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**TECHNOLOGY OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION  
ON “THE ZBRUCH BORDER” (1921 – 1939)**

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the research* is to make an attempt regarding the historical and statistical analysis of the phenomenon on illegal migration in “the Zbruch section” (within Tarnopol Voivodeship, the Republic of Poland) of the Polish-Soviet border in 1921 – 1939. **Methodology of the Research.** The author applied historical typological, statistical, comparative and systematic methods in order to highlight the main features of the collective image of an illegal migrant or smuggler on the Polish-Soviet border. **The scientific novelty** of the research is that, based on the modern development of historiography and the involvement of a wide range of the archival sources, the known cases of the illegal migration have been classified according to social, political, national, territorial and inclusive criteria. Due to the specific criteria identification, it was possible to better determine the causes and consequences of the phenomenon of the illegal migration on “the Zbruch section” of the Polish-Soviet border in 1921 – 1939. Owing to the application of several classification criteria, it was feasible to determine that the illegal migrants (refugees) were the representatives of diverse nationalities (the largest percentage were the Ukrainians, the Jews and the Poles), the people of excellent territorial origin and social status, religion and in different age categories on “the Zbruch section” of the Polish-Soviet border in 1921 – 1939. The interdependence of this classification with current political and economic phenomena in the USSR has been visible: during the period of collectivization and the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933, the vast majority of the refugees were peasants; when the protracted struggle against the church began, priests began to appear more often among the refugees. **Conclusions.** Taking into consideration such diversity among illegal migrants, the following could be stated: the massiveness of the studied phenomenon, social diversity among refugees, its importance as an integral part of the reality of the interwar period, and outline further prospects for the study on violations of the Polish-Soviet border regime.

**Key words:** refugees, “Zbruch border”, Republic of Poland, USSR, Holodomor of 1932 – 1933, smuggling, illegal migration.

## ТЕХНОЛОГІЯ СТАТИСТИЧНОГО АНАЛІЗУ НЕЛЕГАЛЬНОЇ МІГРАЦІЇ НА “ЗБРУЧАНСЬКОМУ КОРДОНІ” (1921 – 1939)

**Анотація.** Метою дослідження є спроба історико-статистичного аналізу явища нелегальної міграції на “збручанській ділянці” (в межах Тарнопольського воєводства, Республіка Польща) польсько-радянського кордону в 1921 – 1939 рр. **Методологія дослідження.** Використовуючи історико-типологічний, статистичний, порівняльний та системний методи, автор намагається висвітлити основні ознаки збірного образу нелегального мігранта чи контрабандиста на польсько-радянському порубіжжі. **Наукова новизна** дослідження полягає у тому, що на основі сучасного розвитку історіографії та залучення широкого кола архівних джерел відомі випадки нелегальної міграції класифіковано за соціальними, політичними, національними, територіальними й інклюзивними критеріями. Виокремлення конкретних критеріїв дозволяє краще визначити причини та наслідки явища нелегальної міграції на “збручанській ділянці” польсько-радянського кордону в 1921 – 1939 рр. Завдяки застосуванню кількох критеріїв класифікації, вдалося з’ясувати, що нелегальними мігрантами (біженцями) на “збручанській ділянці” польсько-радянського кордону в 1921 – 1939 рр. були представники багатьох національностей (найбільшою була частка українців, євреїв і поляків), люди відмінного територіального походження і соціального статусу, віросповідання та у різних вікових категоріях. Видима взаємозалежність цієї класифікації з актуальними політичними й економічними явищами в СРСР: у період колективізації та Голодомору 1932 – 1933 рр. переважну більшість біженців становили селяни; коли розгорнулася боротьба з церквою, серед біженців почали частіше з’являтися священники. **Висновки.** Таке розмаїття серед нелегальних мігрантів може свідчити про масовість досліджуваного явища, соціальну різноманітність серед біженців, його важливість як невід’ємної частини реальності міжвоєнного періоду й окреслити подальші перспективи дослідження порушень режиму польсько-радянського кордону.

**Ключові слова:** біженці, “Збручанський кордон”, Республіка Польща, СРСР, Голодомор 1932 – 1933 рр., контрабанда, нелегальна міграція.

**Problem Statement.** Modern Ukrainian and foreign historiography studies the illegal migration across the Polish-Soviet border mainly in the context of the border studies, “active intelligence” by the Soviet special services in the early 1920s, or the issue on the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933. The above-mentioned approach leaves behind other facts of the border regime, which leads to an artificial narrowing of the statistical sample and the list of reasons, which provoked the phenomenon of “flights from the USSR” on the Zbruch section of the Polish-Soviet border during the interwar period.

The author made an attempt to classify the statistical samples of the people, who crossed the Polish-Soviet border illegally or tried to do so according to various criteria, essential characteristics and circumstances that influenced migration in this article.

The purpose of the research is to study social, statistical and national cross-section of the groups of people, who became illegal migrants (refugees) in order to form an idea of the spread of the illegal migration from the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) to the territory of Poland in the 1920s and 1930s. The definition of a social sample: a set of elements of the sociological, or historical, in this case, the object of research, which is subject to direct review, is considered to be an essential issue in the study on the illegal migration processes on the Polish-Soviet border in the 1920s and 1930s. The integrity of the methods and means of isolating the elements of the object, the subject of observation and research, the classification of individual units, groups that illegally crossed the state border are all considered to be vital issues. Hence, there is a drastic need to generalize, which stems from the characteristic and unique migration precedents that enable fully the social basis of the illegal migration flows between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Republic of Poland.

**Review of Sources and Recent Research.** After 2014, due to the actualization of a wide interest in the history of Ukraine both inside and outside the country, the studies on the Polish-Soviet border of 1921 – 1939 began to appear, in particular during the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933, and the illegal trade, migration of people, military and sabotage and intelligence activities. The scholars tried to give a response to the acute issues of the modern (hybrid, and then full-scale) war with Russia, to search for examples of the national consolidation in history, interaction across the front line, which is turning into a closed border, hence, there were numerous studies (Chmelyk, & Khakhula, 2022, p. 222). The study on the illegal migration activities on the border was not left aside by the world historians, who were interested in the phenomenon of the USSR closed state border, its role in the formation and establishment of the totalitarian system, and the mechanisms of protecting the state border. Taking into consideration, a rather short period that has passed since the beginning of the surge of interest in the rudimentary “ryzky” (or, in a narrower context, “zbruchansky”) border, the amount of historiography devoted directly to illegal activities on it is quite limited. In this context, it is worth mentioning the historical studies carried by Timothy Snyder, Peter Adelsgruber, Sabina Dullin, Kate Brown, Yaroslav Papuga, Serhii Humennyi (Humennyi, 2021, p. 26; Zuliak, & Kulyk, 2023, p. 132).

It should be mentioned that the studies on the the border guards activities of the interwar Poland – the Border Guard Corps (in Polish “Korpus Ochrony Pogranicza” – KOP) and the police units were crucial. In this part of the historiography, it is worth mentioning the research achievements of such scholars as Henryk Dominiczak, Artur Ochal, Andrzej Peplowski, Mariusz Jabłonowski (Humennyi, 2019, p. 328; Humennyi, 2023, p. 21). The modern scientific study on the illegal crossing of the state border issue between the USSR and the Republic of Poland would be insufficient if the archival sources were not involved in the study. The activities of the state police and the Border Guard Corps (KOP) in the counties of Tarnopil Voivodeship were covered and could be found in the funds of the State Archive of Ternopil Region (DATO). In contrast, the State Archive of Khmelnytskyi Region (DAKhmO), the State Archive of Vinnytsia Region (DAViO), and the State Archive of Volyn Region (DAVO) provided information about the measures taken by the Soviet and Polish (Archive of the Border Guard Service of Poland – ASG) sides to protect the state border on the Zbruch and regulate life on the border.

It is preferable to reveal the essence of definitions, which are related to the consideration of the illegal migrations phenomenon through “the Zbruch border” from 1921 to 1939, while analyzing the topic of the article. There is a discrepancy in the exact nicknames of the illegal migrants in diverse sources of that time. This name usually depended on which side a person, who identified himself as an illegal migrant belonged to. “A person, who crossed the border illegally ” – this is how the refugees are called in the official documents of the police checkpoints and the KOP battalion (State Archive of the Ternopil Oblast, f. 316, d. 1, c. 349, p. 13). The Soviet side did not use any specific concept that would characterize the phenomenon of escape from “a country where a person can breathe freely,” and the illegal migrants were considered to be the “spies,” “counter-revolutionaries,” “smugglers,” and “bandits” (Diullen, 2014, pp. 73, 79). The attitude of the Soviet authorities towards those, who fled abroad was covered in the official document “On Supplementing the Regulations on State Crimes (Counter-Revolutionary and Especially Dangerous Crimes Against State Order for the USSR)” with the articles “On Treason to the Fatherland” issued on June 8, 1934, which stated that: “the escape is punishable by the highest degree of criminal punishment –

by shooting with confiscation of all property, and in the presence of mitigating circumstances – by imprisonment for a term of up to 10 years with confiscation of all property” (Sobranye zakonov, 1948, p. 255). The most diverse in terms of the characteristics of the refugees from the Ukrainian SSR was the Western Ukrainian press, on whose pages they were called “the refugees from the other side of the Zbruch River”, “the refugees from the USSR”, “the fugitives from famine”, “the fugitives” (Humennyi, 2021).

In this article, the terms “refugees” and “illegal migrants” will be used, as those that, to our mind, characterize the essence of this phenomenon in the interwar years most comprehensively. According to modern science the term “refugees” are people who, for some reasons, became victims of persecution for their faith, nationality, language, membership in a certain social group, political beliefs and are outside the country of their citizenship or origin and cannot or do not want to use the protection provided by this country. In turn, illegal migrants are people who, having left their country of permanent residence, entered the territory of another country without any official permission to do so and refused to leave it, return to their country of origin, motivating their actions with political or other persecution, a threat to their physiological existence (Eldridge, 2022).

**Purpose of the Research.** The purpose of the research is to make an attempt regarding the historical and statistical analysis of the phenomenon on illegal migration in “the Zbruch section” (within Tarnopol Voivodeship, Republic of Poland) of the Polish-Soviet border in 1921 – 1939.

**Research Methods.** The methodology of the research is determined by an interdisciplinary approach (history, statistics, economics) and is based on general scientific and special historical methods. There have been applied the historical typological, statistical, comparative and systemic methods, the author has highlighted the characteristic features of the collective image of an illegal migrant or smuggler on the Polish-Soviet border.

There has been applied a complex of general scientific methods (analysis and synthesis, description of the nature of events and their explanation) while conducting the research. There has also been also used the historical genetic method due to which it was possible to analyze cause-and-effect patterns important for the technologies of statistical analysis of illegal migration on “the Zbruch border” (1921 – 1939) in the article.

**Research Results.** There should be outlined social categories of illegal refugees, migrants, saboteurs and smugglers on the basis of a complex of causal relationships, which triggered the illegal border crossing. It is necessary to take into account political, economic, social and status characteristics of the border areas residents, people of other territorial origin, who crossed the border illegally in the 1920s and 1930s. We are going to consider all the features of the multifaceted migration process and, note that no classification should be considered indisputable before conducting a comprehensive study of a social selection of illegal migrants on the Polish-Soviet border. The categories below can be revised in light of new documentary sources or after developing new methodological approaches to sampling for the issue under study. In addition, when analyzing different groups of the illegal migrants, it is vital to take into account the limited nature of the sample, since the data of the state bodies used by the scholar mostly contradict the subject of the study, since most of the documents involved relate to unsuccessful attempts to cross the border or the detention of offenders. Instead, there are successful examples of crossing, which are presented by the subjective sources (the memories of the migrants, publications in the media, correspondence).

We will begin our consideration of the socio-historical portrait of refugees and smugglers by classifying illegal migrants based on their social status. Data on the type of activity of the

detained refugees could be found mainly in the interrogation protocols of people arrested by the Polish or the Soviet side during illegal border crossing, in particular, it was studied the following:

– The majority of the illegal migrants or smugglers were rural residents (the Ukrainians, the Jews, the Poles), in the documents of the Polish state police departments, and later – the KOP, the economically active part of the peasantry (“kulaks” – according to the Soviet classification), hired agricultural workers were noted. For example, in the case of Hukiv customs (nowadays the village of Kamianets-Podilskyi district of Khmelnytskyi region), the Soviet border guard in a document dated October 1, 1923 noted that 90% of smugglers were local residents, who took on such risky work because of poverty. “The peasant population here (near the border on the Zbruch River – *the author*) is mostly poor, without the most basic equipment, and illiterate. These everyday difficulties on the border became a favourable ground for smuggling to be considered as a common phenomenon, a way of voluntary earnings, and not as a crime that undermines the economic development of the country,” complained the head of Hukiv customs, Karpenko (State Archive of the Khmelnytsky Oblast, f. P-323, d. 3, c. 4, p. 8).

– *The migrant workers* were another significant part of the social sample of illegal migrants. It was mentioned that, a senior police officer Kazimierz Platskevycz detained a person on September 19, 1930, who could not present permits for staying in the border zone in the report of the police department at Chortkiv railway station. The investigation revealed that the unknown person was Kostiantyn Ivaskiv, originally from Ivano-Frankivsk region nowadays. After crossing the border in 1919, “when there was no border yet,” he worked as a carpenter in the border village of Zhabyntsi (nowadays Kamianets-Podilskyi district of Khmelnytskyi region). Ivaskiv made numerous “shuttle migrations” across the poorly controlled border (in the 1920s, the Soviet border guards did not guard the border very carefully, as they were engaged in smuggling and constantly let saboteurs through), each time returning to the USSR. However, active collectivization deprived him of the opportunity to earn a living, his property and carpentry workshop were confiscated, and the craftsman himself was forced to work on a collective farm for food. Konstantyn Ivaskiv decided to cross the border illegally again as he was unable to bear the poverty and was caught by the Polish border guards (DATO, f. 283, d. 1, c. 109, pp. 2–11).

– The *pre-revolutionary intelligentsia and individuals*, who collaborated with the Ukrainian or Polish authorities in 1917 – 1921. More than 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers, who later ended up in internment camps in Kalisz, Wadowice, and Strzałków, moved to the Polish bank of the Zbruch at the end of 1920 (Olszewski, 2012, p. 10). Illegal migration across the Polish-Soviet border remained almost the only way to Europe, a chance for the professional growth and free creative and national activity. Hence, diverse representatives of the intelligentsia resorted to illegal migration at different times. For example, the Ukrainian writer and nationalist movement activist Olena Teliha (Shovheniv) left the Ukrainian SSR near Kamianets-Podilskyi (1922) with her mother and brother illegally (Zhdanovych, 1947, p. 144). A renowned dancer, Serge Lyfar managed to emigrate illegally on his second attempt: “My family did everything possible to organize my escape. They bought gold and various currencies, experiencing great difficulties. My family let me go easily (...) they supported my intention to escape abroad, as far as possible from the poor Soviet life” (Lyfar, 1994, p. 119).

– Sometimes even *the clergymen* became illegal migrants or, according to the official documents, smugglers. The Soviet newspaper “Chervonyi Kordon” in its issue dated October

12, 1927, reported that in 1923, a Catholic priest “from the city of Smotrych (nowadays Khmelnytskyi region – *the author*) Vaclav Shymansky “helped” two of his parishioners, Skardeli and Motyka (...), to cross the Soviet border into Poland. Motyka was detained by the State Border Service of the Ukrainian SSR. According to the Soviet investigators, another priest, Marian Yendrushchak, “instructed his parishioners Sapko, Baranivska, and Pidvysotska to buy the counterfeit goods for him for 150 and 250 karbovantsiv. Then he sold the goods”. Both priests were imprisoned for a term of six months to one year, followed by five years of exile outside the Ukrainian SSR as “socially harmful elements”. However, the Bolsheviks’ anti-religious policies (including the flight of priests to Poland and the Bolsheviks’ closure of churches) met with resistance from the broad masses of the Ukrainian rural population (Belyaev, 1927; Kuśnierz, 2023, p. 72).

– *Former or active military personnel* with experience of serving in the ranks of the army of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR), the Ukrainian Galician Army (UGA), participants in the insurgent movement against the Bolshevik regime, deserters from the Red Army (Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army) and the Polish Army also made up a significant share of the illegal migrants. According to Prof. Oleksandr Zdanovych, “there were 159 Soviet military personnel, who fled to Poland from 1921 to 1933. The most “fruitful” for the Polish intelligence were 1922, 1930, 1931, 1932 and 1933 (41, 23, 13, 12 and 14 defectors, respectively)” (Zdanovych, 2017, p. 193).

The Soviet border guard Sergei Tykhonovych, reporting that his family was starving, asked for asylum in the Republic of Poland, citing the voluntary nature of his escape from the USSR (State Archives of Volyn Region, f. 46, d. 9-A, c. 427, pp. 17, 29–30). There were also cases of desertion among the Polish border guards, since not all of them could withstand six months of being away from settlements, often with a threat to their lives or in a different ethno-national environment. According to a survey in 1927, there were recorded 118 escapes of the officers and soldiers of the Border Guard along the entire eastern border of the Republic of Poland. The excessive severity of the Border Guards was the paramount reason for the escape of personnel. For example, the case of the desertion of Franciszek Sieradzki, KOR of the “Kudryntsi” company (nowadays Chortkiv district, Ternopil region), who fled to the Ukrainian SSR on May 8, 1930, while on patrol. The reason for the desertion was the fear of reporting and punishment for wearing unregulated buttons and overcoats. The “refugee” himself told about this in Kamianets-Podilskyi during a meeting with another Polish border guard-deserter (Archives of the Polish Border Guard, f. 177, c. 541/109; f. 178, c. 542/47).

It is vital to outline the reasons for “smuggling” on the Polish-Soviet border in order to understand the widespread categories of the illegal migrants:

- monopoly (including tariff and customs restrictions) policy of the states in their foreign trade;
- the post-war economic stagnation, features of “war communism” and the NEP policy (the emergence of the possibility of selling smuggled goods in private shops, located, for the most part, on the Polish side, even on small islands in the middle of the Zbruch River, such as a cloth and alcohol store opposite the Soviet village of Wolokhy), as well as the resulting commodity shortage on the domestic market of the USSR;
- limited imports of consumer goods and the inability of the Soviet state to provide its own population with a wide range of high-quality goods produced on the domestic market;
- the imbalance of supply and demand, which arose against the background of the gradual increase in the purchasing power of the residents on both sides of the border (since the mid-1920s);
- the lack of developed industry and agricultural cooperation in the immediate vicinity of the border, the high cost and low quality of the Soviet goods did not contribute to competition

with relatively cheap supplies of the European and American products through the Republic of Poland;

– historical maintenance of trade and economic contacts in the border zone of Polissia and Volyn, restoration of traditional illegal trade flows near the “the Zbruch section of the border” (DAKhMO, f. P-323, d. 3, c. 4, p. 47).

Let’s consider several examples of recorded facts of the smuggling on the Polish-Soviet border by the Polish or the Soviet side. Some information about the development of the border, the scale and composition of the turnover of the illegal goods coming from Poland to the Ukrainian SSR near Skala nad Zbruchem, Borshchiv district, were provided by Naum Bernstein: “The industry of the Soviet Union at that time (the 1920s – *the author*) was, as is known, almost destroyed, and the industrial goods were supplied to the inhabitants through smuggling. The Polish-made fabric was widely used in Orynyń (nowadays Khmelnytskyi region – *the author*). There were two woolen fabrics under the names “Boston” and “kostor” (...), other industrial goods could also be found there. These goods were paid for only in foreign currency, mainly gold coins issued during the tsarist regime, and dollar banknotes. The closest Polish town to the border was Skala, where the smugglers from Orynyń had acquaintances. The border line was guarded, but not as strictly as later on, when the border was “closed” (available on (I mean the increased border security on the Soviet and the Polish sides in the 1930s – *the author*). The so-called “guides”, the people, who knew where to cross the river and who definitely had some “contacts” with the security (...). But there were numerous tragic cases. My aunt Brana Weinstein died on the border. She was shot right in the river” (Bernshtein, 2009, pp. 39–40).

It should be stated that a more informative classification of illegal migrants by motivation for crossing the border seems to be the author’s methodological approach in order to study the reasons that prompted a specific person to violate the regime of a checkpoint at the state border, in particular:

– Voluntary *illegal migration* is the act of crossing the state border, carried out by a person internally, without coercion, intentionally, committed for certain reasons: political persecution, economic hardship, starvation, threat to personal freedom and life and livelihood of relatives, desire to restore contact or live together with relatives on the other side of the border, unwillingness to serve in the Red Army or the Polish Army, job search or inability to carry out professional activities in the territory of Poland or the USSR, religious beliefs. Examples of voluntary illegal migration include:

- The protocol of the KOP in Pidvolochysk dated October 18, 1932 states that 18-year-old “Yadviga Blazheyovska (the text of the protocol also contains a variant of the surname “Blashkova”)” from Volochysk, crossed the border with her mother Maria Blazheyovska and her brother illegally, fleeing from hunger, because “in 1932 the Bolsheviks took away our entire grain harvest, leaving us without a piece of bread”. Since Yadviga’s mother was from the Galician village of Dorofiivka (nowadays Ternopil region), the family decided to flee to live with a relative, Matviy Kharchuk (DATO, f. 176, d. 1, c. 9, p. 6).

- Stepan Hrenskyi and Stanislav Olenin from the border town of Tarnoruda explained their escape from the USSR on February 23, 1934, by “hunger and political persecution by the USSR authorities” (DATO, f. 231, d. 1, c. 2113, p. 15). A 25-year-old Ilko Stychurskyi from Shuparka, Borshchiv district, crossed the border “in search of work” and was detained by the Polish border guards when he tried to return from the Ukrainian SSR on December 14, 1931 (DATO, f. 316, d. 1, c. 349, p. 32).

- In 1935, Anton Vashkevych, who came from Łańcut povit (county) (nowadays the Republic of Poland), was arrested in Voronovitskyi district of Vinnytsia region and was accused of illegally

crossing the border with the USSR in 1922 and espionage in favour of Poland. During the investigation, it was determined that Vashkevych served in the Polish army for a month and a half in 1922 and deserted during his leave because he fell ill with typhus, switching to the Soviet side (State Archive of the Vinnytsia Oblast, f. 6023, d. 4, c. 783, pp. 9, 18, 29).

– *Forced (mandatory) illegal migration* occurred mainly through the fulfillment of tasks set by the security services of the Republic of Poland or the USSR. There could be highlight edespionage, incitement, information gathering, penetration into law enforcement agencies or national, party organizations, combat operations, provocations among these tasks. Due to the threat of deportation (outside the country or within it), extradition (forced return, for example, of a Red Army deserter), the forced migration could also be caused. The story of the Jewish girl Zinaida Aloiza, whom the American newspaper Svoboda mentioned, describing her as “a young beautiful woman (who – the Author) graduated from espionage courses in Kharkiv” is considered to be significant. The girl had to “cross the Zbruch with the agent Zakharchuk” and fulfill the task “to marry a Polish officer... in order to collect data on the Polish secret agents” (Svoboda, 1930, p. 1). Instead, Pavlo Khomenko (a nickname “Danylevskiy”) was an agent of the Polish intelligence in Kamianets-Podilskyi. The State Police of the Republic of Poland mentioned him in its report for December 1922 as a “non-resident of Galicia” in the military commissariat of Kamianets. According to some sources, in mid-1923, Khomenko, concerned about his safety, emigrated to Poland illegally, where he got a job. He was appointed as the Head of the Intelligence Border Post in the town of Skala nad Zbruchem, Borshchiv povit (county), Tarnopol Voivodeship (Zdanovych, 2017, p. 192).

The refugees on the Polish-Soviet border can be also classified according to such characteristics as the *nationality, faith, inclusive features or religious affiliation*. The documents on the Border Guard Corps (KOP) and the Soviet border guards required the nationality of those detained for illegally crossing the border to be indicated. According to these data, the Ukrainians, the Poles, the Jews and the Russians predominated among illegal migrants. For example, Mykola Kuzmin from Rostov and Pavel Morozov from Leningrad were caught and interrogated on the Polish-Soviet border on September 20, 1929. Numerous illegal migrants were the ethnic Poles, who sought to cross the border to get to their homeland. They retreated with the Polish army in 1920. Hence, there could be found some information in the indictment of Julian Woncholski (1933, Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR) from Kholmynsky district of Vinnytsia region about the escape of his son Kazimierz to Poland. There could be found people of the Czech and the Slovak origin, such as Frančišek Kučera, who tried to cross the interstate border “to earn money in the Soviet Russia (USSR)” among those detained by the Polish border guards (DAViO, f. 6023, d. 4, c. 3200, pp. 4, 10–11; DATO, f. 283, d. 1, c. 109, p. 29).

According to information based on the materials from the Polish side, the Zbaraż and Borszów district police teams, the following categories can be distinguished among the illegal migrants by religion: the Jews, the Greek Catholics, the Orthodox, the Roman Catholics, the Protestants, the atheists (DATO, f. 316, c. 626). Similar documents entitled “The List of Refugees from the Soviet Russia (USSR)” or “The List of Fugitives to the USSR”, compiled by the “district” teams of the state police of the Republic of Poland, mainly contained data on the date of birth or age of the illegal migrants (in Polish – *uchodźcow*), which allows us to outline the age (physiological) categories of the refugees. Hence, taking into consideration the age classification, we can conclude that among the “fugitives” there were people of the preschool age (3-6 years), the adolescents (10-15 years, who were often involved as the couriers-smugglers), the youth (15-21), the early adulthood (21-40), the middle-aged (40-60) and even late adulthood (60 and above). Almost the entire spectrum

of the age categories of the illegal migrants was presented in the memo of the KOP of the battalion No. 14 “Borshchiv” issued on June 2, 1931, which reported on the detention of the Borchuk family from Voytovets (nowadays Khmelnytskyi region), who crossed the state border. The oldest detained refugee, Oleksa Borchuk, turned 55 that day, and the youngest, Arkhip Borchuk, was 15. On the territory of Borshchiv district itself, near the village of Hermakivka, on January 18, 1934, the fact of the transfer of the Roman Catholic Jackowski family to the Polish bank of the Zbruch River was discovered. The oldest representative of the family, Jozef Jackowski, was 47 years old, and the youngest, Marian, was only a year old (DATO, f. 281, d. 1, c. 158; f. 231, d. 1, c. 2113, p. 24).

There is an excerpt from a commemorative plaque below, which was compiled by the Polish Border Guard Corps in the village of Lysychyntsi, Zbaraż povit (county), Tarnów Voivodeship (DATO, f. 316, d. 1, c. 626, p. 4) (Table 1). Taking into consideration this table, you can obtain information about the age, religion, and place of origin of the illegal migrants.

Table 1

**Excerpt from a commemorative plaque compiled by the Polish Regional Committee of Lysychyntsi, Zbaraż povit (county), Tarnopol Voivodeship (DATO, f. 316, d. 1, c. 626, p. 4)**

№	Surname and first name	Years	Confession	Permanent place of residence	Date of escape	Return
1	Prychitka Stefan	32	Greek Catholic	Soviet Russia	1918	-
2	Tychyj f. Rychlewski	21	Catholic	Podwoloczyska	23.V.1931	13.VII.1931
3	Reznik Franko	20	Catholic	Staromiej szczyzne	3.V.1931	24.VII.1931
4	Husak Mikołaj	21	Catholic	-,,-	17.V.1931	24.VII.1931
5	Szapował Jan	17	-,,-	-,,-	19.V.1931	26.VII.1931
6	Bajda Włodzimierz	18	-,,-	-,,-	26.V.1931	24.VII.1931
7	Jazczuk Paweł	19	-,,-	-,,-	26.V.1931	24.VII.1931
17	Lisowski Iwan	21	Catholic	Dorofijówka	4.VI.1931	Did not return
18	Walczak /fornal/	-	-	Kamionka	4.VI.1931	Did not return
19	Charczuk Tomasz	-	-	Unknown	4.VI.1931	Did not return
20	Biłas	-	-	Nastasowa	Unknown	Did not return
21	Stelmach+brat	-	-	Unknown	Unknown	Did not return
23	Maksymiszyn Iwan	-	-	Tarnopol	Unknown	Did not return
24	Gadzinowski Jan	-	-	Lwów	Unknown	Did not return
25	Horlaj	-	-	Lwów	Unknown	Did not return

We should pay attention to the frequency of detection of people with disabilities (hearing impairment) within the border zone when classifying the illegal migrants according to the

criterion of inclusiveness. For example, there were detained 4 “deaf-mute people”, one of whom managed to write information about himself in Hebrew, by the soldiers of the Yampil border post, on September 5, 1932, near the village of Baymaki (nowadays Bilohirskiy district of Khmelnytskyi region). Due to poor command of the Russian language, they concluded that “abroad – a fugitive”. The Soviet border guards understood only his age – “50” years from the text of the detainee. The name of the arrested person was established by a bread card written on it “Hrihoriy (Itsko) Konevskiy” and confirmed during interrogation in the Vinnytsia SIZO (DOPri) (DAViO, f. 6023, d. 4, s. 89, pp. 1, 6, 7). 20 вересня 1932 р. The Soviet border post in Slavuta also detained two “deaf-mute” children (names not specified): “One aged 15–16 (higher), detained at the border with Poland, and the other one, aged 10–12, detained for the fifth time during an illegal crossing into Poland without any documents (...) we sent him to the Shepetivka workers’ clinic to see an expert doctor for examination and, according to the conclusion, he was taken out through the Slavuta police district outside the border zone,” and then sent to a “collector for homeless deaf-mute children (literal translation – *the author*)” (DAViO, f. 6023, d. 4, s. 90, pp. 1, 4). The Soviet border guards sent to Vinnytsia “a deaf-mute woman (inaudible – the author) and Vadym Volodymyrovych Yazko, a native of Vinnytsia district, who arrived from Poland to our side illegally” in the summer of 1933. Such a high frequency of detection of people with hearing impairments on the Polish-Soviet border was localized during the Holodomor of 1932–1933, becoming part of one of the historical peaks of the illegal migration on “the Zbruch border” (DAViO, f. 6023, d. 4, s. 108). However, the motivation of people with the disabilities when crossing the border into the USSR remains unclear. Such actions could only be explained by low awareness of the situation in the Soviet state due to the communication barrier characteristic of people with hearing and vision impairments, the Bolshevik propaganda on the border. It is also likely that people with the disabilities could have been scouting for the illegal migration for their relatives, close friends, in the interests of the state structures or the smugglers (or were the smugglers themselves – the “pachkari” (“packers”)), since they did not provide any information in case of detection by the border guards.

The illegal migrants classification by *their territory of origin* is crucial. Based on the processing of archival funds, the following regions could be named that the refugees often mentioned as their place of birth or permanent residence: Borshchiv, Chortkiv, Kopychynskyi, Buchach, Zbarazhsky povits (counties) of Poland, Kamianets-Podilsky, Orynynsky, Chemerivetsky, Pluzhnenny, Volochyskyi, Vinnytsia, Berdychiv, Mariupol districts of the Ukrainian SSR, the territory of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). The detention on November 29, 1923 near the border post of Toky (nowadays Ternopil region) during an illegal border crossing of a native of the ethnic Greek village of Sartana (Mariupol district, Katerynoslavshyna, modern Donetsk region), mentioned in the interrogation protocol as “Yorko Howabits” is considered to be a striking example of the territorial spread of the phenomenon of illegal migration on the Zbruch section of the Polish-Soviet border (DATO, f. 316, d. 1, c. 322, p. 1).

**Conclusions.** Due to the study on the statistical sampling technologies of the phenomenon on the illegal migration on the Polish-Soviet border in the context of its social structure in the 1920s and 1930s, it was possible to trace a certain algorithm of the existence of “the Zbruch border”, since the internal political, social and economic changes in the USSR intensified illegal migration. In turn, it was accompanied by an increase in the rigidity of the totalitarian regime, strengthening of security and the actual closure of the state border. The above-mentioned approach will enable us to understand the reasons for the gradual intensification of

state border protection by the USSR simultaneously with the development of the processes of Sovietization, collectivization and nationalization of land, the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933 and political repressions of 1937 – 1939 (including the Polish nationals displacement from the border area, the autonomous Polish administrative units’ liquidation – Marchlewski (“Polski Rejon Narodowy im. Juliana Marchlewskiego” in the Ukrainian SSR) and Dzerzhinsky (in the Belorussian SSR) the Polish national districts, the Polish operation carried out by the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs – NKVD).

The Polish border service recorded illegal migration, mainly of the migrant workers at the initial stage of the border’s existence as it was directly related to the destruction of industry after the events of 1914 – 1921. The second important social category, as evidenced by the documents, were the soldiers of the defeated Ukrainian armies (and with them the Ukrainian, the Polish creative and national elite) or the soldiers who did not want to serve in the Red Army. Later on, the process of collectivization, the Holodomor and the fight against the Ukrainian nationalists (and the supporters of the restoration of the Russian Empire), the Bolshevik policy towards the church, changed the social portrait of illegal immigrants. The intelligentsia, the clergy, and the workers continued to flee the USSR. However, the majority of illegal migrants were the peasants, most often from border areas, who perceived crossing the border as a form of the political protest, an attempt to improve the economic situation, and sometimes the last resort for survival.

Thus, based on several classification criteria, we can conclude that the illegal migrants (refugees) on the “the Zbruch section” of the Polish-Soviet border in 1921 – 1939 were the representatives of many nationalities (the largest share was of the Ukrainians, the Jews, and the Poles), of different social status and confession, of different age categories and territories of origin. The interdependence of this classification with current political and economic phenomena in the USSR is visible: during the period of collectivization and the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933, the vast majority of the refugees were the peasants, and when the struggle against the church intensified, priests began to appear more often among the refugees. Taking into consideration some information on the place of refugees’ residence, we could state that it refutes the claim about the regional nature of the illegal migration on the Polish-Soviet border, since illegal crossing was carried out by both residents of border areas and immigrants from Ukraine, Russia and the First Czechoslovak Republic. Such diversity among illegal migrants may indicate the mass nature of the phenomenon under study, the social diversity among refugees, its importance as an integral part of the reality of the interwar period and outline further prospects for research into violations of the Polish-Soviet border regime.

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