statistics**
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	31%	40%	35%	33 %
Female	69%	60%	65%	67 %
<b>Age</b>				
16-17 years	1%	1%	0%	0 %
18-20 years	34%	36%	0%	4 %
21-23 years	41%	37%	6%	34 %
24-26 years	15%	15%	25%	34 %
27-32 years	8%	9%	35%	33 %
More than 32 years	2%	2%	33%	67 %

**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic 2018 (N=307); MYES 2017; authors calculations.

**Notes:** \*Statistics for Ukrainian students are valid for the school year 2017/2018; \*\*Due to the small number of graduates in the survey (48 respondents) one should interpret the percentages with caution;

\*\*\*Statistics for graduates are valid for 2001-2017; the age at graduation is mentioned here.

As has already been mentioned, it is impossible to get accurate estimates of the age and gender composition of all Ukrainian graduates since detailed data is available only after 2000. The aggregated statistics published annually by MEYS bring information also about the age of graduates for respective years. Table 3 illustrates the number of graduates in age groups but these aggregated statistics provide data for the age at graduation and should serve rather for orientation purposes. Direct comparison with the survey sample could even be misleading since graduates are getting older<sup>45</sup> and some of them have left the country (they are harder to target by the survey).

When it comes to the coverage of Czech universities, the majority of students and graduates recruited for the survey came from five larger public universities all around the country: Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague (23% of the sample), Masaryk University in Brno (20%), Charles University in Prague (17%), Brno University of Technology (8%), and Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem (5%). Table 4 illustrates the number of students and graduates in the sample by university.

<sup>45</sup>Those Ukrainians who graduated at the age of 25 in 2008 are now 35 years old. Annual statistics for foreign graduates are aggregated into age groups, therefore it is not possible to run the calculations for the exact current age.



**Table 4. Universities covered by the survey**

	Students	Graduates
Czech University of Life Sciences (CULS)	68	1
Masaryk University (MU)	53	7
Charles University (CU)	30	21
Brno University of Technology (BUT)	23	0
Jan Evangelista Purkyně University (UJEP)	15	1
Technical University of Ostrava (VSB-TUO)	12	2
University of Economics in Prague (VŠE)	6	8
Anglo-American University (AAU)	10	0
Czech Technical University (CTU)	6	3
Metropolitan University Prague (MUP)	4	1
Technical University of Liberec (TUL)	3	1
Palacký University Olomouc (UPOL)	4	0
University of West Bohemia (UWB)	3	1
Tomas Bata University (TBU)	3	0
Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (UMPRUM)	2	0
The Institute of Hospitality Management (IHM)	2	0
University of Finance and Administration (VŠFS)	2	0
Mendel University in Brno (MENDELU)	2	0
University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague (UCT Prague)	2	0
University College of International and Public Relations Prague (VSMVV)	1	0
University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno (UVPS Brno)	1	0
Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (AMU)	1	0
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB)	1	0
Not answered	5	2

**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

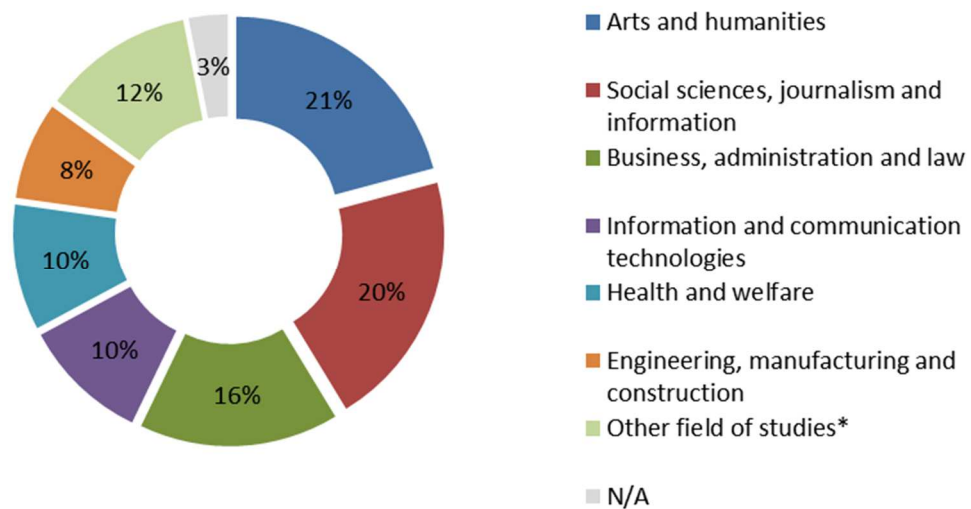
The coverage of the universities in the survey is slightly different from the official statistics provided by MEYS (compare Table 4 and Table 2) but the general picture is similar: the vast majority (91%) of our respondents attend or graduated from public universities. Although some universities are underrepresented, we managed to cover almost 70% of all Czech public institutions of higher education; at the same time, there were only 5 private universities in the survey (AAU, MUP, IHM, VŠFS, and VSMVV). In terms of geographical coverage our sample is quite heterogeneous: 55% of our respondents studied or graduated from universities located in Prague (12 universities) while the rest



studied all around the country in university cities like Brno, České Budějovice, Liberec, Olomouc, Ostrava, Pilsen, Ústí nad Labem and Zlín.

About two thirds of Ukrainian students (68%) contacted by the survey studied in bachelor programs, about a quarter (24%) attended master programs and 8% were doctoral students. A majority of the graduates in the survey (65%) had a master's degree, only 8 of them received their bachelor's degree and 9 finished Ph.D. The most popular field of study among our respondents was social sciences, journalism and information: 21% of students and 33% of graduates. The same proportion among current Ukrainian students (21%) studied arts and humanities. Figure 1 illustrates the field of study of current Ukrainian students addressed by the survey.

**Figure 1. Field of studies of current Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic.**



**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** \*Other fields of studies including Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary medicine, Education, and Services.

While every fifth graduate in the survey received his or her diploma in social sciences, journalism and information, other popular fields of studies were Information and communication technologies (8 out of 48 graduates), Business, administration and law (7 out of 48 graduates) and also Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics (also 7 out of 48 graduates in the sample). Although the results of the survey suggest that the vast majority of Ukrainian students and graduates did not have to pay for their education at public universities, the wording of the question concerning the financial matter of the studies does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about the share of self-payers in our sample<sup>46</sup>.

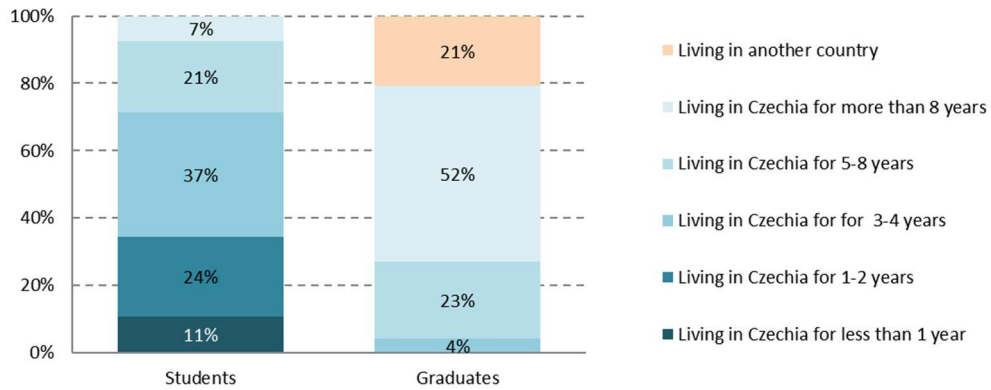
<sup>46</sup> When asked who paid (pays) for their education students and graduates had to choose from the following options: 1) I study for free on a grant program, 2) parents, 3) other relatives, 4) I paid for my education myself, 5) I study on an education loan, and 6) I paid from inheritance or other passive income (dividends, revenue). As a result a significant part of the students and graduates (including those who neither had scholarships, nor paid for their studies at public universities) probably did not understand the question and answered as if asked about the financial support to cover the living costs in the Czech Republic. 38% percent of our sample answered as if they paid for their studies, which is definitively not true, especially if compared to the official statistics of self-payers in top public universities.



Logically, current Ukrainian students are relatively new immigrants compared to their compatriots who already graduated: more than one third of Ukrainian students lived in the Czech Republic for just up to 2 years and more than two thirds spent less than 5 years here. At the same time more than half of the graduates we managed to recruit for the survey were living in the Czech Republic for more than 8 years; while one fifth of them reported to be living elsewhere at the moment. (Figure 2)



**Figure 2. The length of stay in the Czech Republic for Ukrainian students and graduates**



**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

Slightly more than one fifth (22%) out of 259 current Ukrainian students reported attending some kind of short-term study programs abroad before, mostly in the Czech Republic (mentioned by 27 students) and in other EU countries (mentioned by 24 students)<sup>47</sup>. The share of those who attended short courses before studying in a Czech university is slightly lower among male students (15 %) and among more recent students who spent up to 2 years studying in the Czech Republic (18 %). Also only half of those who studied at private universities reported experience with any short courses before; though the total number of Ukrainian students in private universities is rather low and this finding should be interpreted with caution.

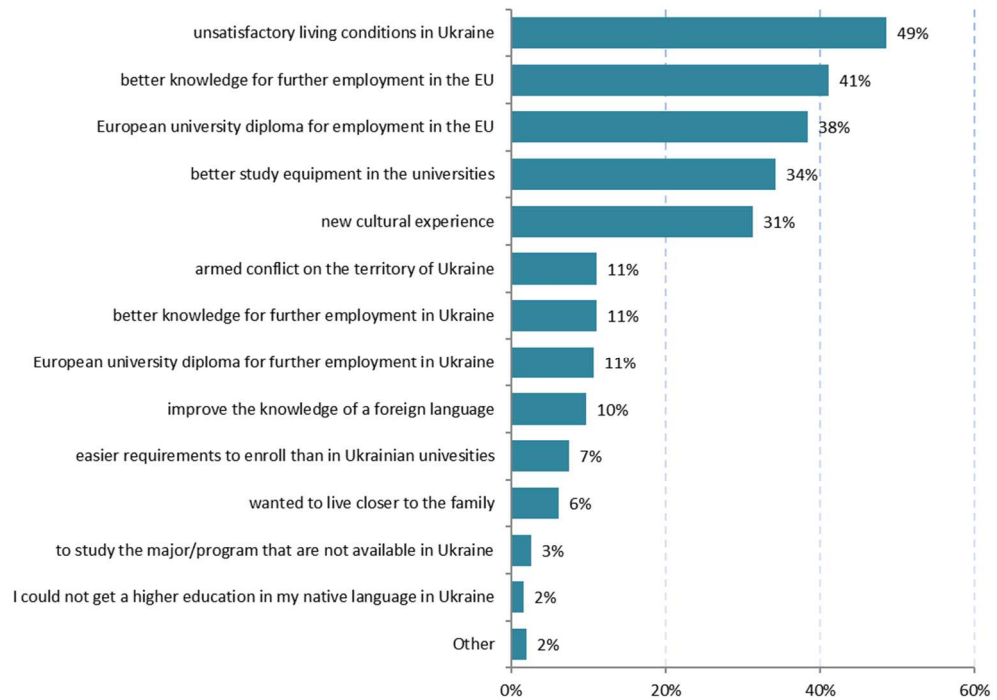
### The main migration motives for Ukrainian students

To understand migration motives of Ukrainian students and graduates they were asked three questions: why they decided to study abroad, why they came to the Czech Republic and why they chose a given university. In each of these questions they had to choose up to three main reasons from the list and, if they failed to choose among the provided reasons, they could also pick the answer “other reasons”. Figure 3 illustrates that the main push factors for Ukrainian students and graduates were unsatisfactory living conditions in Ukraine (chosen by almost half of the sample). Other important reasons to study abroad were the expectations of getting proper knowledge and a diploma for further employment in EU countries, and also better material and technical equipment at foreign universities. One third of the sample admitted that they were looking for a new cultural experience of being an international student. (See Figure 3)

<sup>47</sup> 9 students reported that they attended some short-term study programs outside the EU and 4 people attended two types of courses.



**Figure 3. Main reasons to study abroad mentioned by Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic**



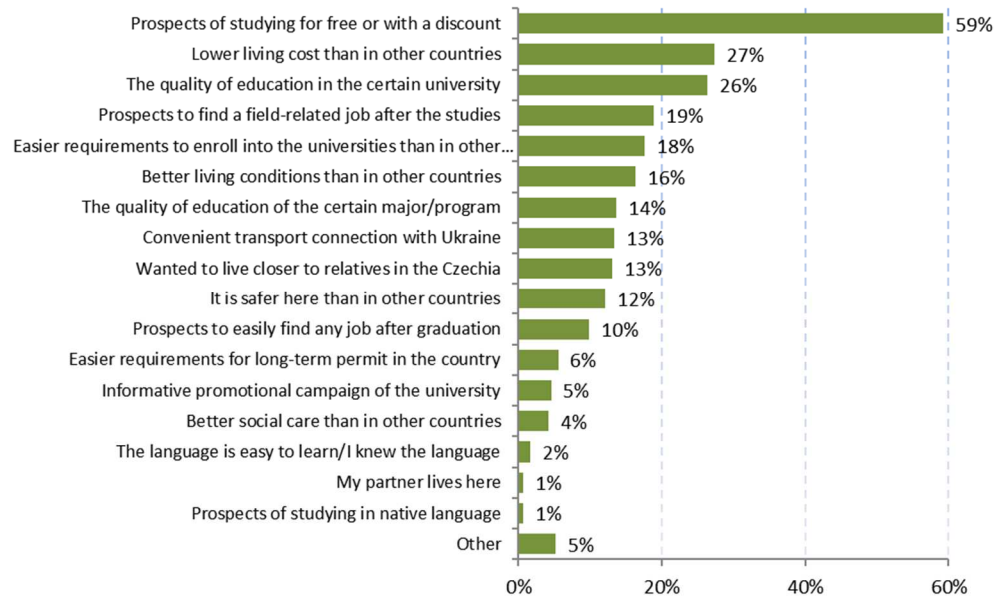
**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

Note: Multiple response question; percentages do not sum up to 100%.

When asked why they chose the Czech Republic to study, by far the most important reason mentioned in the survey was the possibility to study without paying for the education: this reason was mentioned by almost 60% of the sample (See Figure 4). Almost one third of the sample also mentioned lower living costs in the Czech Republic (compared to other foreign countries) and the quality of education in a particular university (mostly picked by students and graduates from Charles University, Masaryk University and the Czech University of Life Sciences). Among important pull factors were also the prospects of finding a field-related job after studies, easier enrollment requirements and better living conditions in the Czech Republic. (Figure 4)



**Figure 4. Main reasons to study in the Czech Republic mentioned by Ukrainian students and graduates**



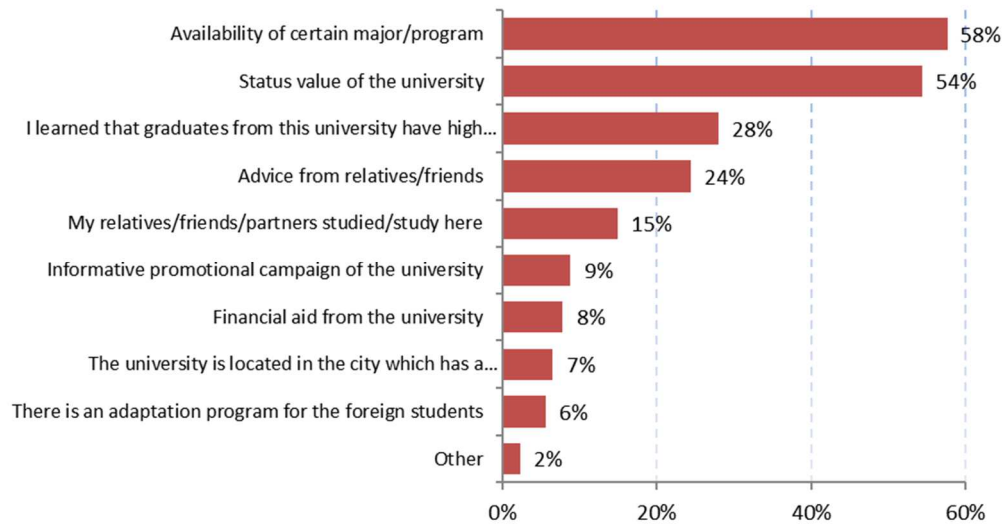
**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

Note: Multiple response question; percentages do not sum up to 100%.

As is obvious from Figure 5, the choice of the particular Czech university was connected primarily with two factors: the availability of a certain study program (58%) and the prestige of the university as such (54%). Information that graduates of a given university have high chances of employment was significant for almost one third of the sample (28%). Social and ethnic contacts seem to play an essential role in deciding at which university to study: 24% of our sample were advised to study at a particular Czech university by their friends and relatives and another 15% selected the university because their friends and close ones already studied there. (Figure 5)



**Figure 5. Main reasons for choosing a given university mentioned by Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic**



**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** Multiple response question; percentages do not sum up to 100%.

The survey also brings interesting findings about the effect of promotional campaigns of the Czech universities: almost one in ten of our sample selected informative campaigns targeting foreign students as the main reason for choosing the university. (Figure 5) Those who chose the promotional campaign of the university as one of the main factors that influenced their decision were mostly students and graduates from Masaryk University, the Czech University of Life Sciences and Charles University.

### **The potential of human capital of Ukrainian graduates and students**

The vast majority (about 98%) of our respondents, regardless of whether current students or graduates, are not of Czech origin (neither are any of their parents or grandparents) and they were born elsewhere: there were only 2 students born in the country, and 3 students and 2 graduates with Czech grandparents.

In order to understand the potential of Ukrainians who graduated from Czech universities to return back to Ukraine it is important to understand their ties to both the country of origin and the destination country. When it comes to having what was in the survey called “close relatives” back in Ukraine, a majority of both students and graduates reported to having family ties in the country of origin. The connection with the country of origin is very intense. Interestingly, however, the share of those with close relatives in Ukraine turned out to be even higher among those who already graduated: 68% among students and 85% among graduates<sup>48</sup>. This does not support the assumption that migrants who come to study tend to bring close family members after a longer stay (or after graduation): while the vast majority of graduates lived in the Czech Republic for a longer time, only a small share of students reported that they stayed here for more than 8 years. A more probable explanation for this seemingly surprising finding is that

<sup>48</sup> As has already been mentioned, while interpreting these findings one has to keep in mind the relatively small number of graduates in the survey.



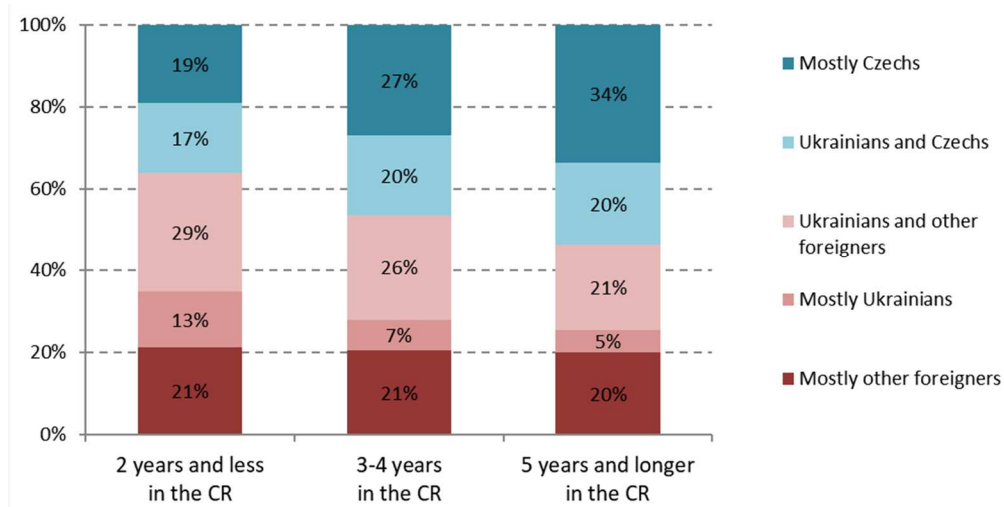
the current students in the survey are more often (than graduates) the children of Ukrainian immigrants who are already living in the country: since their parents are not in Ukraine, they more often report having no close family members back there.

When asked about their everyday life contacts, only one in ten of our respondents (10%) reported that they interact mostly with their compatriots, about one fifth (21%) interact mostly with other foreigners, and about one quarter of them (24%) report to interact equally with Ukrainians and other foreigners (not Czechs). Slightly more than a quarter of the respondents (26%) acknowledged that they interact mostly with Czechs and about one fifth (19%) of the sample reported having a similar intensity of contacts with both Ukrainians and Czechs. Here it is useful to clarify that this question was used for all the respondents, including those 10 Ukrainian graduates who are currently not living in the Czech Republic.

Contacts with Czechs were therefore significant for almost half of the sample (mentioned by 45% of the sample). Clearly the intensity of interactions with the majority population for students and graduates living in the Czech Republic depends on two main factors: the length of stay in the country and the command of the language. Figure 6 presents the results for students and those graduates who live in the Czech Republic.



**Figure 6. Everyday interactions by length of stay in the Czech Republic for Ukrainian students and graduates**



**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** Only current students and graduates who live in the Czech Republic are included.

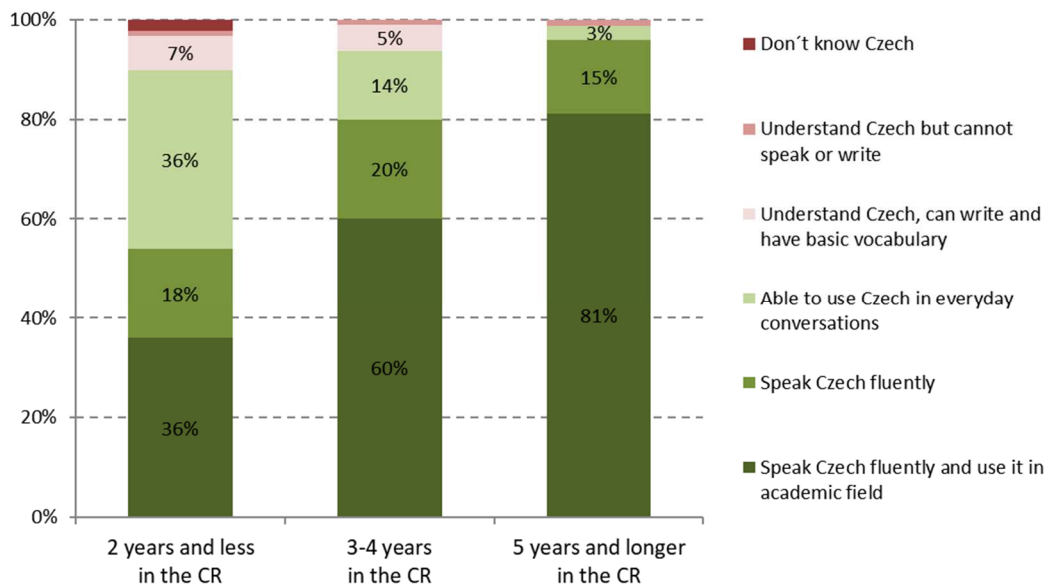
On one hand, the figure above suggests that the intensity of contact with Czechs increases over time spent in the country. Interactions mostly with Czechs were mentioned by more than one third of those who spent over 5 years in the country<sup>49</sup>. On the other hand, it suggests that even after 5 and more years of living in the Czech Republic about a half of Ukrainian students and graduates communicate mostly with their compatriots and other foreigners.

The importance of ethnic networks and contacts with other foreigners cannot be explained by the language barrier Ukrainian students might experience. It has already been mentioned that the majority of Ukrainians study in Czech language programs. Their self-assessment of Czech language skills in the survey is also very high: the majority of our sample report to speak Czech fluently (79%), including 61% who stated that they are able to use the language also in the academic field. About 16% of the sample report that they have sufficient language skills to use Czech in everyday conversations and only a marginal share of respondents reported to have some kind of language barrier: 11 respondents admitted that they have only basic vocabulary (though understand and can write), 3 of them have only basic understanding but cannot speak or write and 2 have no knowledge of the Czech language. Most of those who reported the language deficit have been living in the country just for a couple of years and over time the language proficiency improves significantly: eight in ten Ukrainian students and graduates living in the country for 5 and more years report the ability to fluently use Czech even in the academic field. (Figure 7)

<sup>49</sup> Contacts primarily with Czechs were actually mentioned by almost half of those who lived 8 and more years here but due to the low number of respondents this category was not analysed separately but combined with those living in the country for 5-8 years.



**Figure 7. Self-assessment of language skills among Ukrainian students and graduates by length of stay in the Czech Republic**



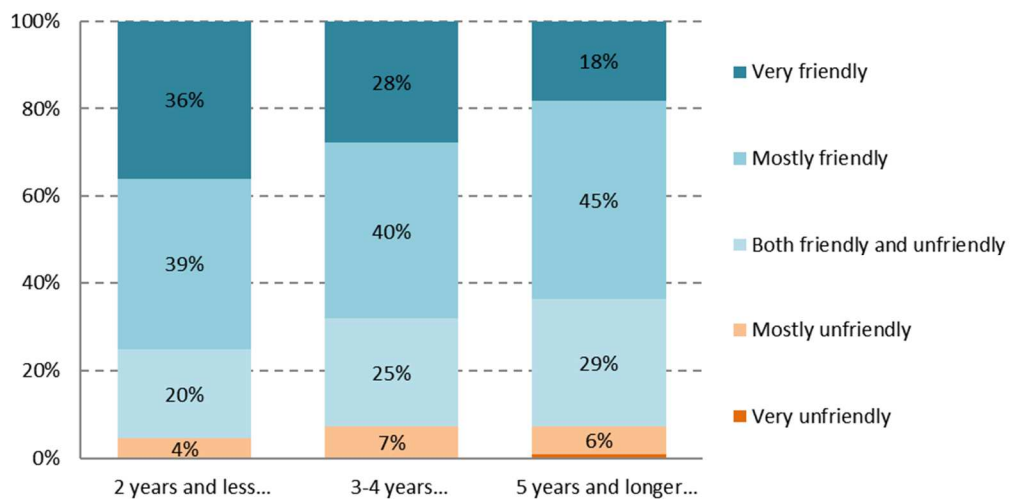
**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** Only current students and graduates who live in the Czech Republic are included.

Clearly, the interactions of Ukrainian students and graduates with the majority population could be influenced by the general attitudes and stereotypes in the hosting society towards immigrants and Ukrainians in particular. Analysis of public opinion surveys shows that Ukrainians are not one of the most favored nations among Czechs and the stereotype of “cheap labor” is rather strong here (Šmídová, Vávra and Čížek 2015; Leontiyeva and Vávra 2009). Ukrainian students and graduates in the survey had to evaluate the approach of other people in everyday life when they learn about the Ukrainian origin of our respondents. More than half of our sample chose answers on the positive side on the 5 point scale from very unfriendly to very friendly: 41 % mostly friendly and 27 % answered very friendly. It seems that Ukrainian students have very rarely experience, if at all, with bad attitudes. Interestingly though, this subjective perception of attitudes towards Ukrainians among respondents who spent different times in the country differs. Figure 8 suggests that the most positive reaction of the surrounding society is much more often reported by those who stay in the country for a shorter period of time, i.e. those who communicate less with Czechs (compare with Figure 6). It seems that especially at the beginning of their stay the social bubble of university protects Ukrainian students from the stereotypes on the side of the majority population.



**Figure 8. Reported reaction of surrounding people upon learning about Ukrainian origin of respondents.**



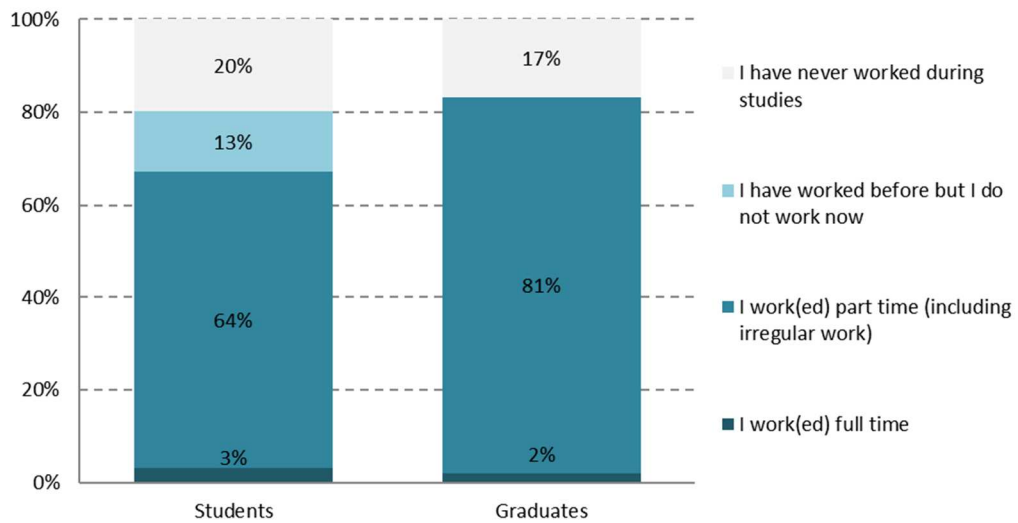
**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** Only current students and graduates who live in the Czech Republic are included.

Another important factor that might influence the migration decision after studies is the economic situation and job opportunities. Unfortunately there are not statistics about the employment rate of foreign students and graduates in the Czech context. Also it was mentioned that the great benefit of being a foreign student currently enrolled in full-time studies in the Czech Republic is free access to the labor market. In fact, the majority of Ukrainian students and graduates contacted within our survey reported at least some kind of economic activities during their studies. While only a small fraction had experience of full-time work, 64 % of current students were working part time at the moment of the survey (including irregular work) and another 13 % of them used to combine their studies with work (but they are not working at the moment). The share of those who reported combining work and studies is very similar among the graduates. (Figure 9)



**Figure 9. Experience of combining work and studies among Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic.**



**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

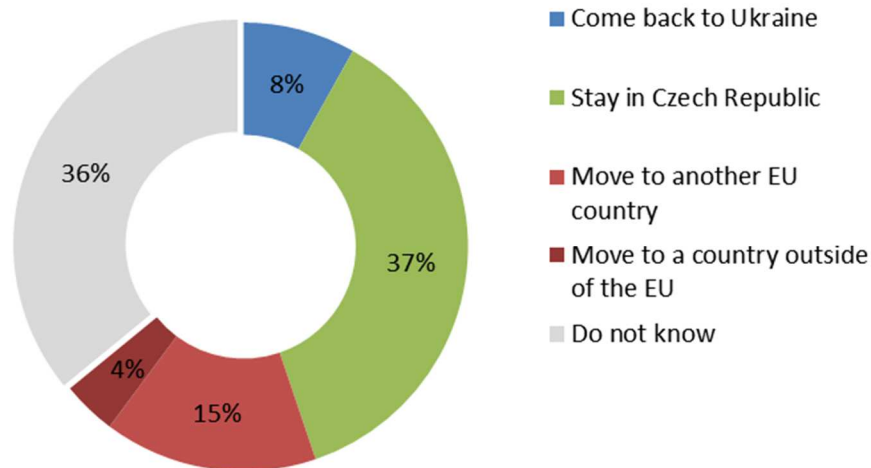
Experience of working during the studies is a bit lower among younger students but even there it is noticeably high: only about one third of students up to 20 years of age (31%) have never worked in the Czech Republic during their studies. Interesting could also be a significant gender difference: 27 % men and 16 % women report to have never combined work and studies. This difference can not be fully explained by the somewhat larger share of females among different age groups or among the graduates. Though, more in-depth research about the nature and the intensity of the work among male and female students would be necessary to draw some solid conclusions.

## Strategies after graduation

We already mentioned that one fifth of the graduates we managed to contact through the survey reported to living elsewhere than in the Czech Republic at the moment: 3 came back to Ukraine, 6 moved to another EU country and 1 was living in a country outside the EU at the moment of the survey. It is hard to draw any conclusions based on this finding (due to the low number of graduates in the survey and the selection bias) but it would be interesting to discuss the future plans of current students. One of the most important questions of our survey was asked in the final part of the questionnaire. Current students from Ukraine were asked about their plans after graduation from a Czech university. Clearly, a large part of current students had difficulties answering the question about their future and therefore chose the option “don’t know”. Figure 10 illustrates that despite the fact that not all Ukrainian students were able to express their plans for the future, more than one third of them plan to stay in the country of studies, while one fifth plan to move elsewhere (mostly within the EU) and only less than one tenth intend to return to Ukraine.



**Figure 10. Plans of current Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic after graduation.**

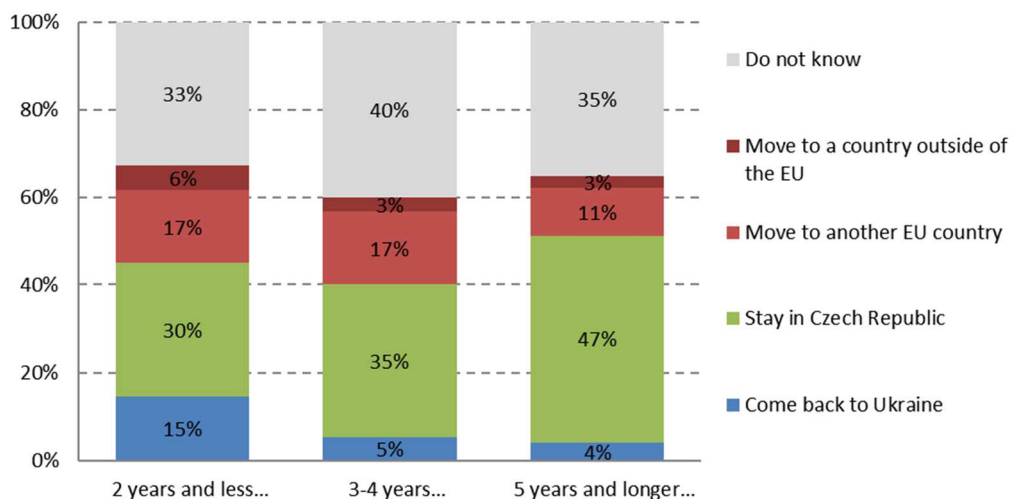


**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** Only current students are included.

The plans of our respondents about their future are not that much different for male and female students and across different age groups. The survey however suggests that the future intentions of Ukrainian students might change after some time spent studying in the Czech Republic. The length of stay in the Czech Republic seems to be strongly correlated with the preference to remain here: (while the share of undecided is more or less stable) after 5 and more years of studies almost half of surveyed students plan to stay in the country after graduation and the proportion of those who plan to return to Ukraine became lower than 5%. (Figure 11).

**Figure 11. Plans of current Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic after graduation.**



**Source:** Survey of Ukrainian students and graduates in the Czech Republic, 2018. N=307

**Note:** Only current students are included.

Ukrainian students who plan to stay in the Czech Republic after graduation (95 respondents), as well as the graduates who already stayed here (38 respondents), were asked about the main factors that influenced their decision



(they had to pick up to a maximum of 3 main reasons from the provided list). The majority selected three main pull factors (sometimes in combination): better living conditions in the Czech Republic (71 % of relevant respondents), higher salaries (54 %) and better job opportunities in a given professional field (50 %). Less frequently selected were reasons like the unstable political situation in Ukraine (36 out of 133 relevant respondents), a partner living in the Czech Republic (33), job opportunities in the Czech Republic in general, not necessarily field-related (22), enthusiasm about gaining new experiences (14), desire to live closer to the family (14), and last, the armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine (10).

As was mentioned, the intention to return to Ukraine is rather weak among Ukrainian students in our survey especially after more than 2 years spent in the Czech Republic. Those who plan to return (or already returned to Ukraine) mentioned mostly sentimental and patriotic reasons like the desire to live closer to Ukrainian friends and relatives (mentioned by 18 respondents), to use the knowledge gained abroad for the home country (17), and to live in the cultural environment a person grew up in (13). 4 out of the relevant respondents (all females) mentioned that they did not like living in the Czech Republic and only one believed she could find a good job in her professional field back home.

The overall experience of Ukrainian students and graduates with their studies in the Czech Republic is very positive. When asked about their satisfaction with studies at Czech universities, 89 % of the sample provided positive answers on the 5 point scale from 1 “completely unsatisfied” to 5 “completely satisfied”, including more than half of the sample (54 %) who picked the highest possible score. The share of those who were unsatisfied was less than 3 % and the rest of the students and graduates (9 %) selected a middle option (“neither, nor”). The highest level of satisfaction was recorded among relatively recent immigrants. Regardless of gender, those who spent less time studying seem to be slightly more satisfied than the graduates and those who studied for a longer time; but the differences are rather marginal.

One of the last questions in the survey was aimed at learning about the attitudes of students and graduates concerning the most effective strategies for attracting more Ukrainian students to the Czech Republic. Here current Ukrainian students and graduates could choose all relevant strategies from the provided list. From the point of view of students and graduates themselves, the most important strategy is to spread more information about the study possibilities: it was selected by 62 % of all the respondents. Other often preferred strategies were to offer grants to prospective students (58 %), to provide help with employment (45 %) and legal advice (44 %), to make it easier to work part-time as a student (22 %), and to offer more study programs in English (21 %). A bit less often mentioned were the improvement of student dormitory accommodation (more and better dormitories selected by 45 respondents), easier requirements for residence permits (35) and its prolongation (4) and improvement of the quality of study programs (26). Only 6 respondents mentioned that Ukrainian students should not be encouraged to study in the Czech Republic and 2 of them mentioned other not specified encouragement strategies.

As has already been mentioned, in many respects this survey has an exploratory character. Unfortunately, the nature of the collected data does not allow for discussion about the coherence between future plans of current Ukrainian students and the present reality of the graduates. The data about Ukrainian graduates are insufficient and the strategies of Ukrainian students after graduation remain unknown. Our survey did not bring much light to this due to the low number of respondents who already graduated and the very specific targeting oriented predominantly to current students.

Migration strategies of Ukrainian students after they finish university depend on many factors, including the economic one. Given the economic nature of Ukrainian migration and the relatively high rate of economic activities during



studies, finding (keeping) a good job after graduation is expected to be one of the most important prerequisites. Obviously, a part of the Ukrainian graduates might experience certain problems while attempting to match their future jobs in the Czech Republic with their field of education (though fewer problems could be expected for graduates with technical and engineering skills as well as natural sciences). Arranging a legal stay could also be a bit of a problematic issue; yet the big starting bonus for foreign graduates is free access to the labor market, i.e. they can apply for any job without need for a special job permit. On the one hand, nowadays the biggest demand for foreign labor in the Czech Republic is in low-skilled and semi-skilled jobs not requiring university education. On the other hand, the national statistics prove that the Czech Republic has a very low unemployment rate in general and the prospects of Ukrainian graduates on the Czech labor market might be even more optimistic compared to many other EU countries with high unemployment of youth and fresh graduates. Taking into account the good language skills of the students in our survey and, most importantly, their personal motivations often oriented towards staying in the Czech Republic one could expect that nowadays students will mostly not return to Ukraine and instead settle down in the country of their studies.



## Conclusion and discussion

Nowadays student migration seems to be rather a marginal component in Ukrainian migration to the Czech Republic, yet just a brief look at the statistics suggests that the country is becoming a more and more attractive destination for Ukrainian students. Apart from Slovaks, Ukrainians represent the largest group of immigrants in the Czech Republic. The Ukrainian community is becoming stronger and it is logical to expect that established migration networks will become more and more significant for attracting newcomers. Given the ongoing and emerging push factors in Ukraine (like for example instability of the socio-economic situation and military conflict with Russia but also the overall situation in tertiary education) and pull factors in the Czech Republic (like demand from Czech universities, the low unemployment rate and the overall favourable socio-economic situation) combined with rather limited alternative migration strategies (like strict regulations concerning labor migration to the Czech Republic) one can expect Ukrainian student migration to gain importance in the following decades.

Both available statistics and the answers of Ukrainian students in our survey prove that free of charge access to public education is one of the most important pull factors. The share of Ukrainian students enrolled in private universities and those studying programs in foreign languages is slightly growing since the beginning of the century. But so far, a majority of Ukrainian students study in the Czech language at public schools, where they are in many respects treated as Czech students (and not only in terms of access to education, scholarships, dormitories, etc. but also for the purpose of statistics). They are treated as those who do not need any special integration measures or services and their incorporation into university structures and networks is practically taken as a matter of course. The survey however suggests that even having very advanced language skills, a significant part of Ukrainian students might live in a kind of a social bubble since they communicate mostly with their compatriots and other foreigners (but not with Czechs).

According to the conducted survey Ukrainian students are mostly economically active during their studies so hopefully the transition from education to the labor market will be fast and successful. Though the mentioned lack of social contacts with the majority population in combination with an uncertainty of legal status and a need to secure any job immediately after (or during) graduation might result in a higher probability of over-education. Unfortunately there is no hard data on unemployment of Ukrainian graduates or utilization of their education and skills. A previous study of the mismatch between job and education for Ukrainian labor migrants however suggests that the entrance point to the labor market is very significant and it can influence persistent over-education of immigrants (Leontiyeva 2014). A potential advantage of Ukrainian graduates compared to labor migrants is free access to the labor market<sup>50</sup>. Thought to be very disadvantageous is the fact that the length of studies is calculated for the purpose of permanent residence permit application only by one half, therefore even graduates who spent considerable time in the Czech Republic are not qualified to apply.

There are no statistics concerning the strategies of Ukrainian students after graduation from Czech Universities and the data collected within this project did not provide clear answers to what is in fact happening. Previous studies point to the fact that that a longer stay in the Czech Republic is often associated with a preference towards settlement. The results of our survey are in line with these findings since in time current Ukrainian students in our survey seem to grow ties to the country of their studies and incline towards staying here after graduation.

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<sup>50</sup> Nowadays a job permit is tightly connected with a given position and given employer; therefore even upward mobility could be problematic and it requires paperwork.



Given the aspirations of a significant part of current students, the legal aspect of their integration seems to be important. The debate about the impact of student migration on Czech society is inevitably connected not only with a discussion about the economic costs or benefits but also with policies towards foreign graduates. The calculations of the economic benefits of student migration in the Czech context suggest that investments by the state into the provision of tertiary education for foreign citizens might very well pay off because young skilled professionals are acquired at a relatively cheap cost (Ključnikov 2015). But the mentioned calculations are true only if most of the foreign graduates stay in the country. The lack of a stable legal status could be a pitfall for successful integration and it could force some of the potentially very valuable professionals with knowledge of the language to search for other prospective destinations.

Growing interest in foreign students (including those from Ukraine) on the side of Czech universities is not only the consequence of socio-demographic developments resulting in a lack of Czech students. The importance of the internationalization of tertiary education has already been acknowledged on the strategic level. At the same time, political and public debate about the benefits of student migration and the human potential of foreign graduates seems to be at a very early stage. Given the global competition for highly skilled immigrants, the need for evidence-based policies in the Czech context is obvious but available data and statistics are scarce. The findings gathered within the project suggest the need for profound research and also an intensive dialogue between all relevant actors.



## Policy recommendations

The explorative character of the study within this project does not allow for the drawing of very detailed policy recommendations. General problematic aspects identified in the research were the following:

- lack of access to public health insurance for students;
- time-consuming recognition of foreign secondary education;
- insecure legal status of graduates and disadvantaged position of those with studying experience for permanent residence application;
- lack of access of graduates without permanent residence to social and unemployment benefits;
- lack of detailed statistics about foreign students and especially graduates in terms of their economic activities, utilization of skills and legal status.

From our point of view, the most pressing issue when it comes to policy recommendations for the Czech state is a) to solve the access to public health insurance for foreign students and b) to propose a more effective solution for the legal stay of foreign graduates. Both would require a change of the respective law(s) and clearly it is not a matter of quick decisions, especially in times when migration has become a highly-politicized issue. However a debate of the mentioned issues is definitively in place at least on the expert level. Czech migration policy has already become more selective and it seems that student migration and skilled migration is prioritized; therefore the lack of relevant data and research on this type of migration seems striking. An improvement of the status of students and graduates is connected with utilizing the human potential of immigrants who are already in the country. In order to make effective decisions aimed at integration of these immigrants more knowledge and deeper research is necessary. To sum up, everything discussed in this report seems to support the need for two short-term strategical priorities in the Czech context: a) to ensure effective cooperation between relevant bodies and b) to promote and support political and public debate about the impact and role of student migration and the human potential of foreign graduates.

The most problematic research finding for the Ukrainian state is connected with the aspirations of Ukrainian graduates to settle down in the Czech Republic after graduation. Here the recommendation of effective return and reintegration policies are in place. Though given the state of affairs and the socio-economic situation in Ukraine, the mentioned policies seem to be a great challenge for the future decade. If it fails to return its graduates to the homeland, Ukraine should probably develop effective strategies for communicating with the diaspora and think of ways to use the potential of professional Ukrainians abroad (aside from financial remittances). Last but not least, intensive cooperation between the Czech Republic (as a receiving country) and Ukraine (as a sending country) on strategies of internationalization of higher education seems to be essential; and international student migration should be addressed by both sides in the wider context of labor, economic and migration policies.



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## Methodological appendix

Within the project a three-stage research strategy was used that included: 1) desk research of current policies in the sphere of migration, education and the labor market in Visegrad countries, 2) in-depth interviews with the representatives of main stakeholders, and 3) an on-line survey of current and former Ukrainian students in Visegrad countries. For exact desk research questions, interview guides and the survey questionnaire please look at the further appendices.

Desk research was conducted according to a set of questions that were the same for all Visegrad countries. At first, regulations that were in force as of 1 October 2017 were analysed. However, the latest changes in the national law were also reflected due to the need of transposition into national law of the Directive (EU) 2016/801 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing by 24 May 2018.

As a part of the information gathering process representatives of main stakeholders were interviewed using the standardized guide lists. 16 in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, the Centre for International Cooperation in Education, the Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations, the Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies, Charles University, 8 public and 2 private universities.

The online poll was conducted from 29<sup>th</sup> March till 16<sup>th</sup> May in the Ukrainian language. The interview was promoted through such channels as personal contacts among students, graduates and university staff, interest groups on Facebook and V Kontakte and official representatives of universities. The main and most effective channel, however, was a promotional campaign through Facebook that allowed us to show the advertisement with the request to take part in the survey to 8000 Facebook users. Also the message with the link to the on-line survey was distributed through different Facebook pages of specialized groups of Ukrainians (as well as several groups of Russian speaking and other migrant associations the Czech Republic). 28 top universities were contacted for the possibility to help with the promotion of the survey through their university mailing list. Some personal contacts at universities distributed the questionnaire among their students. None of the Universities explicitly refused to cooperate but we do not know much about the further distribution of the questionnaire because officially contacted persons at universities gave us no detailed feedback concerning their further steps. Each time the university, the organization or a person was contacted they were asked to distribute the survey among Ukrainian students.

The described recruitment strategy allowed us to reach 307 respondents, from which 259 were students and 48 graduates from full time programs and thus were used for further analysis. During the first two weeks of promotion we collected 15% of all answers (before the data cleaning).

Due to methodological limitations the results of the poll cannot be generalized to the whole population of Ukrainian students since the coverage of universities is very different. Not much is known about Ukrainian students in the Czech Republic but the comparison of gender and age structure gives us hope that we collected relevant data to explore and interpret findings about students. The data about graduates are very poor and here the results of the survey are in fact very approximate. The results for graduates should rather serve for orientation purposes not only because of the low numbers but also because the process of recruitment for the survey was more oriented to current students (particularly targeting Czech universities).



Some universities were significantly over represented in the survey, while the feed-back from the others was weaker. 26 % of students who answered our on-line questionnaire were from the Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague, 20 % of them were from Masaryk University in Brno and 12 % from Charles University in Prague. According to official statistics in 2017, the top two universities for Ukrainian students were in fact Charles University (14 %) and the Czech University of Life Sciences (10 %). The University of Economics in Prague was third on the list (about 10 %), but in our survey, only 6 students and 8 graduates responded, placing it 7<sup>th</sup> on the list of university survey responses. Meanwhile, according to official statistics only 4 % of Ukrainian students were studying in Masaryk University. The coverage of the universities in the survey is slightly different from the official statistics but the general picture is similar and the vast majority of our respondents attend or graduated from public universities. The survey covered about 70% of all Czech public institutions of higher education and 5 private universities. In terms of geographical coverage it was also quite heterogeneous as slightly more than a half of our respondents studied or graduated from universities located in Prague and the rest studied in cities like Brno, České Budějovice, Liberec, Olomouc, Ostrava, Pilsen, Ústí nad Labem and Zlín. The feed-back from universities noticeably depended of the intensity of personal ties of the team members and the willingness of the official contacts at the university.



## English version of the questionnaire for the survey of Ukrainian students and graduates

Greetings! We\* are conducting a piece of research into Ukrainian students' migration to study abroad. One of the aspects of the research is learning more about the motivation and future plans of Ukrainian students studying or graduated abroad. Among other things this research may help universities improve the quality of education and the learning experience as well as help improve the conditions of your stay in the country and the university. If you are willing to help us with this cause - we ask you to fill out the questionnaire. It will not take more than 10 minutes to answer these questions. The survey is anonymous and all the answers will be used in generalized form.

We will be very grateful for your help!

\*Institute of Public Affairs (Warsawa), CEDOS (Kyiv), Association for International Affairs (Prague), Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education Central European University (Budapest), The Slovak Foreign Policy Association (Bratislava)

### Section 1

1. What statement describes you best:

- I came from Ukraine to study on a full program (bachelor, masters or PhD program) in a university in the Czech Republic ---> **GO TO SECTION 2**
- I came from Ukraine on an exchange program and I study on a short term program in a university in the Czech Republic ---> **SUBMIT FORM**
- I am from Ukraine and I graduated from a Czech university ---> **GO TO SECTION 13**
- Other ---> **SUBMIT FORM**

### Section 2

2. What is your relation to the Czech Republic?

- I was born in the Czech Republic
- My parents were born in the Czech Republic
- My grandparents were born in the Czech Republic
- I am not of Czech origin

3. How long have you been living in the Czech Republic? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do any of your close relatives live in Ukraine?

- Yes
- No

5. Whom do you interact most with in your everyday life?

- Mostly Ukrainians
- Both Ukrainians and Czechs
- Mostly Czechs
- Mostly other foreigners
- Both Ukrainians and other foreigners



6. Do you speak the Czech language?

- Yes, I can speak fluently and use it in the academic field  
Yes, I can speak fluently
- Yes, I can use it in everyday conversations
- Yes, I understand it, can write and have basic vocabulary
- Yes, I understand it but cannot speak or write
- No

7. Did you participate in any short term study programs abroad before your study in the Czech Republic? Please choose all the answers relevant to your experience.

- Yes, I studied in the Czech Republic
- Yes, I studied in another EU country
- Yes, I studied in a country outside of the EU
- No, I did not participate in such programs

### Section 3

8. What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What university do you study in? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What grade level and year are you?

- Bachelor 1 year
- Bachelor 2 year
- Bachelor 3 year
- Bachelor 4 year
- Masters 1 year
- Masters 2 year
- PhD

11. Who pays for your education? If the payment comes from different sources, choose the one that covers the biggest share.

- I study on a grant program
- Parents
- Other relatives
- I pay for my education myself
- I study on an education loan
- I pay from inheritance or other passive income (dividends, revenue)

12. What factored into your decision to study abroad? Please choose up to 3 answers.

- I wanted to get better knowledge for further employment in Ukraine
- I wanted to get better knowledge for further employment in the EU countries
- I wanted to get a diploma from a European university for further employment in Ukraine
- I wanted to get a diploma from a European university for further employment in the EU
- I wanted to study a major/program that is not available in Ukraine
- Easier requirements to enroll into the universities than in Ukraine



- I could not get a higher education in my native language in Ukraine
- Better study equipment in the universities
- I wanted to get a new cultural experience
- I wanted to improve my knowledge of a foreign language
- Unsatisfactory living conditions in Ukraine (health care system, transport infrastructure, housing market etc.)
- Armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine
- I wanted to live closer to my family
- Other:\_\_\_\_\_

13. What factored into your decision to study in the Czech Republic and not other countries abroad? Please choose up to 3 answers.

- Prospects to easily find a job in the Czech Republic after the studies (not necessarily field-related)
- Prospects to find a good job in the Czech Republic after the studies (field-related)
- The quality of education in a certain university
- The quality of education of a certain major/program
- Easier requirements to enroll into the universities than in other countries
- Prospects of studying in my native language
- Informative promotional campaign of the university
- Prospects of studying for free or with a discount
- Lower living costs than in other countries
- Better social care than in other countries (benefits, payments)
- Better living conditions than in other countries (health care system, transport infrastructure, housing market etc.)
- Easier requirements to get a permit for long-term stay in the country
- I wanted to live closer to relatives that are in the Czech Republic
- It is safer here than in other countries
- Convenient transport connection with Ukraine
- Other:\_\_\_\_\_

14. What were the main reasons for you to choose your university? Please select up to 3 answers.

- I learned that graduates from this university have high chances of employment
- Availability of certain major/program
- Status value of the university
- Informative promotional campaign of the university
- Advice from relatives/friends
- My relatives/friends/partners studied/study here
- Financial aid from the university
- There is an adaptation program for foreign students here
- The university is located in a city which has a convenient transport connection with Ukraine
- Other:\_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you combine study with work?

- Yes, I work part time (including irregular work)
- I have worked before but I do not work now
- No



16. How do people approach you in everyday life when they realize that you are from Ukraine? Please answer on a scale from 1 to 5 where...  
1 - very friendly; 5 - very unfriendly

17. What are your plans after you finish your studies?

- Come back to Ukraine ---> **GO TO SECTION 5**
- Stay in the Czech Republic ---> **GO TO SECTION 5**
- Move to another EU country ---> **GO TO SECTION 6**
- Move to a country outside of the EU ---> **GO TO SECTION 6**

#### **Section 4**

18. You say, you would like to come back to Ukraine. Please tell us the main reasons. Please select up to 3 answers ---> **GO TO SECTION 6**

- It is easier to find a job in Ukraine (not necessarily field-related)
- In Ukraine I can find a good job in my professional field
- I want to use what I have learnt here for my home country
- I want to live closer to my Ukrainian friends and relatives
- I do not like living in the Czech Republic
- I had bad experiences in the Czech Republic connected to my Ukrainian origin
- I want to live in the cultural environment which I come from
- Other

#### **Section 5**

19. You say, you would like to stay in the Czech Republic. Please tell us the main reasons. Please select up to 3 answers ---> **GO TO SECTION 6**

- Better job opportunities in my professional field
- It is easier to find a job (not necessarily field-related)
- Higher salaries
- Better living conditions
- Unstable political situation in Ukraine
- Armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine
- I want to gain new experiences
- I want to live closer to my family
- My partner lives here
- Easier to get permission for a long-term stay than in other countries
- Other

#### **Section 6**

20. If the Czech Republic wanted to encourage more Ukrainian students to come and study in the Czech Republic, what should it do? Please choose all answers that apply to your opinion.

- Spread more information about the possibility
- Offer grants to prospective students
- Make it easier to work part-time as an Ukrainian student
- Enhance the quality of the study programs
- Offer more study programs in English
- Offer more or better accommodation in student dormitories
- Provide more advice in legal questions



- Provide help on employment
- Other

21. In general, are you satisfied with your experience of studying in the Czech Republic? Please answer on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 – I am completely unsatisfied; 5 – I am completely satisfied

### Section 7

22. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

23. What is your age: \_\_\_\_\_ ---> GO TO SECTION 13

### Section 8

24. What is your relation to the Czech Republic?

- I was born in the Czech Republic
- My parents were born in the Czech Republic
- My grandparents were born in the Czech Republic
- I am not of Czech origin

25. How long have you studied in the Czech Republic? \_\_\_\_\_

26. Do any of your close relatives live in Ukraine?

- Yes
- No

27. Whom do you interact most with in your everyday life?

- Mostly Ukrainians
- Both Ukrainians and Czechs
- Mostly Czechs
- Mostly other foreigners
- Both Ukrainians and other foreigners

28. Do you speak the Czech language?

- Yes, I can speak fluently and use it in the academic field
- Yes, I can speak fluently
- Yes, I can use it in everyday conversations
- Yes, I understand it, can write and have basic vocabulary
- Yes, I understand it but cannot speak or write
- No

### Section 9

29. What was your major? \_\_\_\_\_

30. What university did you go to? \_\_\_\_\_



31. Who paid for your education? If the payment came from different sources, choose the one that covered the biggest share.

- I studied on a grant program
- Parents
- Other relatives
- I paid for my education myself
- I studied on an education loan
- I paid from inheritance or other passive income (dividends, revenue)

32. Please recollect, what factored into your decision to study abroad? Please choose up to 3 answers.

- I wanted to get better knowledge for further employment in Ukraine
- I wanted to get better knowledge for further employment in the EU countries
- I wanted to get a diploma from a European university for further employment in Ukraine
- I wanted to get a diploma from a European university for further employment in the EU
- I wanted to study a major/program that is not available in Ukraine
- Easier requirements to enroll into the universities than in Ukraine
- I could not get a higher education in my native language in Ukraine
- Better study equipment in the universities
- I wanted to get a new cultural experience
- I wanted to improve my knowledge of a foreign language
- Unsatisfactory living conditions in Ukraine (health care system, transport infrastructure, housing market etc.)
- Armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine
- I wanted to live closer to my family
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

33. Please recollect, what factored into your decision to study in the Czech Republic and not other countries abroad? Please choose up to 3 answers.

- Prospects to easily find a job in the Czech Republic after the studies
- Prospects to find a good job in the Czech Republic after the studies
- The quality of education in a certain university
- The quality of education of a certain major/program
- Easier requirements to enroll into the universities than in other countries
- Prospects of studying in my native language
- Informative promotional campaign of the university
- Prospects of studying for free or with a discount
- Lower living costs than in other countries
- Better social care than in other countries (benefits, payments)
- Better living conditions than in other countries (health care system, transport infrastructure, housing market etc.)
- Easier requirements to get a permit for long-term stay in the country
- I wanted to live closer to relatives that are in the Czech Republic
- It is safer here than in other countries
- Convenient transport connection with Ukraine
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

34. Please recollect, what were the main reasons for you to choose your university? Please select up to 3 answers.



- I learned that graduates from this university have high chances of employment
- Availability of certain major/program
- Status value of the university
- Informative promotional campaign of the university
- Advice from relatives/friends
- My relatives/friends/partners studied/study here
- Financial aid from the university
- There is an adaptation program for foreign students here
- The university is located in a city which has a convenient transport connection with Ukraine
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

35. Did you combine study with work when studying?

- Yes, I worked part time (including irregular work)
- No

36. How did people approach you in everyday life when they realized that you are from Ukraine? Please answer on a scale from 1 to 5 where...  
1 - very unfriendly; 5 - very friendly

37. What year did you graduate? \_\_\_\_\_

38. Where did you live after you graduated?

- I came back to Ukraine
- I stayed in the Czech Republic
- I lived in another EU country
- I lived in another country outside of the EU

39. Where do you live now?

- I came back to Ukraine ---> GO TO SECTION 10
- I stayed in the Czech Republic ---> GO TO SECTION 11
- I moved to another EU country ---> GO TO SECTION 12
- I moved to a country outside of the EU ---> GO TO SECTION 12

### Section 10

40. You say, you came back to Ukraine. Please tell us the main reasons. Please select up to 3 answers ---> **GO TO SECTION 12**

- It is easier to find a job in Ukraine (not necessarily field-related)
- In Ukraine I can find a good job in my professional field
- I want to use what I have learnt here for my home country
- I want to live closer to my Ukrainian friends and relatives
- I do not like living in the Czech Republic
- I had bad experiences in the Czech Republic connected to my Ukrainian origin
- I want to live in the cultural environment where I come from
- I was unable to legalize the status of my stay when I finished my studies
- I could not find a decent job in the Czech Republic
- Other

41. How long ago did you return to Ukraine? \_\_\_\_\_



### Section 11

42. You say, you stayed in the Czech Republic after finishing your studies. Please tell us the main reasons. Please select up to 3 answers ---> **GO TO SECTION 12**

- Better job opportunities in my professional field
- Easier to find a job (not necessarily field-related)
- Higher salaries
- Better living conditions
- Unstable political situation in Ukraine
- Armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine
- I want to gain new experiences
- I want to live closer to my family
- My partner lives here
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

43. How long have you been living not in Ukraine? \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 12

44. If the Czech Republic wanted to encourage more Ukrainian students to come and study in the Czech Republic, what should it do? Please choose all answers that apply to your opinion.

- Spread more information about the possibility
- Offer grants to prospective students
- Make it easier to work part-time as an Ukrainian student
- Enhance the quality of the study programs
- Offer more study programs in English
- Offer more or better accommodation in student dormitories
- Provide more advice in legal questions
- Provide more help on employment
- Make easier requirements to get a long-term permit than in other countries
- Other

45. In general, are you satisfied with your experience of studying in the Czech Republic? Please answer on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 – I am completely unsatisfied; 5 – I am completely satisfied

### Section 13

46. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

47. What is your age: \_\_\_\_\_

48. What is the highest level of your education?

- Secondary school degree
- Bachelor degree
- Masters degree
- PhD



#### Section 14

If you want to receive the paper with the results of our research of Ukrainian students studying abroad, leave us your email address and we will send it to you!

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Thank you for your time and help with our research! We greatly appreciate it!



## Association for International Affairs (AMO)

AMO is a non-governmental not-for-profit organization founded in 1997 in Prague to promote research and education in the field of international relations. This leading Czech foreign policy think-tank owes no allegiance to any political party or to any ideology. It aims to encourage pro-active approach to foreign policy issues; provide impartial analysis of international affairs; and facilitate an open space for informed discussion.

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### Yana Leontiyeva

Yana Leontiyeva, PhD, is a research fellow at the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences and she specialized in migration research. Her research is especially focused on integration of immigrants on the labour market, skills utilization, transnational migration, remittances, attitudes towards immigrants, methods of surveying immigrants, and quality of migration statistics. She has advanced knowledge of quantitative methods and extensive experience of coordinating surveys of immigrants. She participated in several national and international research projects and coordinated three largescale surveys of non-EU foreigners in the Czech Republic. She is a member of the editorial board of the peer-reviewed journal Central and Eastern European Migration Review and she authored several publications and articles.

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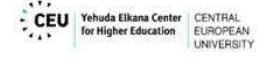
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Liudmila Kopecka, PhD, got her degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology at Charles University in Prague. Her doctoral research was focused on migration of students from Russia and Kazakhstan to the Czech Republic. She used to work as project coordinator of Migration Awareness Programme in People in Need Foundation. She participated on several migration-related research projects and she occasionally makes radio-documentaries about migration issues for Czech National radio.

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