

# Delineating the state of research into the family life of foreigners living in the Czech Republic

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What role does the family play  
in the integration process?

# Where can the relevant information be found?

- Investigate *family (related) issues* in studies dealing with
  - *the integration of the individual or society's/the state's approach to migrants (the migrant is seen as an individual, not as a member of a certain community) (1)* or
  - *the life and integration of communities (2);*
- Take advantage of infrequent surveys in which
  - *the family perspective* is mentioned directly (3) or
  - the family is seen as *the unit under scrutiny (4)*.

# 1A. Studies dealing with the integration of the individual or society's/the state's approach to migrants

- Scrutinise the status of foreigners in Czech society and factors determining their integration;
- Analyze a whole range of factors:
  - legal,
  - economic,
  - cultural,
  - social,
  - socio-psychological,
  - psychological,
  - sociological and
  - political;
- These factors can be studied:
  - from the position of the individual,
  - from the point of view of society in general and
  - from the point of view of the state and its institutions;
- Family issues: marginal role in this area and mentioned sporadically;

## 1.B Studies in this area should reflect family issues connected with...

- The status of migrants (and their families) in society (Ivan Gabal Analysis & Consulting 2004);
- Living conditions, social security (Nešporová 2007);
- Education, integration at school (Drbohlav, Černík, Dzurová 2005, Janská 2006);
- Coexistence of migrants and the majority.

*The family issue – with regard to this aspect – is covered in Lachmanová, Drbohlav (2005), however this study is not relevant to this section – see part 4.*

## 2.A Studies dealing with the life and integration of communities...

- Two key points of interest:
  - characteristics of the alien community,
  - the question of how members of the community co-exist with the majority;
- Both these questions concern
  - values,
  - culture and
  - traditions;
- Pressure to preserve or update these values stems from two different sources:
  - contact with members of the same community who are not members of the immigrant's family and
  - **The way the family functions**; maintaining and passing on a particular upbringing, or through established interaction based on the values, culture and traditions of the country of origin;
- A number of immigrant communities uphold a traditional understanding of the family.

## 2.B ...and their relevance to the study of migrant families

- Implicitly involves the family perspective, at least to a certain extent;
- Investigate patterns of behaviour typical for the community in question but do not analyse the migrants' family life *per se* or the role of the family in the integration process;
- Family life analysed in far greater detail than in the research category described above, but still only one of the aspects analysed (i.e. is not the focus of attention);
- Facts concerning the immigrant's family life are relevant only for the community to which they apply;
- The standard of information on different communities derived from existing literature varies;
- May apply more to the issue of national minorities than the integration of foreigners:
  - certain communities in the CR include members who are several generations remote from the original migrants;
  - even newly forming foreign communities may include some community members who are Czech citizens and not foreigners.

## 2.C Existing surveys reflect family life in such communities...

- The Vietnamese community (Brouček 2003);
- The Russian community (Drbohlav, Lupták, Janská, Bohuslavová 2000);
- The Ukrainian minority (Drbohlav, Janská, Šelepová 2000);
- The Chinese community (Moore undated);
- Migrants from other countries (Arabs, Greeks and Greek-ethnic Macedonians, Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, Yugoslav-ethnic Macedonians and immigrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina) (Uherek 2002 (ed.), Deriánová 2001);
- People of Czech origin returning to the Czech Republic from other countries.



### 3. Surveys which apply the family perspective concern:

- Family reunification (Rozumek, Vrátná 2003, Counselling Centre for Integration 2003)
- Gender (Szczepaniková 2004) or the cohabitation of mixed pairs (Jiroušková 2002, Drápalová, Kolářová 2002)
- Generations (Janská 2006, Kavanová 2005);
- Specific family issues or reproduction patterns
  - "Fake" Marriages (Lenz 2006),
  - The impacts of migration vis a vis Ukrainian women on their own families in the Ukraine (Yarova 2006).

*Although these two papers were published in the CR, they do not in fact concern the Czech Republic but two other European countries.*

## 4. The Family from Next Door project: the family as the unit under scrutiny

- Questionnaires from both immigrant and majority families (Lachmanová, Drbohlav 2005);
- Questions concerning perceptions of the integration process did not correlate closely to issues regarding the family life of immigrants or to the family's role in the integration process.
- Areas involved:
  - The benefits of meetings between both groups of families
  - Perceptions of the integration process (changes observed since the previous year) by both groups of families
  - Everyday co-existence of the families of foreigners with Czech society.

# Conclusions

- Complex studies on migrant families in the CR still lacking;
- Relevant information can be found in many areas of research;
- However, attention devoted to the issue of the family in existing studies is mainly marginal or details issues only to a partial extent;
- Existing sources of information are practically incomparable, whether because of the differing phenomena to be analyzed or because of differing methods;
- This area has not yet been investigated systematically, however several projects have commenced recently.