**SEVERAL CZECH RESPONDENTS TALKING ABOUT VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THEIR NATIONAL MIGRATION**

**1. A Very Brief Introduction of the Respondents**

For the purpose of our interviews concerning national migration – we have chosen four respondents. **Jaroslava Kačerová** (born in 1970) has moved eleven times in her life. As a common fact for all her domiciles, she revolved with her family around a small village Malá Černoc, situated in Northern Bohemia. **Barbora Reklová** (1971) has changed her residence five times. Currently she lives in Most, a famous industrial town of Czech Republic. **Zdeněk Hammer** (1969), presently living in Most as well, comes from Hořany, a village that has been demolished because of brown coal mining. **Evžen Prosche** (1938) moved as a little child with his family from a village Lom not far (only few kilometres) to a town Litvínov that is located under the Ore Mountains.

**2. Migration – Travelling and Commuting**

Zdeněk claims that the conditions for public transport are definitely better in the town Most he has moved to: towns enable kids better transportation to school. Before migration, he had to walk three kilometres from his village to a nearby small town. Jaroslava can remember her commuting (16 kilometres every weekday) to a primary school in Podbořany. Evžen appreciated getting a flat in Litvínov (where he worked), because it saved him from tiring commuting that some of his colleagues had to go through to have a job. Jaroslava thinks that frequent migration gave her a lot of experience how to deal with practical aspects of moving house, getting used to new conditions, learning new necessary things and meeting people.

**3. Diverse Lifestyles of the Country and Urban Locations**

Zdeněk was used to spend a lot of time outside when he lived in the village Hořany, but the situation changed after the moving of his family to the town Most. Instead of playing with children on the ground, he spent more time inside their new flat or outside on the sidewalk. He considers noise as an evident disadvantage of urban life. Zdeněk compares the attitude to traditions in both places: the village kept all traditions such as Easter or building Maypoles and – on the other hand – only individuals follow old traditions and customs in the town. Many villagers also owned domestic animals and pets they had to take care of. Some worked on the farm or went to pastures with cattle; others had sheep or pigs in their yards. Coal was used for heating of houses. People in the village used to be more interested in the lives of their neighbours. As Zdeněk is getting older, he thinks more often about going back to the village (it is his unfulfilled dream so far). Barbora says that it is no more possible to have domestic animals (chickens, cows, sheep, goats etc.) in the town, nevertheless she keeps many pets. Jaroslava points out different possibilities of communication in the country in the past (when she was a child): only three families had a telephone at home in the village Malá Černoc. She mentions anonymity of the town in the contrast to high interest of village people in the behaviour of the others (especially newcomers).

**4. Environment and Industry Influencing Migration**

This is one of the most essential topics for the people living in north-western part of Czech Republic. The impact of brown coal mining is enormous in many places of this area: since the village Hořany was demolished in 1981, Zdeněk’s family had to move before, so coming to Most was not their voluntary decision. Barbora’s family moved out from Chodov (a locality near an industrial town Sokolov) for the sake of Barbora’s health problems. It was the decision of her parents because she was just a little kid.

**5. Medical and Commercial Facilities**

Evžen is aware of the fact that special medical care represents one of the biggest advantages of living in a town. When they lived in the village Lom, only a general practitioner and sometimes dentist were available; but with some more complicated health problems, they had to go Litvínov. When he looks back, he regards the opportunities that health centre offered in his new home town as the way from the country to civilization. Zdeněk considers as obvious advantages of living in the town: easy accessibility of a doctor, supermarkets and a great choice of food and another goods.

**6. Sport and Culture**

Jaroslava claims that there are no organized interest groups and sport clubs in Malá Černoc and she sees many differences also in cultural life: she could go to disco, to the cinema or theatre in towns she used to live; in Malá Černoc only to a pub and sometimes (during a season) to a village ball. Evžen prefers living in Litvínov mainly for enough cultural (theatre and cinema) opportunities how to spend leisure time. Zdeněk tried to find sport activities after moving to Most. He played football and ice hockey. Sports represented for him the best way how to avoid hanging around blocks of flats and being bored.

**7. Neighbours and Friends**

Zdeněk thinks that individuals in the town he lives in are unconcerned about other people living in their surroundings. On the contrary, his childhood reminiscences lead us back to completely different rural atmosphere where inhabitants of Hořany took care of their neighbours’ lives. He regrets the fact that moving to a town meant the loss of his good friends and neighbours. However he was able to make friends with some people in Most. Barbora realizes how sad is to say goodbye to your old friends and go to another place. It happened to her frequently as she moved five times so far. In her childhood, it was a problem to become accustomed to permanently new classmates and teachers. Jaroslava concedes that losing of old friends is not so problematic and sad issue: new environment of a village brings spending time doing various activities with other local children, so you become friends easily.

**8. School and Work**

Migration in their childhood meant for all our respondents the change of school environment. The most interesting remark has been mentioned by Barbora. She perceived friendly and family atmosphere in her village school where she started compulsory school attendance. On the other hand, the town school was full of hostile communist mood with its symbols and strict rules. It was apparent in the style of clothing, methods of foreign language (Russian) teaching and rigid political opinions. Concerning job opportunities, Jaroslava noted that not only many people came from the country to towns but also the other way round because of work in agriculture. However this was the only exception, otherwise it was quite complicated and almost impossible to get a well-paid job in a village (the number of job opportunities was rather limited there).