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Autumn books

In this issue we focus on two social phenomena linked with migration from and to Poland:

- Social remittances from migrants and how they are changing Poland - see interview with prof. Anne White on next page, devoted to the just-published book "[The Impact of Migration on Poland. EU Mobility and Social Change](#)" by Anne White, Izabela Grabowska, Paweł Kaczmarczyk and Krystyna Slany
- The role social networks play for Ukrainian migrants in Poland - see article on page 5 by Marta Kindler and Katarzyna Wójcikowska-Baniak.

As the CMR marks its 25th anniversary, we have much to celebrate with. Another key book by our researchers has been published in September:

- "[25 wykładów o migracjach](#)" [25 Lectures on Migrations] edited by Magdalena Lesińska and Marek Okólski is meant for a broad audience of all those wishing to understand migrations in the world, Europe and Poland.

25 wykładów o migracjach

redakcja naukowa
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How migration influences the lives of stayers

Interview with Anne White, Professor of Polish Studies and Social and Political Science at University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies

Dominika Pszczołkowska: [“The Impact of Migration on Poland. EU Mobility and Social Change”](#) is I believe the first book which is both about emigration from Poland, and its influence on the country, and immigration into Poland...

Anne White: This occurred almost by chance.

When I originally conceived the idea for the book in about 2013, there wasn't much immigration into Poland. I thought the immigration chapter would just be a little epilogue. We wanted to have a book which would focus more on stayers, because when people talk about the impact of migration, they very often talk about what migrants do and it's not a complete picture. The book is about stayers and, connected to that, it's about turning things inside

out and instead of saying „these are migrants, what do they do?” saying „how is Polish society changing and why is that linked to migration?”. I really do think that's the most helpful way of looking at it. Although it's very difficult to establish causation, through in-depth research you can show how on a micro level things you would not have expected are happening.

Which aspects of social life have you found that migration influences?

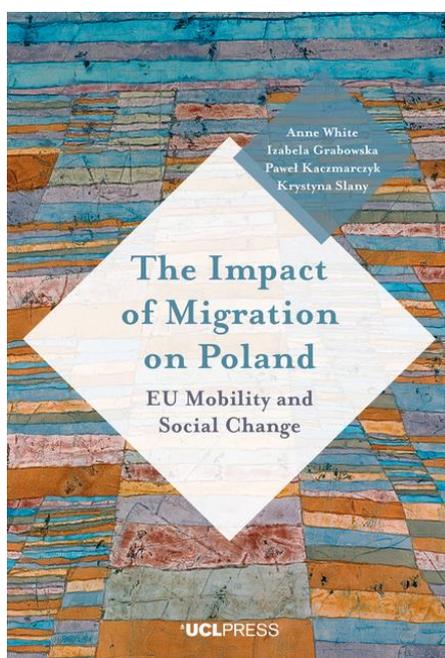
Trust is a fascinating case. Supposedly, as societies become more democratic and

people become more prosperous, they become more trusting. Often it is said that Scandinavian countries are very good examples of this. Levels of generalized trust are quite low in Central Europe, which is probably due to the communist heritage. At the same time, there have been

improvements in Poland. This might be connected to rising prosperity, but it could also be a social remittance of migration: my interviewees said they liked the fact that when they went abroad people seemed more trusting to strangers.

Looking at it the other way you could also say: why isn't generalized trust rising faster in Poland, when it's doing so well economically? When interviewing migrants I,

Michał Garapich and many other researchers constantly find this idea, especially among labour migrants, that you should not trust other Poles when abroad. My research in sending societies, small towns in Poland and even Warsaw brought out lots of examples of this, so there is this unhelpful kind of idea circulating in that transnational space, in Poland and foreign countries, that Poles when they get abroad are not to be trusted. This somehow links up to the idea that generally you shouldn't trust people you don't know. I think that is having a role in bringing down the



level of trust in Poland, or at least not letting it increase as fast as you would expect.

What else is changing due to migration?

Obviously lots of things around lifestyles, those are the easiest to see. In a book I cite by [Arcimowicz et al. \(2015\)](#) about changing habits in Poland the authors started off thinking that people would be most influenced by television, but it turned out they were most influenced by their experience of being abroad. It's very much a case that visits abroad or working abroad consolidate lifestyle changes that happen anyway.

One of the things that interested me was older people and their appreciation that they can live for themselves, have more interesting lives, and don't just need to be grandparents. [Krzyżowski et al. \(2014\)](#) have written very interestingly about this change in Poland. From my research it's clear that people over 60 do go abroad and see things that they like, and then try to enact them here. At the same time, there are some kinds of social remittances which can only be put into practice in certain settings. Suppose you are a retired person and have lots of ideas about going to classes and doing various things. When you go back to Warsaw, you can, but in a village general opportunities are much fewer.

This is linked to a much broader question of how receptive different destinations are to different kinds of social remittance. A number of researchers including [Grabowska et al. \(2017\)](#) have written about resistance to different kinds of social remittances. It might well be that somebody who had been very impacted by migration became much more tolerant to LGBT people, but then they go

back to a small town and not say anything about it because they know that it isn't a very favoured view.

Are Poles generally becoming more or less tolerant due to the influences of migration?

People can be affected by migration in very different ways. You can predict how an individual might be influenced. There is a lot of research about contact theory and in general the research about receiving societies is really helpful for understanding sending societies. If somebody doesn't have the opportunity to form friendships with people who are different to them, they may simply have hostile, intolerant attitudes reinforced as a result of migration. And then those also somehow tie in with xenophobic attitudes circulating in Poland. There is a very interesting article by [Fox and Mogilnicka \(2017\)](#) about pathological integration. This is where people coming to the UK as migrants integrate into British society by picking up British ideas about racism and racial hierarchy. I think that probably does happen sometimes. They found it in their samples, which were Romanian, Polish, Hungarian.

But it can also be the other way around, and I have seen quite a few examples of the other way round. [Rzepnikowska's \(2017\)](#) study of Barcelona and Manchester is really interesting about this as well. She writes about conviviality, and convivial situations are exactly those where different kinds of people can become more open to difference. She shows that even people from the groups which are less likely to be open to difference, the less educated for example, if they have plenty of good opportunities to meet, say, black people when abroad, they tend not to be racist and change their minds about things.

Is Polish religiosity also changing because of migration?

There is quite a lot of scope for doing work on that in Poland. The trend is towards an individualization of religion. Even though over 90% of people in Poland say they believe in God, the percent who say „I believe in God in my own way” has increased dramatically. That process is part of a more general trend towards individualization, which is occurring in Poland, but also happens through migration. There are statistics showing clearly that when Poles go abroad, they are less likely to attend church. A brilliant book by Joanna [Krotofil \(2013\)](#) shows how their private preferences and inner spiritual life become more important. Sometimes it takes them away from Catholicism, sometimes they have a more individualized approach, they are not so accepting of the Church as an institution. It seems to me that must be having an impact, but it’s one of those examples where it is very difficult to find out what is going on in smaller, more conservative places, where people still feel more constrained to attend church.

Can we say in general whether social remittances impact more in large cities or small towns?

I think they impact in different ways. In cities things are already changing for lots of reasons, so the researcher’s task there is to see how social remittances intertwine with those changes. For example, if a pensioner returns from a visit abroad enthusiastic about taking evening classes in Poland, there is a demand, which has been created by being abroad. In Warsaw there is also supply, so the demand and supply side come together. In a

small village there might be the demand side but not the supply side.

In small towns the impact is very noticeable in things around lifestyle and infrastructure. If you go to some small towns, clearly there are streets of housing which have been built by migrants. We cite [Kurczewski and Fuszara \(2012\)](#) on how women are acquiring driving licences because their husbands are working abroad. This last effect is quite noticeable and quite attributable to migration. That brings me on to the other main theme of my book: that migration has different kinds of impacts on different sorts of people. Probably there is more value added for people who are generally less exposed to globalization influences. Somebody who, for example, can’t afford to go on holidays abroad or perhaps doesn’t read all that much, but they go and visit a grandchild living abroad, might be exposed to new ideas in a different way than someone who had the chance to pick up such ideas from other sources.

I have to ask you about Brexit, although it’s not part of your book. Do you believe it will encourage more Polish people to return to Poland, settle permanently in the UK, go elsewhere?

It was already starting to have an impact when I was doing the last interviews for the book in August 2016, but my signals come particularly from my work as a volunteer English teacher at a Saturday school. Firstly, the issue of security is very important. Until the Brexit referendum there was this kind of migration confidence that Polish people had, that they could go to a country in Western Europe, and if it didn’t work out they could come back, they could go to a third country, they could go on inviting their friends and

relatives, or if their sister in law in Norway invited them, they could go to her. People just had this kind of optimism and assumption that this was forever and built their lives on that. Even if they didn't invite over various family members, they thought they could do it later. Now this sort of easy transnational existence is threatened, and I think that has huge implications for families, because people have to be thinking potentially about care arrangements for older parents in Poland, or whatever it might be. There could be lots of different reasons to feel insecure as a result. And then also there are all these things around whether people feel that the British are welcoming towards citizens of other EU countries. Quite a few of my interviewees over the years found British people a bit cold and difficult to get to know, but not necessarily hostile. I think the balance has tipped a bit. Now they are aware that quite a lot of people are genuinely hostile. The British have been taught to be more hostile because of certain media and politicians. That adds to a sense of insecurity, which means that that kind of transnational social space where ideas are circulating and where people feel comfortable is under threat.

At the same time there are also other processes. Although the EU is a kind of mobility laboratory, still there is a kind of migration process that happens. People are going to settle, they are not going to be endlessly mobile. More and more studies have shown that this is happening. It is natural for people to settle, particularly when they have children and those children go to school. People have settled in the UK and often they have lots of British friends who are quite open towards people from other countries. After all just half of voters didn't vote for Brexit. Most young people didn't vote for Brexit. The main effect of Brexit for migration between Poland and the UK is that those people who came to earn quick money are not coming anymore. You can see this already in hospitality or agriculture, which are suffering because people are not coming anymore in the same numbers.

[The Impact of Migration on Poland. EU Mobility and Social Change](#) by Anne White, Izabela Grabowska, Paweł Kaczmarczyk and Krystyna Slany was published in September 2018. It is available in open access.

Events coming up:

- Conference on [Migration Routes of Polish Roma](#) (POLIN museum in Warsaw, October 4)
- Conference on European Migrations Post-2004: Causes, Effects and Perspectives (Emigration Museum in Gdynia, October 25-26)
- [IMISCOE Spring Conference: Transforming Mobility and Immobility: Brexit and Beyond](#) (Sheffield, UK, March 28-29, 2019). Conference co-organized by the Migration Research Group (MRG) at the University of Sheffield and CMR. **Paper proposals due by October 10, 2018.**

On social ties and emotions – an explorative study of the role of social networks in migration

By Marta Kindler and Katarzyna Wójcikowska-Baniak

Migration scholars seem to be convinced that people who have a similar cultural background and migrate from areas geographically closer have it easier when it comes to adapting to the country of migration and that the main causes behind integrating successfully are economic. We hear similar claims about Ukrainian labour migrants, who are the largest group of migrants in Poland (and most dynamically increasing immigrant population in the EU) and who are in public and academic discourse portrayed as practically “assimilating” into Polish society. Since 2014 (that is since the dramatic political changes in Ukraine following the Euromaidan protests, the annexation of Crimea, the military conflict in Donbas and Luhansk) we observe an increase in all channels of entry and a significant increase in applications for residence permits. In 2015 there were twice as many applications as in 2014 and last year an almost 30% increase in applications for temporary residence, over 40% - permanent residence and over 70% for the long-term EU residence permit. In addition, last year over 1.7 million employer’s declarations of employment were issued to Ukrainian nationals – for work in agriculture, construction, domestic work, but also administration and services. Does this large group of predominantly temporary migrants feel part of society? We decided to question this assumption of “easy” integration, and ask in our research project entitled “Migrant networks and integration of Ukrainian migrants in Poland – a quantitative and qualitative approach”, whom Ukrainian migrants living in Poland actually have ties to and what matters

most in regard to what they receive via these ties. To find this out our team at the Centre of Migration Research conducted over the last three years a questionnaire-based survey among more than 500 adult Ukrainian labour migrants, followed by 40 in-depth interviews and analysed the collected data.

One of the research questions was what types of resources Ukrainian migrants can access through their social networks and how this relates to their everyday integration ([Cherti, McNeil 2012](#)). [Schaefer \(2013\)](#) distinguishes three types of support, which migrants can receive within their social networks – informational, instrumental and emotional. A great amount of literature, concerning the issue of migrants’ integration, focuses on the first two aspects such as: practical help in finding a job and accommodation, legalising stay or orientation within the city. Obviously, these resources are also important for our respondents and interviewees. However, what may seem surprising is the extremely important role, which the migrants assign to emotional support. For migrants who are no longer in the initial phase of migration, it turns out to be the most important and decisive for the sense of integration (both for migrants working in low-skilled and high-skilled jobs). Why is this so?

With growing migration experience, the economic and legal obstacles become less severe – after a few years, with the exception of circular migrants, migrants usually have a rather stable job, legalised stay and some form of legal employment. However, even after many years in

Poland, they still encounter socio-cultural and psychological barriers (such as: the feeling of being estranged resulting from cultural differences but also from stereotypes and prejudices, the sense of uprooting and “homesickness”) which are much harder to overcome. Emotional support, available in their networks, allows them to respond to these difficulties. As the [analysis of qualitative data by Marta Kindler and Katarzyna Wójcikowska-Baniak \(2018\)](#) shows, our interviewees receive emotional support mainly through strong ties to their Ukrainian friends in Poland, who usually have similar migration experiences. People working in white-collar occupations meet new friends mostly at work, at the university or in hobby-related groups. Migrants in blue-collar occupations more often maintain contacts with friends from their community of origin, who also are migrants or form new bonds thanks to participating in religious practices. According to our informants, being rooted in the same culture and sharing a similar migration experience allowed them to build an intimate and trustful relationship. They claim that only people, who are in a similar position to their own can truly understand their problems. Reflecting the importance of such a relationship, Wiera – a middle aged woman, working as an elderly care-worker - said:

“We support each other. And most of all, we support each other morally. You know, in exile, we must support each other. One can cry one’s heart out, ask for advice. That’s how life is.”

Lena – a 30-year old professional shares Wiera’s opinion on the unique compassion possible only among migrants commenting about the women she meets during her knitting group gatherings:

“And in this our group [name of the group] we support each other, because we talk not only about knitting, but also about life, about this migrant life here and we help each other, we ‘ventilate’ information.”

Emotional support is of great significance to our interviewees both during serious life crisis events (illness or death in the family) and in every-day situations. Strong bonds with co-nationals in Poland provide them with a sense of security and stability, which is expressed by the majority of the studied persons as a belief that they “have somebody they can count on” or that they are “not alone”. The group of closest friends fulfils the need of affiliation. However, the results also indicate that even a single, strong tie to a Pole can be crucial for a sense of well-being in Poland. However, these were rare among the interviewees.

The research team includes: dr. hab. Agata Górny, dr. Ewa Jaźwińska, dr. Marta Kindler, dr. Sabina Toruńczyk-Ruiz, and Katarzyna Wójcikowska-Baniak. We have presented our research results at several conferences, including the annual conference of the Committee for Migration Research of the Polish Academy of Science, the annual meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology, the IMISCOE Spring Conference and the annual meeting of the Polish Society of Social Psychology. Apart from the mentioned [CMR Working Paper 107 \(165\)](#) “Social networks and integration of migrants from Ukraine. Qualitative research report”] two articles are currently under review in prestigious journals. They share the research results regarding the mechanisms behind migrants social network construction, maintenance and consequences for everyday life and answer the question whether migrants’ psychological integration increases their intention to settle. The research project “Migrant networks and integration of Ukrainian migrants in Poland – a quantitative and qualitative approach” is financed by the National Centre of Science under the grant no. 2014/15/D/HS4/01234.



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Marta Kindler

Marta is a member of CMR since 2004. She holds a PhD in socio-cultural anthropology from the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder. From 2009 till 2011, she also worked as a Migration and Freedom of Movement Adviser at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Her main fields of academic interest include migrant networks, temporary forms of migration, migrant domestic work, migrant integration and irregular migration.



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