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Abstract

PhD thesis entitled: *"The social distance of Polish emigrants towards strangers in a new socio-cultural environment"*

This work is an attempt to describe the phenomenon of the latest migration of Poles, which take place after 2004, when Poland became a member state of the European Union and when many Poles found employment abroad.

The majority of migrants from Poland, relatively well-educated, young and having unpleasant experiences in the sending country, manage quite well in the new social and professional circumstances and are satisfied with the decision to leave. From this point of view, migration is very important.

When people migrate from one nation or culture to another, they take their identity with them. While in a new culture, their cultural identity and their sense of belonging are subject to change. The author tries to answer the question to what extent the socio-cultural environment diversifies the social distance towards foreign Polish emigrants in Germany, the local population and Poles living in the country? The presented work discusses differences regarding the social distance of respondents towards people of other nationalities and towards followers of other religions.

The first chapter is devoted to the subject of migration, its characteristics, its various types, its duration, geographical displacement, etc. The analysis is based on the reasons for the migration of Poles to Germany after Poland got added to the European Union. This part

presents adaptation difficulties as well as positive and negative effects of trips of Poles and the nature of work performed in Germany. In connection with the conducted research, an attempt to approximate the attitude of immigrants from Poland to the population of the host country is important.

The second chapter of this dissertation is devoted to the explanation of the term "stranger", as well as to determine what is familiar, understandable and what is the source of uncertainty, danger and fear. This discussion concerns who or what is perceived as "foreign" or "different" and what conflicts result from meetings with strangers. Various concepts were presented and sources of stereotypes and prejudices were defined in order to determine the social distance towards the "foreigner". An important supplement to these considerations are studies of stereotypes and prejudices to a different nationality or a different religion.

The third chapter of this dissertation defines the notion of social distance based on empirical studies based on the concept of E. Bogardus. It allows to determine the proximity and spatial distance between people of other nationalities and other religions. The assumptions of the research issues, purpose, method, technique as well as characteristics of the respondents - Polish emigrants, and two comparative groups - residents of Germany and Poles living in the country were presented.

The fourth chapter deals with the empirical analysis of the distance of the respondents to other nationalities: American, English, Turkish, Syrian, Chinese, Russian, Jewish, German, Indian, Nigerian and Polish. The social distance of Polish emigres to another nationality and the distance between Germans and Poles living in the country to other nations has been presented.

Then, in the fifth chapter, the social distance was determined against the followers of other religions. The following religions were taken into account: Christian (Catholic and Orthodox), Judaism, Protestantism, Buddhism and Islam. The order in which the results are presented is the same as in the case of different nationalities.

The finalization of the theoretical considerations is the analysis of the empirical material and the summary. It should be assumed that the conclusions from the research may serve not only science but also migration policy and intercultural education.

Keywords: Social distance, foreign, profitable migration, other nationalities, followers of other religions

