

RESEARCH OF STUDENTS' ORIENTATIONS REGARDING INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

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Abstract. The *purpose* of the article is to identify and compare the essential characteristics of migration attitudes among Ukrainian and Polish students, and to outline trends in their development in the future. *Methodology.* The subjects of the research are students of various courses and specialties of the Lviv National Environmental University and the University of Life Sciences in Lublin (Poland). To collect empirical information, an online survey was conducted in October 2023, with 187 Ukrainian and 187 Polish students (n=374) participating. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions, the results of which will be analysed in this study. The survey *results* showed that students of both higher education institutions have a rather positive attitude towards international migration processes, both women and men. Possible manifestations of student mobility can be seen as a fact that characterises the social role of modern students. *Practical implications.* The work is a study of young people's attitudes to migration, i.e., it is prospective, not retrospective. Such research can be extremely useful for the development of an effective socio-economic policy of the country. Since the research results reflect the moods of young people, they cannot claim to be highly predictive. However, a vision of what might happen if people's hypothetical aspirations were to become reality can be a powerful argument for politicians and statesmen in developing migration-related policies, both now and in the future. *Value/Originality.* Survey data from different age groups of students at two universities allow for a better understanding of their attitudes towards migration, immigration, and mobility and a comparison of these indicators in a peaceful country and in times of war. Possible manifestations of student mobility should be seen as a fact that characterises the social role of modern students. The problem, however, is that there are currently no effective mechanisms for managing these processes. There are also no mechanisms capable of ensuring the systemic effectiveness of communication links between different actors at the intercultural level, with the possibility of meeting their socio-cultural, professional and material needs in the process of socialisation of modern youth, as well as for the adequate reproduction of the intellectual potential of society as a whole. However, student emigration cannot be viewed exclusively from a negative perspective, as a "brain drain", although it is obvious that if students who study and work abroad do not return, the country loses part of its intellectual potential (Adamic, Dyachuk, 2023; Tokar, 2022). If to consider the return and emigration not as a purely territorial movement of students, but as a movement of intellectual resources, one can identify a positive trend: significant intellectual potential in the form of ideas, technologies and professional knowledge is returning to the country.

Keywords: students, international migration, study, employment, residence, return.

JEL Classification: F22, J61, J62

1. Introduction

Migration is an issue that affects people all over the world. In recent decades, the pace of migration processes and the number of migrants have increased significantly. It is likely that this phenomenon will continue to grow due to the spread of advanced technology and globalisation. In modern conditions, many scientists and researchers, politicians and society in general are concerned about the consequences

of migration processes for the world community and individual countries. Therefore, the study of international migration processes and their impact on the internal security of the state is important (Abdullayev, Begishev, Limareva, Hajiyeve, Yumashev, Prodanova, 2023). Undoubtedly, migration, like any social phenomenon, should be studied systematically, focusing on a comprehensive approach (Tagliacozzo, Pisacane, Kilkey, 2023; Novosad, 2020).

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Today, students are the most likely to make radical migration decisions. As for Ukraine, in addition to socio-economic motivations, low income and the impossibility of self-fulfilment, the war has been added to the reasons for migration sentiments (Bestuzheva, Kozub, Horobinska, 2023; Grinkevych, Bulyk, 2016; 2017).

Today, Ukraine has become a supplier of mainly intellectual, highly skilled and, at the same time, cheap labour abroad. Students are a special social group of young people who represent the "future in the present". Students are a valuable driver of the future and, in particular, they determine what the future will look like. The aim of the study is to compare the essential characteristics of migration attitudes among Ukrainian and Polish students and to outline trends in their development in the future. The practical significance of the results of the research is that student migration is seen as an aspect of future labour migration.

2. The Main Social Indicators of the Survey

Despite the narrow focus of the study (students, age, youth), it is considered useful and fundamental.

Based on the results of the survey, the answers of Ukrainian and Polish students from two universities will be analysed and compared: Lviv National Environmental University (LNEU) and the University of Life Sciences in Lublin (ULSL) in Poland. The age distribution of Ukrainian and Polish respondents is as follows (Figure 1).

As shown in Figure 1, the majority of Ukrainian respondents who were willing to share their intentions regarding international migration are

students under the age of 23. In contrast to their Ukrainian counterparts, the percentage of older Polish students who completed the survey is higher. The percentage of respondents under the age of 18, on the contrary, is the lowest. This can be explained by the fact that in Poland, secondary education is completed somewhat later than in Ukraine (after lyceum, for example). Thus, the average age of freshmen is 18-19 years, while in Ukraine it is 17 years.

In terms of *gender composition*, the percentage of female and male respondents in Ukraine was distributed as follows: 52% – women and 48% – men; in Poland: 63.6% – women and 36.4% – men. The question of gender was of particular interest to see if there was a big difference in the answers. It is understood that Ukrainian male students over the age of 18 who are fit for military service cannot travel abroad during martial law, but it was interesting to know their opinion on this possibility.

The next question that raised interest was about the *size of the respondent's place of residence*, as it was necessary to find out whether this could be a motivation for displacement. The percentage answers are shown in Figure 2.

As can be seen from the results of the survey, the majority of students at LNEU come from small settlements. The reason for this division may be that LNEU has a long history of agrarian higher education, with specialities in agriculture and engineering. Such specialities are supported by the state, so there are many students from rural areas and small towns who want to obtain such qualifications and study for budgetary funds. This is author's subjective view. In Polish universities, there is approximately the same percentage of represen-

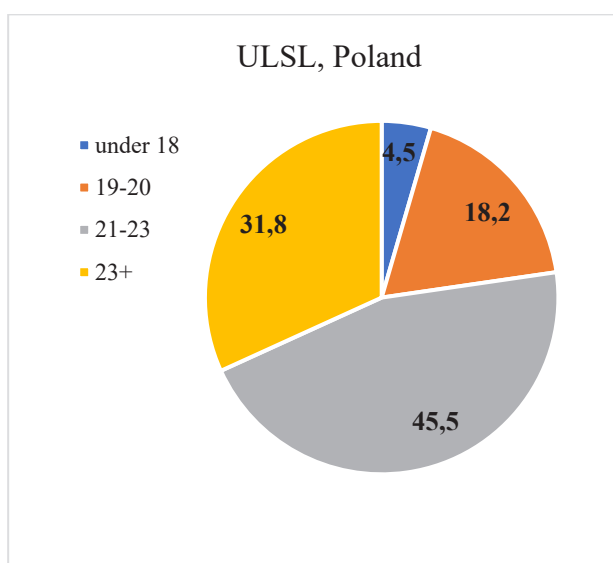
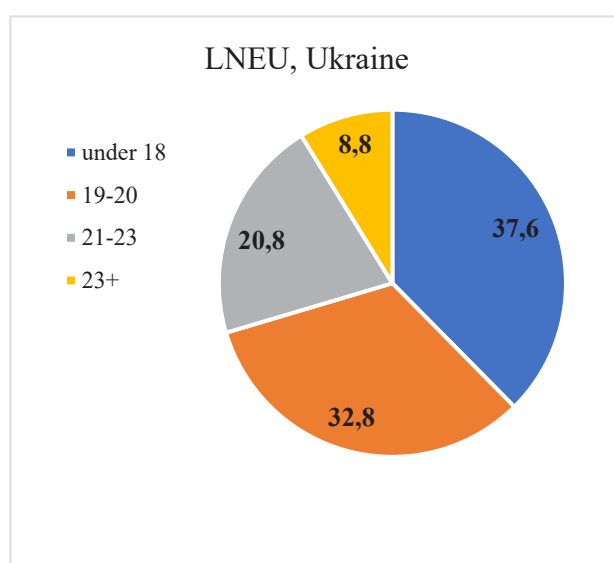


Figure 1. Age of respondents, in %

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

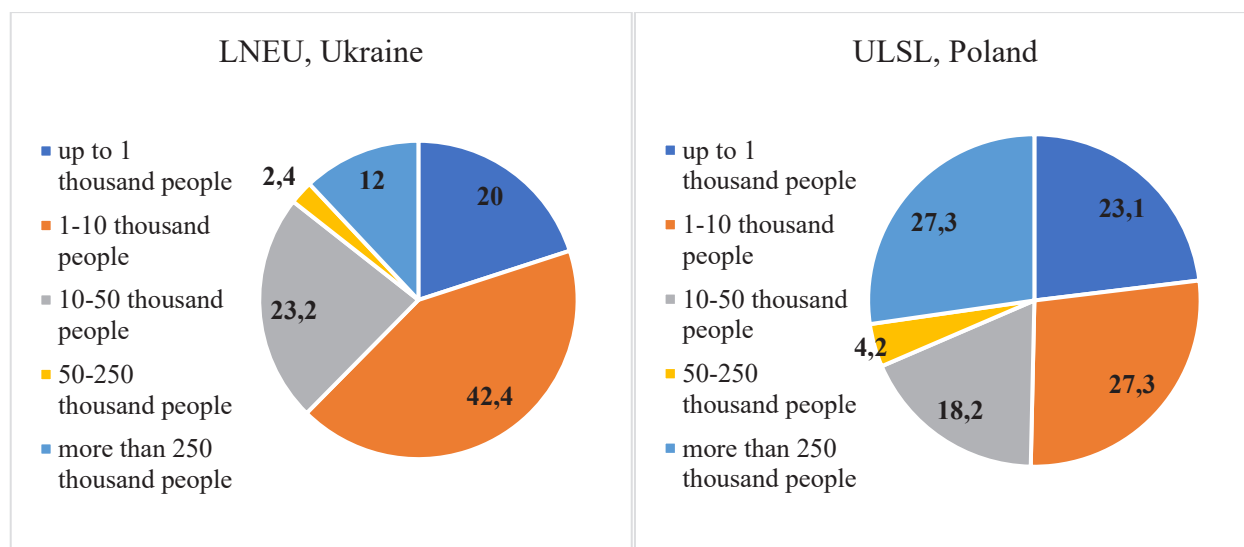


Figure 2. Number of residents in the respondent's settlement, %

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

tatives of settlements of different sizes, the smallest – 4.2% – with a population of 50-250 thousand.

3. Identification of Respondents' Connections with Emigrants

The next thing of interest was whether the respondents had relatives who had moved abroad. The results were somewhat surprising, as it was expected that the percentage of Ukrainian students who answered in the affirmative would be higher than that of those from Poland. Instead, the following data was obtained: 76% (142 people) of Ukrainian students answered in the affirmative, and 88.9% (170 people) of Polish students said they had relatives and friends who had moved abroad.

The next question with sub-questions concerned those respondents who gave an affirmative answer. And here the following benchmarks were of interest:

a) *Reasons for going abroad* (Table 1). Consider the Lviv National Environmental University as number 1

and the University of Life Sciences in Lublin as number 2.

The generalised answers show that Ukrainians are most concerned about the security situation in the country. This is by far the most important reason for leaving the country, followed by low wages, poor healthcare, low educational attainment, and poor infrastructure.

As for the Polish neighbours, the most important reason for moving abroad, according to respondents, is the unsatisfactory state of healthcare, followed by low salaries, poor educational system, security situation, and the last place is taken by the state of infrastructure. It is understood that the respondents expressed their assumptions about the movement of their relatives or friends, but the following results are available.

b) *The period of time during which the respondents' relatives or acquaintances emigrated* (Figure 3).

c) *When asked whether their relatives or friends plan to return, Ukrainians answered as follows: 47.5% – yes,*

Table 1

Reasons for relatives or acquaintances to go abroad

Reasons	Respondents' answers, in %									
	It doesn't matter at all		It doesn't really matter		Neutral		Important		Very important	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Low wages	-	1,8	2,4	1,8	8,7	4,6	30,2	46,1	58,7	45,7
Poor infrastructure	14,0	9,1	19,7	27,3	40,7	31,8	15,1	18,2	10,5	13,6
Dissatisfaction with the state of healthcare	12,8	4,5	20,9	18,1	20,9	9,3	38,4	54,5	9,3	13,6
Dissatisfaction with the state of education	17,4	3,9	11,6	22,7	44,2	18,4	14,0	45,5	12,8	9,5
Security situation	-	13,6	2,3	18,2	13,9	40,9	23,3	9,1	60,5	18,2

Source: Results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

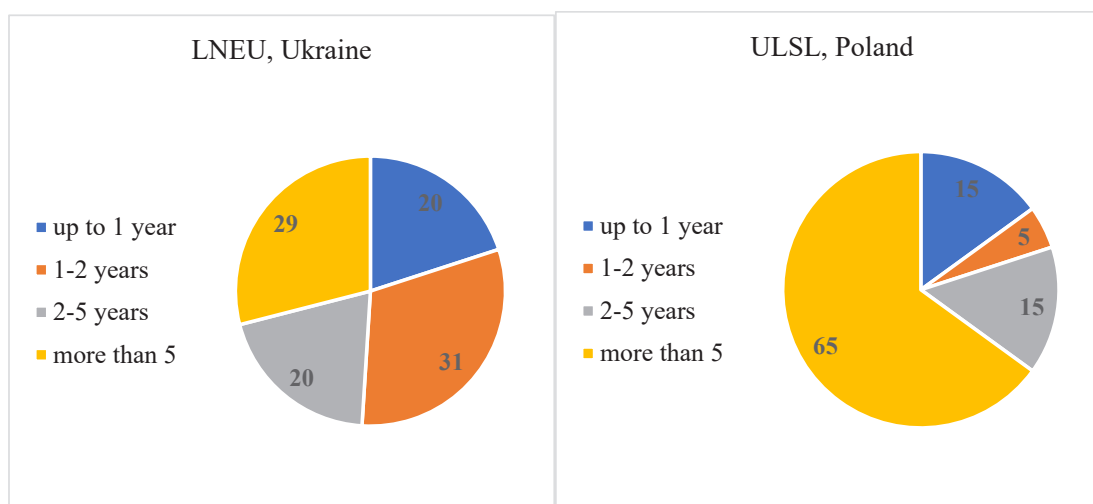


Figure 3. Time period of emigration of relatives or acquaintances of respondents, in %

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

but under certain circumstances; 36.6% – yes, they do; 15.8% – they do not plan to. For Polish respondents, the results were as follows: 55.0% – yes, but under certain circumstances; 15% – yes, they plan to; 30% – they do not plan to. Based on these results, it can be concluded that after Ukraine's victory, a third of Ukrainians will indeed return home, and almost half will do so under certain circumstances. And although this is only a certain sample of respondents, it still cannot but rejoice. Everyone believes in victory and in returning home.

4. Identifying the Reasons for the Respondents' Own Emigration

The next set of questions directly relates to students' attitudes towards their potential moving abroad. Thus, the next question concerns the students' perception of their ability to go abroad, the answers to which are presented in Table 2.

First, it was determined the percentage of Ukrainian students considering going abroad, which is 88.9% of the total number of respondents. As it turned out, the majority of them indicated that they were considering emigration for the purpose of living, followed by employment, and lastly, study. As for the Polish respondents, 95.4% gave a positive

answer about the possibility of moving abroad. The answers showed a situation similar to that observed in the survey of Ukrainian students: possible for residence, employment, and education.

The next question included in the survey was, frankly, provocative. This was done to test the answers to the previous question: whether the offer of a job abroad could influence respondents as a reason for emigration. However, the answer confirmed the previous data: 43.1% of Ukrainian students said that they would consider such a possibility; 38.7% of Polish students also gave this answer. Thus, this gives confidence in the truthfulness and logical consistency of the respondents' answers.

Subsequently, it was important to find out *what level of remuneration for working abroad would encourage respondents to consider moving abroad for employment*. The data obtained can be seen in Figure 4. As can be seen from the results, the salary expectations of Polish students are significantly higher than those of Ukrainian students. This is predictable and logical, given that the level of wages in Poland is higher than in Ukraine, and therefore the expectations are proportional. It was also noted that salaries below 1,000 EUR abroad are generally not considered by Polish citizens. In addition, excessively high incomes

Table 2

Opportunities for respondents to move abroad

Reasons	Respondents' answers, in %									
	No, I am not considering		No rather than yes		Maybe		Rather yes than no		Yes, I am considering	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Education	49,5	18,2	20,2	27,3	20,2	24,6	3,7	13,6	6,4	16,3
Employment	20,7	22,7	7,2	13,4	34,2	31,8	21,6	18,2	16,3	13,9
Residence	28,7	26,5	12,0	22,8	39,8	36,4	6,5	11,7	13,0	2,6

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

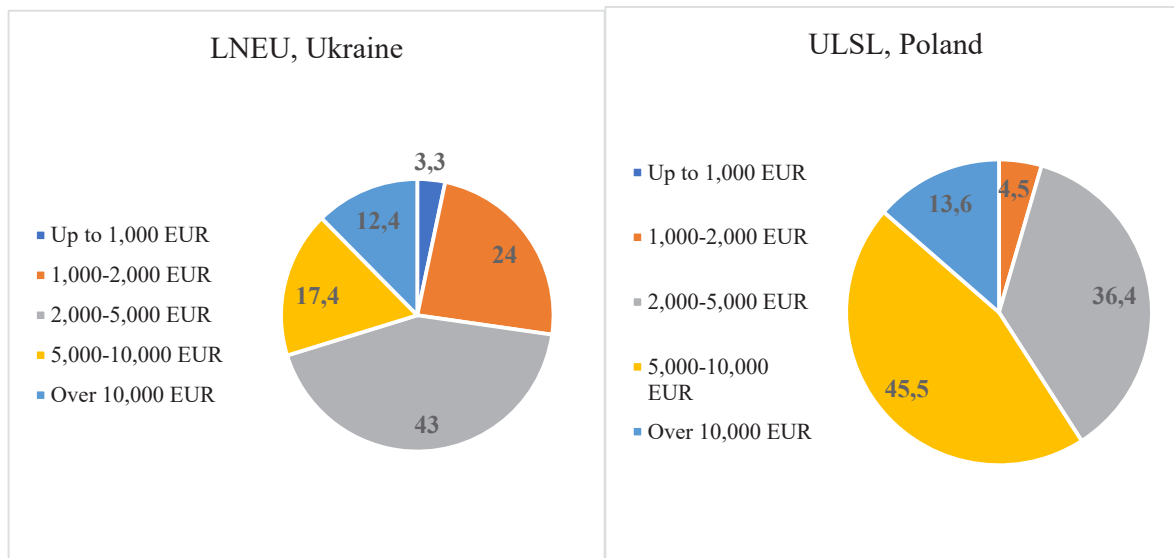


Figure 4. Minimum monthly salary that would encourage respondents to go abroad to work, in %

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

above 10,000 EUR are perceived quite soberly by respondents from both educational institutions, their share is approximately the same, so the percentage is low.

The next question of interest was *whether higher salaries abroad would influence respondents to change their field of study to a less prestigious one*. In particular, the question was asked whether the respondents would agree to work in a less prestigious and possibly more physically demanding job if the salary was higher than in their speciality. Interestingly,

the responses on both sides differed dramatically with regard to the first two points: Ukrainian students – 25.4% agreed; 47.5% – maybe; 27% – no; Polish students – 45.5% agreed; 27.3% – maybe; 27.3% – no. It can be concluded that the respondents from LNEU have chosen their dream profession and are not keen to change it, even for the sake of better prospects abroad. However, this answer may be due to the fact that the majority of Ukrainian students surveyed are under 18 years old (37.7%), so they may not yet be considering changing their field of study at all.

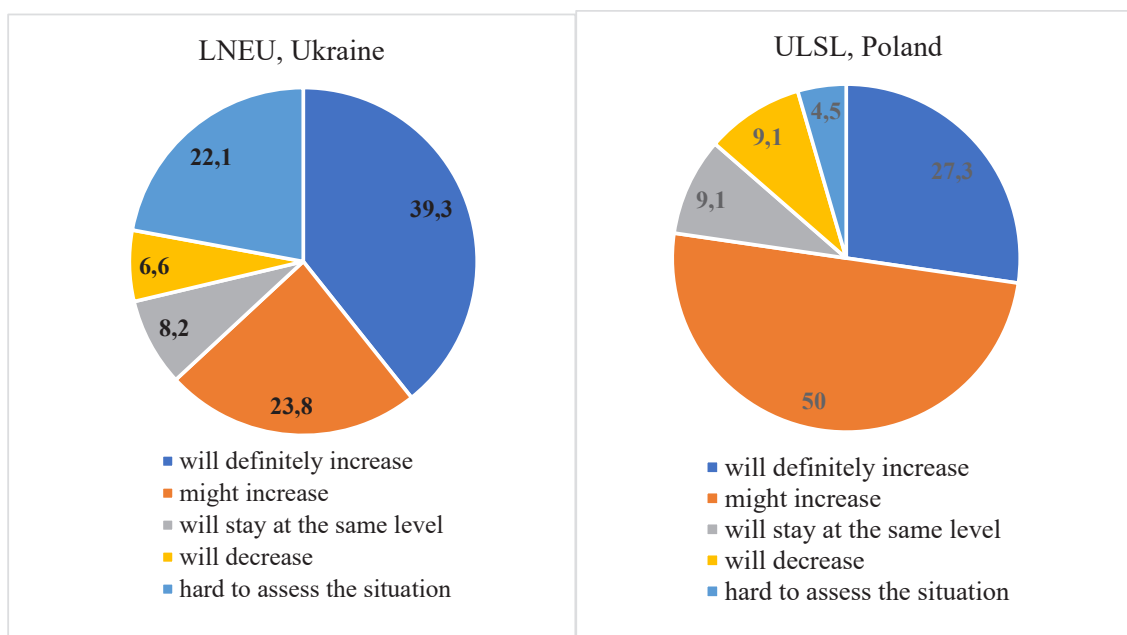


Figure 5. Attitude towards migration of respondents by gender

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

Table 3

Comparative results of respondents' attitudes towards migration by gender

Question	Answers, in %					
	Male			Female		
	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe
Could a job offer abroad have influenced you as a reason for emigration?						
– Ukrainian respondents	68,6	8,1	23,3	54,3	21,4	24,3
– Polish respondents	67,4	10,3	24,3	56,7	14,2	29,1
Are you ready to change your field of study to a less prestigious one in order to work abroad with a high salary?						
– Ukrainian respondents	51,2	16,7	32,1	33,3	43,2	23,5
– Polish respondents	58,9	13,3	27,8	47,9	20,4	31,7

Source: results of student survey "Study of migration processes"

The last question of the survey that aroused interest was the opinion of Ukrainian respondents on the trend of emigration abroad. The answers are shown in Figure 5. It is logical that Ukrainian students predict an increase in emigration, given the difficult situation in Ukraine: the ongoing war, the economy not recovering, and gloomy prospects make the outflow of people inevitable. Polish students, on the other hand, tend to anticipate a possible increase in emigration from their country, which also has security and economic reasons.

At the beginning of the survey, a question was asked about the gender of the respondents to see if there were any significant differences between the answers of women and men regarding their desire to move abroad. Having analysed the answers to two key questions in this regard, the answers are presented in Table 3.

The results presented in Table 3 show that Ukrainian male students would be more willing to go abroad to work and would be more likely to change their profession to a less prestigious but better paid one compared to female respondents. A similar picture is observed among Polish respondents of both sexes.

5. Conclusions

Based on the analysed sociological survey, it can be concluded that students of both higher education institutions have a relatively positive attitude towards international migration, with both women and men showing similar sentiments.

The survey data of different age groups of students at the two universities allow for a better understanding of their attitudes towards migration, immigration

and mobility, as well as a comparison of these indicators in their home countries in peacetime and wartime. Potential manifestations of student mobility should be seen as a fact that characterises the social role of modern students. The problem, however, is the lack of effective mechanisms for managing these processes. There is a problem of the lack of tools capable of ensuring the systemic effectiveness of communication links between different actors at the cross-cultural level, with the possibility of meeting their socio-cultural, professional, material needs in the process of socialisation of modern youth, as well as for the adequate reproduction of the intellectual potential of society as a whole. However, student emigration should not be viewed only from a negative perspective as a "brain drain", although it is clear that if students who study and work abroad do not return, the country loses part of its intellectual potential. If one considers return and emigration not just as a territorial movement of students, but as a movement of intellectual resources, one can see a positive trend: significant intellectual potential in the form of ideas, technologies and professional knowledge is returning to the country.

In the light of modern globalisation processes, the return of ideas is no less important for the development of the country's intellectual, scientific and technical potential than the physical emigration of students. For Ukraine, this is a very important aspect, because after the victory, it will be necessary to rebuild, revive, and raise the native land from the ashes, and who better than the future of the nation to do this? The topic is relevant and interesting for further research in the post-war period.

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