

All in the Family: A Dynasty Approach to Household Migration

Evidence from the 19th Century Austro-Hungarian Empire¹

Alexander Klein²

CERGE-EI³

Abstract

This paper deals with the rural-urban migration of families in the last decades of the 19th century in one of the most developed regions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy – the Pilsen region. The analysis indicates that the household head's expected real rural-urban wage gap was not the main factor behind migration. Instead, the observed behavior is consistent with families maximizing a dynastic utility function such that it was the future prospects of children which triggered migration. The results are not based on tracing of families in time but rely on identifying a control group of stayers. Specifically, I compare the structure of migrant families at the time of arrival to an urban area with that of families who stayed in the hinterlands and to decipher migration motifs.

Abstrakt

Tato studie se zabývá migrací rodin z venkova do města v posledních desetiletích devatenáctého století v plzeňském regionu. Analýza ukazuje, že rozdíl ve mzdách mezi venkovem a městem není hlavní příčinou migrace. Rodina se rozhoduje na základě maximalizace dynastické funkce užitečnosti čímž budoucnost dětí sehrává výraznou roli při rozhodování jestli migrovat nebo ne. Analýza je provedena porovnáváním rodinné struktury migrantů v čase příjezdu do města a rodinné struktury těch, kteří zůstali na venkově.

¹ I am grateful to Ludmila Fialová, Randall Filer, Michael Haines, Jan Hanousek, Štěpán Jurajda, Drew Keeling, Evžen Kočenda and the participants of The Economic History Association 2004 Meeting, Berlin Workshop on the Quantitative Economic History and International Conference on Social Science Research 2004 for comments

² E-mail: alexander.klein@cerge-ei.cz, tel.: + 420 2 240 05 227. Address for correspondence: CERGE-EI, P.O.BOX 882, Politických veznu 7, 111 21 Prague, Czech Republic

³ Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education of Charles University & Economic Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.