

**Abstract of the doctoral thesis by Anke Lasek, MSc  
entitled “The impact of return migration on entrepreneurial propensity and sustainability of  
related entrepreneurial activity in Poland (2007-2015)”**

In the era of globalization, the conditions, forms, and consequential effects of international migration continue to adapt as time progresses (Pries, 2003; King, 2013; Goździak and Pawlak, 2016). Consequently, ongoing research contributes to enhancing the classical understanding of more permanent migration by examining it through the lenses of 21st-century dynamic migration developments (Pries, 2003). The purpose of this dissertation is to provide a respective contribution. It centers around international voluntary labor migration, a type of mobility when individuals move abroad rather freely, though guided by economic motivations and therefore oftentimes on a more temporary basis. More particularly, it focusses on return migration and the occupational choice of returnees upon return to their home country, e. g. into entrepreneurship. The analysis includes decisive aspects such as individual entrepreneurial propensity and long-term sustainability of returnee business, i.e., attention on firm performance and business survival.

This research project adopts the quantitative approach as it allows to conduct empirical investigation of observable dynamic human behavior with the support of statistical techniques. Respective analysis is based on a unique data set originating from Polish longitudinal survey Social Diagnosis (Diagnoza Społeczna). This data set enables to analyze economic activity and entrepreneurial performance of returnees and non-migrants for five consecutive waves, i.e., for the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015. The results indicate that the impact of return migration on entrepreneurial propensity of individuals and the sustainability of their businesses is modest. Returnees are more likely to be self-employed: this effect is strong and significant for 2, 4 and even 6 years upon return. The probability of opening a business is higher for a recent returnee. Yet, the entrepreneurial status is not correlated with migration experience, nor are the investment activities of the individuals. Moreover, the survival rates for entrepreneurship status do not differ statistically between returnees and non-migrants. Moreover, the risk of business failure and loss of investment funds is significantly higher for individuals with migration experience. When it comes to economic performance, returnees exhibit higher incomes than non-migrants but the entrepreneurial status is completely irrelevant in this aspect: there is no difference between the income of return entrepreneurs and the income of returnees in waged employment.

These findings contribute to a rapidly evolving literature on international migration and particularly to the impact on the socio-economics of origin countries (home countries). So far, only a very few other studies used longitudinal panel data to analyze the entry into entrepreneurship among return migrants, and almost none investigated it simultaneously with survival of returnees' entrepreneurial activities. The study demonstrates that the entrepreneurial potential of returnees is not as significant as suggested in the economic literature, at least for the case of Poland.

Key words: return migration, returnee, entrepreneurship, performance returnee entrepreneurship, longitudinal study, CEE, Poland

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