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BRAIN DRAIN

The problem of "brain drain" in the Republic of Belarus

Every year in the Republic of Belarus the level of education rises to a level higher than the previous one. But even the ease of education has led to some consequences. At the moment, there is a serious problem in our country – the lack of workplaces. And this reason is one of the most important for the emergence of such a problem as "brain drain" in the Republic of Belarus. People leave our country in search of a "better" life, a "better" place of work, a "better" income, having no idea whether they will get this "better" life there or not.

Brain drain as a global phenomenon

"Brain drain" is the process of mass emigration from a country or region of qualified workers, professionals, scientists, usually for better living conditions or higher salary. Many studies show that

this does not mean that the "brain drain" has only disadvantages. Many professionals call this process "brain exchange", which helps to look at this problem from the other side.

In theory, we can also talk about the existence not only of external "brain drain", but also internal. In this case, the "brain drain" is associated with the transition of employees to commercial companies, in which their skills and knowledge are much better paid.

There is also a "brain cycle" – the expansion of international knowledge exchange, the formation of the international labor market, international research, scientific and technological clusters, and increased investment in human capital.

Statistics

Many people are convinced that the Republic of Belarus is losing skilled workers due to low wages. Living in our country is not as expensive as in many more developed countries, but many people still do not have enough money for living here and supporting themselves and family. We tried to find the average wage in Europe from different sources.

Table 1

Comparison of average wages in Europe

Country	Wages	Country	Wages	Country	Wages
Moldova	190 €	Russia	370 €	Montenegro	486 €
Armenia	232 €	Serbia	377 €	Hungary	487 €
Albania	320 €	Romania	398 €	Lithuania	541 €
Bulgaria	332 €	Azerbaijan	402 €	Latvia	566 €
Macedonia	353 €	Belarus	426 €	Czech Republic	651 €
Georgia	362 €	Kazakhstan	441 €	Poland	671 €

As we can see, our country doesn't have the lowest wage. However, if we look at this problem more deeply, we can understand that the net income is much smaller. There are a number of factors that do not allow people to receive a worthy salary in our country. For example, a complex tax system. All employees receive 10–40 % less money than was shown in the table.

Analysis of "brain drain" in the Republic of Belarus

The Republic of Belarus is developing in different directions all the time. However it's because of this development that competition increases, which, among other things, leads to the problem of brain drain, which has both domestic and international nature.

The economical situation in the country affects emigration the most, but there are also other reasons of it like the standard of living, the level of development in IT-spheres and science of other countries, working conditions, and other aspects of cultural development.

Due to qualified personnel moving out there is an increasing percentage of shortage of the following specialists in our country:

- business analysts;
- programmers;
- design engineers of electronic equipment;
- specialists with knowledge of a foreign language;
- logisticians.

Let's take a closer look at the causes of the problem of "brain drain" in our country. Why is the number of young people leaving their country in search of something else constantly increasing? Here are a few points.

First is lack of prestige.

Second is low wages.

Third is the lack of working places for professionals.

In 2017 1,1 million people left our country. 71,8 % of them were working age population. That means only 30 % of the population who left our country does not go to work, so 1 million working people left our country in 2017. The percentage of migrants of working age is one of the highest among CIS countries.

However at the same time our country continues to receive foreign students. According to the statistics of 2017, 25,7 thousand foreign students studied at the universities of our country. Although in 2016 they were 16,5 thousand. For just one year, the number of foreign students in our educational institutions has increased by 10 000. On the one hand, our country receives future specialists, but on the other hand, soon there will be no Belarusian students here, because all of them will leave to develop their potential in the place where they are evaluated on merit.

The Ministry of internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus on migration annually conducts statistics on how many people enter the territory of our country under employment contracts and how many leave (tab. 2).

Table 2

Number of migrant workers entering and leaving [1]

Year	Migrant workers who entered	Migrant workers who left
2013	18 180 (16 425 men, 1755 women)	5715 (3996 men, 1719 women)
2014	32 288 (27 503 men, 4785 women)	5441 (4477 men, 964 women)
2015	28 451 (23 780 men, 4671 women)	6328 (4856 men, 1472 women)
2016	17 844 (15 132 men, 2712 women)	7403 (5356 men, 2047 women)
2017	15 844	10 703 (7292 men, 3411 women)
2018	10 625 (8783 men, 1842 women)	11 093 (7441 men, 3652 women)

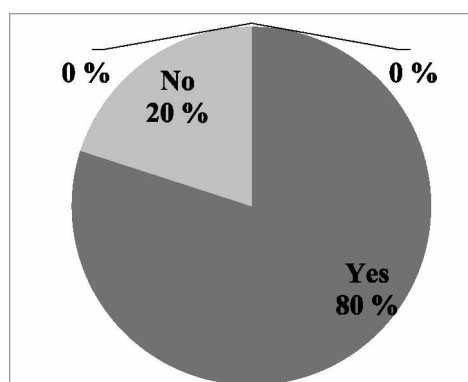
Many people do not register when they leave or enter the country, so the exact numbers are not able to be determined. We reviewed the statistics for the period of 2013–2018. According to the table, the number of people leaving increases by almost a thousand every year. Also we can clearly see that men outnumber women by thousands. Men volunteer to work abroad very often so as to meet their families' needs. As we can see, the number of people coming wasn't constantly reducing, but the data still says that less and less people want to come to our country.

Tab. 3 immediately makes it clear that the largest number of people usually looks for work in the category of "Working specialties". What's for skilled workers and specialists they began to leave less by 2017, fortunately for our country, but in 2018 their number abruptly increased. Workers in the service sector, trade and agriculture had been leaving relatively steadily for five years. In our country, there is always a need for agricultural workers, so it makes sense to take measures to interest them to stay. There are not many executives who emigrate, but there are also not many qualified executives in our country in general. These data show growth and improvement in one area and decline in another, namely, improvement of conditions for qualified personnel and deterioration of conditions for workmen.

People who went to work abroad by occupation from 2013 to 2018 according to the Ministry of internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus [2]

Occupation / year	Executives	Skilled workers and specialists	Service and trade workers	Agriculture workers	Working specialties
2013	15	677	1153	301	3569
2014	7	517	975	231	3711
2015	4	198	1085	477	4564
2016	20	53	1535	365	5430
2017	21	26	1330	396	8916
2018	9	154	1135	560	9235

We conducted a survey among students of the School of Business of BSU to show what future young professionals want.



«Do you want to go to work abroad?»

The survey involved 110 people, 80 % of whom, as we can see, want to leave our country after graduation. Only 20 % want to stay. The majority voted for such countries as Germany, USA, and Great Britain. Those who still would prefer to stay in our country said that they would like to stay in Minsk. And only a few would like to work in smaller cities. Why? In our country the assessment of the diploma of our University is falling. We praise foreign technologies and foreign education, while we should promote our own and raise the prestige of our universities.

Students point out the following reasons why they want to work abroad. In Belarus there are:

- 1) Small salary (66 %);
- 2) Poor living conditions (55,3 %);
- 3) No opportunity to develop (46,8 %);
- 4) Bad attitude to employees (25,5 %);
- 5) Large taxes (17 %);
- 6) Lack of jobs (14,9 %).

Among other reasons, there are relatives, who live abroad; uncommented reluctance to stay; desire to change the atmosphere; desire to gain experience abroad.

Ways to solve the problem of «brain drain»:

- 1) Salary Increase;
- 2) Increasing the social status of young people;
- 3) Development of patriotic feelings;

- 4) Construction of such research centers as, for example, a high-tech Park;
- 5) Improving practical development;
- 6) Increasing the number and quality of jobs;
- 7) Development of production in the Republic of Belarus.

Conclusion

«Brain drain» strongly affects the development of our country, as it loses qualified personnel. In addition, Belarus is losing Belarusians, which affects the ethnic composition of the country.

Solving the problem of brain drain is possible only by creating better conditions for work and life in general in our country, but it will take a lot of time and effort.

References

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