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Vysokokvalifikovanyi ukrains'kyi fakhivets' u Nimechchyni ta Pol'shchi: Analiz keisiv u Miunkheni, Krakovi i Vrotslavi /
Highly Qualified Ukrainian Specialist in Germany and Poland
[Analysis of Cases in Munich, Krakow, and Wrocław]

Oleksiy Musiyezdov

Volume 8, numéro 2, 2021

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1083570ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.21226/ewjus680>

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Éditeur(s)

Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies University of Alberta

ISSN

2292-7956 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Musiyezdov, O. (2021). Compte rendu de [Oksana Danylenko and Tetiana (Tetyana) Panchenko. Vysokokvalifikovanyi ukrains'kyi fakhivets' u Nimechchyni ta Pol'shchi: Analiz keisiv u Miunkheni, Krakovi i Vrotslavi / Highly Qualified Ukrainian Specialist in Germany and Poland [Analysis of Cases in Munich, Krakow, and Wrocław]]. *East/West*, 8(2), 363–366.
<https://doi.org/10.21226/ewjus680>



Oksana Danylenko and Tetiana (Tetyana) Panchenko. *Vysokokvalifikovanyi ukrains'kyi fakhivets' u Nimechchyni ta Pol'shchi: Analiz keisiv u Miunkheni, Krakovi i Vrotslavi / Highly Qualified Ukrainian Specialist in Germany and Poland [Analysis of Cases in Munich, Krakow, and Wrocław]*. Oleh Anatoliiovych Miroshnychenko / Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2020, www.kas.de/documents/270026/4625063/Висококваліфікований+український+фахівець+в+Німеччині+та+Польщі.pdf/c5ceb412-cefd-a4de-6782-23afa5923619?version=1.0&t=1598365733411, www.kas.de/documents/270026/4625063/HIGHLY+QUALIFIED+UKRAINI+AN+SPECIALIST.pdf/50393006-9a91-4ab6-eb22-35e53d3b66f2?version=1.0&t=1604678662499. 100 pp. (Ukrainian) / 29 pp. (English). Tables. Appendix. Open access PDF.

The topic of highly qualified Ukrainians living abroad is becoming an increasingly important societal and academic question. Socio-political, economic, and other conditions in Ukraine have shifted in recent times, causing a certain portion of the population to seek living, professional, business, and cultural opportunities abroad. Also, some other countries, in particular Poland, are very interested not only in migrants but in highly qualified emigrants owing to the needs of their economies. These factors served as the rationale for the publication of the book under review. This study, therefore, is a most timely contribution to the overall field of research.

The appearance of a book on the topic of highly qualified Ukrainians abroad is a fairly rare event in academic life. There are at least two underlying reasons for this. First, this area of exploration is rather new, and so, one only sporadically encounters scholarly material delving into the subject.¹ Second, quite often only general statistical data is employed in related studies. The book under review, however, attempts a qualitative analysis. Its authors are themselves integral to the situation they describe: both are accomplished Ukrainian academics (Oksana Danylenko, in sociology, and Tetyana Panchenko, in political science), and they both live abroad (Danylenko, in Poland, and Panchenko, in Germany). Given this type of personal element in the study, one readily expects very interesting results.

The authors' primary research aim was to examine the motives behind movement and migration. They state that in order to accomplish this objective, they combined analytic data relating to biographic situation and the measurement of identity via lingua-conflict indicators with questions

¹ An example of such material is my article "Ukrains'ka emihratsiia u Pol'shchi: Vid zarobitchan do vysokokvalifikovanykh spetsialistiv."

concerning the perception of home (sometimes indirect questions were employed). The authors claim that they based their research on the principles of the sociology of everyday life and Gabriele Rosenthal's biographic method, as well as on their own lingua-conflict method. The book contains twenty-four interviews with highly qualified Ukrainians living in Munich, Krakow, and Wrocław taken from October 2019 to January 2020. The majority of interviewees were 27-42 years old; had been living abroad for two to six years; and had graduated in engineering, computer sciences, or applied mathematics. Fourteen interviewees worked in the information technology (IT) industry, and five—in the finance and banking sector.

The authors divided their subjects into two groups: those who might go back to Ukraine someday and those who would reject such a possibility. The authors paid special attention to the reasons for emigration and to the potential factors and conditions that could drive the respondents to return to Ukraine. They identified among respondents the following primary motives for emigration: the desire to have a new or an international living experience; the feeling of insecurity in Ukraine owing to political and/or economic instability and the war; job dissatisfaction; and the desire to secure a better future for their children.

One of the most interesting parts of the book is its analysis of respondents' notions of expected quality of life versus their opinions on the quality of life achieved in their new country. Respondents generally linked the idea of quality of life to (1) material determinants, that is, the calibre of goods and services such as water, food, transport, roads, and so on; and (2) non-material determinants, such as the feeling of predictability, stability, fairness, and the like. The majority of respondents were working in the IT industry in Ukraine (with salaries 4-5 times greater than the average wage) and could expect better conditions there, so their main reasons for leaving the country were non-material (that is, non-financial).²

The authors, based on their analysis, formulate recommendations about what can be done to facilitate the return of highly qualified Ukrainian professionals to Ukraine (the so-called *zhovto-blakytna karta*, or Yellow-Blue Card). On the level of the state, they suggest business and home loans; tax-free transportation (in particular, cars); document assistance (cutting through obstructive red tape); help with enrolment in kindergartens, schools, and other educational institutions (for example, in cases where such educational institutions are absent in a given region), as well as reintegration assistance for children; and systemized help in the search for a preferred job.

² See also, e.g., my article "Pochemu sotsiologii dolzhny byt' interesny aitishniki i naoborot."

Also, they believe that companies should offer a special relocation package for professionals whom they wish to recruit.

Despite the undoubted value of the book, it does have some weaknesses. First, the authors mention their methodology, but they do not indicate its practical implementation. For example, questions remain about precisely how the principles of the sociology of everyday life and the Rosenthal method were used and what the core of the lingua-conflict method is, why it was used, and what its advantages are over other methods. In other words, the work lacks a description of its theoretical underpinnings. This lacuna complicates the reader's ability to process the authors' results and methodology, to determine if these methods were properly applied and the conclusions appropriately derived, and so on. In addition, the interview portions (which are provided only in the Ukrainian version of the book) are not direct transcripts—in each case, we have the authors' narrative accompanied by quotations from the interview. This makes it impossible to assess the data in other ways or to draw different types of conclusions.

Second, the authors come to the conclusion that non-material reasons for leaving Ukraine prevailed among highly qualified Ukrainians living abroad. But they formulate recommendations that take into account only material motives and do not address other types of motivating factors. This seems rather odd, and it presents a weak argument. Stated differently—Why would people possessing salaries high enough to satisfy their needs (quite often referring to the salary gap as unfair) have mainly material motives for relocation and be guided by them? Third, there are dissimilarities between the Ukrainian and English versions of the book. These variances do not affect the fundamental nature of the given conclusions, but the inclusion in the English version of the detailed interview portions would be helpful.

All of this being said, the book under review does make a contribution to migration studies, sociology, anthropology, and related fields. Many aspects of its research, though, could be further developed. I would refrain from expressing recommendations in the absence of a closer examination of the respondents' non-material concerns. This subject could be explored, for instance, within the framework of social structure studies, values studies, and the like, regardless of the methodology (qualitative or quantitative) used.

Oleksiy Musiyezdov
V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

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