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UNIVERSITY
of
GLASGOW

**“Challenges and Opportunities of Polish Migrants in Scotland and Return
Migrants in Poland”**

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Abstract

On 1st May 2004, Poland, along with other central and Eastern European countries joined the European Union as part of the first phase of the fifth EU enlargement. This enlargement in 2004 raised debates in the European Union regarding free movement and labor mobility issues. Regardless of the transition period imposed by all the countries in the European Union on the A8 migrants, three countries including the UK opened their borders immediately. Among these countries, the UK hosted the largest number of A8 nationals and interestingly, Poles constituted the majority of these. As the second largest 'region' within the UK, many Polish migrants resided in Scotland. While there is a considerable number of studies on the lifestyle of Polish migrants in the UK, not enough attention has been paid to the challenges and opportunities on Polish migrants in Scotland and the ones who have returned. Therefore, this research fills an important gap in the current literature. It looks at both ends of the movement and investigates the challenges and opportunities that migrants have encountered in Scotland and after returning. The research will examine migrants' main motivations for migration, the opportunities that influenced their decision to either stay in the UK or return home, and how they coped with the challenges that they have faced during their migration, and upon return.

Keywords: Challenges and opportunities, EU enlargement, Polish migrants, Polish return migrants

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An Exploration of Challenges and Opportunities of Polish Migrants in Scotland and Return Migrants in Poland

1. *Chapter One- Introduction*

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the basis for the study by giving a short introduction to the research background, the importance of the research, and the research aims and questions. Furthermore, it discusses the research methodology, provides an overview of the thesis and describes the content of each chapter.

1.2 Research background

On 1st May 2004, Poland, along with other CEE countries such as Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined the European Union as part of the first phase of the fifth EU enlargement. These Central and Eastern European countries have been called the “Accession Eight” (A8). This enlargement in 2004 raised debates in the European Union regarding free movement and labor mobility issues. The debates were not about the fact that eight countries have joined the EU with a relatively large population, but mainly about the economic situation in them that would push many of the CEE nationals to the countries with better economic situation. Central and Eastern European countries were part of the “Socialist bloc” for more than half a century and had a different social and economic situation, as well as a considerably lower GDP compared to Western Europe. As “Old Europe” was concerned about the potential negative effect on the wages and employment of its native population due to a huge arrival of migrants from the A8 countries, twelve countries enforced a transition period and restricted the A8 nationals from the access to their labor market. The transition period varied from 0 to 7 years. While some countries like Austria and Germany imposed the most extreme period of up to 7 years, three countries, including the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Ireland immediately allowed access to their labor markets. The main reason why Germany and Austria enforced the longest limitation was their proximity to these countries and their considerably stronger economic situation. On the other hand, the UK, Sweden and Ireland did not impose restrictions on A8 nationals because they predicted a relatively small number of migrants due to language differences, their geographical distance from A8 countries,

and restricted access to professional employment due to potential non-recognition of their qualifications (Fevre, 1998; Dobson, Latham and Salt, 2009). Among these countries, the UK hosted the largest number of A8 nationals. The UK government estimated flows of between 5,000 to 15,000 (Dustman et al. 2003). In reality, this number increased to over one million between 2004 and 2010 (UKBA, 2012). Interestingly, Poles constituted the majority of these migrants to the UK. Approximately 70% of migrants from A8 countries were Poles (Porter, 2013: 9). As the second largest 'region' within the UK, many Polish migrants resided in Scotland. The data suggest that the growth of net migration to Scotland has been mainly due to the immigration of A8 nationals (Moskal 2013: 156; Lisenkova & Wright 2008). This is mainly because of extensive employment opportunities in low-skilled jobs and also due to the Scottish government's more welcoming attitudes towards migrants due to demographic and economic concerns (McCollum 2014; Moskal 2013).

Since the EU enlargement, Poland experienced considerable emigration, which reached its highest level in 2007 with around 2,270 thousand persons (Kaczmarczyk, Lesinska, 2013: 30). High unemployment in Poland - approximately 12% in 2007¹ (Central statistical office in Poland) - and a GDP which was notably smaller than that of the UK, were the main reasons for the large-scale emigration of Poles to the UK, and were disincentives for them to return. This large-scale emigration from Poland was not favorable for the country, as it started to face a labor shortage and demographic issues. While the Polish government implemented new policies to attract emigrants to come back home, they could not prevent further emigration and the majority of Poles did not show any interest in returning home (Porter 2013: 28).

Therefore, this research fills an important gap in the current literature. It looks at both ends of the movement and investigates the challenges and opportunities that migrants have encountered in Scotland and after returning. The research will examine migrants' main motivations for migration, the opportunities that influenced their decision to either stay in the UK or return home, and how they coped with the challenges that they have faced during their migration, and upon return. The following section will discuss the main objectives and research questions of this study in more detail.

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¹ <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/poland/unemployment-rate>

1.3 Research Justification, aims, and questions

3.2 Background

My overall interest in Eastern Europe began during my studies at University of Tehran majoring in Russian language and literature. After my graduation, I decided not to limit my knowledge to languages and learn more about the history, politics, and culture of Russia and Eastern Europe. I was very fortunate to come across the Erasmus + program in International masters in Russian, Central, and Eastern European studies at University of Glasgow. I applied for this program, got accepted, and this is how I started my masters at University of Glasgow in September 2015. From the first days of my arrival in Scotland, I started to notice the large number of Eastern Europeans, especially Polish migrants living and working there. This is where I became curious about the reasons why they choose to move to Scotland. Having lived in Poland for few months, I knew that many young Poles take the opportunity given by free movement in the EU to travel and work in different countries. However, what was peculiar for me was the fact that I saw most of these migrants working in low-skilled jobs such as bars, restaurants and cafes. I decided to expand my knowledge regarding this matter and was surprised by the significant amount of research done on this subject. The more I learned about Polish migrants, the more I became interested in doing research on them. Therefore, I decided to write my master thesis on these migrants. As I kept reading the literature, I learned a lot about the reasons of Polish migration to the UK. What interested me the most was to get involved with these migrants and learn more about the experiences, challenges and opportunities they face in Scotland. I was especially interested in Scotland as I could not find much research done on Polish migrants in this country. Moreover, as a student in Scotland, I could have a better understanding of the migrants' lifestyle, challenges and opportunities there. There were other opportunities that motivated me more to deal with Polish migrants such as the chance to learn the Polish language at University of Glasgow and the possibility to travel to and study in Poland as my second Erasmus mobility. The second

mobility was also a good incentive to do research on return migrants in Poland and the challenges and opportunities they face after return.

The general objective of this thesis is to obtain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities of migration to Scotland and return migration to Poland by young Polish individuals who left Poland post-EU enlargement in 2004. In particular, these challenges and opportunities will be divided into three areas:

1. Economic challenges and employment opportunities
2. Social and cultural challenges and opportunities
3. Political challenges

The first area of empirical enquiry explores the lived experience of migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland. It will explore what economic challenges and opportunities have persuaded them to move to Scotland, to stay longer, or to return home; and in what ways their personal skills and abilities have helped them to cope with economic challenges and to find a proper employment and job position. It also includes answering the question as to whether there are any financial challenges that they are still struggling with and, if so, what are the causes of these constraints and how do they cope with them. Moreover, it addresses the question about how language barriers, changing positions in the labor market, and the welfare state have challenged their economic situation in the host country, and in the home country in case of return migration.

The second area of empirical enquiry is to explore migrants' social interaction with family, friends, and locals. It seeks to find out how these migrants cope with such social and cultural challenges as homesickness, isolation, missing support from the homeland, adapting to a new culture, public healthcare, housing issues, food, weather, religion, prejudice and racism. This part, also, focuses on family ties and how this migration movement has challenged their relationships with their families and friends. Also, it will analyze how social interaction with the locals in the host country and in the home country in case of return migration challenges the migrant's efforts to construct his own position in the host/home country.

The third area of empirical enquiry explores the question about the migrants' lived experience in Scotland and after returning back to Poland in terms of social provision and policy. It examines the challenges and opportunities of the migrants in terms of social provision and political attitudes. It also seeks to find out how the migrants perceive the governments in both host and home countries have answered their needs as migrants/ return migrants and also how migrants might react to the challenge posed by Brexit.

To sum up, the three main research questions of this thesis are:

1. What challenges and opportunities do Polish migrants face in Scotland and in Poland in case of return migration?
2. How do they react to and cope with these challenges?
3. How does the host/home country approach these issues in the eyes of migrants, and how will Brexit affect migrants' settlement or further movement in the near future?

1.4 Significance of the research

The primary reason for selecting this topic was the social phenomenon of extensive Polish migration itself at the macro-level from Poland to Scotland. By conducting interviews with young post-accession Polish migrants, I found an opportunity to create a discursive space in which they could take part themselves and have a chance to express their feelings towards their new lifestyle and the position they are in. Hence, in addition to the academic significance, this research embraces emotional values for migrants by giving them voice and chance to express their needs and challenges. The desire of individuals to take part in this research demonstrates how it lets them tell their stories as migrants who are contributing to their host country and their home country once return. The other positive point of this research is its main focus on Scotland. While the majority of the studies are on the Polish migrants within the whole UK or solely England, the data in this research will reveal the different lifestyle of these migrants in Scotland. Moreover, considering that Eastern Europeans are the fastest growing minority group in Scotland, there are several organizations and projects working on empowering them such as SSAMIS Organization and ESRC project. Therefore, the data provided by this research would also be a very useful source for these organizations and projects.

The literature review provided in the next chapter demonstrates that there are still various research shortages that have not yet been investigated in detail. Since Poland's accession to the European Union in May 2004 the body of literature on Eastern European migration to the UK, especially on migration of Poles to this country, has grown and is still thriving. However, among research focused on Polish migrants' narratives in Scotland and return migrants in Poland, there is still a gap of those trying to picture the lived experience of these migrants and their challenges and opportunities in various economic, social, and political aspects. While the economic aspect is the most studied one, social and political aspects have been neglected to a large extent. For instance, there is no research on issues relating to Polish migrants' social interaction with locals, and especially, the new challenge posed by Brexit which is a very recent phenomenon. This study is, therefore, a response to such shortages in the literature on the lived experience of Polish migrants.

Moreover, instead of focusing on the general experience of Polish migration at the macro-level, this research focuses on the migrants themselves as individuals and tries to address the gap in the existing literature by taking a new approach. By exploring the challenges and opportunities of both Polish immigrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland at a micro-level, the research gives an insight into their perception of "a better life", their expectations and motivations which had played a role in their migration decision-making. Based on the perception of "a better life" and drawing on the literature on "normality" which will be discussed in the chapter of the literature review, this study will analyze to what extent the migration has met their expectations and how close is the reality to the picture they had in mind before they migrate.

This study is also an exception within the studies of Polish migration as it focuses on the challenges and opportunities of both the Polish immigrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland in one single research. Therefore, this research is able to provide a valuable data by comparing the lived experiences of two ends of migration. It also approaches those matters that have been already studied, from a new perspective; for example, it studies the migrants' narratives on decision to migration to Scotland or to going back to Poland, their reaction to their new lifestyle, challenges and opportunities they have found, and how they cope with the barriers during their migration movement. Consequently, the study's goal is to build on former research in this area with the purpose of adding a new perspective.

1.5 Methodology

This section describes the research methods, strengths and limitations of the research. To meet the objectives, a qualitative approach was employed as the most suitable to investigate the challenges and opportunities of migration in this research. The research is based on an empirical study of young Polish immigrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland, aged between 20 to 35 who have migrated or return post- 2004. The research design includes two methods: structured questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. In the matter of geographical distribution of my respondents I selected the two big cities in Scotland and Poland: Glasgow in Scotland, and Krakow in Poland, since most migrants have moved and returned to bigger cities with better job opportunities. Further, an explanation on each method is provided as well as strengths and limitations of the research.

1.5.1 Questionnaires

Due to the qualitative nature of this research, the data gathered by questionnaires were collected solely for explanatory purposes. In total, 20 questionnaires were used. They provided a general premise for studying the social situation associated with the migration issue from homeland to Scotland and vice versa. They also served as a primary source for interviews by providing basic information on the interviewees, such as their age, marital status, and so on. The questionnaires were given to those, who were interested in being interviewed. The total number of ten questionnaires have been used in Scotland, and another ten in Poland.

1.5.2 Interviews

The data gathered by questionnaires, helped to build a clear plan regarding the main goal of the interviews. The questions were open-ended to share control with interviewees and let them feel free to speak. The interviews took place over the period of two years in Scotland and in Poland. They were conducted over the hours of in-depth interviews in the public spaces such as cafes. In total, 20 interviews were conducted: ten in Scotland, and ten in Poland.

1.6 Ethics, strengths, and limitations

The most sensitive part of my case study was the interviews, since talking about the challenges and opportunities of migrants deals directly with their private life. One of the

limitations of this method is the participants' trust, control, and expectations (Bryman, 2008). However, my student status was very helpful, as experience has proved that student interviewers get larger response compared to non-student interviewers (Denzing& Lincoln, 2000: 650). Also, my migrant status in the UK let the participants feel more open, as they believed as a migrant, I have experienced the same challenges as them. The general positive attributes of my methods were: a relatively large sample, and anonymity of the participants. Although, it should be noted that, 20 samples are still not enough to generalize the results to all migrants.

Personal biases and preconceptions (Bryman, 2008) were the main limitation of my research. While I tried not to infuse any personal bias on purpose in my research, but I was very focused on non-economic opportunities of migrants. The interview questions were quite objective when asking about their challenges and opportunities, but my concern is that since I expected the response to be more social-based, my tone may have encouraged the interviewees to respond with the answer that I expected to hear.

Fortunately, no language barriers were met, as all of my interviewees were fluent in English, and in case of misunderstanding, I tried to use my knowledge of Polish language which was enough to clarify the points.

1.7 Overview of the research structure

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 2 presents a theoretical background for the research in order to place this research within the existing literature on the lived experience of Polish migrants, their economic and non-economic reasons to migrate to the UK or to return to Poland, and the notion of a 'better life' in the context of the post-accession Polish migration. Chapter 4 discusses the methodology, including a rationale for a chosen research subject, the research location review, contextualization of the research sample, research methods and their limitations, and ethics. Chapter 5 is dedicated to research findings. The chapter outlines the challenges and opportunities of Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland. The challenges and opportunities of each group of migrants is discussed in three themes: 1) economic challenges and employment opportunities; 2) social and cultural challenges and opportunities; 3) political challenges. Chapter 5 highlights the conclusion and contributions of this thesis to the conceptualization of lived experience of Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland.

2. Chapter Two- Review of the Existing Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature which has explored the reasons why Polish migrants move to the UK/Scotland and why they return to Poland. In the first part of this chapter, the development of migration theories will be reviewed starting with those where economic reasons seem to be the most important ones. This section will be followed with a discussion of the non-economic determinants to migrate, the focus of which is mainly on social aspects of migration. The next parts of the chapter are about the economic and non-economic incentives to return respectively. Studying migrants' motivations to migrate and return clarifies what kind of opportunities they expect to gain by their migration and what challenges they may face during their movement and settlement. Where possible, relevant examples from the case of Polish migration will be referenced with regard to each theory. The following section will review the concept of "normal" and "better life" which has been looked at in relation to Polish migrants. Afterwards, the literature on post-accession Polish migrants' characteristics in the UK and in Poland will be reviewed. This theoretical analysis will be followed by an overview of the post-accession Polish migrants' lifestyle in Scotland and return migrants in Poland. The chapter will end with concluding remarks which will highlight the gaps of the literature that will be filled by this research.

2.2 Economic Determinants to Migrate

Several reasons have led Poland to sustain a lower standard of living than the UK and other Western European countries such as being under the rule of totalitarian regimes for many years, the transition period and move to a market economy. Hence, moving to a more prosperous country in the EU offers a chance to earn notably more than at home. The decision to migrate to a particular country, either for a short or long term, involves a set of pull and push elements. Thus, it is not surprising that a significant body of literature has grown around this subject. In studying migration's motivations and causes, many scholars have focused merely on economic causes among Poles to move to the UK such as Salt and Okolski 2014; Szwabe (n.d.); Cook, Dwyer, and Waite 2010; Pollard, Latorre, and Sriskandarajah 2008; Cizkowicz, Holda, and Sowa 2007. While there are no definite

influential factors in Polish migrants' decision to come to Scotland (or to the UK in a more general sense) there is a number of potential push and pull factors that can be analyzed, such as minimum wage, unemployment rate, and GDP. This pull-push approach cannot be regarded as a proper economic theory because of its lack of accuracy, wide range of different elements, and its static nature (De Haas 2010). However, it can be an appropriate tool for exploring the reasons and incentives of Polish migrants in this research. In addition, there is no one particular migration theory predominantly accepted and able of describing the motives of migration, rather there is a complex of theories developed independently but not contradictory from one another (World Bank 2006: 33; Massey 1999: 47; Salt & Okolski 2014:30). Therefore, within explanations of economic motives of Polish migration to the UK, scholars have based their arguments on three main migration theories: 1-neo-classical theory, 2- dual labor theory, and 3- human capital theory. In this section, each of these theories has been discussed with regard to their related economic push-pull factor.

2.2.1 Wage Differentials in the Light of Neo-Classical Migration Theory

The findings from several pieces of research have taken a neo-classical approach towards the post-enlargement outward migration from Poland (Szwabe n.d; Hicks 1932; Cizkowicz et al. 2007; Blanchflower et al. 1994; Fihel, Kaczmarczyk & Okolski 2006, Cook, Dwyer, & Waite 2010). According to this theory international migration is subject to the wage rates between countries (Massey et al. 1999). Within this approach it is believed that migrants act in a rational way, that is, they tend to enhance their efficiency and are searching suitable locations for proper usage of the gained human capital (Fihel et al. 2006: 4). As the real wage differential seems to be the main cause of the international labor migration, the neo-classical theory is perceived to be one of the most important theories in explaining the East-West migration in the European Union. This theory defines labor mobility as one of the primary means for restoring the economic balance between countries (Szwabe n.d.: 1). This seems especially true in the case of Polish migration to the UK where there exists an uneven economic balance due to the high difference in exchange rates and purchasing power. The finding in the literature claims that between the years 2001-2003, the minimum wage in the UK was more than three

times higher than in Poland (Szwabe n.d: 10), and though the wage differentials declined in the post-accession period, wages in Poland were still far less than in the UK (Salt & Okolski 2014: 21; Fihel, Kaczmarczyk, & Okolski 2006: 49). As a matter of fact, a great migration flow of Poles to the UK occurred at the time of a rapid economic development in Poland, when the unemployment rate started to decrease and wages began to rise (Fihel et al. 2007 as cited in Salt & Okolski 2014). This can be explained by push-pull approach which is in line with neo-classical migration theory. Based on this approach 'pull factors' in the UK have been stronger than the 'stick factors' in Poland (Salt & Okolski 2014: 20; Szwaben.d: 2) which consequently resulted in a bigger outflow of Polish migrants.

Relying on neo-classical theory, scholars have made clear arguments for clarifying one of the reasons of East-West migration, but there are some drawbacks to their approach. The main criticism is directed at the fact that these scholars have put the flow of labor migrants across borders in the same line with the flow of capital. In this sense, they have ignored the complexity of human decision-making for migration which goes beyond the mere economic profit increase. In other words, as a universal pattern, various factors are involved in human mobility not only one that is wage differential. The neo-classical migration theory demonstrates migrants as 'atomistic, utility maximizing individuals' and ignores other migration incentives such as 'households, families, and communities' (De Haas 2010: 231). Consequently, this single-incentive approach creates a gap between intention and real planning for emigration, or in other words between the concepts of "real" and "general" migratory potentials (Fihel et al. 2006: 67). Also, in the neo-classical approach migration is considered merely instrumentally which focuses only on labor market mechanism and pays no heed to other effective structures (Massey et al. 1999) such as households and institution. Last but not least, within this theory only permanent migration is taken into account, and it fails to point at other spatial migration forms such as return migration and temporal mobility (Fihel et al.2006: 5).

2.2.2. Employment Rate Differentials in the Light of Dual Labor Market Theory and Human Capital Approach

Alongside wage differentials, the employment rate in countries also plays an important push-pull role in migration decision-making. This determinant can be analyzed from two perspectives: 1- the high employment rate and labor demand in the UK that served as a pull factor, and 2- the low employment rate in Poland besides low wages that served as a push factor.

According to the UK National Statistical Office, in June 2001, 667,000, and in May 2006, around 600,000 jobs were accessible in the UK labor market (Fihel et al. 2006: 55). These numbers imply a high demand for labor in the UK and that the huge inflow of A8 migrant workers did not fully respond to the UK workforce needs. This fact suggests that the connection between migration and the host country's labor market is far more sophisticated than that offered by the neo-classical migration theory, and is close to the idea presented by the dual labor market theory. Based on this approach, there are two types of labor sectors in a country: a primary one with a secure employment and wage condition; and a secondary one with an insecure and low wage conditions (Fihel et al. 2006: 7; Massey et al. 1999). While nationals avoid the secondary type of jobs, migrants take interest in taking them (Fihel et al. 2006:7-8) due to the fact that they usually consider these jobs a temporary duty. They, therefore, care less about the low prestige and social position of these jobs (Piore 1979, 1986; Massey et al. 1999).

As already mentioned in the section about post-accession Polish migrants' characteristics, the majority of these migrants take low-skilled jobs in the UK while possessing high levels of education. The low quality of the jobs taken by Poles (or A8 migrants in general) is mentioned in several findings (Stella et al. 2016: 15; Trevena 2009; Salt & Okolski 2014; Fihel & Kaczmarczyk 2009; Anderson et al. 2006). Conradson and Latham (2005) have called these types of migrants 'middling transnationals'. This new inflow of 'middling transnationals' has been welcomed by the employers throughout the UK as they struggled to fill the so called "3D, (dirty, dangerous, and dull) jobs" (Favell 2008: 704) with native workers prior to the economic downturn (Cook et al. 2010: 9-13; Dench et al. 2006; Spencer et al. 2007). In addition, the high unemployment rate in Poland is clearly a push factor motivating them to leave and find a job elsewhere. The fact that the countries with the highest level of

unemployment, that is, Poland, Lithuania, and Slovakia, have the largest number of emigrants is good proof of this theory. However, one of the limitations of this approach is that it bases its analysis on the macro level and fails to respond to the question regarding the elements provoking migratory behavior. To make it more clear, in the case of Polish migrants, the dual labor market theory clarifies the UK market's need for labor in secondary jobs. However, it does not analyze the migratory behavior of individuals and the reason why they accept taking low-skilled jobs while possessing a high education. Consequently, the general and explanatory nature of the research done by Salt & Okolski 2014, Szwabe n.d., Cook et al. 2010, and De Haas 2010 that highly rely on dual labor market and neo-classical approach face limitations in examining the migratory behavior of immigrants as individuals.

The human capital approach or neo-classical microeconomic theory is a complementary piece for the dual labor market theory. It looks at migration decision-making at a more micro level and focuses on migratory behavior of individuals. Within this theory the migration decision-making is based on the cost and benefit calculation regarding mobility and immobility (Massey et al. 1999). Here, migration is seen as an investment decision made with the desire to maximize pay for the given level of skills (Sjaastad 1962). Therefore, based on this approach, migrants make a comparison between the home and host country and take into account such factors as employment, migration costs, earnings and skills and calculate the expected results of the movement. Based on this explanation, some scholars have made sense of the reason why Polish immigrants take low-skilled jobs in the UK. In their findings, Pollard et al. (2008) declare that the job's compatibility with migrant's education is not essential for the decision to migrate. As a matter of fact, a job being well-paid was more connected with the job satisfaction gained than its compatibility with migrant's qualifications (Pollard et al. 2008: 9-10). Therefore, even low-skilled jobs in the UK/Scotland were still attractive to Poles as they could make much more money there compared to Poland (Stella et al. 2016: 15; Pollard et al. 2008). Fihel et al. (2006: 53) have looked at this phenomenon in a negative way and have argued that Poles have lower rates of return to their human capital compared to natives mainly because of the 'ethnic discrimination' in access to more qualified jobs and not because of their qualification gap. In contrast to this idea, the findings by Cook et al.

(2010), and Parutis (2014) suggest that the key to the more qualified jobs is simply linguistic skills and it is not related to the systematic discrimination. High level of English language skills serve as a stepping stone to move from 'any job' to a 'better job' in search of a 'dream job' (Cook et al. 2010: 14-17; Parutis 2014: 36)

2.2.3 GDP Rates and Other Economic Factors

Before the accession to the EU, during the years 2001-2003 the GDP per capita in the UK was around 2-4 times higher than in Poland (Szwabe n.d.: 11). After accession, Poland, alongside with Slovakia and Lithuania were the three countries with the lowest GDPs per capita (Pollard et al. 2008: 41) which clarifies the economic reason of A8 migration more.

All in all, according to the literature focusing on economic motivations of migration, the inflow of Poles to the UK can be justified by Poland's economic situation. The most significant determinants are the situation in Poland's labor market and the impacts related to the accession to the EU. Some other factors such as the strength of the British economy and British currency have also been regarded as the main pull factors, as it allowed Poles to earn and save a higher amount of money compared to Poland. The neo-classical model, pull-push approach, dual labor theory and human capital approach create the general feeling that the economic determinants can clarify most of the variance in migratory behavior of Polish immigrants. However, all of them ignore the social context of migratory behavior that will be discussed in the following section.

2.3. Non-economic Determinants to Migrate

In contrast to the opinions of the scholars who have based their arguments on material-based migration theories, there are several scholars who have focused on social and non-monetary aspects of Polish migration to the UK. Favell (2011: 694) rejects the idea that migration decision-making is purely due to the simple cost-benefit calculation and that it derives only from a "rational" wish for financial progress. Also, in contrast to the findings of Salt & Okolski (2014) who decline non-economic factors such as 'woman liberation, adventure, or curiosity' (2014: 29), Engbersen (2012) talks about "fluid migrants", who are defined by Eade et al. (2007) as young and adventurous "vagabonds" moving without any certain schedule and

believing in “intentional unpredictability”. Such a definition reflects a sense of irrationality which is in contrast to the rational inclination of the cost/benefit approach. Pollard et al (2008: 5) also argue that the post-enlargement migration is not just an economic phenomenon: ‘many come to the UK to learn English, start a business, live in a more socially liberal society or simply to broaden their horizons’. Accordingly, Parutis (2014: 37) claims that though some of her respondents are still classified as economic migrants, they have not migrated only for financial purposes, but also to experience life abroad, explore the world or learn English. These arguments point to a particular set of motivations for migration that do not necessarily center on economic achievements. Conradson and Latham (2005: 288) have termed this group of migrants ‘trans-migrants’ whose movement is dependent on a complex set of personal impulses, among which monetary motives are not necessarily central. Their desire to migrate arose not solely due to wage differentials, but because of other non-financial rewards (Drinkwater et al., 2010: 73). Especially in the context of free movement in the European Union, the movement of individuals does not have to be necessarily economically motivated (Massey et al., 1999; Borjas 1994). With regard to this, Luthra et al. (2014: 11) argues that “the Free Movement” in the EU and “technological advancements” have reduced the neoclassical cost/benefit sense of movements and hence, the Polish migrant is far from being a mere economic actor. They have categorized non-economic migrants in three groups: 1- family migrants, whose migration decision-making is highly dependent on family reasons; 2- students, who are considered educational migrants; and 3- adventurers, who migrate “just because” and represent the smallest group of non-economic migrants (ibid: 43). Burrell (2009) believes that highly educated individuals more likely migrate for non-economic reasons.

Based on the mentioned arguments in this section, the non-economic motivations to migrate can be classified into two groups: 1- non-economic motivation to migrate for social capital improvement, and 2- non economic motivation to migrate for human capital improvement. These two classifications will be discussed next.

2.3.1 Social Capital Improvement as a Non-Economic Motivation to Migrate

Bourdieu (1985: 248) has defined social capital as some actual or virtual resources that an individual or a group can receive by having a strong network of more or less institutionalized connections with other individuals (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Ryan et al. (2008: 673) and

Waldinger et al. (2003: 11-12) state that social networks are largely considered a significant source of social capital, as they help migrants to gain social support. In this sense, they have regarded social networks as synonymous with social capital. This is mainly because these networks have a strong effect on migration process from the very beginning when it is at the decision-making stage until returning to the home country (Guilmoto and Sandrom 2001). They help migrants gain social support by providing information on various matters from finding accommodation to gathering social capital (Naperla et al. 2010: 60) and hence, by reducing costs and risks of migration (Massey et al. 1987; Boyd 1989: 639; Fihel et al. 2006: 11). Therefore, social networks play a significant role in perpetuating and encouraging migration. Napierala et al. (2010: 60) argues that the main factor resulting in migration flows from Poland to Norway was the existence of social networks. The same fact applies to Scotland as both Moskal's findings (2007: 158) and SSAMIS report (interim report 2016: 1) state that by introducing Scotland a friendly place, informal networks of friends and relations residing in Scotland have been an encouraging element for many Polish migrants to move there. By studying the employment experiences of Eastern European migrants in London, Csedö (2010: 91) has found that social networks are important in helping professional and graduates access the labor market. This implies that the channels to employment are also as dependent on social networks as non-market mechanisms. However, based on Csedö's findings, compared to low-skilled migrants, professional persons are more independent when looking for jobs in the host country (ibid).

While the above-mentioned scholars have used social capital mainly in relation to migration, Putnam (2000) has studied social capital in the context of local communities and neighborhood. According to his "constrict theory" he argues that the more ethnically diverse the community, the less trust among its members (2007:147). He further gives an example of Americans who are suspicious of not only people who do not look like them, but also of the ones who do (2007: 148). Similarly, Spencer et al. (2007: 673) also point at the exclusion of newly arrived migrants from long-established associations due to the feeling of distrust towards them. Siara (2009) has referred to the lack of harmony in social networks in her research on recent Polish migrants in London and how disparagingly Polish migrants treat each other. Garapiach (2007) also illustrates the tension between the old and new flows of Polish migrants and has called the existing suspicion among them a "discursive hostility". In contrast to these negative approaches towards social capital in correlation with migration, Ryan et al. (2008: 675) suggest

that social capital is the spirit of communities that is especially related to the migrants' social ties. However, in their findings, Ryan et al. (2008: 679-680) do not totally deny the existence of distrust among Polish migrants despite the practical, informational, and emotional support afforded by them. These scholars maintain that migrants often positively relate to specific groups of networks such as families and friends. Portes (1995) also believes that rather than being limited to the local context, migrant networks can spread beyond geographical boundaries and construct transnational ties. This is especially easier today thanks to the ease of communication provided by mobile phones, Skype (Dekker & Engbersen 2016), and cheap flights (Williams & Balaz 2009). However, developing networks are not all possible by technological means and requires more effort from migrants. Cox (2002) has argued that access to the greater network can be learned and employed. This is where the association between social capital and cultural capital comes up which is discussed below.

2.3.2 Cultural Capital Improvement as a Non-Economic Motivation to Migrate

Bourdieu (1986) has defined cultural capital as symbolic advantages that an individual owns which may include accent and behavior and can also be found in the form of educational skills. Ryan et al. (2008: 676) has argued that migrants who expand some essential skills such as language, are able to use these skills in order to access a wider social network beyond their ethnic group. Thus, the development of cultural capital (language skills & educational qualifications) can develop social capital by facilitating wider networking. This is, actually, the ability of social capital which lets it be converted into other forms of capital, such as financial and cultural (Fihel et al. 2006: 11). After becoming a member of a social network, migrants find the opportunity to gain social capital and then translate it into other forms of capital to boost their position in the host society (Gurak & Cases 1992; Bourdieu 1986). In this sense, each migrant relies on a special type of network according to his or her needs. As an example, a highly-skilled migrant counts on occupational or industrial networks to access labor market (Findlay & Garrick 1990) rather than on families and friends. This is mainly because professional networks help migrants access higher positions, while relying on ethnic ties, migrants end up in lower positions (Csedö 2010: 91).

The research done by Luthra et al. (2014: 20) on migration motivations and integration provides a very rich data on migrants' migration purposes. They have studied a remarkably

large-scale of respondents in four European countries. Doing research in four European countries has let them gain functional data without country-specific biases and therefore, they have gathered useful data about main characteristics of Polish migration and about various migration experiences among Poles. Their findings show that migrants who migrate for gaining language and cultural skills usually face lower wage jobs or even unemployment. However, they may still achieve their migration goal. This implies that there are migrants who migrate based on anti-materialistic reasons. They decide to move abroad, to go away from family and work, only for self-realization purposes, to fulfill a dream and to attain a more worthwhile life. These type of migrants have been termed “developing cosmopolitans” (Datta 2009), “free global movers” (Favell & Smith 2006), “lifestyle migrants” (Benson & O’Reilly 2009) who go after a ‘good life’, or “searchers” who desire to ‘experience a new way of life, meet new people & improve English language skills’ (Eade et al. 2007: 34).

As for economic motivations, some scholars have studied non-economic motivations in the context of pull-push theory. Studying post-EU enlargement migration to and from the UK, Pollard et al. (2006: 43) have found that one of the main non-economic pull factors for Polish migrants has been learning English language. They argue that the initial reason to move to the UK is to learn or improve their English. They have found that one in six Polish migrants has mentioned adventure, experience living abroad and new culture as his/her key motivation to move to the UK (ibid). Szewczyk (2013: 17-18) argues that individuals who decide to migrate for non-monetary goals, for example to get a better education (King 2002: 92 as cited in Szewczyk 2013) are under the impact of some stimulations, and therefore, can be embedded in a “pushed category” and should not be considered ‘interchangeable homogenous commodities’ (Juhasz 1999 as cited in Skeldon. et al. 2000: 36).

Attention has also been paid to the duration of migration and its influence on the improvement of cultural capital. Several studies have shown that the longer migrants stay in the UK, the more they appreciate social lives with Britons (Spencer et al. 2007: 58) as they find an opportunity to integrate better into the British society. Also, the longer they live in the UK, they find the opportunity to construct deeper social networks with other migrants, usually from the same country (Burrell 2010: 301), and to get a better education which helps them to get integrated

better as they become more ‘culturally interested’ (Parey & Waldinger 2011) by living closer to natives (Luthra et al. 2014: 20).

Conclusion

In general, economic reasons have comprehensively, but not surprisingly, been regarded as the most notable factors resulting in wide-scale migration to the UK. Interestingly, however, there has been substantial heed paid to other driving elements and to various migration patterns that question the dominance of purely economic factors. In contrast to the economic migration which is provoked by material condition, non-economic migrants, for instance “lifestyle migrants” migrate either part-time or full-time to those countries that indicate a better quality of life for them (Benson & O’Reilly 2009: 609). Persons moving for experience (King 2002) are content with ‘getting by’ economically and are more interested in getting involved socially (Luthra et al. 2014: 20). As the literature review in this section shows, the patterns of young Polish migration are not embedded only in economic terms but rather as upgrading the social and cultural capital by offering new adventures to migrants or by letting them live in a more “normal” place and giving them skills that will be useful for them later in life in Scotland or back home.

2.4 Economic Determinants to Return

So far, the discussion has been on migrants’ incentives to migrate to the UK in the context of economic and non-economic benefits of migration. This section will make a slight shift towards analyzing return motivations among Polish migrants. According to the literature on return migrants, the most common economic incentives to return can be summarized in three areas: 1- economic recession in the host country, 2- increased earning potentials thanks to the human capital accumulated abroad, and 3- better life quality and consumption in home country.

The economic recession in the host country as a push factor reflects the buffer theory which claims that migrants return to the source country at the time of economic recession in the host country. In his research, Dobson et al. (2009: 4) have tested the validity of this theory. Their findings though, contradict the theory as they have found out that employment and economic growth are not the only elements affecting migration. Several findings similarly suggest that the economic recession in the host country does not necessarily mean that migrants would be better

off if they returned home since their country is still economically weaker (Dobson et al. 2009 : 9; Glorius 2013: 222). In such cases, low-skilled migrants are more likely to return than high-skilled migrants (Borjas 1987; Klein-Hitpaß 2013). This can be especially justified when the migrant's human capital gathered in the host country (for example learning a foreign language) is in high demand and 'super-transferable' (Dustmann et al. 2007: 20) in the home country and enables the migrant to raise his income (Glorious 2013: 223; Dustmann et al. 2007). Olesen (2002) and Wolfeil (2013) have termed this process a brain return/gain where the home country benefits the return migrants' skills gained abroad. In contrast to this idea, Gitmez (1984: 120) maintains that the small-scale investment of the migrant abroad does not lead to the socio-economic development of the home country. In response to Gitmez's idea (1984), Rogers (1984: 294), relying on his 'normative expectations' argument, claims that no one could expect those migrants who escaped weak economic situation in their home country to return as innovators of social change.

Taking a structural approach (Cassarino 2015: 257), Anacka et al (2013: 293-4) argue that the migrants' situation on labor market in both sending and receiving country has significant influence on migrants' decision to return and if one or more of such elements as the job compatibility with qualifications, personal development at work, and the level of remuneration does not meet migrants' expectations they would start searching for work on the home labor market. This is in contrast to the finding of White et al. (2008: 1478) which demonstrates that occupations and qualifications are not the main influence on migrants' future plans, regardless of them being low-skilled or high-skilled.

Another factor persuading migrants to return is that if the consumption prices are significantly lower in the home country, the migrant would return despite the lower wage (Glorius 2013: 223; Dustmann et al. 2007). In this case, the valuable currency or the higher wage of the host country increases the purchase power of the migrant in the home country and induces him to return (Glorius 2013: 13). Accordingly, Dustmann et al. (2007: 12) argue that when consumption in the host country produces less pleasure than the consumption in the home country, the benefits of the migration declines and costs may enhance. This, therefore, may cause return migration.

Alike migrants' motivations to migrate, the migrants' motivations to return also are not limited to economic factors and there are various non-economic elements involved as will be discussed further.

2.5 Non-Economic Determinants to Return

As non-economic factors play a crucial role in migrants' decisions to return home, personal and emotional aspects of their decision is more bolded than rational ones. There are several non-economic factors inducing migrants to return, the most common of which are social networks, cultural familiarity in the home country, and missing family and friends.

Since accession to the EU in 2004, the role of social networks in motivating the emigration from Poland has declined (Anacka et al. 2010). However, they still play an important role in return migration (Anacka et al. 2013: 291). Glorius (2013: 224) maintains that if migrants keep in regular touch with their social context back home by frequent visits and communications, they will have a smoother way in case of return migration and subsequent reintegration. In his research, Moser (2005), points at how push factors in Germany has made pull factors in the origin country highlighted for migrants. Moser (2005) found a strong influence of social capital in motivating return migration and argued that migrants with weak social network in Germany struggled with solving some country-specific issues and behavior rules which made the daily life harder for them in Germany and therefore, made remigration attractive. There are several other scholars who also agree on the fact that social networks enhance the possibility of return migration by increasing the availability of information resources and support (Cassarino 2015: 265; Portes 1997; Boyd 1989: 650). In contrast to these scholars, White et al. (2008: 1499) denies the strong impact of social networks on return migration and believes that 'networks facilitate settlement, rather than return'.

Glorius (2013: 297) has also mentioned another factor inducing remigration which is cultural 'familiarity'. There are some certain cultural motivators in the home country that serve as pull factors for migrants such as weather, food, access to local newspaper and etc. (Glorius 2013: 297). She also argues that despite good economic integration, failing in cultural integration in the host country due to the strong sense of belonging to the culture of the home country, leads to the decrease in migrant's life quality. Consequently, the sense of 'being the other/stranger' in the host country enhances the strength of these cultural motivators in the home country and

makes migrant return (ibid). This type of return has been termed as “return of failure” by Cassarino 2015: 257). This is again in contrast to White et al. (2008: 1497) findings which demonstrate that less integrated migrants, for example the ones with lower language skills, do not necessarily return. Their findings also show that it sometimes even works other way round and less skilled and less integrated migrants with weaker networks are sometimes even more insistent in remaining in Britain.

One factor, on which all literature agrees on, is “the proximity to family” as the key motive for migrants to return. Fomina, et al. (2008: 14) argues that “homesickness” and “family and friends” were the main reasons for migrants to return. Similarly, Glorius’s (2013: 292) and Lesinka’s (2013: 82) findings declare that missing family and friends has been the main reason for many of their respondents to return.

2.6 “Normal” or “Better” Life in the Context of Post-Accession Polish Migration

The concept of “normality” and a “better life” is one of the widely researched subjects in regards with the post-accession Polish migration. The literature on the Eastern European nationals show the connection between the post-communist citizens wishing for “normality” and their eagerness to be “normal” (Galasinska & Kozłowska, 2009:87). As an ‘abstract’ concept (Rabikowska 2010: 8) normality cannot be conceptualized without being measured in a wider context (ibid: 10). Researchers, therefore, have conceptualized this concept in relation to various contexts, such as: affordability and consumption (McGhee, Heath, & Trevena 2012, Bauman 2007, Rabikowska 2010, White 2009, Trevena 2009, 2013, Romejko 2009, Salt & Okolski 2014, Kusek 2014), the myth of the West (Rabikowska 2010, Rausing 2002, Kozłowska 2010), and Identity (Rabikowska 2010, Rausing 2002).

Most of the literature on “normality” agree on the importance of a sense of material deprivation among post-communist Polish migrants who cannot afford everyday consumer products in Poland, which is in contradict to their life experience in the UK. Consequently, migration is considered a “normal” source of income for Polish migrants which assures a “normal” living standard (White 2009:15), as it transfers them from “failed consumers” (Bauman 2007) to active ones with excess earnings in the UK (Mc

Ghee, Heath, & Trevena, 2012: 721). Galasinska and Kozłowska have defined “normality” as “having enough, making ends meet with even modest pay” (Galasinska and Kozłowska 2009:96). This is, what Oliver et al. (2010: 9) call ‘*consumption-led migration; the consumption of a better life often involving improved material conditions*’. However, there are different points of view in literature regarding the words “better” and “normal”. Some researchers, such as Galasinska & Kozłowska (2009), Rabikowska (2010), White (2009), and Kusek (2014) argue that Polish migrants desire to migrate to search for a “normal”, rather than a “better” life focusing merely on economic aspects of migration. While others, such as Trevena (2009, 2012, 2013), McGhee & Heath (2012) believe that Polish migrants are not only searching for normality, but also a better and happier livelihood. They draw this argument on migrants’ eagerness to improving their personal priorities, such as family and education, alongside their income. Szewczyk adds the debate of “happiness” on the subject of “normalcy” and gives an example of graduates who lead a “normal happy life”. He argues that happiness can be sought in a “happy family life, a satisfying job, and financial security” (Szewczyk 2013:228). Flynn et al. (2017: 58) also make a connection between social security and normality and argue that these two elements complete each other as they both meet the emotional and material needs of migrants and play an important role in migrants’ future decision regarding settlement. They also point at the element of happiness and declare that “feeling of contentment and calmness” at work and the desirable surrounding environment provides emotional feelings of security which are compatible with migrants’ perceptions of a more normal life (ibid: 61).

Rausing (2002) has analyzed the concept of “normality” in correlation with the consumption of Western consumer goods in Estonia. In contrast to above-mentioned authors, Rausing argues that the consumption of expensive Western products during the transitional period was conceived as returning to “normality” which had nothing to do with affordability (Rausing 2002: 127). Her argument highlights the importance of the myth of the West, rather than the relatively smaller income in Eastern Europe. During the post-war period after 1945, the desire of the westward movement for seeking employment became a normality among East Europeans (Romejko 2009). Rabikowska states that during the post-war period, Eastern Europe has been experiencing a certain

inferiority in relation to the West, that is, what was considered “normal” in the West, was lacking in the East (Rabikowska 2010: 9). Therefore, “the West” has become a sign of “normality” for Eastern Europeans trying to make a connection between who they are to what they expect to be (Rabikowska 2010: 7-8). In her findings, Rabikowska argues that it is the idea of Western Utopia that outlines the inclination towards normality among migrants in various areas of life, such as religion and family (ibid: 11). Galasinska and Kozłowska (2009) maintain that as a Western country, UK is perceived a place where a “normal life”, as opposed to Poland, is achievable. Accordingly, Kozłowska calls Britain ‘a stable world of opportunity’, and “a land of happiness’ where having a normal and successful life is only dependent on one’s rational choice (Kozłowska 2010: 97-98). Migration to the UK is pictured as a ‘search for a better life, for something more, or something different to that on offer in Poland’ (Botteril 2012: 118).

The research done by Rabikowska (2010) takes a more unique approach towards the subject of “normality”. In her research, she makes a connection between the two concepts of “normality” and “identity”. She sees “normality” as an everyday reality that can change the migrants’ identity within the time they spend abroad. She argues that after facing different cultures and customs it is hard or even impossible for migrants to reconstruct a “normal home” (Rabikowska 2010: 6). For Rabikowska, a foreign culture and nation are defined as something “different” and even “abnormal” that are against the “normal home” (ibid). Both Kozłowska (2010) and Kusek (2014) study the relation between these two concepts in a different way. They believe that migration to the West is a gateway for Eastern Europeans to escape their past communist identity and move towards a more modern Western one to which they belong. Generally, Eastern Europeans strive to search for conditions contrary to those they had during communism (Kozłowska 2010: 21). In accordance to Kozłowska’s argument, Bauman states that normality in the West is a vision of a ‘better form of life which the ancient regime arrested in its growth’ (Bauman 2000: 14).

A very interesting and different data on normality is offered by Botteril. He believes that in fact, it was the assumption of ‘normal’ life in Poland that was a trigger for emigration. He argues that moving to the UK, is actually a break from normal life in

Poland (Botteril 2012: 125). In his findings he reveals that some of the returnees has expressed satisfaction at coming back to a 'normal life' as opposed to the migratory experience (ibid: 164). So while all the literature on normalcy have focused on the lives of migrants in the host country, Botteril fills the gap by looking at this concept in Poland. His work, therefore, provides a very rich and different data on this matter.

2.7 Characteristics of Post-Accession Polish migrants in the UK and Return Migrants in Poland

The characteristics of the post-2004 Polish migration consists of young, highly mobile, well-educated, with a relatively equal numbers of male and female migrants (with a slightly more male migrants). The majority of these migrants are single, and few of them have children (Moskal 2013: 162; Trevena 2009: 12); however, many of them have moved to Scotland/UK with a partner or other family members (Stella et al. 2016: 4). They are predominantly economic migrants whose priority of migration is employment (Salt & Okolski 2014: 3; Stella et al. 2016: 4). Although, as it will be explored later in this chapter migrants' motivations are more complicated and are not only economic-based.

The post-accession migration to the UK attracted very young and highly skilled individuals. At the time of EU enlargement almost half of these migrants aged 25 and less (Moskal 2013: 162; Fihel and Kaczmarczyk 2009: 31). One of the reasons of the high levels of education was because of the educational boom of the early 1990s which resulted in increase of tertiary level graduates in Poland (Trevena 2009: 16-17). However, despite their high level of education, the majority of them take low-skilled jobs in the UK, as they move there right after their graduation in Poland without any professional experience (Fihel et al. 2008; Trevena 2009; Drinkwater et al. 2006; Moskal 2013). Therefore, the main professions of this group of immigrants are mostly in such industries as hospitality, agriculture, manufacturing, building, and construction where they work longer hours with less payment compared to the locals (Trevena 2009:15; Moskal 2013: 162).

From a geographical perspective, 56% of Polish migrants come from small towns and rural areas, predominantly from southern region of Poland where there is

less job opportunities (Burrell 2016; Fihel&Kaczmarczyk 2009: 30-31). They have migrated to almost all regions of the UK, mostly to London where it is more likely to find a job (Pollard et al. 2008: 6). Because of a big demand for labor in low-skilled jobs in Scotland and also due to its demographic issues, Scotland has become the second region in the UK after England that has attracted Polish migrants and therefore, young Polish migrants are overrepresented there (Scotland Census 2011).

The characteristics of return migrants are not much different from those who emigrate. The interesting fact is that most of the returnees are those who emigrated from Poland before the accession (Kaczmarczyk & Lesinska 2013: 30). According to research done by Fialkowska and Szczepanski (2012) based on LFS (Labor Force Survey) data, compared to the overall population, the post-2000 return migrants are younger and better educated. Most of them are single and the number of male returnees is relatively more (Kaczmarczyk & Lesinska 2013: 30; Anacka 2013). However, their chances in the Polish labor market is not higher than the immobile individuals. Even, the percentage of unemployment among returnees is slightly higher than others (Fialkowska & Szczepanski 2012). This issue has arisen from the low-skilled job experiences in the UK that has prevented migrants to develop their professional skills. However, the return migrants have richer personality in terms of open-mindedness and being more flexible for a new lifestyle (Kaczmarczyk & Lesinska 2013: 31).

2.8 An Overview of Polish Migrants' Lifestyle in Scotland and Return Migrants in Poland

There is a limited body of literature on the life experience of Polish migrants in Scotland. Most of pieces of research have been done between the years 2007 and 2009. However, the number of research in this area is growing and several scholars have recently contributed to this subject such as Flynn et al. (2017), Trevena et al. (2013, 2016), and Pietka et al. (2016) and various interim reports have been recently published by SSAMIS projects². The study on return

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migrants is even more scarce. The focus of this literature is mainly on the challenges migrants face with housing, hostility, access to services, employment, health care, and cultural adaption.

2.8.1 Housing

Most of the studies have found that A8 migrants in Scotland are accommodated largely in private rented accommodation (Orchard et al. 2007; Stevenson 2007; Rolfe et al. 2009). The majority of these migrants experience homelessness upon arrival to Scotland (SSAMIS second interim report 2016: 1; Stevenson 2007) and have stayed as a guest with a friend or relative until they found an accommodation (Robinson et al. 2007: 16). Due to the lack of information and language barriers (SSAMIS second interim report 2016:1; Orchard et al 2007: 35) accessing private accommodation became the simplest option for them (Tribal 2008). Several studies also refer to the poor quality of migrants' houses and detail the poor condition and furnishing, hygiene and existence of overcrowding in this accommodation (Orchard et al. 2007; De Lime et al 2007). Polish migrants, especially, have been reported to occupy the lower end of the housing-quality spectrum (Robinson et al. 2006: 26; Audit Commission 2007). However, many of A8 migrants have been provided with social housing in low-demand areas in Scotland such as Aberdeen (Rolfe et al 2009: 63) and they positively relate to their housing condition in Scotland compared to Poland (Rolfe et al. 2009: 339). However, in regards to social housing as the best option, there exists some concerns about the accommodation's location and its quality (SSAMIS second interim report 2016: 1).

2.8.2 Hostility and abuse

The evidence from several studies acknowledge that Scotland is one of the most welcoming regions throughout the UK (Rolfe et al. 2009: 43; McCollum et al. 2014: 83). According to the 2011 BSA survey the Scottish public has consistently expressed a less hostile attitude towards migrants. McCollum et al. (2014: 88) justifies this stance by giving two reasons: 1- the small migrant population, and 2- demographic issues in Scotland. He mentions that Scotland is facing a low demographic rate and is in need for migrants to improve its demographic structure and its economy.

▫ Social support and migration in Scotland

According to the literature, few cases of discrimination are mentioned in the literature, especially towards the LGBT migrants (Stella et al. 2016: 4).

2.8.3 Access to services

There exist several studies that indicate that migrants are not fully aware of how to access services. This may be either because of their lack of access to advice or little demand for some specific services (Rolfe et al. 2009: 89). Migrants experience difficulties in accessing such services as ‘childcare, debt services, business start-up assistance, and language services’ (Stevenson 2007: 39). Lack of services has also been problematic for migrants living in rural areas of Scotland, such as lack of transport links and infrastructure (Flynn et al. 2017: 63).

2.8.4 Employment

As mentioned several times, the majority of A8 migrants have low-skilled jobs despite their high qualifications. Most of the literature indicate four main reasons why migrants end up in low-skilled jobs: 1- language barriers (SSAMIS second interim report 2016:1; Rolfe et al. 2009: 26; Pietka 2013: 141; Metcalf et al. 2009: 37), 2- access to information (Rolfe et al. 2009: 26), 3- recognition of their qualifications (Rolfe et al. 2009: 26; Metcalf et al. 2009: 23), and 4- lack of confidence (Kociolek 2007; Rolfe et al. 2009: 28). Among all these reasons, lack of English proficiency have been regarded as the main factor leading migrants towards low-skilled jobs (Rolfe et al. 2009: 43). Therefore, improving language skills helps migrants to move to more skilled jobs (SSAMIS second interim report 2016: 1; Metcalf et al. 2009: 53). In general, due to the economic security provided by even low-skilled jobs in Scotland, migrants feel satisfied and happy with their situation (Stella et al. 2016: 4)

The challenge of employment also exists among return migrants. Many highly-skilled return migrants move to economically advanced regions with more job opportunities (Klein-Hitpaß 2013: 251). However, the situation of returnees in the labor market is not better than those who were immobile and the unemployment rate is even slightly higher among returnees (Fialkowska and Szczepanski 2012). Consequently, migrants start to realize that unlike what they have expected, their experience gained abroad cannot be developed further which leads to their dissatisfaction (Anacka 2013: 296)

2.8.5. Healthcare

Healthcare has not been considered as an important challenge among Polish migrants in Scotland as most of them regard themselves as healthy (Orchard et al. 2007; Metcalf 2009: 23). They are aware of how to access NHS (Rolfe et al. 2009: 39), but they also prefer to deal with their health issues during visits home (Metcalf et al. 2009: 46; SSAMIS research project 2017: 1). A very recent project done by the SSAMIS in Scotland (2017) shows that migrants usually complain about the low possibility of access to specialists, the common “paracetamol culture”, language barriers, extra charges on NHS for some particular services, and lack of routine of tests. On the other hand, migrants appreciate the maternity care and free prescriptions³.

2.8.6 Cultural challenges

Cultural challenges have been observed mainly among return migrants when they start to make a comparison between the lifestyle and social values of the host country and home country (Anacka 2013: 297). Moving from a Western country which is known as a tolerant, multicultural and democratic place makes migrants not feel like home in their home country, but rather like newcomers (ibid: 298).

2.9 Concluding Remarks

Throughout this chapter, the Polish migrants’ economic and non-economic incentives to migrate to the UK/Scotland and to return to Poland have been discussed. The migration theories mentioned in this chapter show that motivations for migration are multiple and complex and include both economic and social aspects. Reviewing the Polish characteristics, their definition of a “normal” and “better life”, their complex incentives to migrate and return, and their lifestyle after migration, a set of gaps in the literature have been revealed that will be filled through the sample of Poles in Scotland and Poland collected for this thesis. The importance of this research is because of its:

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³<http://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/gramnet/research/ssamis/outputs/outputs/#/reportsandpublicationsforpolicyandpractice>

Geographical focus: While the number of research on A8 migrants in Scotland has increased in recent years, but there is still little literature on their life experience in Scotland compared to the amount of research done UK-wide.

Focus on Polish migrants: most of the literature of Eastern Europeans' lived experience in Scotland covers all A8 migrants. This research, however, focuses merely on Polish nationals. The challenges and opportunities experienced by Polish migrants can be different due to their wider social networks and the greater popularity of their language in Scotland. I assume that, due to these facts, Polish migrants cope easier with challenges and enjoy more opportunities than other Eastern Europeans in Scotland. In this research, however, it will be hard to measure the difference in level of challenges and opportunities faced by Poles compared to other A8 migrants, as I do not make any comparison between these two groups. However, the data provided by this research on Polish migrants can be very useful for future research with the aim of comparisons of lived experience between A8 migrants in Scotland.

Wide-range of challenges and opportunities: while research has emerged regarding challenges and opportunities of A8 migrants in Scotland, this research covers a wide-range of them from housing to food and weather. This research, therefore, builds on the existing literature on Poles' challenges and opportunities by providing a greater understanding of the diversity of their lived experiences in Scotland, and tries to address various challenges and opportunities that have not been focused on in other research such as the challenge posed to them by Brexit.

Focus on young migrants: as young individuals are usually more adventurous and open to challenges and look constantly for opportunities, I believe they have a different migration experience than elderly migrants. This research, therefore, provides a useful data of challenges and opportunities faced by migrants between the ages 20-35.

Focus on return migrants: what is unique about this research is that besides exploring the lived experiences of Polish migrants in Scotland, it also looks at lived experience of Polish return migrants in Poland. This is the first research that looks at challenges and opportunities of Polish migrants at both ends of the migration cycle.

The experiences of migrants will be explained within the framework of their definition of a "better life". Instead of using facts and figures from various organizations, this research has

involved migrants themselves in this study and has given them voice to express their experiences and needs throughout their migration. As individuals who are contributing considerably to their host society, gaining a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities they face in different areas will help the Scottish government to improve and modify policies in order to attract and retain migrants. I do not deny the fact that at the time of this research migration is not a devolved matter and the Scottish government has limited power to actually make policy in this area. However, some policies in Scotland, such as free educational system for European students, attract a notable number of migrants every year and the improvement the migrants' condition can help them better in their settlement in future. On the other hand, the Polish government will also get a deeper realizations of the needs of return migrants, especially in the course of post-Brexit period when a large number of migrants may potentially return home. Consequently, by bringing up the challenges and opportunities of Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland in one single research, this thesis will provide rich and useful data for further policy-makings in both countries.

Chapter Three- Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to describe the methods used in conducting the research. By analyzing the methods, this chapter will also clarify the limitations of the study. For this research, only qualitative approaches have been employed. Through this chapter, I will give a more detailed explanation of the methodology I have devised, and the steps I have taken throughout the fieldwork to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland.

The sample used for this thesis includes young Polish migrants between 20-35 who have migrated to Scotland or have returned back home post-2004. As discussed in chapter 2, many members of the Polish community of Scotland are young, mobile and flexible. The age of return migrants is more diverse and while the majority of the sample of Polish migrants in Scotland includes individuals below 30, most of the return migrants are close to or over 30. I used two different research methods for my fieldwork in Scotland and Poland during January 2016-February 2017.

This chapter will continue as follow. First, there will be a description of the research location, its characteristics and the reasons why it attracts migrants. After this section, I give a short description about my research sample which includes the characteristics of migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland. This will be followed by a review of the methods I employed throughout the fieldwork: questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The next section will highlight the limitations of the methods, and the chapter will end with a review of the ethical approval received from the university and its guidelines.

3.2 Polish Immigrants in Glasgow and Polish Return Migrants in Krakow: Research Location Review

3.2.1 Glasgow

The first part of my research was conducted in Scotland, Glasgow. According to the 2011 Census, the population of Scotland is 5,295,403, of which 593,245 live in Glasgow⁴. Glasgow is the biggest city in Scotland located in the west central lowlands of the country. The 2011 census estimates the overall number of Polish migrants in Scotland to be 55,231 which constructs the biggest non-UK born group⁵. More recent research on EU nationals in Scotland declares that the number of Polish migrants to be 86,000 which constitutes around half of the population of the whole EU nationals residing in Scotland (Rolfe, et al. 2016: 3). Economically, there is a wide-range of jobs in Glasgow, or in a more general sense in Scotland, in low-skilled sectors such as hospitality, food services, factory jobs, etc. where most of the EU nationals are employed (ibid). According to the statistics, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee are respectively the main hosts of the EU nationals residing in Scotland (ibid: 8). Therefore, after Edinburgh, Glasgow, with its big population of both EU and non-EU nationals, is considered to be the second city with the biggest ethnic diversity in Scotland.

3.2.2 Krakow

Krakow is the second largest city in Poland after Warsaw. It is one of the most important cities in Poland in terms of economics, culture, and art. Krakow is located in the southern part of Poland with the population of 759,800 in 2014⁶. The research on the locality selection of Polish return migrants done by Klein-Hitpaß (2013: 187) suggests that 90 percent of highly-skilled migrants return to urban areas and cities in Poland, the most common of which are Warsaw, Krakow, Wroslaw, and Poznan. This is logical due to the relatively low unemployment rate and high wages in these cities in comparison to smaller cities and rural areas in Poland (ibid: 189).

4 <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ods-web/area.html>

5

⁵ <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/scotland-census-profile/>

6

⁶ <http://krakow.stat.gov.pl/en/information-about-voivodship/capital-of-voivodship-381/population-436/>

However, the selection of region for return migrants is dependent on various factors such as their background and the year of their emigration. While well-developed cities such as Warsaw and Krakow are the most popular return destinations for highly-skilled individuals who have returned post 2004, some less developed regions such as Mazowieckie and Pomorskie have attracted more returnees who have emigrated prior to EU-enlargement (Kaczmarczyk et al. 2013: 30). As the focus of this research is on post-2004 return migrants, the importance of Krakow is apparent. Due to its increasing employment opportunities and favorable living standards, Krakow is the second region in Poland after Warsaw in attracting Polish return migrants⁷.

It should be noted that the location selection for this research is not necessarily do to the fact that migrants concentrate in big cities because of employment opportunities. The most recent research on migrants' experiences in rural areas of Scotland done by Flynn and Kay (2017) emphasizes the popularity of rural areas in Scotland among Eastern European migrants. The employment opportunities, and financial and emotional security provided by rural areas are also key motivations for many of these migrants to move and settle in rural areas of Scotland and not in big cities (ibid: 59). My decision to choose Glasgow and Krakow as the locations of my research was due to various factors. First of all, I was a student in both cities. My immigrant status in these cities let me go through a relatively similar experiences and challenges of those migrants who were living there. However, I do not deny the fact that my experiences as a student could have been different in many aspects compared to economic migrants. However, there are many similarities in regards to social experiences. Also, as I had to spend most of my times in these cities due to my classes at university, I could establish contacts at an early stage that helped to navigate the Polish community in Glasgow and return migrants in Krakow. Living one year in Glasgow and one year in Krakow gave me the chance to expand my knowledge of both of the cities. I also realized that there are few academic studies focused on these specific regions. While Edinburgh hosts a larger number of Polish migrants and Warsaw a larger number of return migrants, ease of access to the community, little research of a similar nature, the better possibility to conduct interviews, and the importance of these cities in terms of immigration and

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⁷ http://businessinmalopolska.com/public/upload/fck/file/HR_pdrv_30-08-11.pdf

return migration, were all considered in choosing Glasgow and Krakow for the fieldwork locations.

3.3 Contextualizing the sample for the thesis

This section will explain how the sample for this thesis was acquired. First, one important issue needs to be mentioned: this qualitative sample does not represent all the Polish migrants in Glasgow or return migrants in Poland. However, despite the relatively small size of the sample, I could use my findings to reach more general conclusions which would be useful to the wider literature and policy on Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland.

The internet was very useful in finding the respondents. Two websites were especially helpful: in Scotland, the Couchsurfing website, and in Poland, the Facebook page 'Krakow expats'. I posted a public request on these websites which contained a short description of the research subject and asked the interested individuals to contact me. I also sent some private messages on Couchsurfing to let more people know about the research. This was the initial step to finding respondents. Later, I used snowballing techniques as my respondents helped me enter into the wider Polish community in Glasgow and to get to know more return migrants in Krakow.

The qualitative sample used for this research is composed of 10 migrants in Glasgow and 10 return migrants in Krakow with a total of 10 interviews and questionnaires in Glasgow and 10 interviews and questionnaires in Krakow. The characteristics of migrants of this sample are as follows:

Polish migrants who migrated to Scotland or returned to Poland post-2004

Between the ages 20 to 35

Slightly more females

Mixed educational and professional background

Single or living with a partner

Mainly without children or other dependents

Comparing the characteristics of this qualitative sample with the characteristics discussed in chapter 2, there are only two main differences. First, according to the literature Polish migrants are predominantly economic migrants (Salt et al. 2014). However, the most mentioned reasons of my respondents to move to Scotland have been self-development and adventure rather than economic reasons. This can be due to the young age of my respondents and their more flexible attitude towards their future. In case of return migrants, literature declares that returnees do not have higher chances in Polish labor market than others (Fialkowska et al. 2012). However, most of the respondents in this sample claimed that the skills gained in the UK has helped them improve their chance in finding a job in Poland.

Now that the characteristics of the sample have been reviewed, the following section will discuss the methods used for this thesis as well as their limitations.

3.4 Research methods

This section will review the methods employed throughout the course of this thesis and the overall strengths and methods of this study. There are two main methods used for this research in 2016 and 2017: semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Each of the methods will be discussed below.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the data gathered from the questionnaires were used mainly for exploratory purposes. The questionnaires were given to the participants who were interested in being interviewed afterwards. In total, 10 questionnaires were completed in Glasgow, and 10 questionnaires in Krakow. The questionnaires provided me with general information for studying the social situation related with the migration issue from homeland to Scotland and vice versa. The questionnaires have positively contributed to my research due to their anonymity.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

After completing the questionnaires, I conducted interviews with the same respondents. In total, I interviewed 10 people in Glasgow, and 10 people in Krakow. A consent form was signed by all the respondents and interviews were recorded with their consent. The reason I

decided to conduct interviews alongside questionnaires was to get more in-depth data relating to the migrants' experience of migration and return migration and the challenges and opportunities they have faced. Conducting interviews is a challenging method as the first step is to get the respondents' trust. In this sense, my status as a student and my knowledge of Polish language were very helpful. Denzin et al (2000: 650) have claimed that student interviewers are more successful in getting higher response rates than non-students. The interviews were conducted in English. My knowledge of Polish language was however, a proof of my interest in Polish culture and Eastern Europe in a more general sense which had a great role in gaining my respondents' trust. Throughout my interviews, I did my best to follow the required ethical rules and tried to avoid any questions which I felt my respondents were sensitive about or to which they do not incline to reply.

3.5 Limitations of the fieldwork

The limitations of the fieldwork can be summarized in two areas: generalizability, and interviewer bias. Each of the limitations will be discussed here.

3.5.1 Non-generalizability of research data

One of the limitations of this study is the non-generalizability of the findings to a larger group of Polish migrants. From the interviews conducted, I gained some rich empirical data. The data cannot be generalized to the whole group of Polish migrants but it is valuable as it provides in-depth insight and can be used to suggest wider experiences of Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland.

3.5.2 Limitations of interviews

As already mentioned, the first step in attracting respondents for interview is to build trust between them and the interviewer. Two issues during the interview matter most. First, the sensitivity of questions and second, the location of the interview. Therefore, I was very careful with the interview questions and did not put any pressure on the interviewee for the answer. Also, I chose convenient, public places where the interviewee feels comfortable and safe. All the interviews were conducted in cafes mostly chosen by the interviewees themselves.

One other important limitation regarding interviews is the matter of expectations. Sometimes, the interviewee feels that he/she needs to give an answer that is expected to be heard rather than their own personal opinion. Sometimes on the contrary, the interviewer bias gets involved. It happened that sometimes I felt I was using a special tone or body language to motivate my interviewee to give an answer that I expected to hear. As an example, I was more eager to hear that as young individuals, my respondents choose to travel mostly due to non-economic reasons and wanted to hear about this more. However, I tried to be as objective as possible throughout my interviews. I believe, the interviewer bias is an issue that can happen to any researcher who conducts interviews. Bryman (2008) has noted that as an ‘active analyst’, researchers’ personal biases can be involved while interviewing.

3.6 Ethics

This research adhered to the ethical standards set forth by the University of Glasgow. According to the ethical rules, an informed consent was given to each participant involved in the qualitative research, meaning those from whom an interview was taken. Both questionnaires and interviews were completely anonymous. A cover letter was sent to each of the participants regarding the purpose of the study. The location of interviews was in cafes mainly suggested by participants themselves. The participation in the research was totally voluntarily and no force was put on any individuals to take part. There was also no pressure on respondents in answering the questions and they could avoid any questions they felt uncomfortable with. The case of return migrants was especially more sensitive as they might have felt like “failures” who have wasted their time abroad and then decided to go back to their country again. In this situation, I tried to show that what they have been through is considered a very valuable life experience and the data they provide can be very useful.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the methodology employed in this thesis, the methods used to obtain data, and the limitations of the study. Glasgow in Scotland and Krakow in Poland were chosen as the location for this thesis. Such factors as ease of access to the community, little conducted research of a similar nature, better possibility to conduct interviews, and the importance of these cities in terms of immigration and return migration were the motivations to choose these cities as my research location. The target respondents for this study were Polish

migrants who have migrated to Scotland and returned to Poland post-2004 and who are between the ages 20 to 35. The main characteristics of the respondents are quite similar to the characteristics described by other literature. The only difference of my sample is that young migrants are more motivated by non-economic factors to migrate and return. Also, return migrants had better opportunities in Polish labor market than non-migrants. Two methods employed in this study were questionnaires and interviews. The limitations of these methods are usually due to the generalizability of the data, small sample size, sensitivity of interview questions, interviewer bias, and expectations between interviewer and interviewees. In order to protect my respondents as a vulnerable group, I have followed all the guidelines suggested in the ethical form. All the guidelines regarding the location of the fieldwork and attitudes towards respondents have been followed accordingly.

The following chapter will build on this chapter by outlining the findings gathered from the fieldwork. The findings from the fieldwork will be broken down into three chapters: economic challenges and employment opportunities, social and cultural challenges and opportunities, and political challenges.

Chapter Four- Challenges and Opportunities of Polish Immigrants in Scotland and Return Migrants in Poland: A Closer Look at the Empirical Evidence

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two major parts: 1-Polish immigrants in Scotland; and 2-Polish return migrants in Poland. Each part starts with an overall discussion of migrants' reasons for migration, their definition of a "better life", and to what extent their migration has met their expectations. Thereafter, the lived experiences of migrants will be outlined in three areas: a) economic challenges and employment opportunities; b) social and cultural challenges and opportunities; and c) political challenges. Each part of this chapter will end with a short conclusion of the data discussed.

PART I

4.2 Polish Immigrants in Scotland

Overall Discussion

The reasons for migration to Scotland can be summarized in three themes:

1- The role of social networks: The first factor that motivated migrants to move to Scotland was the existence of social networks. Nine out of ten respondents stated that they came to visit a friend who lived in Scotland and later on, they decided to move to Scotland with the help of their friends. The importance of the role of the social network that has been discussed in the literature review is also demonstrated by the data outlined in this research. The majority of the respondents have chosen Scotland simply because they have had a friend living there who has smoothed the way of migration for them (Guilmoto & Sandron 2001; Naperla et al. 2010; Massey et al. 1987; Boyd 1989; Fihel 2006; Moskal 2007; SSAMIS Report 2016). The argument of Fihel et al. (2006: 11) that the social capital is able to be converted into other forms of capital, such as financial and cultural can be approved by the fact that many of the respondents not only got help from their social network at the beginning of their migration with accommodation and finding a job, but also it enabled them to widen their social contacts that simplified their integration.

2- Economic reasons: finding a job right after graduation, the ability to be financially independent, stronger currency, easier conditions for setting up a business, and lower taxes compared to Poland are the economic opportunities migrants have found in Scotland.

3- Social and cultural opportunities: getting a degree from Scottish universities without paying tuition fees, learning English, having a chance to have an independent life, the friendliness and openness of the Scottish nation, cultural diversity, and the personal improvement are the social and cultural opportunities in Scotland mentioned by the respondents.

Nine out of ten respondents believed that they found a better life in Scotland. One element that all the respondents had in common in defining a “better life” was traveling and having adventure. As young and highly mobile individuals, they take any chance to travel and explore the world. Therefore, in contrast to the idea of some scholars who believe that Polish migrants search for normal rather than better life by focusing merely on economic aspects (Galasinska and Kozłowska 2009, Rabikowska 2010, White 2009, Kusek 2014), the findings of this research is closer to arguments of those scholars who believe that Polish migrants search for both normality and happier livelihood (Trevena 2009, 2012, 2013; McGhee and Heath 2012).

One of the reasons why most of the respondents stayed in Scotland longer than the expected period was the financial stability that could be achieved in Scotland even by doing low-skilled jobs. The economic comfort let them achieve what they expected to gain in their lives, that is, traveling, learning about cultures and having adventure. Young migrants take the free movement as a great opportunity to travel and work at the same time. This argument has been approved by many scholars (Massey et al. 1999; Borjas 1994; Luthra et al. 2014). They simply see no reason to limit themselves spatially and enjoy the opportunity they have. At the same time, the economic factors also should not be denied as they need to make money for living and being able to travel and explore more. They are, in this sense, “trans-migrants” (Conradson & Latham 2005) whose motivation to migrate is complex and is not only economical. This is also in parallel with Burrel’s argument (2009) that as highly educated individuals they migrate mainly due to non-economic rather than economic motives.

None of the respondents claimed that he\she wants to stay in Scotland forever. Four of the respondents wanted to go back to Poland. Sweden, Spain, and Australia were the most common destinations mentioned by the respondents to go to after Scotland.

All the respondents were happy with their decision of moving to Scotland. They highly appreciated the adventure and experience achieved as a result of their migration. The next section of the chapter will discuss in more detail the challenges and opportunities faced by Polish immigrants in Scotland.

4.3. Challenges and opportunities of Polish immigrants in Scotland

4.3.1. Economic Challenges and Employment Opportunities

A) Employment and finding a proper job

According to the findings, 6 out of 10 respondents had a job at the time of the research. In most cases the internet, and in the minority of cases family and friends were the main sources of finding a job. The majority of the respondents worked longer hours compared to Poland. Most of the respondents already had a job in Poland. Only 2 respondents had a job related to their skills and educational background and only 4 respondents declared that their job had met their expectations.

Some of the respondents of this thesis found it hard to find a skilled job in Scotland, mainly due to language barriers and the competitive Scottish labor market. Language skills were not mentioned as the main obstacle for finding a job as most of the migrants work in places that do not require strong language skills. This is in contrast to the idea of Rolfe et al. (2009) who considered language barrier as the main obstacle to get more qualified jobs. However, my respondents believed that stronger English skills can lead them to the higher level jobs which is in accordance to the opinion of Cook et al. (2010) and Parutis (2014). The importance of language barrier is so strong in some cases that the migrant does not even apply for other jobs due to it:

“I don’t think I wanna try to find a better job because I am very afraid of my English”
(MA 30)

The chance to get promoted in the work place without having specific contacts, better income, and wider options were mentioned as the main opportunities regarding employment in Scotland. However, finding a “serious” job still remains as one of the most important challenges due to the competitive atmosphere in the labor market. Based on my respondents’ approach

towards the employment issue in Scotland, it can be concluded that the main reasons for the migrants to take low-skilled jobs are the language barrier and the competitiveness of the Scottish labor market, rather than “ethnic discrimination” mentioned by Fihel et al. (2006:53) in the theoretical part. Most of the respondents believed that they have a better chance in Scotland to get promoted in jobs without having contacts and stronger language skills can lead them to the more qualified jobs. This simply can serve as a proof that there is no feeling of “ethnic discrimination” regarding employment among Polish migrants. While these reasons were the most common ones among respondents, they did not consider other factors an issue for finding a more qualified job, such as access to information (Rolfe et al. 2009); recognition of their qualifications (Rolfe et al. 2009; Metcalf et al. 2009), and lack of confidence (Kociolek 2007; Rolfe et al. 2009). However, a better English skill can enable them to access information easier and will also enhance their confidence.

B) Financial Constraints

Most of the respondents had a slight financial issue during their first days of moving to Scotland. Later on, however, financial constraints were not regarded as a challenge anymore. The financial security provided by even the low-skilled jobs in Scotland made it bearable for migrants to stay for a longer time in low-level jobs which are usually irrelevant to their educational background. Embedding this factor in the neo-classical migration theory, we face two facts in regards to Polish migrants in Scotland: 1) the wage differential acts as one of the main elements motivating Polish migrants to move to Scotland (Stella et al. 2016: 15; Pollard et al. 2008) which is in alliance with the neo-classical theory, 2) Migrants act in a rational way and tend to enhance their efficiency, but in contrast to the idea of Fihel et al. (2006) they fail in proper usage of their gained human capital by getting occupied in low-killed jobs. This proves the fact that migration decision-making is a more sophisticated process influenced by complex factors.

Respondents more often compared their situation with Poland where they had financial struggles even when they had high-skilled jobs:

“I know I had a better job in Poland, I had my weekends and holidays off, but the money was super rubbish.” (MA 30)

MA's situation is a good example of cost-benefit calculation explained by the human capital theory. Human capital theory focuses more on the migratory behavior of migrants as individuals rather than serving as a mere instrumental factor like neo-classical theory. While MA had a better job in Poland, her calculation result of her movement has proved her that there are more things for her to appreciate in Scotland. This fact has made it easier for her to cope with some challenges such as having a low-skilled job. In accordance with this theory, Pollard et al. (2008: 9-10) and Stella et al. (2016: 15) believe that the level of job satisfaction is directly connected to the income rather than to the job's compatibility with the migrants' skills. The migrant's cost-benefit approach also points at one of the aspects of the notion of "normality". The financial comfort that lets them avoid the material deprivation they had back home, is the yield of their migration which has become their source of income and assures a "normal" living standard (as approved by White 2009). It is also compatible with Galasinska's and Kozłowska's (2009: 96) definition of "normality", that is, "having enough making ends meet with even modest pay".

It should also be noted that, in contrast to the dual labor market theory, it was not the challenge with finding an employment in Poland that had triggered MA to move to Scotland, but other factors such as wage differential.

The possibility to save money even with part-time jobs in Scotland gives the opportunity for migrants to have more time for themselves to do different sort of things they have planned for their lives. As an example, those who always wanted to start their own business got the opportunity to set enough time aside for it while supporting themselves financially with part-time jobs:

"Here I don't have to work full-time and I have time to work on my business. In Poland this would be impossible to work 4 days, because my salary would be too low to rent a flat and pay the bills." (GD 29)

C) Labor Position Changing

One of the challenges faced by all of the samples in this research was not having a stable job and a permanent contract. Each migrant has at least changed his or her job twice within a few years. Some migrants have made progress in the labor market, but most of the migrants usually

move from one job to another. There were two different approaches towards this issue. Some migrants considered it a positive situation that gave them an opportunity to try different jobs instead of doing one “boring” job during their lifetime:

“Here, nurse can become a beautician, beautician can become a nurse. This is something very popular here, changing jobs all the time. In Poland, you tend to stick with the same job for your whole life because there are less opportunities.” (JU 35)

On the other side, some migrants complained about their unstable situation and the temporariness of their jobs. Some also felt that they are wasting their time by doing low-skilled jobs all the time while holding good qualifications. Especially, the ones who had a better job in Poland:

“I miss my job in Poland. ... Here, I worked as a telemarketer, as a housekeeper and probably the next job will be working as a waiter. But in Poland I was a manager” (AL 35)

Aleksandra’s words show that at the same time that migrants get financial benefits in low-skilled jobs, the lack of personal development due to their jobs becomes a push factor for them to leave their host country. The argument is approved by Anacka et al. (2013: 293-4) that when the job stops meeting migrants’ expectations, they start searching for work on the home labor market. The findings in this research also clearly demonstrate this fact as most of the migrants complained about the lack of personal development. The majority declared that their jobs do not meet their expectations and therefore, none of them stated that he/she wants to stay in Scotland forever. Therefore, the argument of White et al. (2008: 1478) that the occupations and qualifications are not the major influence on migrants’ future plans comes into question. This argument may be true for a limited period of time but not for a long term. As Fihel et al. (2006), Piore (1979, 1986), and Massey et al. (1999) have declared, migrants take secondary jobs and care less about their prestige and social position due to their temporariness. Therefore, migrants’ approach towards this matter can change as the time spent in a low-skilled job becomes longer. Another argument for this matter is that, as already mentioned, young Polish migrants are not only in search for a “normal”, but also a “happier” life. As a “satisfying job” (Szewczyk 2013: 228) is one of the elements of “happiness”, we cannot deny the important role of job satisfaction in migrants’ future decision-making.

D) Welfare

The better welfare system which exists in Scotland and the myriad financial aids were appreciated by all the respondents. The available benefits in Scotland were regarded a big help for migrants, especially for the ones with kids or the ones who were students. However, there were different opinions regarding the welfare state in Scotland and in Poland. While the migrants from villages and small towns of Poland stated that the welfare is much better in Scotland, those from big cities, especially Warsaw, mentioned that the welfare state is almost similar in both countries. This can be because migrants from bigger cities are more aware of accessing to welfare system in their home country and also demands for welfare is higher in bigger cities.

4.3.2 Social and Cultural Challenges and Opportunities

A) Homesickness and Missing Support from Homeland

Six out of ten respondents declared that homesickness has been a challenge for them. The frequency of visiting Poland varies among migrants from one to six times a year. One of the interesting facts is that the majority of the respondents declared that they miss their friends more than their families and have mentioned this as the reason why they visit home.

Besides missing family and friends, homesickness for the migrants also refers to missing the comfort (more emotional than financial) that was provided by their family in Poland or any other comfort they had compared to Scotland:

“In Poland I have always lived with my parents. Food was always ready for me, I didn’t pay money for the bills. Now it’s different, because I have to pay for everything”. (GR27)

B) Public Healthcare

The finding regarding the healthcare issues are all in accordance with the findings mentioned in the literature review. Alike the findings of Orchard et al. (2007) and Metcalf (2009), the majority of the respondents have never had a serious health issue. However, similarly to the findings published in SSAMIS research project (2017), my respondents have also faced challenges in accessing specialists and complained about the “paracetamol culture”. Moreover, visiting the GP even for their serious health issues was another challenge faced by the respondents. Therefore, in common with the opinion of Metcalf et al. (2009), migrants studied in

this research prefer to deal with their serious health issues in Poland since accessing specialists is easier, cheaper, and faster.

JU believes that the competitive medical care in Poland has caused improvement in services, while the Scottish medical service lacks this competition and consequently, lowers the quality of medical aid.

C) Individual Security

None of the respondents has had a serious individual security challenge. They usually connect this issue to the area where they live. The female respondents who worked far from their accommodation mainly felt more insecure to go back home late at night. According to some of the female respondents, they have experienced verbal harassments mainly by addicts or drunk people. In more serious situations, such as getting robbed, respondents have referred to the police. In general, the migrants have expressed that the security in Scotland is either the same as Poland or slightly less. This, however, can be due to their less familiarity with the city and being away from their families.

D) Legal and Bureaucratic Challenges

While the respondents found some kind of paperwork in Scotland unpleasant, they appreciated the less bureaucratic system in Scotland compared to Poland. Their bureaucratic challenges are mainly due to their language barriers or unfamiliarity with the legal system in Scotland, such as registering for GP, or registering on governmental websites for tax matters. Those from the big cities in Poland were less satisfied with the bureaucratic system in Scotland and claimed that some sort of paperwork is easier in Poland such as applying for jobs or applying for flats through letting agencies. However, the ones with the aim of setting up a new business found the process much easier in Scotland than in Poland.

E) Social Interaction with Locals

No issue regarding social interaction with locals at the daily level was mentioned by the respondents. The main challenge comes up when migrants try to make friends with locals. Among the respondents, only three of them had Scottish friends. The difficulty to make friends with Scottish people has been expressed by all the respondents. The reasons can be the cultural

differences and the migrants' language barriers. Also, many of them have declared that they have not found the opportunity to meet Scottish people to get closer to them. In addition, their migrant status in Scotland makes them feel closer to other migrants, rather than to the locals.

GR believes that it is hard to make friendship with Scottish nation because they do not like Polish migrants:

“I think there are some foreigners they like, and some that they don't like. So I think I'm in the second group.” (GR 27)

The migrants challenge with interacting with the locals brings the argument of Ryan et al. (2008: 676) into question. They believe that the improvement in some essential skills such as language enables migrants to access a wider social network. The findings, however, does not relate this issue to the migrants' skills as most of the migrants have been successful in improving their English while still struggling in their social contacts with locals. This fact should not be neglected that English language has helped migrants to socialize more with other immigrants in Scotland. But the matter that they still face issues in their interaction with locals brings other elements into light which mostly deal with cultural norms rather than migrants' skills.

F) Prejudice and Racism

Almost all the respondents have experienced a situation where they have felt they have been treated wrongly due to their nationality. However, apart from those who have been verbally harassed because of their nationality, others may have been culturally misunderstood. At the same time, they agreed on the higher level of toleration towards immigrants within Scottish nation compared to the Polish nation.

FI believes that Scottish people look down on Polish migrants because they are Western Europeans and feel superior to Eastern Europeans. However, FI belief may have evolved from a mere personal feeling without an external proof to it. As already mentioned in the theoretical section, myth of the West has made many Eastern Europeans to move to the West in search for a “normal” life that was missing in the East (Rabikowska 2010). Therefore, these are not Western Europeans, but Eastern Europeans who look down on themselves. This feeling not only leads to losing their confidence, but also makes them fail in experiencing what they expected as a “normal” life.

Despite few unpleasant experiences, the majority of migrants appreciated the tolerance and friendliness of the Scottish nation and felt welcomed there as an immigrant. Therefore, my findings confirm the idea of Rolfe et al (2009) and McCollum (2014) in the sense that Scotland is one the most welcoming regions throughout the UK.

G) Housing

All the respondents have had challenges regarding housing issues in Scotland. In general, they evaluate the housing standards in Scotland lower than in Poland, while the prices are much higher. Alike the findings of SSAMIS research report (2017), Stevenson (2007), and Robinson et al. (2007) all the respondents of this research have experienced homelessness at the beginning of their migration and have lived a certain period of time at their friends until they found a flat. Most of them have changed flats at least three to four times during their stay in Scotland because of the challenges they had faced. Such issues as dampness, difficulty in finding accommodation in a good area with a reasonable price, difficulty in getting social housing, and heating problems have been reported by the migrants. The poor quality of migrants' houses, especially the ones occupied by Polish migrants has been approved by several scholars such as Orchard et al. (2007) and De Lime et al. (2007).

“I would say flats are quite expensive here and the standards are quite low. I can say the housing quality in Poland is better”. (MG 29)

H) Food and Weather

Food and weather in Scotland are considered a serious challenge for migrants. Migrants complained about the unhealthy diet, the low-quality products, lack of sun, constant rain, and cold summers in Scotland. Especially, weather is one of the main push factors that makes many of migrants want to move to a warmer place.

Despite the dissatisfaction towards food and weather, some migrants try to keep positive and concentrate more on the opportunities and comforts they have found in Scotland. This attitude helps them to put up with challenges like weather, which cannot be changed manually or by any rules.

I) Personal and Family Issues

One very interesting fact about personal and family issues is the impact of these issues on the migrants' decision-making to migrate. The data in this thesis has found that most of the migrants have been affected by a personal experience or family issue that has triggered them to "move away and start from zero" (MG 29). A relationship break up, losing a beloved person, or loose family relations were the main factors for this sample that triggered them to migrate to Scotland.

"My dad was alcoholic, and that was a huge problem for me. I didn't want to be close to these problems, because I felt it had a really huge effect on me" (MG 29)

On the other hand, EW (30) now wishes to return back home as she misses her family and does not want to be away from them. GR has been in a close relationship with his parents but they have encouraged him to migrate as they believed he would have better opportunities in Scotland.

J) Adapting to a New Culture

The respondents were well adapted to the Scottish culture and lifestyle. One interesting point that has been mentioned by most of the respondents is the different drinking culture in Poland and Scotland. While Polish people are known as heavy-drinkers (GR 27), many of the respondents were surprised about how Scottish people drink more than Poles, especially the girls.

Also, some of the respondents believed that the family traditional values are stronger in Poland and people are more family-oriented than in Scotland:

"I also think Polish people are more traditional, more family oriented. ... Here, I think people are more individualistic, they are more focused on themselves than on relationships or family". (MG 29)

In general, migrants have faced cultural differences in Scotland. However, these differences have not been a challenge for them and they have easily managed to get along in the new cultural atmosphere.

Isolation

The feeling of being isolated has been a challenge for all of the respondents at the beginning of their migration to Scotland. The area of living and the language barrier have a big role in creating this feeling. Those respondents living in the suburbs still felt isolated even after several years. The multicultural atmosphere in Glasgow, especially in the central area of the city, helps migrants to get out of isolation and feel themselves as a part of the society. Being in a multicultural area matters significantly as many of the migrants find it challenging to make a close friendship with the locals. The multicultural space gives them the chance to make friends with people from different countries and cultures and find the ones to whom they feel closer.

“When I moved to the suburb area, I experienced a real real isolation. Where I live, the population is just Scottish. They are quite xenophobic. Especially the older generation, especially the ones in the suburbs. So I miss cosmopolitan environment in Kelvin side”. (JU 35)

4.3.3 Political Challenges

A) The Scottish Government’s Response to the Migrants’ Needs

All the respondents were highly grateful for their situation in Scotland as an immigrant. They believe that their needs are being taken care of properly and they do not expect more from their host society. They highly appreciate the opportunities that the Scottish government offers them such as free English courses at the college, free education at the Scottish universities for European nationals, certain benefits such as the child benefit, and financial aids during their studying years. All of the ten respondents have enjoyed free English courses at the college and some of them are already students at the Scottish universities. The opportunities they get let them get on well with the challenges they face as immigrants in their host country. Many of them believe that enjoying all the opportunities leaves them no space to complain about other issues.

B) Brexit

The unclear future of migrants due to Brexit made it hard for the respondents to give comments on this issue. The respondents were not happy about this matter and they found the news to be “shocking and unexpected”. Most of the respondents believe that Brexit does not mean that they will have to leave the country. At the same time, there was an uncertainty in their answers regarding this challenge. WJ (35) believed that Brexit won’t make the migrants leave as

the UK's economy is dependent on migrants. Moreover, some of the respondents talked about their right choice about moving to Scotland as they felt more welcomed there:

“I'm here only 2 years, I don't have residency. But Scotland wants us to stay so I'm in the right place. Maybe in 2 years I have to leave”. (AL 35)

The Brexit phenomenon can be considered a serious challenge for migrants mainly due to its unclear consequences and the negative mental and emotional impact on them. The feeling of being unwelcomed in the society has already caused tension among the respondents. Applying for the UK citizenship or moving to another European country were mentioned as possible responses to Brexit.

4.4 Conclusion

Based on the data gathered from the interviewees, the following elements are, respectively, the main pull factors for migrants to move to Scotland:

Financial comfort and security

Learning English

Adventure and cultural diversity

Studying at Scottish universities without paying the tuition fees

Various benefits and financial aids

And the following elements are the main challenges faced by Polish migrants in Scotland:

Weather and food

Low-skilled jobs and consequently, lack of occupational improvement

Instability and temporariness of the jobs

Housing issues

Social interaction with locals

Brexit

The myriad opportunities met by the migrants in Scotland give them the chance to enjoy their decision about migration and made it simpler for them to get on with the challenges caused by it. Migrants mainly focus on the positive aspects of their decision which helps them cope with the issues they confront. They also appreciate the fact that their migration has met their expectations and has provided them with those necessities they did not have back home.

PART II

4.5 Polish Return Migrants in Poland

Overall Discussion

While the reasons to migrate to the UK is relatively similar among migrants, the reasons to return differ from one migrant to another and depend on several factors such as their marital status, their financial situation, their overall condition in the host country, and their relationship with their families and friends back in Poland.

The decision of those respondents who are married or in a relationship has mainly been under the dominance of the decision of their wives/husbands or partners. Their level of satisfaction with their decision to return is usually less than other migrants as they have become „tied movers/stayers” and their gain from the migration is less than their partners. In contrast to this group, single migrants have a wider and simpler option about migrating.

The following opportunities in Poland play an important role on migrants’ decision-making to return: the possibility to find a more qualified job, the chance to get to know the changes in their homeland after being away for several years, being close to their family and friends, no language-barrier, more comfort in socializing, confidence, free education, easier student life, and more entertainment. In a sense, migrants not only search for a “normal” or “better” life when emigrating, but also when they return. For many of migrants returning home is equal to getting back to the “normal life” as it gives them “social security” by meeting their both “emotional and material needs” (Flynn et al.2017: 58).

The level of satisfaction among return migrants varies based on their situation and challenges they have faced. However, nine out of ten respondents were pleased with their

decision to return. Their extent of happiness is very much connected to their definition of the „better life” and how their migration has met their expectations.

As an example, the „better life” for JU (32) meant having „stability” in life like having a home and a job. Being a „tied mover/stayer”, JU misses the „stability” she had back in the UK and believes that she had a better life there. In contrast to her situation, JN (31) declared that she gained more than she expected after returning back to Poland. She defined the „better life” as having a job she enjoys (regardless of the less income compared to the UK), having calm, peace, and being close to her family and friends.

IZ (23) situation is also an interesting case. While she has grown up in the UK, she feels happier after moving back to Poland. She believes she feels more comfortable in Poland, as she finds it her „home” and feels safe. AD (29) also found a better life in Poland since it let him „live in peace with himself”, something that he missed in the UK.

The free movement in the European Union is a great opportunity for European migrants. The feeling of being free and not being obliged to live in one country declines the burden and stress of returning back home, as they know they can migrate to another country in case they do not feel happy after return. As the respondents studied for this research were young and highly-mobile, only three respondents declared that he/she would settle in Poland forever. Others mentioned that they will or might migrate to other countries if an opportunity comes up. Only one respondent stated that he would move back to the UK and others had other countries on their mind.

The next section will discuss more details about the challenges and opportunities of return migrants which better clarifies their lived experience after moving back to Poland.

4.5.1. Economic Challenges and Employment Opportunities

A) Employment and Finding a Proper Job

Nine out of ten returnees were employed at the time of the interview. Only four of them had jobs related to their educational background which can be explained by the jobs they had in the UK for several years. Working for several years in the low-skilled sections, migrants lose the chance to get experience in the fields related to their educational skills. After return, some skills

gathered in the UK such as learning English language, make it easier for them to find some certain kinds of jobs, but still irrelevant to their educational skills. In this sense, the argument of Olesen (2002) and Wolfeil (2013) that the home country benefits from the brain return/gain does not apply to Polish return migrants in most of the cases. The Polish migrants' instance is closer to the idea of Gitmez (1984) who declares that the insignificant investment of the migrants abroad does not end in socio-economic development of the home country. Also, in accordance with Rogers (1984) it cannot be expected from economic migrants to come back as innovators of social change.

Based on NT (24), the main challenge regarding the employment in Poland is not the difficulty to find a job, but the low income. Relying on what NT has declared, the neo-classical theory can be regarded the most sensible tool for explaining the migration of Poles to the UK. As already mentioned, four migrants in Scotland were still struggling with finding an employment while nine return migrants were already employed in Poland. Therefore, unemployment rate in Poland may not be the main reason for Polish migrants to move to the UK. The fact that the majority of the migrants were already employed in Poland before migration can be also a justification to this argument.

Some of the respondents have managed to keep the positions they had in the UK and work temporarily in Poland as a self-employed or freelancer. These respondents had a higher level of satisfaction as they enjoy the high British income and cheaper life in Poland. This confirms the findings of Glorius (2013) and Dustmann (2007) who believe that the lower consumption prices in home country is one of the pull factors for migrants to return as the valuable currency of the host country grows their purchase power. Also, some savings from the UK and some skills gained from the jobs gave the opportunity to some return migrants to start their own business in Poland.

B) Financial Constraints

Being used to the higher living standard in the UK makes it challenging for the migrants to get along with their new lifestyle in Poland again. While none of the respondents had a serious financial constraint after returning, they were concerned about being careful with their spending in Poland. This is in contrast to their situation in the UK where they had enough money to live, travel and even save.

The situation of IZ (23) and NT (24) is a good example. Both of them have been grown up in the UK and have been always financially supported either by the government or their parents. They are both students in Krakow and find it harder to be financially independent in Poland:

“The main reason for me is that the salary here is quite low, and the prices are very high. Switching between living in England and now in Poland I couldn’t maintain the same standard of living. I find myself having to save more money, and not spend of course so much. Polish currency is also not that valuable.” (NT 24)

C) Welfare

What all the interviewees had in common was the fact that the welfare state in the UK is better than in Poland. The respondents have not had a serious challenge regarding welfare in Poland, but they appreciated more what they had in the UK. As an example, PW (35) talked about his wife who is trying to set up her own business in Poland but is receiving no help from the government.

Respondents also appreciated certain benefits such as child benefit in the UK. The same type of financial aid has recently started in Poland. AD (29), however, believes that it is not going to last long.

D) Labor Position Changing

Return migrants have more stable jobs in Poland compared to the UK. Some of them have never changed their job since they have come back. Most of them have more skilled jobs compared to their jobs in the UK. None of the returnees has mentioned labor position changing as a challenge after return. JN and NT are even happier with the job they have found in Poland. JN (31) has changed her job many times in the UK. She has worked as an au-pair and has worked in shops. Now she is very happy with the job she has found in Poland as it is related to her studies and the income is also good.

NT (24) is also more pleased with her position in Poland. She used to work in restaurants and cafes back in the UK, while in Poland she is working in the American Bank.

Some of the returnees claimed that the low-skilled jobs in the UK has been one of the push factors for them to return. As Anacka (2013) has stated, if one of such factors as job compatibility with qualifications, personal development, or level of remuneration does not comply with migrants' expectations, they would consider going back to the labor market in their home country. This is clearly an argument that can be applied to many returnees in this research.

4.5.2 Social and Cultural Challenges and Opportunities

A) Personal Issues and Social Interaction with Family and Friends

Personal issues apply mainly to those who came back to Poland because of their partner, wife, or husband. They, consequently, have become "tied movers" or "tied stayers" whose gain from the migration is under the domination of the other's gain (Mincer 1978: 9). Their situation is challenged due to their partner's situation and while their partner is improving, they experience dissatisfaction with their new condition. JU (32) is an example for this case. She had to give up on her well-paid job in the UK and move to Poland because her husband had received a better job offer there.

The situation for AD (29) was even harder. AD has never planned to live in the UK as he wanted to stay close to his family in Poland. He moved to the UK because of his wife and lived there for nine years. However, after nine years, he decided to get divorced and come back to his family:

"She found comfort in the UK and she had no reason to go back. She didn't have a good relationship with the family, I did have. So I wanted to go back because of the family and friends. She didn't miss what I missed. Basically, she felt more comfortable over there and I didn't".

From AD words it is clear that his wife's gains from the migration were stronger than AD's. This unbalance in their gains led their relationship into a break up (Mincer 1978: 12).

GG (35) case is a different one. He believes that living for 12 years in the UK has caused a change in his mindset and the life in the UK has changed his "negative Polish attitude" towards a "positive British manner". Therefore, now he finds it harder to communicate with his family and understand them well. GG's case is a good example for connecting the two concepts of

normality and identity with each other. It is a proper proof to Kozłowska's (2010) and Kusek's (2014) argument which declared that migration to the West is a gateway for Eastern Europeans to escape their past communist identity and move towards a more modern Western one.

B) Public Healthcare

The approach towards the public healthcare in Poland was different among respondents. Some of them complained about the long waiting times to access specialists and the higher prices compared to the UK. At the same time, they criticized the common "paracetamol" culture in the UK and believed that they get a more serious help in Poland. JU (32), however, appreciates the healthcare system in the UK more and believes that the medication prescribed in Poland is not necessary in all occasions.

IZ (24), on the other side, thinks differently from JU. She finds it hard to access specialists in Poland in a short time and she believes the service is more expensive in Poland. But, she is more satisfied with what she gets here compared to the UK.

C) Individual Security

Social security has not been a serious challenge for return migrants. The majority of the respondents believe that the social security in the UK and in Poland is quite similar. One notable point that has been mentioned by some of the migrants is how being closer to their family makes them feel more secure:

"I feel secure because of my family here. I know they won't be left alone. They've got a place to stay at my parents. I know if there will be an issue they are here for me". (JU 32)

JN (30) talked about how so many rules and laws in Poland makes her feel more insecure instead of secure:

"It's not about the security it's more about the services that this police officers or people should give you but instead they are creating fear. I am scared to cross the road because I don't know if they're watching me from somewhere and they're going to jump out. So it's still hard for me to adjust. Everything is forbidden. My sister for example got fined for drinking on the street".

D) Legal and Bureaucratic Challenges

Bureaucratic system in Poland is a big challenge for return migrants. All the respondents in this research complained about the complexity of the legal and bureaucratic system in Poland and how confusing the paperwork process is. Many of the interviewees explained about how they fail in getting a respond to their needs due to the lack of necessary information and a lot of complex paperwork. The status of being a “return migrant” makes the process even more difficult for individuals. JN (30) complained about how she failed in receiving an unemployment benefit up to her return to Poland, although she made an effort to get it for a quite long time.

GG (35) also mentioned how difficult it was for him to do even the simplest tasks such as opening a bank account and getting a phone contract.

Those respondents who intended to open up a business in Poland also mentioned how difficult the process is in Poland due to the bureaucracy. NT (24) complains about the fact that there is nobody out there to help with this issue properly.

E) Housing

Just like immigrants in Scotland, some return migrants have also experienced a short period of homelessness up to their return to Poland. They have received help from their families and friends and have stayed with them for a while until they find their own accommodation. This is in accordance to the findings of Moser (2005), Cassarino (2015), Portes (1997), and Boyd (1989) who believe that by increasing access to information resources and support, social networks play an important role in motivating migrants to return.

Their opinion regarding the housing standards vary among the return migrants as they come from different parts of the UK. Those, coming back from England believe that the housing standards are better there than in Poland. While those coming from Scotland declared that the housing standards in Poland are better as homes are not as damp and cold as in Scotland.

All return migrants agreed on the fact that it is not easy to find a decent accommodation with a reasonable price in either Poland or the UK.

F) Isolation

The feeling of being isolated is very connected to the duration of being away from home. Those respondents who have lived for a longer time in the UK, felt more isolated after returning back to Poland. This is mainly because after a long time, they have lost contacts with their friends or have been less in touch with them. After their return, they find it harder to meet new people and make the same social contacts they had before. This is in contrast to their situation in the UK where after several years living there they had developed their social networks and had got used to their work place and living environment.

For NT (24) the situation was relatively harder as she was grown up in the UK and after coming back she feels that some people may misunderstand her culturally:

“Because of the culture and differences I feel I can’t really engage with the people as I would like to. Sometimes the things I say or the way I behave might seem a bit strange”.

The same fact applies to GG (35) as discussed in the section about the social interaction with family and friends. After living for 12 years in the UK, GG believes that his mindset has changed and makes it harder for him to communicate with his family. This, therefore, gives him a feeling of isolation from his family’s side.

Return migrants need some time to feel integrated into their society again. Finding a job and new friends help them to develop their social network back home and increase their socializing with people. Gradually, the new social contacts bring them out of isolation in their home country.

4.5.3 Political Challenges

A) Polish Government's Response to the Return Migrants' Needs

The return migrants expected to get more help from their government up to return or to have a simpler procedure to find the solution for their needs. However, the respondents complained about how complex their situation was after return as they not only did not receive support but even failed in accessing those benefits that the non-mobile citizens were enjoying. They also mentioned how difficult it was for them to find the information regarding their needs and issues.

PW's (35) situation is an example for this case. PW gave up on getting child benefit for his daughter who was born in Poland. The reasons were his daughter's "unclear" residence status and the complicated process of making a request.

KI (35) also had heard that return migrants are offered some sort of psychological support after return. However, he stated that he did not receive any help:

"I heard they were offering some free psychological consultancy, but I didn't use. I just heard of them. they were encouraging people to come back, but I don't know if they offered any help. They wanted us to come back but they didn't do anything for us".

It should be noted, the fact that migrants did not receive support does not necessarily mean that the Polish government has not offered them any benefits. What can be concluded from the respondents' answers is that the government's attempt was not successful enough in spreading information among returnees about their rights and benefits. At the same time, some of the return migrants have not gone after support and were simply unaware of anything that was out there for them.

B) Brexit

Alike migrants in Scotland, ambiguous consequences of Brexit made it hard for return migrants to comment on it. The tension regarding Brexit was less among return migrants as most of them did not have any plans to go back to the UK. At the same time, some of them, like KL (35), did not take this issue seriously and believed that the law regarding European workers would not change. For AD (29), Brexit had a negative effect and was a push factor for him to leave Britain as he did not feel welcomed there anymore: JU (32) also stated how emotionally she was hurt because of Brexit as she considered England her home where she worked and had friends.

Similar to migrants in Scotland, some return migrants also looked for some solutions to this issue such as applying for the British citizenship or moving to another country in case they decide to emigrate for the second time.

"I'm thinking of applying for the UK citizenship. To be honest, it's such a new thing and I still haven't decided yet because it's hard to think about it" (NT 24)

One interesting case was GG (35) who had a British citizenship and voted for Brexit. He believed that after living for twelve years in Britain he had a second identity which was British. He maintained that from his British point of view the right decision was voting for Brexit.

4.6 Conclusion

Returning home after living abroad for several years has not been an easy decision for migrants. However, there exist many positive points back home that make the challenges of return easier and more bearable. Return migrants appreciate the more skilled and stable jobs back home, the comfort given to them from their savings from the UK, better healthcare, being closer to their family and friends, better housing, and easier social contacts with locals. At the same time, most of the respondents struggled with such challenges as low incomes, high taxes, lower life standard compared to the UK, harder conditions for entrepreneurs to set up a business, and strict bureaucratic system.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on three main themes in regards to the research's findings and aims. These themes will be discussed as follow:

- A discussion and summary of the main findings of this work
- A discussion on the concepts of “normality” and “better life” among Polish migrants
- Future research

By reviewing these themes, the aim of this chapter is to come full circle from the main questions mentioned in chapter 1 in an attempt to shed light on possible additional research.

5.2 Discussion and Summary of the Main Findings

The post-2004 migration of Poles from Poland to the UK has had a significant reflection on the literature focusing on Eastern European migrants. As highlighted in the introduction, less attention has been paid to the lived experience of Polish migrants in Scotland and return migrants in Poland. The exploration of challenges and opportunities that the migrants can have throughout their entire migration period is a major finding of this thesis with a particular focus on related migration theories that justify the migrants' response to the challenges. Further, the main challenges and opportunities of Polish migrants has been summarized based on the findings of this thesis.

5.2.1 Challenges of Polish Migrants in Scotland

Based on my interviews with migrants, I have found that being occupied in low-skilled jobs is one of the main challenges that migrants face with in Scotland. While other challenges such as housing, weather and food have negative impacts on migrants' experiences in Scotland, I believe the low-skilled jobs have a particular negative influence on them. The reason is that after being occupied in such jobs, migrants start to realize the lack of occupational improvement and feel less secure due to the instability and temporariness of

these jobs. The fact that many of return migrants have decided to return to Poland to search for a better job is a proof to this argument.

Moreover, the difficulty in socializing with locals should be considered an important deal as it makes migrants feel “not welcomed” in their host society which may complicate migrants’ integration in their host nation. Especially, the recent “Brexit” phenomenon has increased this feeling among migrants and therefore, requires a considerable attempt to reduce its negative influence on them.

5.2.2. Opportunities of Polish Migrants in Scotland

The main opportunity given to migrants was the adventure and the experience of cultural diversity. These two elements were mentioned by most of the respondents in this thesis while defining the “better life”. Free movement in the European Union is the biggest opportunity for young individuals to travel, live and work in different countries. This is the base for other opportunities for them such as learning a new language, and get to know people with different cultural backgrounds. This is especially true for Polish migrants, as they do not have the opportunity of experiencing a wide cultural diversity in their home country. What I have noticed in regards to this matter is the positive influence of this experience on migrants, as they have become more tolerant towards other cultures and have become more welcoming towards other migrants, especially non-European migrants.

Besides, there are other opportunities that let migrants cope easier with the challenges they face. As an example, the financial comfort given to them by even low-skilled jobs makes it bearable for them to take low-skilled jobs. However, as already mentioned, this may have consequences in a long-term period, but for those who achieve their migration goal, for example setting up a business or studying in good universities, it is simpler to cope with this challenge for a longer period.

5.2.3 Challenges of Polish Return Migrants in Poland

The main challenge that most of the respondents faced after return is the low income and lower life standard in Poland compared to Scotland. While many of the respondents were happy to start a more skilled job back home, the lower income in Poland was their concern. After living in Scotland for quite a long time, many of respondents have become used to their

relatively more comfortable financial situation in Scotland, while after return, they had to be more careful with their spending. This situation is especially harder for those who have become “tied movers/stayers” and their decision to return was subject to the decision of their partner. The interesting fact is that regardless of the big changes in their lifestyle, migrants always find a way to cope with the challenges in a proper way. As a result, most of the respondents tried to focus on positive points back home, such as being close to their family and friends.

Other significant challenges faced by return migrants are: harder conditions for setting up a business, and the strict Polish bureaucratic system. These challenges need a particular consideration, as many of the returnees come back to Poland with the hope of making an improvement in their home country and therefore, are in need of a particular attention and support.

5.2.4 Opportunities of Polish Return Migrants in Poland

Being close to family and friends is the main opportunity that returnees find. The feeling of being more secure due to being close to their relatives and the familiar culture gives them more comfort and confidence. At the same time, they start enjoying the easier social contacts with the locals, better housing, and better healthcare. Moreover, many of them appreciate the opportunities given to them by their savings from Scotland. The big currency value difference enables them to set up a business in their country, buy a house, or simply enjoy life for a while without working. Besides, more skilled and stable jobs back home give some migrants a positive psychological comfort which they lacked back in Scotland.

5.3 A Discussion on the Concepts of “Normality” and “Better Life”

As already mentioned in the theoretical part, “normality” is an abstract concept that cannot be conceptualized without being measured within a wider context (Rabikowska 2010: 8). Out of the three themes used for “normality” in the theoretical part, two of them, that is material consumption, and myth of the West, apply to the findings in this research. Some respondents of this research have taken a “consumption-led migration” (Oliver et al. 2009) where migration has simply become a “normal” source of income for them and assures a “normal” living standard (White 2009).

The myth of the West among Eastern Europeans has also shed a light on their definition of “normality” and a “better life”. The free movement opportunity given to Eastern Europeans since 2004 has increased the desire of westward movement for seeking employment. Besides the fact that the UK was one of the three countries that opened its border immediately for A8 migrants, the belief that UK is a place where a “normal life” is achievable has encouraged a lot of Polish migrants to move there. However, as already mentioned by the respondents, none of them intended to stay in Scotland for his/her whole life, which indicates that migrants not only search for a better life, but also for something more and different. To me, what it shows from my findings is that my respondents were looking for very similar things in Scotland and in Poland, and when a balance of these is achieved, they have a “better life”. It should also be noted that, “adventure” and “cultural diversity” are two elements that have been mentioned almost by all the respondents to define a “better life”. This fact goes beyond the mere economic desires to migrate and brings the opportunities provided by the free movement into the light. As the respondents studied in this research were all young and highly mobile, they simply enjoy the opportunity of living in different countries and learning about other cultures which lets them feel they are leading a “better life” rather than having a “normal” life in Poland.

5.4 Future Research

Using the findings from this thesis, future research subjects dealing with Polish migrants could become interdisciplinary in nature, particularly with sociology and psychology. This interdisciplinary approach could be achieved through focusing on the following themes:

- The psychological impact of the Brexit phenomenon on Polish migrants
- The impact of Brexit on the migrants’ future migration plans
- The inclusion of Polish return migrants into the Polish society overtime
- Applying the Polish findings to non-Polish migrants

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