Families in Migration Through the Gender Lens.

A Study of Polish Transmigrants in Ireland

Magdalena Muszel

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences of the European University Institute

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Department of Political and Social Sciences

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Abstract

This thesis tries to determine the impact of transnational family migration on the gendered division of labour and power dynamics between the couples either entrenching inequalities and traditional roles, or challenging and changing them. It shows also how ideas about gender shape transnational family migration patterns, and affect the individual family life of transmigrants. And eventually, it examines the social and family-related consequences of these processes.

The research questions have been formulated as follows: How do gender role beliefs and family gender arrangement (gender practice, family gender organization) affect transnational family migration? And how are gender role beliefs and family gender arrangements affected by transnational family migration? It is crucial to stress that the answer to these questions will shed light on potential gender transitions, its directions, circumstances and social and familial consequences of transnational family migration. In order to explain the research problem from a dynamic perspective and distinguish various transnational family phases, I introduce three stages which I call; pre-transnational, transnational and post-transnational family stage. The pre-transnational stage refers in retrospect to the time of decision making process about migration, the transnational family stage is about the time of transnational family separation due to migration and the nature of family life during this time while the post-transnational family stage considers the time after family reunification which in my thesis is limited only to the reunification in Ireland. An important part of the thesis is a chapter that is dedicated to the role of Polish Church in Ireland and the correlation of migrant’s religiosity and their gender roles.
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Preface and acknowledgments

My interest in migration and family initially sprang from being a migrant myself- a student temporarily and seasonally (in summer) working abroad. It provided the opportunity to travel which I enjoyed and also to learn about people's lives and about myself. My own experience related to the separation from my family over time as well as other people's experiences gave me a particular interest in some of the contradictions and aspects that lie behind the borderless migration within the European Union and the way that this migration, especially its transnational character, shapes individual family life.

During the first year of my PhD programme at the European University Institute I struggled with countless ideas for the theme of the doctoral thesis. The amount of ideas made the decision of which to choose very difficult. However, while there are a lot of fascinating and important questions to answer, I realized that migration is in many ways a phenomenon that shapes what many people value above all else- family life.

Understanding how transnational migration shapes family life, particularly gender roles and gender beliefs within the family, and vice-versa how people and their gender beliefs and gender roles shape the patterns of transnational migration in Europe, was the driving force behind this project.

There are a number of people I would like to thank personally, in particular my supervisor Martin Kohli and my co-supervisor Rainer Bauböck. They have never failed to provide the right sort of guidance at the right time despite the fact that I was not the easiest student to deal with. Thank you for your faith that my continuous struggle with the topic would eventually end successfully.

I would also particularly like to thank to my husband Grzegorz Piotrowski. His ability to encourage and his patience have been precious to me. Thanks also to my mother Zdzisława Muszel. Her faith in my abilities has given me strength.

In addition, I would like to mention my gratitude to people who I have met in Dublin during my field work there, especially Paulina, Dorota, Bogdan and Mariusz. They became not only my informants but also valued friends.
I. Introduction.

The initial inspiration for writing a PhD thesis on transnational family migration was the huge migration flow from the new EU member states (East and Central European Countries, among them Poland) to the countries of the “old” European Union that took place after the EU enlargement in May 2004.

In the case of Poland, some sources\(^1\) in 2006 stated that as many as four million Poles had left the country in the two years following the EU accession (Klos 2006), mainly going to the UK, Ireland and Germany. The main motivation for this migration was for economic reasons. Transnational reality has become a part of the migration experience of women and men, wives and husbands, mothers and fathers. It became a part of their family life. When someone migrates to a new country his or her family life might be affected by this fact in a variety of ways. Thomas Cooke (2006: 2) noted that, “migration and the family are interdependent because a change in one nearly always involves a change in the other”. There may be some benefits from the move, but there are also costs. The consequences often differ for different members of a family. There is a need to develop a better understanding of family relationships that both shape and are shaped by migration (Kofman 2004).

Moreover, as Pribilsky noticed, family studies require increased focus on the specific patterns for men’s and women’s transnational migration and their reaction to it within the context of their families (Pribilsky 2004).

In other words, transnational migration and transnational practices raise questions not only about the consequences for the economies and the demographic structures of sending and receiving countries, but they also provoke micro-level questions concerning the individual family life of migrants. In order to examine how women and men operate in relation to the transnational family migration, I decided to use a gender based approach guided by feminist theory (Osmond and Thorne 1993) as an analytical framework for my study.

The aim of this study is threefold. On the one hand, to determine the impact of transnational family migration on the gendered division of labour and power dynamics between the couples either entrenching inequalities and traditional roles, or challenging and changing them. On the other hand, to show how ideas about gender shape transnational family migration patterns, and affect the individual family life of transmigrants. Lastly, I will attempt to examine the social and family-related consequences of these processes.

\(^1\) Following the data of B. Klos (2006), Polish media estimated that 2-4 million Poles left the country between 2004 and 2006, while Ministry of Labor and Social Policy-660 thousand, The Catholic Church-1 million, Polish experts-1.2 million, Report ECA (European Citizens Action Service)-1.12 million.
My research aims and research questions have been inspired by the literature on gender and migration studies. First of all, the gender perspective in my study has been driven by a statement that gender is a common concept describing both the family and migration; family has been acknowledged as a gendered unit (Kimmel 2000) and migration as a gendered process where people migrate from and enter into “gendered and stratified societies” (Piper 2008:1). Patterns of migration, as well as other circumstances such as political; migration law regulations, economical; labour or non-labour migration, social and cultural background may vary for different groups of migrants. Nevertheless, “gender is likely to be a fundamental dividing line between the way that immigrants construct and experience an immigrant or trans-national identity” (Moch, 2005:102).


The general assumption in this study is that since women and men are likely to experience migration in different ways, then gender should be treated as a central theme of migration studies (Pessar and Mahler 2003). However, this general and universal statement is not corroborated by the further research related to the question of how gender has been shaped by migration, in which directions, and what is the character of these possible changes.

For instance, on the one hand Mirjana Morokvasic argues that “international migrants albeit women and men in different ways, tend to use the traditional gender order and rely on it for their own purposes, if they don’t challenge or question it” (Morokvasic 2007: 71, emphasis in original), while Nicola Piper advocates that “On the other hand, these cross-border movements – whether by women/men on their own or jointly with their spouses – have the potential to reconfigure gender relations and power inequalities. Migration can provide new opportunities for women and men to improve their lives, escape oppressive social relations, and support those who are left behind.” (Piper 2005:1). Further literary inspiration can be found in chapters 1, 2 and 3 of this thesis.

Therefore, taking into account the existing literature on the topic and the context of transnational family migration of Poles to Ireland, I began my research with a series of questions: How do gender role beliefs and family gender arrangement (gender practice, family gender organization) affect transnational family migration? And how are gender role beliefs and family gender arrangements affected by transnational family migration? It is crucial to stress that the answer to these questions will shed light on potential gender transitions, its directions, circumstances and social and familial consequences of transnational family migration.
The relationship between the research questions is shown in the graph below:

I differentiate family gender beliefs and family gender order as two separate issues which can affect transnational family migration and, at the same time, can be affected by transnational family migration processes. Gender beliefs refer to “a set of beliefs and opinions about males and females and about the purported qualities of masculinity and femininity” (Deaux & Kite, 1987:97), while gender order is a social practice of gender relations at different levels of social life with respect to the gendered division of labour (Pfau- Effinger, 2004). In this thesis both concepts are used with regard to the transnational family life. Although family gender beliefs and family gender order are integral parts of family organization (see for example Chapter II.III. Family as a gendered unit, pp.20-24), the literature on the topic as well as empirical data presented in chapter 2 of this thesis suggest that gender practices do not always conform to gender beliefs, neither gender beliefs are always followed by corresponding gender practices. However, it is not my intention to define the relationship between these two aspects of family life or to study whether gender order shapes gender beliefs or gender beliefs determine gender order within the family. In my opinion this is too big a question to discuss in this thesis. It requires separate, in-depth scientific research rather than brief discussion.

The research questions are interdependent. This assumption derives from the fact that the term ‘gender’ includes men's and women's active roles in society and their beliefs about what is “masculine” and what is “feminine” in their social life. The “activeness” of these roles means that gender roles and relations are produced by social practice, whilst they produce social practice at the same time.

The first research question concerns the whole process of transnational family life; starting from decisions about migration abroad, through experiences and decisions during transnational family separation, until the stage of transnational family life during and after family reunification or family
disintegration in Ireland.

The second question applies to the transnational family stage, the time when family members are separated due to migration but maintain contact with each other across national borders, as well as the time during and after family reunification or family disintegration in Ireland.

In order to explain the research problem from a dynamic perspective and distinguish various transnational family phases, I introduce three stages which I call; pre-transnational, transnational and post-transnational family stage. The pre-transnational stage of the family refers in retrospect to the time before migration: the decision making process about migration, gathering information and preparation for migration. It is important to stress that in my thesis I take into account only one of the many possible migration decisions, that means only decisions about transnational family separation due to migration abroad of one or more than one family member when the rest of the family stays in the home country. So, I do not refer in my thesis to other possible migration decisions, such as, when family members decide to migrate together or the migration decision. The transnational family stage refers to the current or past situation of the informant’s family life when at least one family member is/was abroad and various ties with the family left behind (daily communication, remittances) are/were being maintained. The retrospective perspective used in the study gives an opportunity to follow the whole process of transnational family migration with the chance to perceive a full sequence of causes and effects and turning point events.

The view of the whole process, from the beginning to the end, also provides the opportunity to identify the relationship between cause and effect, as well as allowing for easier interpretation of this relationship. Additionally, the researcher cannot manipulate change or influence the data. The researchers can only collect and measure data. Moreover, the time span provides a complete picture of the process which is clearer and easier to be described and judged by informants. However, one’s opinions and values can also change as life experiences alter over time. Some researchers indicate that even that the mere passage of time, without the addition of new information over time, can affect one’s assessment of events (Frank and Gilovich, 1989). Nevertheless, the retrospective reporting of the interviewees can be as subjective as a prospective rapport. Additionally, the advantage of a retrospective approach provides for the continuity of the subjective perception of life events.

Besides, in my opinion, it is impossible to judge or measure the subjectivity or objectivity of an individual’s thoughts, feelings and opinions on their own family life. There is no sense in deciding which individual’s report is more or less subjective on this matter, as all of them are naturally subjective to some extent.

And finally the post-transnational family stage concerns family reunification (either in Ireland or in
another country), or disintegration after transnational family time. However, my attention is only focused on Polish families which have been reunified in Ireland. I excluded from the investigation those families whose reunification or disintegration took place in Poland or a country other than Ireland. I decided to do so for several reasons. The first reason, a pragmatic one, was related to the limited time and resources as well as formal restrictions related to the number of words in the paper. The second reason was the limitation of the research within the context of immigration, which only made my studies more specific, detailed and in-depth. This would hardly be possible if I had to turn my time and attention to the wider context of transnational family reunification, namely; reunification in the home country or any country other than Ireland. Moreover, the focus on reunified families in Ireland allowed me to investigate families in a specific migration context, which means to explore not only how much the migration situation shapes family relations while family members remain separated, but also how migration circumstances and ongoing transnational processes shape family life after the reunification. The terms pre-transnational and post-transnational family have been introduced to emphasize also the fact that the decision making processes and the preparation for departure have a transnational character even before migration, and some transnational family practices are very often present following transnational family reunification in the host-country.

It is important to stress that there are various family models involved in transnational migration and that different migration plans and trajectories are possible. One of the alternatives is that the family is not established prior to the transnational family migration but at later stages of the transnational migration process, namely; 1) during the transnational migration stage when a single pioneer migrant is already abroad (a migrant gets married/establishes stable relationship with a person whom she/he found in Ireland or with somebody from Poland whom she/he met during visits to Poland or even on the Internet), 2) after migration (family formation takes place at the post-transnational migration stage either with a person met in Ireland or in Poland). Each of these family migration scenarios could be further differentiated by introducing children at one stage or at each stage of the transnational family migration process.

Another transnational family migration pattern includes the possibility that the family couple (married or in a stable relationship with a common household) migrate simultaneously or within a very short time period leaving their children, if they have any, in the home country. So in this situation there is no transnational separation of couples, but possible transnational family separation of migrants from their children (again-if they have children) and also transnational separation with migrants’ parents. And finally there is also the migration scenario of single parent families, in which a parent migrates and leaves his/her children in the care of relatives.
Nevertheless, though the family models and migration scenarios mentioned above together provide a multidimensional picture of transnational family migration, they do not cover all the nuances of family gender roles and family gender relations between the particular family members which I am interested in. This is simply because some of these relations or family roles do not or did not exist at one or other transnational family stage. For example, the consequences of certain family migration decisions cannot be investigated in the case of families established during the transnational migration stage. Therefore, I decided to take into account in my in-depth study the most empirically dominant transnational family migration model and, at the same time, the one which covers all transnational family roles and relations with which I am interested within one family unit. So, the fundamental basis of my investigation is a nuclear transnational family model, which in my paper means either a married or cohabitating couple of the same nationality with or without children. This choice allowed me to investigate the research questions based on basic family gender roles: husband, wife, father and mother. The nature of these roles is discussed with reference to family relations\(^2\) (between spouses and between parents and children) as family roles and relations are mutually interdependent; a change in a family role naturally causes a change in family relationships. The study of the nuclear transnational family model fulfils all of the requirements needed for sufficient research of the issues in which I am interested, namely: transnational motherhood, the transnational wife, transnational fatherhood, and the transnational husband. However, family processes involve different members of the family: children, spouses and the elderly, during important stages in the life cycle such as childhood, adulthood, marriage and retirement. Thus, in order to obtain a complete picture of basic family relations and roles, the role of extended transnational family members has to be taken into account. In my thesis, I therefore also consider these relatives, who have been indicated by transmigrants as key actors in their family life. Additionally, in order to cover the social diversity of migrants, at least partially, I take into account the migrants' social characteristics, such as: education, areas of habitation and occupation in the host country.

The research questions have been studied with regard to the Polish migration movement to Ireland after the EU enlargement in 2004. In terms of the amount of immigrants, Poland was the biggest “sender” among new EU member states that joined the EU at that time. Many Polish migrants have chosen Ireland as a destination country. Nowadays they represent the biggest national minority in Ireland (around 7% of the whole Irish population according to the Department of Social and Family

\(^2\) Family relations are understood here as communication interactions between family members (on the basis of the relational communication approach point of view)
Affairs in Ireland). Many of the recent Polish migrants see themselves as only temporary transmigrants. They intend to return to the home country after some time. They remain very well connected with their families and friends in Poland creating transnational family networks. They practice various types of transnational communication (everyday communication by the Internet and mobile phones, sending remittances, care giving and receiving exchange). These vital transnational social and family ties of Polish migrants contributed to the feeling of actually living in both countries at the same time, namely in Ireland and Poland. Due to the very recent nature of this migration many aspects associated with the migrant's life, including family life have been not yet been studied and require in-depth research.

When investigating transnational family life, I follow the life-cycle perspective and I use anthropological and feminist methodological approaches. It gives me a chance to trace and study the difficult to measure, complex, and dynamic nature of family roles and relations over transnational migration time. It allows me also to be sensitive and alert to all kinds of circumstances which may directly or indirectly influence my research process and outcome. By using qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and life-story interviews, I have a chance to discover not only the motivations and feelings which lay behind the individual actions but also to try to suggest general patterns. Although, it is possible that the results given by my interviewees on their gender practices and gender beliefs are not always compatible with their real gender beliefs and gender order, I risk the claim that my respondents’ declarations, which I collected during my narrative interviews, are very close to their actual gender practice and beliefs in most cases. I based my belief on the fact that I often had an opportunity to compare two versions of the same history presented by a wife and a husband, so to capture similarities and differences. Besides, I had an opportunity for a relatively long (two and four weeks) of participant observation of two families- my key informants (separately Daria and Marek, and Patrycja and Bartosz) while being their guest and living at their places in Dublin. Thus, I had a chance to confront their declarations with my own observations of their family life.

Another factor which leads my research towards an anthropological approach when studying transnational family migration is the lack of family research from a micro-level perspective. As Adrian Favell (2008) claims when writing about new East-West migration patterns within the EU: “Less has been done on the micro, ethnographic level: on the lives, experiences, networks and social forms that this new migration in Europe has taken. Fresh research is called for on the ‘human face’ of this migration” (Favell 2008:702).

As previously stated, the aim of this study is to present and discuss the changing nature of gender
roles and relations within the family in the context of transnational migration, and to understand the substrate of the different transnational experiences of men and women involved in transnational family life. A further aim is to enhance the knowledge base of the complex phenomenon of the transnational family itself in relation to new transnational patterns of migration in the EU after 2004. Last but not least, I hope that my work will provoke further questions on issues linked to European transnational family experiences.

This project is innovative and important for several reasons. First, it combines transnational migration, family, and gender in a single integrated research question. Although the concept of transnationalism is not new, in academic discourse, it was only first approached critically in 1992 in Basch et al.’s publication “Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration”, and it still requires more multifaceted research. Also little research has been undertaken on the current transnational family life. As has been stated by Levitt and Glick Schiller: “Our analytical lens must necessarily broaden and deepen because migrants are often embedded in multi-layered, multi-sited transnational social fields, encompassing those who move and those who stay behind. As a result, basic assumptions about social institutions such as the family, citizenship, and nation-states need to be revisited” (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004:1003). Therefore, I think that potential renegotiation of the migrants’ family roles and relationships is one of the central themes which should be focused upon in research on transnationalism.

The project also deals with the topic of transnational family communication, which especially when considering the usage of new communication and transportation technologies for transnational communication, calls for broader and more detailed research. Most of the studies on the transnational communication are focused on the role of communication between governments and transnational corporations, as well as on the role of global and national media in the creation of a common transnational public sphere. Transnational communication between individuals within social and family networks remains under-researched by scholars (Karim, 1998). Research on the transnational family is also important to garner a better understanding of what makes people engage in different kinds of transnational activities (Sørensen, 2007:162). Moreover, the research design is constructed in a way that takes into consideration three fundamental stages of transnational family life. The study presents a comprehensive analysis of transnational family processes from the decision about migration, through transnational family life to possible family reunification or disintegration.

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3 Transnational families are defined as "families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely ‘familyhood’, even across national borders.” (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 3)
What makes this work more valuable is also the fact that most of the research on transnationalism and the transnational family is undertaken by American scholars and from an American perspective. The transnational theory is mainly built on research on transnational communities in the United States (Mexican, Filipino, etc.). Transnational practices in Europe are rather less explored by sociologists. Therefore, trying to fill this void, I have chosen the big migration movement of Poles to Ireland after 2004 for my research. Although it reflects a new wave of transnational migration within the EU after the enlargement in 2004, this migration movement has barely been described or studied by researchers. What makes it even more interesting is the fact that the character of the recent migration of Poles does not have a uniform character: migrants come from all social and cultural backgrounds and represent a wide array of transnational engagements.

And finally, as Patricia Pessar has argued, there is a need to “engender” (Pessar 1999) transnational studies and theories. Not only will such research more accurately reflect transnational processes—it will also underscore how gender and family are inextricably tied to transnationalism itself.

The theoretical framework for my research comprises two contradictory approaches related to gender and migration. The first one is Morokvasic (2007) and Karjanen’s (2008) approach related to gender and migration. The authors argue that it is unlikely that the majority of female migrants challenge traditional forms of gender knowledge and gender order (Morokvasic 2007: 71). Moreover, “the gender order is not only resistant to change, but under certain circumstances intersecting with class, migrancy and legality can be intensified” (Morokvasic et al 2008:14). Therefore, as it is suggested, the “normality” of the traditional gender order has not necessarily been challenged by emigrational circumstances. While economic and power relations within female households may have improved: the gender order can become even stronger (Morokvasic et al 2008).

On the other hand, Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997:552) uphold the statement that the migration of women is a “gender-transformative odyssey”. On the basis of the sample of Mexican immigrant women, these authors state that “women became more autonomous and assertive through their immigration and settlement experiences. Egalitarianism was promoted by the relative increase in women’s and the decrease in men’s economic contributions to the family. As the balance of relative resources and contributions shifted, the women assumed more active roles in key decision-making process” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994: 194), and “Their migration often involved leaving behind a set of limiting family relations and finding in the U.S. opportunities to question their more traditional roles as mothers and housewives”(Sørensen 2005:1-2). From this point of view, the migration of women leads to the challenging and “undoing” of their traditional family gender roles.
The thesis is organized as follows: the second chapter presents the concept of the family as a
gendered unit and common social beliefs about gender roles in Poland and in Europe from a
comparative perspective. The third chapter explains the concepts of transnationalism and
transnational family migration. It introduces and discusses the three phases of transnational family
migration, namely the migration decision phase (pre-transnational family stage), transnational
family stage and transnational family reunification time (post-transnational family stage). The
empirical studies presented in this chapter illustrate the complex nature of transnational family roles
and relations. The next chapter (chapter 4) introduces the recent transnational migration patterns
within the European Union with particular emphasis on migrants from East-Central Europe after
2004. This chapter also refers to migration history and the present migration reality in Ireland and
Poland, including Polish migration to Ireland after 2004. Chapter five is devoted to the theoretical
and practical aspects of my methodological approach and research design. The next five chapters
present the results of my fieldwork in Dublin and the analysis of these results. Thus, chapters six,
seven and eight discuss the three phases of transnational family migration in the following
sequence: decision-making process; transnational family stage; and transnational family
reunification time. Chapter nine is devoted to the transnational family relations in terms of
transnational relations between parents and children. It takes into account both: relations between
migrants and their dependent children; and relations between migrants and their elderly parents. The
last chapter in this thesis presents and discusses the religiosity of Polish migrants in Ireland in the
context of gender and family. The final part presents the conclusions of my work, which I have
derived from the analysis of the collected material.
II. Family and gender

II.I. What is the family?

Since we all come from families and have had personal experience with them, we assume that we know what the family is. Our subjective understanding of family creates a barrier to understanding and defining the family in a generally accepted way. Families are characterized by a rich variety of features that mix gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and marital history. They also vary in their dynamics and the interactions between family members. Family diversity thus refers to different types of family in structural or demographic terms, as well as in family processes (van Eeden-Moorefield and Demo 2007:1590). There is no single definition of or formula for the family. Family is also subject to change. As Elaine Leeder (2004:2) has stated it has never been and it will never be a static organization, “The family in the world is in process: Resilient, the family copes with the forces acting on it and adopts in an ongoing manner that makes it a highly elastic and changeable form”.

Study of the family involves several theories; however, the family can be classified into three main types according to formal, role and emotional-relational criteria (Wamboldt and Reiss 1989). These types answer the three main questions: Who constitutes the family? What are the functions of the family and the roles of family members? What kind of relationships make people consider themselves and others part of a family?

The first type defines the family by form, according to specific structural features which are neither dependent upon family relations nor upon affection or subjective feelings of group identity. Family members make clear who is in the family and who is not (Wamboldt and Reiss 1989). One of the very strict structural definitions states that the family is “a relatively small domestic group of kin (or people in a kin-like relationship) consisting of at least one adult and one dependent person” (Popenoe, 1993:529). This definition implies that the family constitutes members related-by-blood (or a proxy blood relationship, such as in the case of adoption) where at least one of them is dependent (e.g., most commonly a child, but possibly a handicapped or elderly adult). David Popenoe’s definition does not consider a married or cohabitating couple a family. However, a single parent (whether married previously or not) who lives with one or more dependents (for instance children) is considered a family. Limitations of structural definitions are very apparent. Even though structurally diverse families are not considered as “family” according to some structural definitions,
they may very well be perceived as “family” if they function as “vital emotional units, based primarily on love and affection, that provide psychological security and nurturance to their members” (Peterson & Steinmetz, 1999:3). Another way to define family is by looking at its functions and tasks. According to this definition, there are no structural limits on the family. Whoever fulfils the tasks demanded of family members, such as socialization, nurturance, development, and provision of financial and emotional support, is considered a family member, regardless of his or her structural connection to the other members (Segrin and Flora 2005:9). The functional definitions are more flexible than structural ones. What becomes problematic for these types of definitions is defining what tasks must be performed in order to call someone a family member (Segrin and Flora 2005). Transactional definitions represent the third approach to defining family. They place the utmost importance on the communication among individuals and the subjective feelings generated by interaction. Ernest Burgess (1926), one of the earliest family scientists, proposed in his article written for the American Journal of Sociology, one of the first transactional definitions describing the family as a “unity of interacting personalities.” He also wrote about the general tendency among scholars to perceive family attitudes, role and values through the lens of interactions: “In its place there is a growing tendency to define the family in terms of the interactions of its members as revealed in attitudes, sentiments, values, and roles” (Burgess 1926:111). Rather than seeing the family as composed of individuals connected primarily by legal and biological ties, transactional definitions see family as a group of intimates who create and share a sense of home, group identity, history and a shared future (Koerner and Fitzpatrick, 2002).

Interactions among family members according to the transactional perspective are characterized by the following: intimacy; interdependence; commitment; feelings of family identity; emotional ties; self-defined symbols; and boundaries for family membership symbolized through family stories, family rituals, and other symbolic communication (Segrin & Flora 2005). It emphasises the importance of relations between family members and implies that families are defined primarily by long-term committed relationships, responsibilities and support, rather than exclusively by biological ties or law. These definitions allow the researcher to use the term family to refer to groups of people who traditionally would not be considered family. The researcher has to be aware that the advantage of this definition can at the same time be a disadvantage. To what extent can people choose the tasks and subjective feelings that define family? Is it acceptable to deny someone family status because of a lack of feelings of home or loyalty to them? When studying family, besides defining its structure, functions and relations, it is also very important to perceive family not as a stable but rather as a dynamic social construction which experiences changes over time and under various social, cultural and historical circumstances. Although changing patterns of family
life have been recorded, they have been recognized primarily in its internal structures. Demographic studies indicate that the traditional extended structure of three-generation families has changed to a two-generation or nuclear family structure and more recently to one-parent families (Qvortrup 1989:26). Nevertheless, there is still little understanding of intra-family roles and processes such as gender relations between family members and how these processes are subjects to change.

I am careful to note that the universally accepted definition of family which would overlap all possible aspects of family life does not exist. However, when analyzing the processes and the changing character of family roles and relations “we need to adopt a theoretical and methodological stance that explores family as a flexible social practice based on negotiated interchanges and ongoing processes” (Pruss 1996 after Evergeti & Ryan 2011:362). For the purposes of this paper I will adopt a broad definition of family which takes into account family structure, family roles and family processes as one. The very multifaceted definition of family is created by Elaine Leeder (2004:25). According to her “a family is a group of people who have intimate social relationships and have a history together. Families are of the same or different genders, of the same or different generations, and interact with strong ties of solidarity. Relationships of power and authority are developed, as are resources for meeting the basic human needs of the members. Rights and responsibilities are determined based on the cultural norms; age, sex, and position within the system, and the patterns are established based on the social context within which the family operates”. Further clarification of the family is embodied in the suggestions of Mary DeGenova and Philip Rice: “family is any group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption, or any sexually expressive relationship, in which (1) the adults cooperate financially for their mutual support, (2) the people are committed to one another in an intimate interpersonal relationship, and (3) the members see their individual identities as importantly attached to the group with an identity of its own” (DeGenova and Rice 2002:2). Moreover, in the context of transnational family migration, it is useful to understand families as ‘fluid and constantly being reconstituted and negotiated, adapting across spaces and through time’ (Nauck & Settles 2001 after Evergeti & Ryan 2011:362). These definitions are similar to each other and complementary. They include structural, functional and emotional criteria and, at the same time, they do not overlook an important aspect of family functioning, inter-generational transition. They also recognize the family as a non-isolated social form whose members may have different, sometimes even conflicting interests. Moreover, the definitions do not indicate that family members need to live in the same household, and therefore do not exclude the transnational family.
II.II. Family reciprocity and solidarity.

As the definition of the family presented above suggests, family reciprocity and solidarity are regarded as fundamental values for family function. As reciprocity between parents and their dependent children is an expected social norm, and not discussed here in detail, the reciprocity and solidarity between adult generations; the elderly and their adult children, has further focused the attention of scholars (for example Kohli 1999).

Despite the common trend for weakening of the inter-generational link in the family and as a structural isolation of the nuclear family from its elders, Martin Kohli (1999) discusses evidence on inter-generational solidarity between adult family generations. Looking at the circulation of material transfers within family generations, he claims that this is not only an important part of family relationships, but also the place to study the interaction between family solidarity reflected in the exchange of help and the welfare state.

I neglect to examine the relationship between public and family solidarity, as it is not relevant to the theme of this thesis, and instead I will focus on discussion of inter-generational family solidarity and transfers as an important aspect in inter-generational relations in modern societies (Kohli 1999, 2003). On the basis of the research conducted in West and East Germany among parents and their adult children living in two different households, Martin Kohli drew an overall conclusion about directions of transfers within the family, “The material transfers again have a strong downward direction from the older to the younger family generations, while for instrumental support the flow is reversed” (Kohli, 1999:89). He argued also, that there are four main effects of family material and instrumental support. First, elderly family members, who support their children and/or grandchildren financially, may improve their position in the family by increasing different forms of reciprocation. “In utilitarian terms, being able to ‘give’ may mean being able to buy compliance: in terms of direct provision of instrumental help and other services, but also in terms of less tangible goods such as deference and attention” (Kohli 1999:98). Second, the help that is provided by the elderly gives them a kind of social control over the young. Parental altruism, as pointed out by Kohli, is a main area of submission over the welfare of the young. And thus thirdly, the family flow of material and instrumental support constitutes relations between givers and receivers. The underlying assumption of Kohli’s argumentation is that due to the altruistic and reciprocal character of family relations, family transfers strengthen the link between different family generations. In his further investigations Martin Kohli together with Harald Künemund (2003) analyzed the motivation behind intergenerational transfers within the family. They restricted their discussion on motivation behind intergenerational transfers to “voluntary” giving. Within this framework the role of altruism, exchange and reciprocity were taken into account as factors that can shape the reasons for family
intergenerational transfers or lack of them. The altruistic forms of giving were contrasted against those of exchange. “The altruism theory assumes affection, or a moral duty, or obligation as a basis for giving help in situation of need. (...) The exchange theory, on the other hand, posits that one gives to others because one expects them to give in return” (Kohli and Künemund, 2003:128). They highlighted the particular norm of intergenerational reciprocity where “the rule of exchange allow for reciprocity to take place over a long period of time and as a spot transaction”. Moreover, the value and forms of intergenerational family reciprocity do not have to be symmetrical and may involve different types of transfers and support (2003:129). Additionally, they stressed that the sense of family obligations is conditional, and this is more a result of family interaction over time rather than an abstract normative principle. Eventually, Kohli and Künemund (2003:139) came to the conclusion that the result of their research does not correspond with the commonly assumed altruism - exchange dichotomy but rather with conditional vs. unconditional transfers and dimension, indicating intergenerational separation and independence. The authors also stressed that there is no single motive dominant for intergenerational family transfers but several motives that overlap, coexist or conflict even within the same individual, namely: direct exchange, delayed or indirect or generalized reciprocity, internalizing normative obligation (Kohli and Künemund (2003:139). Motives associated with separation (concern for keeping autonomy or distance), control, power and external norms are briefly mentioned.

While household members’ orientations and actions, including intergenerational transfers, may sometimes be guided by norms of solidarity, they may be equally well informed by hierarchies of power within households (Grasmuck and Pessar 1991:138).

Taking a feminist approach we should understand family solidarity as a cultural form rather than a natural one (Ferree 1990). The family is a social construction and fulfilling family obligations could sometimes be a part of “compulsory” altruism rather than family altruism itself. Moreover, “Families are not articulate actors and cannot make demands, but family members can and do make claims on each other, using the ideology of family to legitimate their appeals and justify self-sacrifice” (Ferree 1990:870). So, the idea of “family solidarity” can be used as a form of emotional blackmail to force help, attention or any other reactions from family members. This is clear in a very popular statement, “We are the family thus we have to help each other”. The expected reaction is regarded as a building and/or a strengthening part of “family solidarity”.

Moreover, family solidarity is a value that cannot always be taken for granted. Families differ from each other not only by social class or racially but also by what they offer to men and women in different cultural, political and economic circumstances. This means that firstly, these circumstances are not neutral to the condition of the family, and that the family does not function in isolation from them, and secondly, family solidarity is not equal for all members of the family. Responsibilities,
family obligations and expectations linked to the idea of family solidarity are interpreted and performed differently according to gender. For instance, Martin Kohli and Harald Künemund (2003:139) noticed that women are keener on unconditional family transfers than conditional family transfers than men.

II.III. Family as a gendered unit.

There are two main approaches, highlighted by Amy Wharton, which have been significant in theoretical discussion about gender roles in the family (Wharton, 2005:106). One of these approaches is presented by Talcott Parsons, who assumed that the different social roles of men and women are a result of biological distinctions between sexes (Wharton, 2005:106). The male sex role is oriented toward instrumental actions (focused on the external environment), while the female sex role is oriented toward expressive actions (focused on internal integration). Therefore, “men are expressed to work for pay and to be family breadwinners, while women were expressed to care for children and maintain the home” (Parsons, 1964 quoted after Wharton, 2005:106). Parsons’ approach strengthens gender stereotypes and ignores power relations in families (Wharton, 2005). The second approach perceives gender roles as “those shared expectations (about appropriate qualities and behaviour) that apply to individuals on the basis of their socially identified gender” (Eagly, 1987:12, quoted after Wharton, 2005:107). From this point of view women and men behave according to the expectations of their different gender roles. These expectations about gender roles are not stable; they change over time (Miller 2003:334).

In order to fully understand the concept of family as a gendered unit, we must be aware what the concept of gender involves. From a structural perspective, “gender is the division of people into contrasting and complementary social categories, 'boys' and 'girls', 'men' and 'women'” (Lorber 2000:82). Gender is often confused with the term 'sex'. However, the concept of gender does not refer to the biological differences but to the social relations which exist between women and men (Steans 1998:10). Gender is understood as an unavoidable social process, a dynamic set of norms and expectations, which West and Zimmerman (1987) called “doing gender”, and Judith Lorber as “gendering” (Lorber 2000:82), rather than as a static result of socialization. In other words, gender is not what we are but something that we do. Moreover “Gender does not, however, affect families' lives in isolation” (Miller 2003:335). Gender, as Julia Miller argues (2003), interacts with race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class to affect family life. Such an approach emphasizes not only the common perception of how that which is masculine or feminine is socially constructed, but it also emphasizes that it is open to challenge and change. Thus, men and women are involved
in the continual process of construction and re-construction of their sense of gender and their gender beliefs (Miller 2003, Ferree 1990, West and Zimmerman 1987).

People create their identities, including their gender, through their interactions with others, their family members, friends, colleagues. Jacek Szymatka (2008, 142-143), when describing the process of formation of social gender roles, emphasized the coexistence of two levels: the structurally imposed level of role; and the personally defined level of a social role. The first, includes common social expectations, requirements and desired standards of behaviour, while the second, involves those elements that have been internalized by the individual and become part of her/his personality. These levels, therefore, reflect two phenomena of social reality: the system of social norms of the group, and individual beliefs. Together they make a new whole which is exclusive to any of the levels. Szymatka postulates the inclusion of both, the structural and personal levels of a role. He also shows that the externally imposed social norms shape the personally defined social role to a much greater extent than the other way around: the personal level of a role does not exert such a decisive pressure on common social demands.

Many of the processes of “doing gender” are invisible or perceived as obvious (Ferree 1990). In everyday interactions gender roles “give individuals clues about what sort of behaviour is believed to be appropriate to which sex. Appropriate gender roles are defined according to a society's beliefs about differences between the sexes” (Miller 2003:335). The turning point comes when that which has commonly been taken for granted has been challenged. Immutable thus far, gender relations become open to explicit negotiation (Gerson and Peiss 1985 after Ferree 1990: 869). In other words, gender roles produce particular social practices and interactions, and simultaneously gender social orders are products of these interactions. The concept of “doing gender” in the form proposed by West and Zimmerman raised criticism, which involved the argument that it validates a gender model in support of women’s and men’s separate spheres, and hence gender inequalities (Butler 2004). Judith Butler offers an understanding of how “restrictively normative conceptions of sexual and gendered life” might be undone. In Undoing Gender (Butler 2004) she claims that: “If gender is a kind of a doing, an incessant activity performed, in part, without one’s knowing and without one’s willing, it is not for that reason automatic or mechanical. On the contrary, it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint” (Butler 2004:1). Moreover, gender is a kind of practice that is always within a social context, and never outside of ideology (Butler, 2004).

Since gender is constructed through interactions between people, then the family is a foundation for these construction processes. Family gender relations and generational relationships are constantly

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4 Gender order describes “power relations between men and women embedded in formal and informal institutions, cultural norms and social practices that contribute to social coherence and change in different societies (Broomhill & Sharp 2007:86).
under construction through various, very often conflicting social interactions between family members. Jane Hood (1983:5) defines family roles as “mutual expectations negotiated by the actors that define each actor's responsibility to other family members in a given context”. For feminists the family is more a battlefield than a peaceful negotiation. They redefine families as “arenas of gender and generational struggles, crucibles of caring and conflict, where claims for identity are rooted, and separateness and solidarity are continually created and contested” (Ferree 1990:880). The constant struggle over family gender roles and relations is reflected in the different beliefs about what a mother, a father, a wife or husband, or other should do or feel.

There are many common and taken-for-granted gender beliefs and expectations that concern family relations and individual family member's roles. They do not take into account different individuals norms, experiences, beliefs or personal ideas about family life. These beliefs present a set of common cultural assumptions about how families should function and about the roles and appropriate behaviour of women and men within the family. The issue of domination is central in these distinctions. Oppositional categories of maleness and femaleness are closely associated with social stratification and control (Ferree 1990). As Myra Marx Ferree noticed these processes start very early. Power relationships based on gender are observable even among small children. “The power to define is itself a means of social control, and this is evident even among children. Children-no less than adults- are actively engaged in working out the meaning of gender in response to the power relationships they perceive all around them” (Ferree, 1990:869). Women are often seen as mothers and family caretakers, while men are viewed as fathers and breadwinners. The assumptions about family gender roles are very often made on the basis of sex rather than gender. Therefore women, because of their biological capability to bear children, are usually perceived as better at raising children than men (Miller 2003:333-334).

The social construction of gender has often been studied in relation to the paid work of individual family members. “The relationship between labour and gender is a substantial portion of what family organizes, both in and out of the household” (Ferree 1990:871). Economic rational theory provides support for the idea that human capital and position on the labour market influences the pattern of housework division (Presser, 1994; Greenstein, 2004; Hook, 2006, Fuwa 2004). Thus, if the division of household duties depends on the partners’ relative resources, then when women are employed, their housework is reduced, as the difference in resources between them and their husbands is smaller (Ross et al., 1983). A similar assumption underlies the approach related to available time; however resources are replaced by time availability (Presser 1994). The partner who has more free time will devote a greater number of hours to the housework, irrespective of gender. The allocation of the domestic work is the result of a rational process, the time dedicated to chores depending only upon the partners’ available time.
However, this approach has been strongly criticized. The rules that govern family gender arrangements seem to be determined by more complex factors than the simple principles of economic rationality. The doing gender approach has been used to explain findings contrary to economic-based hypotheses, such as why economically independent women do more house-work than other women (Hook 2006:642). For example, Barbara Heather et al. (2005) show that rural women who are in paid employment due to an unstable economic situation on the family farm, derived less power from their economic contributions than they might have because the survival of the farm is most important for them. When performing two jobs; the paid employment and the unpaid farm work, they perceive their self-sacrifice and hard work as evidence of being good farm wives. Nevertheless, despite the importance of their economic contributions, they maintain subordinate positions in their families as helpmates to their husbands (Heather et al., 2005).

"Women’s unpaid labour is exploited, its value becoming part of the return the farmer receives. This structure ensures the dependence of farm wives, a dependence legitimized by ideologies underlying wifehood and motherhood. She is perceived as working for him and he supports the family, even when she is also in paid work” (Heather et al. 2005:89).

Heike Diefenbach (2002) stresses that the division of housework between couples is not explained easily by either the relative resources available or gender ideologies. In egalitarian cultural contexts, resources are not important in determining the household labour division, while it is the opposite in societies that are amid traditionalism and modernity. Thus, the role played by the social cultural norms is crucial as they operate as a mediator for the relative resources of partners.

According to the gender ideology perspective, the division of housework is the result of the values and gender beliefs shared by the partners (Presser, 1994; Greenstein, 1996, Davis et al. 2004; Diefenbach, 2002; Fuwa, 2004; Geist, 2005; Cunningham, 2007; Voicu et al., 2009). Thus, men and women who hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender will distribute household labour more equally.

Lorber (2000:82) claims that "Although the binary principle of gender remains the same, its content and thrust change as other major aspects of the social order change. (…) Men's domination of women has not been the same throughout time and place, but varies with political, economic and family structures”. At the same time Judith Lorber (2000:80) points out that despite the fact that racial, class and sexual divisions have to a great extent been challenged, “the belief that gender division are normal and natural is still underlying frame for modern social life”, according to the Bourdieu's assumption that which “goes without saying because it comes without saying” (Bourdieu, 1977:169; quoted after Lorber 2000:80). However, this 'natural' gender division and belief, and the social structure built on them were not natural but constructed by man. None of the gender roles is in any way biologically predetermined but it is “historically and socially

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
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constructed” (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997:549).

II.IV. Typology of family gender models

In my research I rely on the theory and classification of family gender models introduced by Brigit Pfau-Effinger (1998, 1999, and 2004). Pfau-Effinger’s theory relies upon three concepts: gender culture, gender order and gender arrangement. Gender culture refers to cultural values and models pertaining to the forms of the division of labour between women and men and social gender integration. The notion of a gender order describes social organization of gender relations at different levels of social lives with respect to the gendered division of labour. The gender arrangement is the interlink between gender order and the gender culture (Pfau-Effinger 2004).

There can be more than one gender culture within any given society and it is manifested at various social levels (for example institutions, discourses). In order to classify a society’s gender culture, several theoretical dimensions are considered: (1) cultural notions about the ‘main spheres’ of men’s and women’s work and the relationship between them; (2) the valuation of these spheres; (3) ideas about ‘generativity’ and generational relations; (4) dependencies between men and women; and (5) the status of ‘family’. Cultural values in relation to these differing dimensions together form family gender models (Pfau-Effinger 1998; 1999; 2004). Brigit Pfau-Effinger (1998, 1999, 2004), which introduced five gender-cultural family models in Western Europe, namely: (1) the family economy model; (2) the housewife model of the male breadwinner family; (3) the male breadwinner/female part-time carer model, (4) the dual breadwinner/external care model, which can appear in different versions in relation to the dominant values concerning the adequate form of external care and (5) the dual breadwinner/dual carer model.

The models can be divided into three groups: traditional models (the family economy model, the...
housewife model of the male breadwinner), mixed model (the male breadwinner/female part-time carer model), and egalitarian models (the dual breadwinner/external care model, and the dual breadwinner/dual carer model). These models can be characterized in terms of: (a) cultural ideals about the gender division of labour, the main spheres of work for women and men, the social valuation of these spheres, and the way dependencies between women and men are constructed; (b) the cultural construction of the relationship between generations, that is the construction of childhood, motherhood and fatherhood (Pfau-Effinger 2004, Pfau-Effinger, Bang and Jensen 2000:127).

Brigit Pfau-Effinger (2004) emphasizes that there can be more than one dominant family model within a work and family situation, and that her classification is not static and assumes that processes of change may take place within an arrangement. The changing nature of the gender arrangement comes from the fact that, as with any contract, it leaves areas where there may be conflicts, and leads to the transition from the old sets of rules to the new ones (Duncan 2000:12-13). With regard to the apparent discrepancy presented above between the declarations of respondents about their gender preferences, and gender models being practiced in their families, transmigrants’ gender beliefs and family gender models in my study are also addressed at the level of the respondent’s declarations and the observed reality.

The family gender models, both at the level of declaration and at the level of practice, are recognized and determined in my study. This is by: self-declaration of family members about their family model, the norms and expectations which my respondents attribute to particular family gender roles (as mother, father, wife and husband), power division between spouses (decision making) and division of household duties that my respondents declare, and the breadwinner-position.

II.V. Family gender roles and gender beliefs in Europe.

All societies and cultures cultivate certain emotional and psychological characteristics that are seen to be essentially “male” or “female” (Steans 1998:10). These characteristics differ “across societies and cultures, and over time within the same society” (Miller 2003:335). Moreover, the assumptions about gender roles are very often supported, strengthened or justified by religion, as a product of culture and backed by law (Wharton 2005:104, West and Zimmerman 1987:136). Each society develops a “gender culture” (Pfau-Effinger, 1998, 1999, 2004), which is a particular gender code
that clarifies what people of different genders should do, think and be. Connell’s (2002) concept of “gender regimes” has similar implications. It refers to the arrangement of gender practices within social institutions such as families, communities, workplaces or schools. These gender practices are fundamental for the creation of gender orders on a more general level; national, international or transnational.

In order to present the Polish gender arrangement within the wider, European context, I would like to compare gender beliefs in different European countries. Although the time European women spend doing housework has decreased and men's time spent doing housework has increased over time, all over Europe, women still spend more time doing housework than their partners. According to ESS\(^6\) 2004/2005 data, an average difference between women and men in doing housework for 24 European countries was 14.3 hours in a week (ESS02)\(^7\). There are vast differences between European countries with respect to the sharing of household chores between women and men. The most egalitarian countries seem to be the Scandinavian countries, with only a few hours difference in a week. Whereas, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and Greece are at the opposite end of this range, with the wives doing 20 hours and more of housework in a week compared to their partners.

More detailed information on gender beliefs and gender relations in particular countries can be drawn from the data collected by The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). It is possible to compare the data acquired in the three modules: Family and Changing Sex Roles I (1988) Family and Changing Gender Roles II (1994)\(^8\), Family and Changing Gender Roles III (2002)\(^9\). I decided to take into account the data published in 1994 and 2002. When selecting countries for the sample I used the countries of the “old” EU which are currently the most popular destinations for Polish migrants, namely: The UK, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Germany (West and East), Spain, Sweden

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\(^6\) The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically-driven multi-country survey, which has been administered in over 30 countries to date.

\(^7\) Differences between men and women in doing housework for 24 European countries according ESS02 (average number of hours in a week): Austria 14.4, Belgium 15.5, Czech Republic 12.2, Denmark 7.4, Estonia 10.4, Finland 8.3, France 11.8, Germany 14.7, Greece 24.4, Hungary 15.9, Iceland 15.8, Ireland 25.2, Luxembourg 18.2, Netherlands 13.7, Norway 9.0, Poland 16.0, Portugal 21.5, Slovakia 12.5, Slovenia 16.8, Spain 20.4, Sweden 6.5, Switzerland 16.9, Ukraine 11.2, United Kingdom 12.5.

\(^8\) Family And Changing Gender Roles II (1994), Participating Nations: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

\(^9\) Participating Nations: Austria, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Flanders(Belgium), France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakian Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United States.
and France. I considered the responses to four statements. These statements partly resemble those used by Blair and Lichter (1991) for the gender ideology scale. The responses to each statement were coded from 1 to 5, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The first statement is related to the approach towards working mothers and the quality of their relationships with their children in comparison to those mothers who do not work. It was formulated as follows; Do you agree or disagree: a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

In 1994 the eastern part of Germany was ranked at the top, where over 61% of the population was strongly convinced that the paid job of a mother does not negatively influence her relationship with a child. Another 28,1% of East Germans agree with this statement. At the lower end of the ranking was Poland, where 41,9% of people agree or strongly agree that the mother-child relationship is worse when a mother works professionally. Only Spain received a similar ranking, with a slightly lower score than Poland score (40,1%). Ireland was poled in the centre with 62,2% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, and 32,1% strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with the statement that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work. In 2002 the sequence did not alter greatly, however, in almost all countries more people believed that a relationship between a working mother and a child does not differ from that between a non-working mother and her child. Consequently, in East Germany 95,3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the relationship of a working mother with her child is as warm as that of a non-working mother. Again, the largest number of people who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement was in Poland (31,5%) and Spain (32,4%); although in 2002 Spain held the lowest ranking. Surprisingly, in this instance Ireland’s score (30,6%) was very much closer to those of Spain and Poland.

The second statement refers to the influence of a female paid job on family life in general. In 1994 most Italians (64%), Germans from the western part of Germany (61,6%), Spanish (58,7%), Poles (54,8%) and Irish (51,8%) agreed or strongly agreed that family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job. Some eight years later opinion in these countries about female participation in the

11 (1) It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home. (2) Preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed. (3) Parents should encourage just as much independence in their daughters as in their sons. (4) In a successful marriage, the partners must have freedom to do what they want individually.
12 A. Strongly agree, B. Agree, C. Neither agree nor disagree, D. Disagree, E. Strongly Disagree.
13 Do you agree or disagree: all in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job.
labour market and its influence on family life was a much less traditional one than before. Nevertheless, 47.8% of respondents from West Germany, 42.2% from Poland and 38.3% from Ireland still supported the belief that when a woman is engaged in a paid job, her family is likely to suffer because of it. The biggest decrease in this belief was noticed in Spain (30.2% of people agreed or strongly agreed with the statement). Residents of Sweden and Germany felt the opposite towards the impact of female jobs on family life. Both in 1994 and in 2002 a large number of Swedes (47% in 1994, and 54.4% in 2002) and East Germans (1994 - 55% in 1994, and, 60.6% in 2002) rejected the statement.

In 1994 and 2002 respondents of ISSP surveys also referred to the assertion for which the aim was to measure common gender beliefs about female life preferences; Do you agree or disagree: a job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children. In 1994 a majority of Poles (65.2%) and Irish (50.9%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while most East Germans (71.2%) and almost half of the British population (48.9%) and West Germans (48.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. In 2002 over half of the Polish respondents (although less than in 1994-51%) still supported the view that women’s life aspiration is a home and children. Poland was closely followed in the ranking by Spain (41.9%) and Ireland (39.9%). The majority of the German respondents held an opposing view, with both East (72.4%) and West Germans (62.4%) largely rejecting the statement.

The final statement from the ISSP of 1994 and ISSP of 2002 which I have taken into account is: Do you agree or disagree: a husband's job is to earn money; a wife's job is to look after the home and family. Again, the most traditional views held by respondents among the listed countries, both in 1994 and in 2002 turned out to be Poland. However, compared with the result from 1994 (67%), in 2002 there was a 21.3% decrease in the amount of people who agreed or strongly agreed with the above statement (45.7%). Also in 2002 more Poles than in 1994 (20%) disagreed (31.2%) or even strongly disagreed (3.8%) with the traditional division of family duties and roles. The most egalitarian nations in 1994 were the Germans from the eastern part of Germany where 11.2% of the people agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and 78.6 % disagreed or strongly disagreed, and the Swedes where 11.4% agreed or strongly agreed with the traditional gender roles and labour division, and 69.6% were against it. In 2002, the Swedes and the Dutch took the most “egalitarian” positions, while the number of East Germans who agreed with the statement slightly increased to 14.6%, and those who disagreed decreased to 74.8%. Nevertheless, East Germans were more egalitarian than for example the Irish (in 2002, 19.8% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and 67.7 % of Irish people rejected it).

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14 Italy did not take a part in the survey in 2002.
Of particular interest is the difference between those countries which share a similar socialist past: the approach of the East Germans and the gender beliefs of Poles. There may be several explanations for these discrepancies. Myra Marx Ferree (1995) explained it by the fact that prior to unification East German women had access to low-cost child care and were expected to be full participants in the labour force. State-sponsored subsidies for basic necessities meant that, "Dependence on an individual husband appears to have been reduced to a minimum" (Ferree, 1995: 13). So, East Germany practised “public patriarchy”, meaning that “the nature of the state's role in public patriarchy was to emphasize the direct relationship of mothers to the state” (Ferree, 1995:13).

In order to explain the unexpected differences stated above between two countries with a socialist past, Poland and East Germany, it is necessary to realize and to understand that cultural and social conditions in which the socialist model of family and the role of women was constructed differently in these countries.

Similar to East Germany, one of the slogans of the post-war Polish socialist ideology was gender equality, which was officially introduced by the Constitution Act of 1952. The newly introduced gender equality was mostly economically motivated and its aim was to secure equal access to jobs for men and women (including heavy industry and public transport). Naturally, this was followed by the promotion of both the male worker and the female worker as the ideal socialist models. However, in reality the socialist gender equality was an empty maxim. Partnership relations between spouses were practically non-existent and eventually it turned out that women were forced to carry a double burden: professional work as well as home duties. As a result it led to further consolidation of patriarchal relations. The system of state institutions which were established to mostly deal with female burdens (free of charge nurseries, kindergartens, paid maternity and educational leaves), were not sufficient in the face of other family problems such as the shortages of goods or housing problems, etc (Zembrzuska 2000:8).

Interestingly, the socialist model of womanhood was, in some respects, similar to the heroic and patriotic image of the Mother Pole (Matka Polka) which evolved in Poland over past several hundred years (see the next part of the chapter for further information about the Polish Mother ideal).

15 In opposition to “public patriarchy” in East Germany, the state of West Germany represented “private patriarchy” which role was “to emphasize the direct relationship of mothers to the state; to encourage wives' dependence on husbands and children's on parents” (Ferree 1995:13).

16 (§ 66): “A woman has equal rights with man in all areas of a state, political, economic, social and cultural life. The guarantees for equality for women are: (1) equality with man's right to work and salary according to the rule “equal wages for equal work”, the right to rest and relaxation, to social security, to education, to honors and distinctions, to occupying public posts; (2) protection of mother and child, protection of pregnant woman, paid leave of absence before and after childbirth, development of maternity wards, obstetrics hospitals, child-care centers, kindergartens; development of services and canteens.”
model of womanhood and motherhood). Both figures shared the idea of devotion and sacrifice. While the ethos of the *Mother Pole* is characterized, among other features, by her devotion to Polish national identity (in which Catholic religion played an enormously significant role), the socialist propaganda tried to transfigure this ethos into a devotion to socialist ideology and political goals. So, the socialist ideal woman consisted of two elements: heroic matriarchs-protectors and workers-producers (Zajicek and Calasanti, 1995:181).

According to Peggy Watson, traditional, patriarchal roles were consolidated in socialistic Poland firstly due to, the official propaganda (despite declared gender equality) and secondly because “traditional gender identity was also heightened as a cultural resource for both survival and resistance” in Poland and formed “an important aspect of the nostalgia for ‘normality’ in the face of lack of civil society and state intervention in the privacy of citizens” (Watson, 1993: 472–3). So, the family was perceived as “a niche within the system,” - the place where the manipulation of the socialist state was minimal and an area for the possible development of opposition activity (Watson, 1993: 480).

Additionally, some authors (for example Voicu et al. 2009) suggest that it is the impact of religion (Catholicism and Orthodoxy) that more or less determines the egalitarian sharing of domestic duties. Malina Voicu et al. (2009:365) noticed that religious people are more inclined to support the traditional gender work division. Some religious traditions are more likely to encourage a traditional arrangement within the family. In Europe, Christian Orthodox traditions and the Catholic heritage are more conservative with respect to gender roles than the Protestant ones, which are the most liberal. “Thus, in countries with high percentages of Catholic or Orthodox believers, the traditional pattern of housework division is prevalent. It seems that these two religious denominations are imposing a traditional model of family life, supporting gender inequality. Our data indicate that religious context is more important for the equal sharing of housework than individual religious practice. Orthodox and Catholic traditions create a ‘culture of gender inequality’” (Voicu et al. 2009:372).

Despite the results of the ISSP in 1994 and 2002 showing the common trend being towards more egalitarian family gender roles and gender beliefs in all European countries including Poland, most Poles still cultivate rather traditional gender beliefs. As is inferred from the data and analysis

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17. The results of European Social Survey 2004/2005 indicate that the six most religious countries in Europe, each with more than 80% of people who are active or non-active believers are, in descending order: Turkey, Poland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia. Only 2% of Turks are non-believers, while 88% of Poles are active believers. At the same time the five most secular countries in Europe (each more than 50% of non-believers) are: Estonia, Czech Republic, Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands.

18. In 2012, the next survey will be conducted (fourth, after 1988, 1994, 2002) by the ISSP and will be devoted to Family, Work and Gender Roles. Thus, we will have an opportunity to check whether the direction of change is the same as had been noticed in the previous surveys.
presented above, Polish society does not differ greatly in these matters from the Irish one. Thus, it seems to be unlikely that Poles who migrate to Ireland experience a culture shock which could be traumatic for their family relations and their beliefs about gender. Instead, we can assume that possible changes in family gender roles and gender beliefs among members of Polish transnational families in Ireland are the result of processes particularly linked to migration and transmigration, namely; separation with the family left back in Poland and the transnational activities of migrants, rather than a confrontation with the totally different family values of the host society.
II.VI. Family gender roles and gender beliefs in Poland.

I decided to divide this sub-chapter into two parts. The first part is based on the available literature on the topic (historical overview), while the second part depicts contemporary Polish family gender arrangements and models on the basis of the selected, mostly quantitative research conducted in Poland over the last 5 years\(^{19}\). I adduce research results of quantitative surveys in order to create the wider social perspective in the background of which, I strongly believe, the results of my own qualitative research among Polish migrants in Ireland will be better understood. A large amount of existing quantitative research on the topic has forced me to limit my choice of surveys which I quote in this chapter to those which I assume the most interesting and relevant for the goals of my thesis.

II.VI.a. Family and “familiocentism” in Poland

Poland in common with the developed European countries faces demographic changes: delaying marriages, which contributes to the decline of the marriage rate; lower birth rate; and improvement in the life expectancy at birth. The results of censuses taken in 1970 and in 2002 show that the demographic profile of Polish families has changed significantly over 32 years. The average number of people in Polish households fell between 1970 and 2002 from 3.39 to 2.84 people per household. The percentage of one-person households increased in that time from 16.1% to 24.8%, while the proportion of five or more people living in one household and constituting a family decreased from 23.9% to 14.1%. This decreasing trend is also apparent in the average number of children in households; in 1988 it was 1.87 while in 2002 it was only 1.78. The most popular family structure in Poland comprises a small family, consisting of parents and children (50% of Poles). One fifth (21%) of the family structures are represented by larger families, which includes grandparents, parents and children. A total of 9% of family structures are represented by single person households and the same percentage of households comprise only spouses, without children. Six out of a hundred Poles (7%) cohabit with someone of the opposite sex, only 2% live alone with a dependent child or children (88.5% of all single-parent families in Poland are constituted single-mother families (Jóźwiak 2006), and the remaining 2% comprise any other form of relationship (2%) (CBOS BS/40/2008). Compared to the other EU countries, Poland is still more family-centred: the marriage rate is still high, the divorce rate is still relatively low, the “singles” family life patterns are

\(^{19}\) By Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) and Pentor Research International
The Polish family is still seen more as a “social unit” to support individuals, rather than an emotional space for individuals to grow (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbanska 2006). The family has continued and continues to occupy a place of honour within the Polish culture. The most important life value of Poles — according to their own declaration — is family happiness (78% of all respondents). It turned out that family happiness as a basic value is more valued by women (83%) than men (72%). The importance attached to the family is differentiated by factors such as sex of the respondents, their age, marital status, level of religiosity, and to a lesser extent – political views. It increases along with education of the respondents. Among socio-professional groups this is particularly evident: among lower-level white-collar workers (90% of responses), high-level managers (85%), self-employed people (83%), and for the economically inactive housewives (88%). In terms of attachment to the family, as many as two thirds of Poles (66%) claim that they are definitely family people, every third respondent is a “sort of” family man and only 4% admit that family has no special meaning for them (CBOS BS/40/2008). Women more often regard themselves as family people (77%) than men (55%). For most Poles (CBOS BS/4/2008) meetings with their parents, grandchildren or adult children are almost daily rituals (at least once a week: 73% with parents, 69% with grandchildren, and 58% with adult children living alone). There were very few respondents who had only sporadic contact with parents, grandchildren or adult children living alone or not meeting with them at all. Regular relations with siblings (41%) were almost as frequent as relations with parents-in-law (46%) (CBOS BS/4/2008).

It seems that the high value of the family in Polish society places pressure on idealized family life. Successful family life is the measure of a successful life in general. In other words Poles, even if they are not entirely happy within their family life and do not appreciate it greatly, consider that these feelings are wrong and shouldn't be admitted (Golinowska et al. 1995).

Taking into account the significance of the family for most Poles it is not surprising that patterns of inter-generational reciprocity are very strong in Polish society. Most Poles continue to be embedded in a significant network of kin, where they receive substantial physical and emotional support. The great role of grandparents in Polish families is still very visible. The vast majority of Poles (97%) (CBOS BS/157/2009) appreciate the role of grandparents and grandmothers in the family. A total of 95% of respondents who are not grandparents themselves, appreciate grandparent’s knowledge and experience (CBOS BS/157/2009). They also declared that their grandparents had taught them the principles of religious faith (59%), morality (58%) and patriotism (49%). There is also a strong

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20 CBOS/BS/40/2008- There is nothing like family. N=1137.
22 Declaration of respondents who have: parents (582 people), grandchildren (272 people), adult children living separately (372 people), parents-in-law (361 people), siblings (776 people), grandparents (269 people).
linear relationship between the respondents' levels of engagement in religious practices and feelings of gratitude for the education of moral and religious principles and patriotism given by their grandparents (BS/ 3/2008). Grandparents are also a source of knowledge about the history of the family (for 55% of the respondents) and material help; 13 % of respondents got an apartment from their grandparents, and 7% of respondents came into an inheritance (BS/3/2008)\textsuperscript{24}.

The strong influence of grandparents on their grandchildren, among other things, is due to the fact that almost half of adult Poles (47%) at least partially, owe their upbringing and care to their grandmothers and grandfathers (BS/3/2008). This factor to a large extent may increase the respondents' opinion that grandparents have played a significant role in their lives. At the same time two thirds of respondents declared that when old they would like to live in their own home and benefit from occasional assistance from close family members, friends and neighbours. Only 12% of respondents would like to live with their family members and have daily support from them. Submitted declarations in 2009 differ from those from 2000, when every fifth respondent (20%) wanted to share an apartment with the family. This change demonstrates the increasing need for independence, which respondents hope to keep in their old age. Total independence from the family when old is chosen by 9% of Poles (CBOS BS/157/2009). Among those who are already retired nine out of ten Poles (89%) said their pension was their only income (BS/160/2009)\textsuperscript{25}. The most frequently mentioned fiscal source was financial support from children or other relatives (12%) and savings (9%), while 47% admitted that they help their children in their houses and 40% take care of grandchildren.

Although the nuclear family model has become more popular and common in Poland than ever before, the role of grandparents and intergenerational exchange of material and non-material help is still very visible and important for most Poles. According to the data about the engagement of the elderly in family life in Poland, it seems evident that the level of family reciprocity between adult generations is not balanced. The instrumental support given for old parents by their adult children is reciprocated by net downward material transfer and very often (maybe even more often than material help) by instrumental support, such as time spent caring for grandchildren.

II.VI. b. Polish women and the foundation of their gender identity construction.

Although women's autonomy and individuality is reflected in the increasing level of women's

\textsuperscript{24} BS/3/2008, Co im zawdzięczamy?Opinie w przeddzień święta babć i dziadków. (What do we owe them? Opinions the day before the grandmother and grandfather Day) (N=870).
\textsuperscript{25} CBOS BS 160/2009, Sytuacja ludzi starszych w społeczeństwie- plany a rzeczywistość. N=1022. (Seniors in society: plans and reality.)
education and professional activity in the labour market in Poland, it is accompanied by an excess of household duties, that are not equally shared by men and women. It seems sometimes that the democratization of social life, individualization and a declared shift from the traditional patriarchal to more modern family model, does not reflect the daily lives of families (Balcerzak-Paradowska 2004, Gębuś 2006). Although the occupational activities of women are accepted as part of the pattern of everyday family life, they can hardly be regarded as an expansion of the social role of women but rather as an extension of their established duties. She is in the situation of joining two positions; as a housewife and as a professional worker (Hochschild & Machung 1989, 1997). Moreover, women's work is both economically and culturally undervalued in relation to that of men (Rai et al., 1992). Although women significantly increased their participation in the labour force over the past half century, men have only slightly increased their commitment to household duties, such as child care and housework. The observed disproportion Arlie Hochschild et al. (1989:12) characterized as the “stalled revolution”: In recognition of this, terms like the double burden or second shift (Hochschild & Machung 1989, 1997) and work-conflict (Williams 1999) are often used to describe the family situation when paid work and family obligations weigh more heavily on women than men (Hochschild & Machung 1989, 1997, Williams 1999). This seems that “a socialist good-mother superwoman” (Morokvasic 2007:84) is a model specific to many Polish women.

Anna Titkow in "Women in Poland at the turn of the century,"(2002) as well as in her other book “Identity of Polish women”(2007) claims that Polish historical and cultural aspects as well as the significance of private and family life in the hierarchy of values in Poland have meant, that women do not have any psychological comfort for activities which “would be contrary to the canons of patriarchal culture”\textsuperscript{26}(Titkow 2002:60). Describing the specific situation of Polish women Titkow used the term "pressure of social standards and stereotypes" (Titkow 1995:9-39, Titkow 2007: 47-73). The adjustment of women to the requirements of this pressure is a result of historical tradition, socialization and life experience. Poles tend to merge femininity with maternity. The main role of the Polish woman is, above all, to be a good mother, who would take care of her children, and sacrifice her private and professional life to be one. The only valid reason for placing a child in group care is economic need. Mothers who does not fulfil these social expectations are regarded as unnatural and wicked (“wyrodna matka”). Informal elder care is also typically a women's responsibility. Their care-giving role has been viewed as an extension of their roles as wife and mother (Alford-Cooper 1993). Some statistical data also confirm that social image of woman is strongly associated with maternity. 75% of Polish respondents in 1994 believed that “woman should have children in order to have a sense of being fulfilled woman”(Siemieńska 1996 after Duch-

\textsuperscript{26}“psychologicznej’ przestrzeni na w miarę powszechne podjęcie przez kobiety działań, które byłyby sprzeczne z kanonami kultury patriarchalnej”
Krzystoszek 2007:41). Being the Mother is a basic identity of Polish women who have children; 34.4% of all women who have children think about themselves primarily as mothers. When they had three possibilities to choose (the mother, the wife, the human) as much as 90% of them had chosen the role of mother as the most important role in their life. For Polish men their parent role is not as much important as for women. They think it is more important to be the husband and to be the human (Titkow, Duch-Krzystoszek, Budrowska 2004, Duch-Krzystoszek 2007).

Importantly, Polish catholic culture, in accordance with the approach of the Catholic Church, suggests a dominant male ideology, and supports traditional gender roles. Additionally, women are taught to accept their fate and to be martyrs for their family and the nation (Gerber 2010). “Consequently, the religion encourages a traditional housework division, women being mainly responsible for the domestic work. Here, both the religious beliefs and practices are involved. Religious beliefs are associated with traditional ideas about family and gender roles” (Voicu et al. 2009:367). In the Roman Catholic marriage ceremony, there is a passage that clearly describes the positions of the wife and husband: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church” (Ef 5, 22–23). These words are very often understood literally and provide the background for the patriarchal family model that regards the role of woman in the family as subordinate in relation to the role of the man. Thus, it is not surprising that in Poland, a country where the Church is very important and influential, the traditional point of view concerning the woman’s place at home is still popular, even among prominent politicians27. Thus, it is not surprising that also Polish female organizations with a religious background view women in the context of the family (Fuszara 2005:1072). They mostly “work for the preservation of the status quo, and not towards change, and some arise directly in response to pro-change movements” (Fuszara 2005:72), such as one of the organizations- the Assembly of Polish Women (APW)- quoted by Małgorzata Fuszara does: “The basis for the assembly’s activity is the Catholic Church, papal teachings and the Charter of Family’s Rights, and its goal is to provide information and strengthen a positive view among women about their femininity and motherhood, encourage their acceptance of the concept of the complementary nature of men’s and women’s roles in the family and their willingness to fulfil the commandment of caring for other human beings”(Fuszara 2005:1072).

27 Jarosław Gowin (Minister of Justice In Poland ) „Minister defends traditional role of woman” (11 April2012 , Gazeta Wyborcza, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75478,11519757,Minister_Gowin_broni_tradycyjnej_roli_kobiety.html). The minister is against the Polish accession to the Cancel of Europe` convention against violence against women. According to him, the concept of gender used in the convention may threaten human dignity as it is understood in the Christian tradition.
The ideas of femininity are deeply ingrained by Catholic doctrine in Poland (Gerber 2010). The Virgin Mary became an important figure that joins gender, faith and nation as one national symbol that lies at the heart of discourse about Polish identity (Gerber 2010:33) and the ideal model of the Polish woman –Mother Pole (Matka Polka). The Mother Pole should follow the values epitomized by The Virgin Mary, the Queen of Poland (the Virgin Mary was crowned Queen of Poland in 1656 by King Jan Kazimierz). “Like Mary, Mother Pole suffers and grieves, but remains ever loyal in her commitment to family and nation, no matter what the personal cost” (Gerber 2010:33). The concept of Mother Pole provides a common view of gender in Polish culture and history. Polish women have not been mothers and wives only- confined to the kitchen and the household- but also have been the guardians of Polish traditions, national identity and religion. During Poland's partition in the 19th century the concept assumed even more of a nationalistic character. The Polish woman, under the aegis of the Mother Pole ideology, while waiting for her husband and sons-the partisan fighters, she became responsible for cultivating the Polish national spirit within the tranquility of the household. Thus, Mother Pole “was a strong figure, though a thoroughly domesticated one. She remained at home while her husband and sons went off to fight for Poland, but she nonetheless served the nation by educating the young in a patriotic spirit, and by sustaining home and hearth for the partisan fighters. She was characterized [sic] by a limitless ability to endure suffering, as she watched her men sacrifice themselves to the forces of History. And when the men were gone, it fell upon the Mother Pole to keep the nation alive” (Porter 2005:160). Anna Titkow noticed that the patterns of social beliefs and behaviour shaped by the Mother Pole ideology function until these days: “That difficult time of the lost independence created the social genotype of the woman, which functions in the sphere of social attitudes and behavior to the present day, as a person who is able to meet the toughest requirements of the social reality” (Titkow 2007: 52).

In other words, the image of Mother Pole was shaped during difficult periods in Polish history and remains deeply rooted in Polish popular culture, iconography and mostly importantly, in Polish mentality and social beliefs. According to this stereotype, the mother embodies cultural and religious values. She is expected to sacrifice herself for the family and for the homeland, in silence and without expecting anything in return. The Mother Pole concept has been very often used by the Polish Catholic Church, politicians or even in everyday social contacts between people to maintain social control over women. The image is also widely cultivated by Polish women as it gives them an illusion about their special, 'noble' social role through values such as mothering, innocence, kindness.

Despite the progressive modernization of social and cultural life in Poland, the ideal of motherhood is commonly present even in the Polish popular mass media. Beata Łaciak (1995:231-244) noticed that despite significant social and cultural changes, indicated in women’s magazines, the traditional
model of motherhood is still very much promoted in the Polish female press. Being a mother is presented as an especially significant experience. Regardless of professional ambition, career opportunities and other successes achieved by a woman, she must be a good, caring and loving mother. This kind of promotion of motherhood may be related to the social stereotype of the *Mother Pole* and the fact that in Poland, traditionally a woman was seen and evaluated only from the aspect of whether she was a good mother. Therefore, besides the model of modern woman-mother who is active and has a career, the more traditional model of a woman-mother, a traditional housekeeper is ever present (Łaciak 1995:237). As Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek (2007:78) noticed: “In our culture female identity is being built in correlation with the family”. Family is a domain of Polish women’s life. This can be perfectly exemplified by the statement of one of the female respondents quoted in the Duch-Krzystoszek’s book (2007:78): ”We live to have a home, to be loved and to bear children”.

II.VI.c. A new gender contract or domestic matriarchy?

Malgorzata Fuszara (2002) postulates that social, political, economic and legal changes in Poland after 1989 also brought about a re-definition of the social roles of individuals and groups and the relations between them as well as a new description of female and male roles. So, the processes of shaping a new gender contract take place in both the public and private spheres of social life. Nevertheless, despite a new gender contract which is in the process of being shaped the disequilibrium between genders is still very visible. One of the reasons for this lies in the fact that changes have occurred only in female gender roles while male gender roles have remained unchanged and men’s participation in the domestic sphere is still very small (Fuszara, 2002). Therefore, since male power is still dominant in the private sphere, there are men who decide about the character of the gender arrangement within their families (partnership-like or traditional). In other words, in reality, the possible new gender contract is shaped more by men than by women (Fuszara, 2002: 11).

Moreover, Agnieszka Graff (2001) claims that Polish patriarchy is not in the process of reconstruction but rather is “young and vital; patriarchy which claws are deeply embedded in the floor of parliament”, and we should cease “to delude that Polish patriarchy is at the stadium of democratic transformation” (Graff 2001:19). However, Polish women are becoming aware of gender discrimination (Fuszara, 2002, Domański, 1999). Nevertheless, this awareness or even women’ willingness to change this inequality is rarely followed by action to change the disparity either in the public sphere (Fuszara 2002, Titkow 2007) or in the private sphere, as Domański’s
conclusion indicates: “There are very little evidences that a sense of general discomfort associated with belonging to the ‘worse’ sex is followed by the negative approach toward traditional family gender arrangement” (Domański 1999:78)\textsuperscript{28}. Thus, despite Polish society, especially the female part of it, being aware of the discrimination of women, and claims that this situation should be changed (Fuszara, 2002:10), the source of persistent gender inequality could be “a pragmatic acceptance of the existing division of gender roles. Simply, people accept the conditions which are used to, and in which they are able to function” (Domański 1999:134). Another source of the female acceptance of gender inequality can be associated with their sense of power within the family. A popular saying in Poland argues that the man is a real head of the house, but the woman is the neck that turns this head. However, the actual female power and female authority is often illusory and wishful rather than realistic. The communist time in Poland produced “a gastronomic mother” (female power within the family is limited to organizing, cooking and serving food for the rest of the family) functioning within the framework of domestic matriarchy (Walczewska 1999: 164-169) or as Anna Titkow (1995:15,34-36, 2007: 68-70) called it “managerial matriarchy”\textsuperscript{29} and “super woman” (1995:38, 2007:72). “Severe life conditions resulted in formation of special type of matriarchy specific for communist and post communist countries of East Europe in which the woman, overworked, tired, burdened with purchases, feels at the same time that she is an irreplaceable manager of family life. She fulfils obligations and duties which could be a job for several people” (Titkow 1995:31-32).

The kitchen is not the fortress of a triumphal and self-confident mother. It is rather the last rampart of the uncertainty of her role in the family. She is on the defensive because she knows that very little outside of the kitchen depends on her (Walczewska 1999: 166-167). The limited and illusory power associated with domestic matriarchy is, according to Anna Titkow (1995), “one basic gratification associated with traditional way of improving self-esteem” (Titkow, 1995:32).

Voicu et al (2009) noticed that Poles have developed „different gender policies than Western countries, stressing the role of women as mothers and earners but not doing anything to involve men in the domestic field” (2009:365). This phenomenon could be explained by taking a historical view, as it was done by Anna Titkow (1998): “Their [women] ability to cope with difficult living conditions, both under the communist regime and later, enhanced their sense of competence. As they carried heavy net bags of food and suffered from lack of sleep, they were compensated by their knowledge that they were the indispensable managers of family life who performed, alone, duties and tasks that would be burdensome for several persons. Success in managing daily survival was

\textsuperscript{28} „Są to bardzo nikłe dowody na to, że poczucie generalnego dyskomfortu związanego z przynależnością do ‘gorszej’ płci łączy się z negatywnym stosunkiem do modelu rodziny ujmowanego w kategoriach konwencjonalnych norm”.

\textsuperscript{29} „menadżerski matriarchat”
won through both personal sacrifice and indomitable perseverance. 'Without us' they rightly said 'everything would collapse'. This perception afforded Polish women tremendous psychological gratification. For the majority of them, this gratification is more important than the satisfaction that comes from occupational and social status” (Titkow 1998:26). Therefore, the will of some women to keep “the old family order” may lie in their desire to keep their, as they see it-privileged position in their families- unchanged.

Anna Titkow (2007) has also drawn attention to another interesting point. Despite the continued presence of obvious discrimination indicators of women in Poland, most of them still avoid to use the term of discrimination to describe their individual situation (Titkow 2007: 67). This female agreement for discrimination could be an effect of both; lack of awareness of women’s political, economic and social group interests, and the effect of gratification associated with the managerial matriarchy. So in this fluid reality there are constant dimensions of collective identity of women which undergo to minimal changes (Titkow 2007:67). “Perspective, in which the Polish version of ‘super woman’ and ‘managerial matriarchy’ will disappear, and instead of it the awareness of female group interest and individualistic motivation of women to realize themselves not only by their gender roles will appear, seems to be quite distant …(Titkow 2007:72).

II.VI.d. Gender in Polish surveys

In order to present current family gender beliefs in Poland in a more complete way and from different perspectives, I decided to also present the results of quantitative surveys conducted in Poland by the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS)30, Pentor Research International31 and Millward Brown SMG/KRC32 over last five years. Additionally, I complement this part of the thesis with some quantitative and qualitative data from book publications of Anna Titkow (2007)33, Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek (2007)34 and Anna Titkow, Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek and Bogusława

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32 16 Nov - 21 Dec., 2011, N= 1715
33 „Tożsamość polskich kobiet” (The identity of Polish women)
34 „Kto rządzi w rodzinie” (Who rule in the family)
Budrowska (2004). The data presented below are in the following order; family gender arrangement for the professional work, household labour division and childcare and decision making processes.

Professional work and family life.

Recent statistical studies (Millward Brown SMG/KRC, Nov- Dec. 2011) show that Poles think about family gender roles in a rather traditional way. More than half of all respondents (54%) think that women should take care of the home and children while men should earn money for the family (47% of all female respondents and 62% of male respondents). This trend is also visible among young people (47% accept traditional gender arrangements). As many as 64% of respondents believe that women should not work if they have a child/children less than three years old (69% of men and 57% of women). Only 23% disagree with this belief, and 14% do not have an opinion on this topic. As many as one third of Poles believe that a wife should support the professional career of her husband and resign from her job (28% of women and 36% of men). A total of 44% of informants have the opposite opinion.

Also the data quoted by Duch-Krzystoszek (2007) and Titkow, Duch-Krzystoszek, Budrowska (2004) shows similar trends: 67.4% of Polish women and 76.6% of Polish men are convinced that “it is much better for the family when the man earns money for the family and the woman takes care of home”. Clearly, in the Polish society the employment of men is regarded as more important for the family than the employment of women. This is due to the fact that most of the respondents (80.5% of married women and 88% of married men) think that men are more responsible for the family financial well-being than women (Titkow et al. 2004, Duch-Krzystoszek 2007).

Respondents of CBOS in 2006 were asked their opinions on women’s professional work and its influence on family life (CBOS BS/183/2006). The largest group of respondents (44%) believes that the benefits provided by working wives or female partners outnumber the losses, while 12% of them believe the opposite. Every fourth respondent (26%) believes that the losses and benefits are balanced, and one out of ten respondents believes that in general, the professional work of women does not affect their family life. Men and women differ slightly on this issue: with women marginally more often finding that their professional work is beneficial to or has a neutral effect upon family life, while men think that there is an equal amount of benefits and advantages. Among

35 “Nieodpłatna praca kobiet.Mit, realia, perspektywy” (Unpaid work of women. Myths, reality, perspectives)
men there is also a slightly higher percentage of those who do not have an opinion on the topic. Additionally, female respondents working full-time often claim that their professional work has no impact on their family life, while some unemployed women (13%) suggest that professional work brings more losses than benefits. This difference may indicate that for some female respondents unemployment is a conscious choice, not merely the result of external circumstances. Nevertheless, comparison of the responses of women in 1993 and in 2004 showed that the percentage of female respondents who believe that their professional work brings more benefits than losses to their family life increased from 28% to 46% (CBOS BS/183/2006). An interesting question addressed to respondents in the CBOS (CBOS BS/87/2004) research was related to the desire to give up his/her professional career in order to devote his/her time and energy to raising children and taking care of home life, if his/her financial situation was good enough (spouse or partner had sufficient income) to provide for a family. The question was addressed to all research participants, regardless of their age and family situation. The results seem to be even more interesting; when taking into account that family life consistently ranks higher than professional work among the life values of Poles (CBOS BS/98/2004; CBOS BS/77/2006). Statistical studies (CBOS BS/87/2004) show that definitely more women than men would resign from their job in order to take care of their family – 58%, while 35% of men would be inclined to take this step. Respondents were also asked whether they would like to see their life partners resign from a professional career, if they earned themselves enough to maintain a satisfactory level of family life. Interestingly, the percentage of respondents accepting such a solution (38%) was lower than the percentage of those who declared they would give up work. Over half of people who were asked this question (51%) would not like their spouses to leave their job. In this case, the answers of the men and women differ more than in the previous question. A total of 56% of men would like to see their partner giving up a job, if they were able to maintain a sufficient financial situation for their family, while less than every third man (31%) would prefer their female partners to continue their professional career. Among women, the majority (69%) did not support the idea of providing for the family by themselves alone, while 21% would do so. Factors such as respondents’ age and family structure had a relatively small impact on the answers to both questions. For example, the number of single and married respondents who would give up their career for the family was more or less the same (48% and 47% respectively). More significant factors turned out to be: a level of education of respondents, their profession, and their financial situation. The answers were also different depending upon gender. While educated women more often would not give up their professional career, than those less educated (57% of women highly educated and 22% of women with primary education). The male answers observed were the reverse, though the difference was still not significant. More likely to give up their job were better educated men: 46% of those highly educated, 40% with secondary level education and
33% with primary education. The current working status of respondents; employed or unemployed, also matters (CBOS BS/87/2004). Among male workers, the number of those who would leave their job and take care of their homes if financial conditions allowed, was significantly lower than among unemployed men. In this case, the responses of women were clearly more diverse than the responses of men. Over 70% of women in managerial positions would not leave their jobs. Interestingly, a number of men from the same social group who would resign from their jobs is higher than women. Probably for women in managerial positions their job is not just a way to make money or for thankless obligation. They may appreciate their professional position and social status more than men, as it may have been achieved it with far more difficulties. On the other hand, women employed as farmers, unskilled workers, and - interestingly – self-employed (among them also those running their own businesses), would allow their partners to provide for their families and would become housewives themselves (CBOS BS/87/2004).

The results of the CBOS studies show the inequality between the male and female levels of responsibility for the functioning of families and households in Poland. However, in the case of Poles who belong to the social group associated with high income and high social status and prestige, more people than in other social groups tend to share household duties. Perhaps it is linked to the fact that the majority of women belonging to this group stated that they would not wish to give up their professional career. Most women believe also that their professional work is beneficial to family life. Therefore, the fact that more women than men would be prepared to give up their jobs in order to take care more of their families, should not be explained away by the unwillingness of women to engage in paid work outside the home, but rather that currently, working women are in a situation of combining two positions; professional worker and housewife. The division of professional work between spouses is only half of the story about real family gender roles and relations. The presentation of family household labour division brings about a clearer overview of gender arrangements and relations in Polish families as well as completing and enriching the picture.

Household labour division and childcare.

Family arrangement of household duties is one of the basic criteria of classification of marriages. The way in which household duties are shared between spouses is associated with power relations within the family (Duch-Krzystoszek 2007:127).

In Polish society household labour is strongly associated with female duties while professional work and breadwinning is associated with male obligations. 87% of married Polish woman and 76% of married Polish men conjoined their ideal of a “good wife” with household labour performed by
wives. In the Duch-Krzystoszek’s research (2007) one of the male respondents described that the good wife “listens to her husband, cleans the house, is a good cook, cares about the appearance of her husband”. Similar opinion was shared also by female respondents: “cleans, washes for her husband, is submissive”, “in order to everything to be on time: food, clean clothes”. The “good husband” ideal is commonly associated by Poles with breadwinning, both by Polish women (“provides for the family”) and by Polish men (“a typical head of the family who maintains the family”) (Duch-Krzystoszek 2007:133).

Additionally, as Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek noticed, young women who want to present their relationships as a successful one they will often highlight that their husbands do some housework, while young men declare that they do housework much less than their wives want them to do because they do not want to be perceived as “henpecked husbands” (Duch-Krzystoszek 2007: 142). This research result suggests that young men often see household work as a area of dispute over the power in the relationship.

Therefore, it is not surprising that traditional household labour division is still very popular in Poland. The survey of CBOS conducted in 2006 (CBOS/BS/183/2006), that concerns the opinion of Polish women and men in the division of household duties, shows that in Poland activities such as: washing, ironing, meal preparation and washing dishes, cleaning, and daily shopping continue to be the women' duty in most Polish households. The number of men who deal with these tasks without any help from women is significantly lower. Although it does not apply to all households, tasks such as childcare and taking care of disabled or chronically ill persons, involves more women than men. Interestingly, male and female answers on the question of the division of household duties were only slightly different. Men more commonly stated that domestic duties are undertaken interchangeably with their partners or together, while women were more likely to state that they themselves perform most of the housework. Female respondents less often than male respondents pointed out that men were the ones who take out the garbage, deal with the official matters and order repair services. A similar dependence is also noticeable in the respondents' comments about childcare, care of sick people, and care of pets. Men often claimed that these tasks were divided equally between both sexes, while women stated that they (women) had to do these duties alone. Taking into account the different responses, it turned out that the informants' place of residence, education, type of work carried out and their subjective opinion about their material status seemed to be very influential. The traditional division of gender roles is much more visible in the relationships of people living in the countryside. Women were much more often pointed as those that wash, iron, cook and clean in their households, while in big cities this proportion is much lower. Among respondents with university education as well as those who evaluate well- their financial situation, and those in managerial positions, the number of people who claim that domestic
responsibilities are performed by men and women together or interchangeably, is greater than among respondents with other social status. Pentor's research results are even less optimistic regarding gender division of household duties. Women spend an average eight hours a week more doing household work (24.5 hours) than men (14.2 hours). In a married couple this difference increases to ten hours. The fact, that women have also paid jobs, does not matter in this case (20.8 hours.-women, 12.8 hours-men). Regardless of a respondent's age, level of education and place of living the disproportion amount of time that women and men spend on household's duties is similar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Women /Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elementary</td>
<td>25.8 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>22.7 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td>20.9 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>20.1 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44</td>
<td>24.3 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>25 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>25.1 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>village</td>
<td>27.9 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>town (50-99 thousand inhabitants)</td>
<td>22.3 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>town (100-500 thousand inhabitants)</td>
<td>23.8 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City (above 500 thousand inhabitants)</td>
<td>17.2 h.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pentor 2006

Anna Titkow et al. (2004) and Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek (2007) cited the data according to which 64.6% of married women and 67.4% of married men agreed with the statement that: “house duties such as cooking, ironing, cleaning are natural female duties. Therefore, it is not surprising that 98.9% of Polish women see their homes as places where “I cook, wash and clean” (Duch-Krzystoszek 2007). Sometimes household work is accompanied by female feelings of constraint. This is especially when the couple has children. Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek (2007:71) quoted one of her respondents: “When there are children at home you have to cook, it is compulsion”.

In conclusion, despite the need for a dual family income, the wife's role is still focused on domestic affairs. Women face the double burden of professional work and looking after the domestic domain.
As Danuta Duch-Krzystoszek noticed, a lot of Polish women often have dual roles with associated responsibilities: a professional worker and housewife. Even if both husband and wife work, it is the wife who is automatically responsible for undone household chores, not her husband (Duch-Krzystoszek 2007). Thus, the only way for the Polish woman to gain a prestige and independence is to have a job and her own income; however it still does not release her from fulfilling the housewife's duties. This means also that, as Judith Lorber (2000:87) noticed, “Not much has changed in the work-family structure for women, except that married mothers with good educations now have social approval for the life-long, full-time pursuit of prestigious careers as well as the freedom to quit 'for the sake of their family.”

Decision making process.

Family life also includes the decision making process (CBOS/BS/183/2006). The survey included the questions of who decides on such issues as household expenses, daily meals, spending free time and parenting. Larger household expenses (for example a purchase of a washing machine or TV set), holidays, and bringing up children are these matters that both spouses make decisions about. However, decisions about daily expenses on food, cleaning products or about meals are mostly made by women. Other decisions, more serious ones, are often taken by spouses together. However, it is worth noting that in the cases where only one partner makes the decision, more often than not it is the woman. As the survey results show, Polish women are much more are engaged both in family decision-making processes (however these decisions concern more daily household duties than long-term decisions) and in performing everyday duties than Polish men. (CBOS BS/183/2006).

II.VI. e. Family gender models in Poland; in self-declaration and in practice

The research (BS/52/2006) clearly shows that family gender models exist at both; the preferred and the real level, and that there is a significant difference that divides the respondents' declarations of preferences and their practice. There are three basic types of marriage model referred to in the CBOS research: traditional, partnership, and mixed. In the traditional model; a man is responsible for the financial well-being of his family, he is a breadwinner, and a woman takes care of the household and children. In the partnership model, spouses spend roughly the same time working professionally and both are equally involved in the upbringing of their children. The mixed model is

37 Not taken into account responses of people who live alone.

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
characterized by the professional activity of both spouses, however the husband devotes more time to professional work while his wife, in addition to her professional work, takes care of the house and children as well as she doing most of other tasks, related to everyday family life. The mixed model is thus a kind of traditional model, modified by the need to support the household budget with a second salary (Szacka 2003:390). The CBOS research (CBOS BS/52/2006) shows that since 2000, when 42% of the respondents preferred the traditional model, the percentage of followers of this gender family arrangement decreased in 2006 to 32%, while supporters of a partnership model increased (41%). Some 24% of respondents supported the mixed model. It became apparent that the partnership model is more popular among women than the traditional one (47%-partnership, 28%-traditional). However, the traditional model is supported slightly more by women from villages and small towns than those from big urban areas/big cities. Men rather support the traditional models (37%) than the partnership one (35%). When one considers the place of residence, it clearly shows that the traditional model is less popular in big cities and more so in the country. These preferences indicate that opinions of respondents were strongly associated with socio-demographic characteristics such as age, residence, education and income. Who are the people who prefer a partnership model of marriage? It is usually young people up to 24 years (53%), residents of large cities (53%), those with secondary and higher education (50% and 53%). The traditional model of marriage is popular among people aged from 55 to 64 years (43%) and older (48%), residents of rural areas (40%), and those with primary education (46%) and a basic professional education (40%). The differences in defining the gender roles in the family- the "gender conflict"- is most pertinent among people with a higher education. This may suggest that the causes of this could be in the greater professional aspirations of both; women and men. It is significant also that most highly educated women usually prefer the relatively mixed model, that combines a professional career for women with taking care of home and raising children, while their husbands or partners are active professionally only, and do not participate much in household duties (CBOS BS/52/2006). The equal division of responsibilities in a marriage is most frequently preferred by childless persons or those who have one child. Parents who have two children choose the mixed model slightly more often than the traditional model. Those who have three and more children most often prefer the traditional family model (CBOS BS/52/2006). How do the preferred family models correspond with everyday family practice? Personal preferences on the family gender arrangement and the actual division of responsibilities in Polish families do not overlap very often. Although the most desired family gender arrangement is a partnership model, in which spouses equally share professional and household duties, in reality this model is much less frequently encountered than the traditional, or mixed one. Moreover, despite the mixed model being chosen by respondents as the least preferred, it is realized most often (in 26% of respondents’ marriages) especially among couples with

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
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child/children regardless of analyzed socio-demographic groups (specified by age, education and place of living differences). In every fifth marriage (21%) both spouses do not work, and in 6% of married couples only the wife is employed (an inverted model to the traditional one). The traditional division of family responsibilities is chosen usually by young people - up to 24 years, upbringing small children and from rural areas as well as among less educated people, and respondents with a low monthly income or unemployed. The partnership model is popular only among the well-off inhabitants of large cities. It is also popular among respondents with higher education, although in this group the mixed model is slightly more frequent. The reverse model, with only a working woman, is more often practiced by families of unskilled workers, people in the worst financial situation and the unemployed, than by any others. The question arises then, how far the implementation of the various family models corresponds with the preferences of the respondents. The biggest consistency between preferences and reality appears among those people who function in a partnership model. More than two-thirds of them (69%) indicate that this model is the most desirable. In the case of the traditional model, over half of those (55%) who live according to traditional family patterns, consider them as the best. The CBOS data indicates that the lowest level of consistency between preferences and everyday family life is among those people who live in the mixed model. They rarely define the model as appropriate to themselves. Moreover, the majority of those people would like to reorganize the division of roles within their families. Therefore, in the case of both the partnership model and the traditional model, it seems to be the conscious choice of the spouses. However, the mixed model is chosen for economic reasons, which force both spouses to take up employment, rather than due to the personal preferences. This explains the limited social acceptance for either this model or for the situation where a woman becomes the family breadwinner (CBOS BS/52/2006).

In summary, although the partnership family model is the most popular among both women (79%) and men (68%) (Pentor 2006), it does not mean that Poles reject from traditional family gender arrangements in their everyday life. Moreover, there is a surprisingly high percentage of respondents, who think that fair sharing of household's duties means that women do more than men (women-34%, men-42%) (Pentor 2006).

These findings are supported also by other research. For instance Anna Titkow (2007) in one of the chapter of her book *Identity of Polish Women* analyzed data on preffered and implemented family models in Poland. The data is presented in the table on the next page.

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Table 2. Preferred and implemented family models.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family model</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred model (%)</td>
<td>Implemented model (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband is a breadwinner, wife takes care of home and children</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>23,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife is a breadwinner, husband takes care of home and children</td>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>2,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both husband and wife work professionally and wife takes care of home.</td>
<td>28,1</td>
<td>35,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband spends equal time on professional work and on taking care of home and children as his wife</td>
<td>50,0</td>
<td>27,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other model</td>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>10,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Anna Titkow (2007:228)

Similarly to the other research results presented above in this chapter, the data presented by Anna Titkow (2007) shows that preferences of respondents hardly agreed with their implemented family models. The difference is especially visible in the case of the egalitarian model (both partners work professionally and take care of home and children) which is implemented only by one-quarter of families, so that is half less than number of families who preferred this model. It turned out also that education was an important factor only in relation to the women’s opinion on their family model preferences, not in relation to men’s preferences. It is important to notice that in the opinion of 28% of Polish men with higher education it is better when women take care of home only and men are breadwinners, and next 33% of them think that even if both women and men work professionally it is only female duty to take care of home and children (Titkow 2007:229). Anna Titkow also draws attention to the fact that preferences do not depend on respondents’ place of living (village or big city) neither on income level. Also the fact of implementation of that or another family model was not significantly shaped by respondents place of living, education, number of children or family income. However, women and men who prefer traditional family model have usually more children than others (Titkow 2007:229) At the same time, younger women and younger men more often described their relationships as traditional one while older couples more often implemented family model where both partners work. Undoubtedly, this is due to the phase in which the family is at the moment. Traditional family model is much more popular among families in their procreative phase.
when the couple has small children who require constant care (Titkow 2007: 232).

How could these contradictory preferences and behaviour be explained? Firstly, this discrepancy may indicate that either respondents simply do not understand what the partnership model means in practice, and they just follow opinions, which appear appropriate to and consistent with general social trends; or changes in preferences are mainly superficial and have little impact on still strong traditional gender beliefs and practice beliefs in Poland. Secondly, if we agree that the level of people's expectations and perceptions of fairness of household labour division are affected by gender stratification in a country (for example Voicu et al., 2009, Collins et al., 1993), then - if they live in a country where doing almost all of the tasks within the household by women is perceived as “normal” and fair, so even a minimal contribution by men to household duties may be perceived by them as partnership-like. Another explanation could also be that, although women would like to see their marriage models as a partnership, at the same time they still try to defend their position of a worker-mother superwoman, as called by Morokvasic, or the more nationalistic one- The Mother Pole- paired with domestic matriarchy (Walczewska 1999, Titkow 1995), which gives a woman (particularly a mother) a privileged position within the family and, at least, symbolic power. So, the family is a possible area and a source of female power (Duch-Krystoszek 2007:79), however from the interpersonal family power point of view women do not define the family situation and their power in the family is only executive (Duch-Krystoszek 2007:80).

Danuta Duch-Krystoszek(2007:151) presents also contradictory research results which, on the one hand show that many women ask their husbands for some help, but on the other hand most of them prefer doing household work by they own. The statement: "I often prefer to do some things by my own than to ask for help somebody” is shared by 87,2% of Polish married women. As many as 72,1% of them declared that they prefer “do most of things by my own because no one will do them as well as I do”. As Duch-Krystoszek notices, these female beliefs are probably a form of rationalization of the situation which they think they cannot change anyway (Duch-Krystoszek 2007:151).

In summary, beliefs about families and family gender roles “form the context in which people make choices about their lives” (Wharton 2005:104) over their entire lifetime. Therefore, beliefs which we have about family gender roles guide our behaviour and in a significant way influence our life choices. They shape our family and social life. We can also assume that, firstly; every family unit constitutes a different amalgamation of family roles and relations; secondly, these roles can be reconstructed under particular circumstances; and thirdly, since gender is a multidimensional social construction, the experience of family gender roles and beliefs cannot be limited to behaviour...
within a family. It is also important to note that people tend to cohabitate with similar individuals in terms of gender equality beliefs (Breen and Cooke 2005, Cooke, L.P. 2006).

II. VII. Conclusions

Gender models are shaped by one's culture. They are also subject to change with new social and economic circumstances (Coltrane 1996:25). Since transnational migration clearly brings new social and economic perspective to migrant’s life, thus, my question is: how do these gender roles, mostly traditional ones- as it is most common in Polish families- change and are subject to change in the face of transnational family migration?

The traditional aspects of family gender roles are deeply rooted in Polish society through its history and tradition and are visible in much qualitative as well as quantitative research. Therefore, with a view to gender role theory I assume that the cultural context (Polish cultural and religious traditions) in which gender role beliefs have been formulated in Poland play a crucial role when deciding which family member is going to pioneer family migration as well as during the time of this migration and family reunification. Moreover, gender roles beliefs and family gender relations not only affect who makes a decision about migration and who and when they migrate, but they also affect the desire to migrate, and the ability to realize migration intentions.

I expect that due to the common cultural and religious socialization of Polish women to place family goals above their individual desires, wives play a subsidiary role in the migration decision making process and men more often than women have a deciding voice when making decisions about migration. I assume that this is true regardless of individual human capital and personal resources of family members. I expect also that men are pioneers of family migration more often than women due to the common gender beliefs about their traditional role as family breadwinner responsible for the economical well-being of the family, while their wives more often stay behind.

Moreover, the traditional social assumptions and beliefs about the role of women in the family (glue of the family and having a key-role in raising children), allows for the presumption that the presence of children in the family contributes to a more engendered character of family migration decisions. Even in the most modern societies, females still bear the majority of responsibility for the children, so if there are children in the family the number of restrictions on the female partner is higher than on the male partner. The presence of children in the family decreases the probability of pioneering transnational migration of women, and increases the probability of pioneering transnational migration of men. Mothers are more likely to become tied movers dependent on their husbands than...
childless women.
Moreover, the migration of mothers is less socially accepted and understood than male migration. Migrating mothers, much more than migrating fathers, are exposed to the stigma of being “bad parents” imposed upon them by their relatives, friends and other acquaintances left-behind. Women also feel guiltier than men when they leave their families, especially children, and they are more willingly than men involve themselves in everyday transnational communication, care exchange and the visits of family members left behind. Therefore, in general, I presume that the traditional perception and practice of the roles of mothers and wives as well as husbands and fathers among Polish transnational families in Ireland remains hardly challengeable, due to specific deeply rooted cultural and religious Polish traditions of gender socialization.
III. Transnationalism, transnational family and gender

III.I. Transnationalism

The Thomas and Znaniecki’s study (1927) and the example given by Alejandro Portes (2001) of Italian, Polish and Russian immigrants at the beginning of the twentieth century shows that many transnational patterns have a long history. Migrants from the beginning of the XX century retained links with their home countries, and they kept what today is called the “transnational household by sending remittances back home, and they made political contributions to particular causes” (Portes, 2001:183).

The history of the concepts of transnationalism and the transnational family in the social sciences begins at the end of the 1980s, when increasing numbers of researchers noted that many immigrants, despite the immigration theories of the time, maintained close relations with their countries of origin and lived their lives across national borders. The first significant contribution to the theoretical explanation of this phenomenon was made by anthropologists Lina Green Basch, Nina Glick-Schiller, and Cristina Szanton-Blanc, in the publication *Nations Unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states* (1994). They identified and defined this phenomenon as transnationalism. “We define ‘transnationalism’ as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. (...) Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states” (Basch et al 1994:7).

This definition has been strongly criticized, mainly because of its over-extension of the term immigrants to transmigrants. By using such a broad definition Basch et al. are close to exaggerating that all immigrants are transmigrants. In fact, not all immigrants are involved in transnational practices (Portes, 2001).

Since the publication of Basch et al’s book, several authors have stated their position on the practical and theoretical development of the term through several fields within the social sciences.

In 1998 Michael Smith and Luis Guarnizo edited *Transnationalism from Below*, a collection of essays that addressed transnationalism from a theoretical and empirical perspective. The authors point out that transnationalism is a complex process involving macro and micro processes. Smith and Guarnizo distinguished between the interaction and strategies of political leaders-transnationalism “from above”- and the everyday border crossing, personal and familial interactions...
of immigrants-transnationalism “from below” (Smith and Guarnizo, 1998). These two levels of transnationalism interact with each other. The authors criticize the notion of transnationalism as a boundless and deterritorialized social phenomenon (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:11). They emphasize the importance of translocal rather than transnational relations as “a triadic connection that links transmigrants, the localities to which they migrate, and their locality of origin” (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:13). Transmigrants move in and between their localities and as a result of this they develop their own social space in everyday life, characteristic social practices, symbols and artefacts that span different places. Therefore, their life at any moment is solely linked to either “the localities to which they migrate” or “their locality of origin” (Pries 2001:21).

Alejandro Portes et al (1999) emphasize transnational practices—”regular and sustained social contacts overtime across national borders (Portes et al 1999:219)” —as opposed to a transnational condition of being, which is stressed more by Basch et al. Therefore, transnationalism is limited “to occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contact over time across national borders for their implementation” (Portes et al. 1999:219). An alternative approach to transnationalism is presented by Thomas Faist in The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces (Faist 2000). Transnationalism, according to Faist, is a variation of ties of persons, networks, and organizations across nation-state borders, arising out of international migration patterns and refugee flows (Faist, 2000). He links transnationalism with the concept of transnational social spheres which refer to combinations of dynamic social processes, ties and positions in networks and organizations that reach across the borders of multiple states. It also includes various practices such as transnational reciprocity in families, transnational exchange in circuits and diffuse solidarity within transnational communities.

Taking into account the statement that migration is a gendered phenomenon (Piper 2005), the definition proposed by Jeff Hearn and Richard Howson seems to be the most absolute in this matter: “Thus we define transnationalism as processes by which intersectional gendered immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlements, including through transnational familial, community and organizational networks, and transnational classes and civil society” (Hearn & Howson 2009: 50). Hearn and Howson emphasise that transnationalism is an integral part of settlement processes. This is explained by the fact that migrants form various practical bridges to their new country and build hybrid identities and “that in this process sustaining social field that apply to all aspects of social life and social institutions and cross geographical, cultural and political borders is vital” (Hearn & Howson 2009:50-51).

Most of the current definitions of transnationalism highlight the importance of the individual level of transnational practices (for instance Basch, Faist). This approach opens up a new perspective on
migration processes and it allows us to observe how individual transmigrants’ lives are transformed by their everyday transnational practices, and how these practices challenge the previous social identity of migrants as well as ties and relationships with their home and host country. It also facilitates studying transnational family processes and relations between family members, which constitute, as Basch et al claim, “the initial foundation for all types of transnational social relations” (Basch et al 1994:238).

Some researchers argue that the concept of transnationalism has revealed nothing new but rather: “new labels are applied to old processes” (Al-Ali and Koser 2002:1). The most important features common to “old” and current transnationalism are: long-distance networks which allow for the maintenance of political, social and cultural ties with countries of origin, circulation between countries or return movement, ongoing communication in different forms, sending of money (remittances), business links, and engagement of immigrants in home countries’ political, social and cultural issues (Vertovec, 2004). Therefore the question arises: is there anything new in current transnationalism? Basch et al argue that the increasingly globalized world produces not a new transnational phenomenon as such but rather a new type of migrant experience (Basch et al 1994:24).

“It is also possible to argue that transnationalism is not a new phenomenon and that although recent technological advances have facilitated communication, previous waves of migrants to countries such as the United States also maintained home ties (…). We believe, however, that current transnationalism marks a new type of migrant experience, reflecting an increased and more pervasive global penetration of capital” (Basch et al 1994:24). Smith and Guarnizo(1998:4) claim that the new character of transnationalism comes from the effects that contemporary transnational migrations have upon societies involved, namely: the globalization of capitalism, the technological revolution in the means of transportation and communication, decolonization and the universatization of human rights, the expansion of social networks (Smith and Guarnizo 1998:4).

The new technologies of travel and information and globalization of social networks as features of new transnational migration are also pointed out by Vertovec and Cohen (1999:xvi). They added to the list also the growth of remittances and the disintegration of boundaries between 'host' and 'home' societies (Vertovec and Cohen 1999:xvi). Portes et al (1999:219) suggest that new transnational migrants can be characterized by the “high intensity of exchanges, the new modes of transacting, and the multiplication of activities” they sustain across borders, while in the past “activities of immigrants and refugees across national borders reinforced bonds between the respective communities, they lacked the elements of regularity, routine involvement, and critical mass characterizing contemporary examples of transnationalism” (Portes et al 1999:225). In other words, current transnational patterns differ with intensity, regularity and modes of transnational
communication from those observed by Znaniecki and Thomas among Polish migrants in the US and their family members in Poland.

Members of families who are separated by a large distance stay in touch through various kinds of communication. This includes traditional forms like handwritten letters and the telephone but also, especially currently, with mobile phones and online communication through the Internet. New communication technologies and transportation possibilities have significantly increased the opportunities for contact between family members. Nowadays, the usage of communication tools like the Internet and mobile phones is a part of everyday life for many transmigrants. It allows them to be simultaneously “here and there”. The latest data from European Union Internet Statistics (31 December 2011)\textsuperscript{39} shows that on average 71.5\% percent of EU citizens have access to the Internet\textsuperscript{40}. Online internet communicators such as Skype and others as well as cheap international phone calling\textsuperscript{41} allow for more personal, real-time contact between migrants and their family members in the home country rather than e-mails or sending letters by traditional post.

For many of the current immigrants the connection with their family through new communication tools like The Internet and mobile phones is at the heart of their transnational family life (Vertovec, 2004).

Nevertheless, transnational processes either 100 years ago or today are based on transnational communication. When family members are physically separated for a long time, they have to work to stay connected. Alternatively, they may lose contact and establish separate lives. Families who communicate across borders actively build up a transnational social sphere.

Through various kinds of communication, transmigrants keep “multi stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Basch \textit{et al} 1994: 7). Together with the increase in available communication came a dramatic decrease in the cost of transnational communication. Not only cheap phone calls or online communication but also cheap flights make it possible to 'stay in touch' across borders for a growing number of people. Newly opened flight links, together with increased economic prosperity have brought further possibilities for intensive transnational communications – frequent flights between host and home country. Cheap flights have significantly increased the movement in international migration and made this movement more

\textsuperscript{39} http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats9.htm

\textsuperscript{40} In Poland 62\% of population has an access to the Internet, similar situation is in Ireland; 66.8\% of Irish population has the Internet access.

\textsuperscript{41} Steven Vertovec emphasizes the role of cheap international telephone connections (Vertovec, 2004). The cost of international calls has dramatically decreased in last decade, causing an increase in the frequency of transnational contacts between immigrants and their family members in home countries. “The communication allowed by cheap telephone calls serves as a kind of social glue connecting small-scale social formations across the globe”(Vertovec, 2004:220).

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regular than ever before. New communication technologies blur old boundaries based on geography, class, gender and sexuality and provide a space where new forms of social relationships can evolve (Wilding, 2006). Raelene Wilding (2006: 132) illustrates, the use of mobile phone text messages, emails and information communication technologies as important for some families in “constructing or imagining a ‘connected relationship’, and enabling them to overlook their physical separation by time and space”. On the other hand the Internet and mobile phones may cause a decrease in face-to-face communications, social isolation and the elimination of collective public sensibilities (Wilding, 2006:127). As Putnam claims: “The new ‘virtual reality’ helmets that we will soon don to be entertained in total isolation are merely the latest extension of this trend” (Putnam, 1995: 75). Wilding (2006) examines how and whether kin maintain contact across time and space. She conducted broad qualitative research among family members asking about the usage of a variety of individual communication tools in the past and present, including telephone calls, telegrams, letters, faxes, email, Internet chat rooms, Internet websites, mobile text messages, videos, tapes, gifts, cards and postcards (Wilding, 2006:129-130). There was a significant diversity in the frequency of communications, satisfaction, and the length of connections. She noticed particular patterns of historical progression in the typical mode of communication. Until the early 1990s regular transnational individual communication was based on post. Letters were seen as a relatively easy and cheap form of communication with relatives across boundaries as opposed to the telephone. Letters were relied on for routine and regular communication while the telephone, regarded as less reliable, less widespread and more expensive, was used occasionally for brief chats (Wilding 2006;131). By the mid 1990s the communication routine switched from letters to more frequent and longer telephone calls. In the late 1990s new information and communication technologies like the Internet and mobile phones were developing as a powerful competitor to the older form of technologies for transnational communication like the telephone or post. The use of the Internet, in particular email, has made communication between immigrants and their home country much more frequent. Her research reveals that the usage of email as a specific communication tool has transformed the transnational family. New communication technologies construct shared social fields across vast distances in which family members feel sufficiently connected. At the same time an increase of quantity and quality of transnational contacts between family members generates new expectations of communication and support which is not always seen as a positive effect. Online communication provides a useful addition to family practices. The new communication technologies are used primarily to enable and supplement the continuation of existing family practices and “reduce the impact of distance and migration on the exchange of support and care at a distance, something that has previously been assumed rather than demonstrated” (Wilding 2006:138)
Sometimes, however, regular and intensive communication and the inability to have face-to-face contact serve to intensify rather than diminish the sense of distance. Paradoxically, easy and frequent communication may cause other transnational family problems. Wilding has also pointed out some dystopian tendencies in the impact of new communication technologies on family’s everyday life. “On the other hand, we can see that the introduction of email into everyday lives has, indeed, enabled people to feel that they are ‘connected to home’ and family, in spite of space and distance. However, this also constructs its own rather dystopian dynamic: in case of crisis, the continued existence of distance returns to haunt the family network. Moreover, those who wish to escape find that it is even harder to create social distance.”

Regardless of our dystopian or utopian point of view about the impact of new communication technologies on our social and family life, it seems to be unquestionable that they are involved in the construction of our life, especially when we live transnational family lives.

### III.II. Transnational family

Bryceson and Vuorela (2002:3) define transnational family relations as “familyhood across national borders”. They emphasize the feeling of unity and collective welfare created by transnational family members. Like other families, a transnational family is also a social construction or “imagined community” where the members have to deal or mediate with different identities, loyalties, various types of lifestyles and capital resources. “Transnational families are defined here as families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely ‘familyhood’, even across national borders.” (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 3). Members of transnational families live at least part of the time geographically dispersed and spend periods of time in separate countries. Therefore, the concept of transnational family leads us to reconsider our understanding of family as based on the idea of co-residency and take into account the possibility of spatial separation (Zontini 2007). Despite the separation caused by national borders and distances they look after one another, share resources and maintain their social relations, and provide emotional care and guidance from afar (Bryceson and Vuorela,2002:3-7).

The idea of the transnational family overlaps with the concept of transnational family networks. Transnational family networks are viewed as „strong ties” networks and refer to transnational ties between kin and close friends. As opposed to “strong ties” are “weak ties” that involve relationships between acquaintances (Boyd 1989). Therefore, transnational family networks, because of the close
relations between family members, can be seen as those which can maximize information flows and migration opportunities. For an individual family member, information or assistance may come from any other family member who has emigrated. Family networks help migrants financially, as well as provision of useful information, finding a job or accommodation. Cooperation within social networks facilitates migration and reduces the risk and cost of moving (Massey 1999). In the situation where the transnational social networks are already established every potential migrant is able to benefit. In that way transnational migration networks may result in family migration chains. (Massey 1999). Thus, the concept of transnational family networks is inextricably linked to the transnational exchange relationships which could be understood as “the exchange of care and support across distance and national borders” (Baldassar, Ballock and Wilding 2007: 3). Thomas Faist (1997, 2010) states that transnational family exchange relationships function on the basis of family reciprocity, trust and solidarity. In this way, transnational family members create “a feeling of collective welfare and unity” (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 3) and they can count on a fair division of burdens and benefits (Faist 1997, 2010:77).

Faist (2004) also claims that reciprocity is a dominant mechanism of integration in the transnational family. The author also emphasizes that social and symbolic ties, reciprocity and obligations among transnational family members can result in an easily observed return migration. “Conceive themselves as both an economic unit and a unit of solidarity and who keep, besides the main house, a kind of shadow household in another country. Transnational families make use of resources inherent in social ties like reciprocity, and also resources existing in symbolic ties, such as solidarity. Economic assets are mostly transferred from abroad to those who continue to run the household ‘back home’” (Faist, 2004: 8).

Faist emphasizes that the transnational family is a unit of solidarity linked first of all through economic and symbolic ties. These family ties are reinforced despite the geographical distance by various kinds of transnational family communication. The intensity of these ties can be regarded as an indicator of family affiliation and relationships: “The intensity of the members’ commitments or obligations can be operationalized as indicators of group affiliation, such as sending back remittances, and emotional ties. Of course, the strength of ties differs from one culture to another, and depends on the closeness of kinship and other social and symbolic ties that bind units, such as nuclear or extended families together” (Faist 2000:206).

In other words, intensive transnational communication can provide a strong sense of belonging despite geographical separation. Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) have developed two concepts in which to study transnational family creation, namely ‘frontiering’ and ‘relativizing’. The first refers to “the ways and means transnational family members use to create familial space and network ties in a terrain where affinal connections are relatively sparse” (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002:11). The
second refers to the ways “individuals establish, maintain or curtail relational ties with specific family members” (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002: 14). The first concept is related to the more practical efforts making to keep family ties alive, while the term ‘relativizing’ describes the process of materializing the family as an imagined community. The transnational exchange practices can have both substantive and relativizing functions.

More recent studies are now exploring exchange of care practices and long-distance relationships within transnational families (Ryan, 2007; Zontini, 2007; Baldassar, 2007; Banfi & Boccagni 2011, Evergeti & Ryan 2011).

Transnational practices linked to care-exchange incorporate both the practices (financial assistance, and practical support) and emotions of caring (moral and emotional support) (Baldassar et al, 2007). All of these types of care, exchange can be practiced transnationally through the use of various communication technologies including phone, fax, email, text messages, online communicators as well as personal care and accommodation, which require a presence and can only be exchanged during visits. In other words, transnational care-giving among family members is mainly based on various types of transnational family communication as almost all these activities take place across national borders.

What is noteworthy is that migrants and their family members who left behind are “territorialized”, which means that they are situated at particular time and place and therefore their care giving practices are affected variously by their individual, family and migration life cycles or life courses (Baldassar et al, 2007). Besides- using the terminology Bryceson and Vuorela (2002: 3-30) - transnational care exchange is relational (relational ties of care givers and care receivers could be a source of identity and support) and temporal (associated with individual life cycles of care-exchange participants).

This is connected to what Baldassar (2007: 280) calls ‘mobility of care’ embodied in the ‘negotiated commitments’ between participants of care exchange within the family. As Baldassar claims, the care exchange practices within transnational families develop through time and depend upon: the capacity of individual members, their sense of obligation and responsibility to provide care, and family relationships and commitments that family members share with each other. Notions such as obligations and family duties also cannot be discussed without consideration of the cultural differences and expectations of the caring obligations that exist within families and between families, communities and nations (Baldassar, 2007). Baldassar (2007: 277) also argues that few studies ‘focus on transnational care giving and ageing’. Baldassar (2007: 276) states that caring for elderly or sick relatives does not require proximity and can be done in different ways and in different locations.

“Empirically, the general pre-occupation with geographical proximity means that very little research
has been done on the relationships between ageing parents and adult children who live at a distance, with the result that transnational practices of care have remained largely invisible or are assumed to be unfeasible” (Baldassar 2007:276).

However, it is important to stress that sometimes instead of being sources of positive support and care giving; transnational communication practices can place heavy financial and emotional pressure on migrants (Ryan 2004, 2007, Evergeti & Ryan 2011).

Thus, studies on the transnational family care exchange need to be directed towards a more scientific approach which would include “more interactionist analysis that takes seriously into consideration the individuals involved in migration” (Evergeti & Ryan 2011:358). In order to do this effectively, migrants’ cultural norms and values related to care exchange need to be taken into account (Evergeti & Ryan 2011).

On the basis of the theories presented above, I am inclined to suggest that cultural norms and values shared by migrants and their family members shape to a large extent the way in which transnational family relations, including care exchange between migrants and their relatives in the home country, are being established and in which directions they are evaluated. Also being conscious of different transnational family types and in order to answer my research questions precisely and from a gender perspective, I decided to narrow my investigation to family members from a nuclear family (childless couples, couples with dependent children or single parents) who, despite ties of marriage, blood, adoption or sexual relations, are involved in transnational family life either as transmigrants or family members in the home country. This selection covers the basic family roles and family relations namely: marital that could be observed between spouses and the role of wife and husband (alternatively cohabiting partners), and generational: relations between parents and children and their family roles. Nevertheless, in order to avoid an omission of some important aspect of family relations which may also shape the transnational family life of my respondents, I also outline some of the nuances in relations between transnational nuclear family members and their extended family relatives. I decided to also take into account the role of extended family members, who actively participate in transnational family life, such as kin who take care of migrants' children left behind, as well as those who are actively supported by migrants. I let my respondents indicate, without any structural limitation, those family members who, in their opinion, play a crucial role in their transnational family life. This selection of family members is closest to what Buchowski and Stanisz (2010:338) call intimate family, a family

42For instance, transnationalism can also be traced in the case of mixed marriages, when the immigrant partner maintains the relationship with the family in his or her home country (Constable 2003:216), single parent transnational families, transnational families which are being established during transnational migration time of a single migrants etc. However, these types of transnational family are not covered by my research.
form that is wider in its structure than a nuclear family but narrower than family in general. It covers spouses, children, parents, siblings, grandparents and parents-in-law. Nevertheless, I consider it necessary to broaden this list and also include cohabitating parents. The relations in such a social unit are strong and intimate enough to be regarded by most scholars as close family relations.

III.III. Transnational family migration process

First, as women and men are to likely experience migration in different ways, gender cannot be treated simply as a variable of migration, but rather as a central concept in understanding the migration experience (Pessar and Mahler 2003:812-814), especially the family migration experience.

“Among these, gender differentiated population movements deserve particular attention because they act like a mirror for the way in which gender divisions of labour are incorporated into spatially uneven processes of economic development. In addition, an analysis based on gender highlights the social dimensions of migration. On the other hand, these cross-border movements – whether by women/men on their own or jointly with their spouses – have the potential to reconfigure gender relations and power inequalities. Migration can provide new opportunities for women and men to improve their lives, escape oppressive social relations, and support those who are left behind. But it can also expose people to new vulnerabilities as the result of their precarious legal status, abusive working conditions, exposure to certain health risks, etc.” (Piper 2005:1) In the past two decades temporary and permanent migration movements „are globalizing, accelerating, diversifying and feminizing” (Kofman et al, 2000:1). These processes have also been noticed by scholars and the perception of migration processes as gendered ones has gradually emerged (for example: Morokvasic 2007, Morokvasic et al 2008, Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, 1999, Kofman 2000, Pessar 1999, Pessar and Mahler 2003, Parreñas 2009, Piper 2005, 2008, White 2011, Kraler et al. 2011). Nevertheless, research on gender and migration has still been marginalized within mainstream migration debates and requires in-depth research and more attention. Gender and migration requires not only more attention and research in general, but also the change of one-sided, mainly female points of view in relation to gender migration studies is necessary.

Many studies on the transnational family, even if they assume a gender perspective, are almost exclusively focused on women despite the fact that the concept of gender clearly covers both sexes.
Jeff Hearn (1998, 2009) calls this scientific approach the “absent presence” of men\(^{43}\), and explains: “One of the dominant ways in which men theorize (or do not theorize) men has been through absence. The taken-for-grantedness of men is reaffirmed through the absence of men. Men are unspoken and so reaffirmed” (Hearn 1998:787). According to Hearn, the foundation for this tradition has been established by the belief that gender may be explicitly invoked preferably in relation to women and femininity, not to men and masculinity. In contrast, men and masculinity may be perceived as non-gendered concepts and constructs (Hearn 1998:789).

Thus, it should be clear that gender is about both men and women, and not solely women. While researchers’ aim to explore the gender aspects of migration, research cannot be reduced to focusing on women. “Gender-oriented” means taking into account women’s’ and men’s’ point of view equally. The focus on gender also needs to be done without homogenizing women’s’ and men’s’ experience and practices, and must be undertaken in relation to how gender intersects with other social divisions, such as ethnicity, social background and education. Thus, when introducing a gender perspective into my investigation, I refer to both female and male points of view with respect to their social background and family structure.

Secondly, in order to examine all of the nuances that might be crucial to the phenomenon of transnational family migration, the subject should be treated as a long-term process rather than as a static unit within certain time periods. The dynamic view of the family advocated here requires longitudinal analysis of the individual family life cycle. Inspired by a study by Thomas and Znaniecki on Polish peasants in America and Europe in the early 20\(^{th}\) century, researchers began to use the life-course approach to study social change and life trajectories of individuals (Elder 1985:24).

Research on migration from a micro-perspective of individual behaviour has frequently followed a model of stages in the migration process, such as the Rubicon model presented below. The Rubicon model of migration stages describes the migration process and distinguishes four phases.

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\(^{43}\) Absence in the research on gender of „the other side” of the coin: that of men and masculinities has also been observed by Adam Jones (Jones 2006: xii), who proves the disparity in the discourse of gender by a comparison of hits for search strings utilizing the Google search engine (Jones 2006:xiii). On the 3th of January 2006 hits for „women and gender” were more than fifty times greater than hits for „men and gender” (1,170, 000 versus 23,100). Phrases typed with quotation marks ensure that the results include all the words from the phrases. The disparity in the discourse of gender indicated by a comparison of hits for search strings utilizing the Google search engine on 15 January 2010 for phrases: „women and gender”- 1,780,000 „men and gender”- 44,400, „women and migration”-6,220,000, „men and migration”-4,260,000.

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The predecisional phase and the preactional phase relate to the stage before migration. The first phase is represented by considering migration, while the second one is represented by planning it. The next stage—the actional phase—comprises realizing the decision in favour of migration, and eventually the post-actional phase relates to living at the destination time. Inspired by the Rubicon model, I propose an explanation of the transnational family migration process within a three-stage model, namely: pre-transnational stage, transnational family stage and post-transnational family stage. However, unlike the Rubicon model, my stage model is not related to individual migration but to the transnational family migration. Moreover, it captures not only the process of transnational family migration over time but it also considers the compositional change of families through migration. The pre-transnational family stage relates to the family migration decision making time and process, so it includes considering migration, family migration decision making processes and planning migration activities. The transnational family stage in my study applies to the time when the transnational family is actually realized; family members live apart due to transnational migration. And eventually the post-transnational family stage covers family life following family reunification or disintegration in the host indicates an understanding of how migrants construct their identities while keeping alive a sense of where they are from. In this case, for example, buying Polish products, going to the Polish church or installing Polish satellite television would be a way of maintaining Polish identity in Ireland. Besides, the word transnational is aimed at stressing that the reunified family still maintain transnational contacts with friends and more distant relatives such as parents, siblings and others.
III.III.a. Family migration decision and gender

The reasons for migration can be situated on a continuum from purely individual to family-dominated. Certain characteristics of migrants allow for the prediction of where on the continuum the reasons for migration tend to fall (Lauby and Stark 1988: 473). It is my contention that the decision to migrate and the choice of migration patterns of migrating wives, husbands, mothers, and fathers are determined rather by family needs than by individuals alone. Moreover, the family migration decision making process, especially decisions about who migrates and when they migrate, is strongly shaped by the gender beliefs of family members and the family gender model in which they function.

The sub-chapter below presents the discussion on family and individual motivations to migrate, and factors that shape family migration decisions, with the emphasis on the role of gender beliefs.

For a long time, the push-pull model, deeply rooted in neoclassical economic theory, was used as the classic explanation for migration movement. Within this approach it is assumed that people tend to maximize their utility and they are seeking the best locations for optimal usage of the human capital possessed. Individuals “decide to migrate because a cost-benefit calculation leads them to expect a positive net return, usually monetary, from movement” (Massey 1999:35). The potential migrant is assumed to be an autonomous individual who acts beyond any social context in the sense that his or her decisions do not depend on other people (Massey 1999). It is scarcely taken into account that the decision about migration very often dependent upon other aspects, more subtle than financial ones, shaped and reshaped by specific social and cultural circumstances (Brettell 2003:4).

This theory neither recognizes the importance of the family and networks in migration process nor does it notice the importance of gender studies when studying the migration processes. It doesn’t take into account the differential incentives for the migration of men and woman, as well as not noting cultural and social factors that may constrain woman from migrating (e.g. patriarchal kinship and gender ideologies) (Pessar, 1999:56). Neoclassical accounts of migration have repeatedly been criticized by sociologists and anthropologists for being gender-blind and for not taking into account possible non-economic motivations depending on the individual, family or community life cycle.

The mobility of people depends on several different factors which have an impact on the availability, expectations, motives and incentives associated with migration. And also, decisions about migration, besides economic reasons can be also determined by demographic, social and cultural aspects such as: family size, age and sex, stage in the life cycle, and various aspects of the social structure of families such as kinship patterns (Haug 2008). As Thomas Faist noticed “It would be naive to conceptualize all social units such as households as single-interest decision-making bodies. There is too much evidence on the importance of diverging interests and of power
relations within these units, for example expressed in hierarchical and patriarchal decision making” (Faist 1997, 2010: 70).

The new economics of labour migration, developed under the lead of Oded Stark (Stark 1991) lets us see migration as a way of maximizing family well being. In contrast to previous economic models, the migration decision is part of a family strategy. “The family can be conceived as a ‘coalition,’ a group of players committed by choice to act as one unit vis-à-vis the rest of the world” (Stark 1991:5). So, migration decisions are not made by isolated individuals but within families or sometimes entire communities “in which people act collectively to maximize not only expected income but also minimize risks to income and maximize status within an embedded hierarchy and to overcome a variety of local market failures” (Massey, 1999: 36).

So, the decision making process means a personal calculation and choosing an optimal variant. Migration is a family investment so the family seeks to maximize utility and profits are expected when the migrant's remittances arrive. The family decision about migration is a sort of “contract” between family members, not necessarily always conscious, because family structure is based on the mutual obligations of family members and the breaking up these obligations causes various sanctions. Those who stay and finance the migration of others expect remittances or other kinds of gratitude in return from potential migrants (Kępińska 2009). Remittances also might be perceived as an indicator measuring the degree of involvement of the migrant in his family affairs in the home country (Kępińska 2009). The “economically calculated” family decision may also mean that eventually somebody gains and somebody loses. For instance, the family would migrate even if only one spouse had better earnings in the new place and the second does not gain anything or even loses. The spouse that loses as a result of the migration is defined as a “tied-mover”, since she or he is tied to circumstances that are not beneficial for him/her. Conversely, if one spouse has a chance for net gains as a result of migration but the other's net losses would be of greater magnitude, then resignation from migration means an increase in family well-being and migration would make a family worse off. In this situation the spouse who would have gained from migration is a “tied-stayer” (Mincer 1999). However, although migration is often a joint decision based on economical calculations “women’s discontinuous labour force participation and generally low market power imply that they will command less economic power in the market and in their marriages and, thus, are more likely to be tied migrants” (DaVanzo 1976: Mincer 1978; Polachek & Horvath 1997; Sandell 1977 after LeClere and McLaughlin 1997:316).

Although the new economics’ of the labour migration school represents an advancement over the neoclassical one it still does not consider different social and cultural conditions within the family (family structure, roles and relations). Particularly those aspects linked to gender are largely absent from its analysis. So, this absence in the formulation of the theory suggests that there is no
difference in the behaviour of male and female migrants. The new economic concepts and theories miss the fact that family/household decisions and actions do not always represent unified and equally beneficial outcomes for all members. This is because the family is a gendered unit that includes people with different occupations and interests that can come into conflict with one another. Such diverse female and male interests and occupations very often affect decisions about who manages to migrate, for how long, and where they go. Therefore, while the migration decision is very often described as a joint family strategy, the actual decision making process is full of interpersonal conflicts. As we see, there is also a reason to suspect, that women play a far more complex role in the family migration decision-making process and over the whole time of the family migration, than only as followers or “tied partners”.

In other words, a focus is needed on the variable geometry of relationships within the family as well as analysis of different family roles and structures which might be influential in decisions about migration and migration behaviour itself. It is also necessary to concentrate on the individual motivations of family members and the conflicts of interest between them. Undoubtedly, men, woman, husbands and wives, the head of the family and his/her family etc. may differ and even struggle for conflicting goals. “Since most gender constructions privilege notions of masculinity and femininity that locate women in dependent roles to men, it matters a lot who in the family engages in transnational migration for the form and conditions under which their migration is evaluated” (Sørenson 2005:3).

As Bielby and Bielby (1992) pointed out, social exchange theory, similar to the neoclassical view, predicts that married women are more likely than married men to be tied movers and tied stayers because of women’s lower earning potential. Conversely, it also means that if the wife's potential earnings exceed her husband's potential earnings, then the man is more likely than his wife to be a tied mover or a tied stayer. These purely economic explanations do not take into account the wider social context, like for instance the importance of gender role beliefs in the decision making process. “Neoclassical and social exchange approaches ignore the household roles husbands and wives occupy, the gender role beliefs they subscribe to regarding those roles, and the effect of these beliefs on both the process and outcome of couples' decision making” (Bielby and Bielby 1992:1245). For example, let’s assume that the wife's potential earnings exceed her husband's earnings and they both subscribe to the traditional family gender roles. Then the potential migration would possibly weaken the role of the man as the family breadwinner. Would he decide or agree to emigrate? Neoclassical theory and social exchange theory assume that expectations linked to family gender roles are flexible and they are likely to adjust according to the chances and threats that family members may face (Bielby and Bielby 1992). However, as Bielby and Bielby (1992) claim, that economic rationalization of the family migration decision has a raison d'être, they also argue
that this economic calculation is shaped by gender role beliefs. In particular, they state that control over marital resources, especially financial resources, determines power in family decision-making, therefore the gender role beliefs about bread-winning take precedence. Their research findings suggest that a husband with traditional gender role beliefs will not be dissuaded from migration for family considerations by his better earning wife, if the move promises a “much better job”. In contrast, wives with traditional gender beliefs as well as those with non-traditional ones are unwilling to consider migration if their husbands have high-paying jobs in the home-country.

In fact, studies on gender and migration show that while employment factors are indeed important for men’s’ migration decisions, women, very often due to traditional household gender-based divisions of labour and gender roles, are more concerned about reproductive requirements (Morokvasic 2003).

It also suggests that the role of mother and father shape the migration decision. Mothers, because of their caring role, are less inclined to consider migration than fathers. The research (Bielby and Bileby 1992) suggests that in the 1990s the tied-partner phenomenon affected women and men more equally than before. Nevertheless, although men are increasingly more likely to be tied-stayers (Bielby and Bileby 1992), women are still more likely to be tied-movers (Cooke 2003). Existing research supports the contention that economic family migration is predominantly husband-centered. Zvonkovic, Greaves, Schmiege, and Hall (1996) found that women, even in couples who consider themselves as having similar values and openly expressed opinions, take the secondary position in work-related family decisions. Zvonkovic and colleagues concluded that work-related family decisions were "more often enacted according to the husbands' preference" (1996: 97), although they appeared to be formed through agreement.

The most popular belief is that men’ and women’ household contributions are often valued differently and usually men are pushed into migration through the male breadwinner ideal while women, on the other hand, often give prevalence to their male partner’s careers in relocation decisions (Bielby/Bielby 1992; Jürges 2006). An important condition that shapes the family migration decision is the presence of children in the household. Couples without children can migrate more easily because they face fewer restrictions. Plausibly children make the family migration decision more difficult and complicated. If there are children, they may be more persons involved in the migration decision. Older children probably do not want to give up their social networks, change their schools and start all over everything in a different country. In the case of young children, the limitations and restrictions in terms of migration fall mainly on women. “Even in the most modern societies, females still bear most responsibility for the children” (Gregson and Low 1993; Van der Lippe 1997 after Smits, Mulder and Hooimeijer 2004:288).

Following the human capital model of family migration, Thomas Cooke (2005:2) states that gender
roles have a stronger impact on the family migration decision than utility-maximization. Family migration generally harms the economic status of the wife and her employment, as it is most directly influenced by the husband's human capital, even if the wife has a greater earning potential. This assumption seems to be plausible with regard to families with more traditional gender role beliefs and less applicable for those who subscribe to a more egalitarian family model. The number of women with professional careers who are active in the labour market has generated an increase in dual earner families. Women gain more economic power and thus possibly more power and a more important voice when making family migration decisions.

“These developments suggest that women, as adjuncts to the labour force, may no longer be merely victims, accessories, passive, facilitators, or reluctant /negative about the move. On the contrary, partnered women may have their own labor-force interests at the destination, which may lead them to be active migration decision-makers, embracing migration more positively” (Hiller and McCaig 2007:459).

And thirdly, family social networks spread over the world partially determine the migration destination (Harbison 1981; Boyd 1989). In other words, the migration decision making process also depends on the family or individual's history of migration and access to and activeness of potential migrants in migration networks, either in informal migration ties which are comprised of family members and friends, or formal relations which refer to migrants' organizations and recruitment agencies (Boyd 1989). Researchers like Massey (1999), or Kaczmarczyk et al. (2002,) (the latter authors have focused on the Polish case in particular) have found that people with previous migration experiences or living in locations with a history of migration are more prone to engage in migration. The manifestation of the material success of migrants and the exchange of migration experiences surely encourages potential migrants to move abroad and try their luck. The exchange of information, experiences and help through social networks among migrants and potential migrants has been increasingly recognized and studied by scholars. For instance, Enrico Marcelli et al (2001) describe the example of Mexican migrants to the US, that each act of migration, regardless of consequences, makes future migratory movement more likely, for both the individual migrant and surrounding family members. So, migration networks are often considered as a cumulative causation model of migration (Marcelli and Cornelius 2001). Migration networks facilitate the migration processes of many people not only when they decide but whether they decide and where to migrate, they also help to organize the process at the stage of the actual move, the arrival or/and settlement in the destination country (Massey 1999). While it is highly probable that pioneer migrants decide independently on their own about the migration destination and the time of migration, the majority of people who follow them rely on the pioneers' information, experience and help much more than on the support of formal institutions'. It stems from the fact...
that family and peers become “role models through their achievements in foreign countries” (Fawcett 1989:678f). Additionally, the initial help and presence of people, who share the same cultural code and customs with a new migrant, reduces culture shock and its possible negative psychological and sociological effects. And finally, migration social networks are very often gendered. Sara Curran and Estela Rivero-Fuentes (2003) found, for example, that female networks facilitate the international migration of women while male networks facilitate that of men. The presence and development of gender specific networks in the migration destination depends on whether men or women enter the country first (Parrado and Flippen 2005)

Gender role theory emphasizes that men and women have been socialized to accept their gender roles in society. According to traditional gender beliefs women are often socialized to place family first and personal goals second when it comes to crucial family decisions. However, this is not to imply that women lack power in decision making. Woman may surprisingly have a lot to say about domestic matters. The fact that they may be actively involved in the decision making process does not necessarily mean that their potential gains and losses from migration are considered symmetrically, not as a human capital model of family migration suggests, with those potential gains and losses of their husbands.

It is quite clear that the motivations and ability to migrate as well as the general patterns of migration are influenced by complex macro, meso and micro factors. It is also obvious that family migration is not a haphazard movement of poor people, but a carefully calculated movement, designed to relive economic pressures at various stages of the family cycle (Massey et al. 1987, 1999, Boyd 1989). However, it does not mean that the decision about migration is made exclusively on the basis of rational economic behaviour. Potential migrants and those who are going to stay are involved in multiple social relations and symbolic ties, such as ethnic or religious organizations. Participants attach various interests, obligations, understandings, memories and expectations to all of these relations. Thus, these social relations are also taken into account when making the migration decision. Naturally, the strongest social ties are family relations characterized by substantial emotions and the obligation involved, as well as direct relations between participants (Faist 1997, 2010). The bulk of empirical evidence indicates that the family migration decision making process does not necessarily follow economic logic and that gender-based family roles may be an important factor. The migration decision making process is „shaped by sex-specific family sources of approval, disapproval, assistance and information” (Boyd 1989:657). However, research on how gender role beliefs affect family migration is limited. One of the purposes of this study is to examine how family gender roles and family gender relations shape family migration decisions and thus transnational family migration patterns.
III.III.b. Transnational family stage and gender transition

In this part of the chapter I present the sketch of the mostly anthropological literature that takes up the question of the nature of gender roles and gender relations in transnational families during the transnational family stage as well as after the family reunification in the host country. The following theoretical and empirical knowledge presents also various argumentations and empirical evidences concerning the question of potential gender transition in transnational families, its directions and circumstances under which this transition does or does not occur.

As Gabriella Lazardis and Floya Anthias (2000) noticed, one of the central issues raised by the gender migration studies is the question to what degree migration causes women to experience an improvement or a decline in their social gender positions. The literature on this matter presents two partly conflicting approaches. The first claims that traditionally established gender roles and gender relations are transmitted and practiced abroad. The potential serious challenges for these traditional relationships are hardly noticed and women struggle to fulfill the gender knowledge expectations. Mirjana Morokvasic is one of the few scientists who work on migration from and within Central-Eastern European countries from a gender perspective. Morokvasic’s general question (2007) is how far migration practices challenge or stabilize gender orders. Morokvasic argues that “international migrants albeit women and men in different ways, tend to use the traditional gender order and rely on it for their own purposes, if they don’t challenge or question it” (Morokvasic 2007: 71, emphasis in original). This means that most migrants do not question the dominant knowledge about their gender and about gender relations. They tend to use traditional gender order and rely on it if it facilitates their migration purposes. In the situation when there is a risk that traditional gender orders are challenged, for example when women leave their family due to migration, they use a wide range of strategies that allow women to fulfill the general gender knowledge expectations of motherhood and normally established family relationships (Morokvasic 2007). A good example is the female worker going abroad to send remittances to her family. She may regard herself as a good mother who cares for her children by sacrificing herself (Morokvasic 2007: 83); she may even consider herself as a ‘better mother’ than those who stay and do not provide their children with better education and health care through remittances. The norm of motherhood is thus changed, but not de-constructed. Women from East-Central Europe, as Morokvasic noticed, try to fulfill the ideal of “a socialist good-mother superwoman” (Morokvasic 2007:84). Also other authors when characterizing post-socialist female temporary workers from

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44 The image that had been already discussed in the first chapter. The image presents the mother who sacrifices her life for her children and husband. Clean and warm home makes a sense of her
Central Europe use a similar epithet—migrant-mother-superwomen (Karjanen 2008). Migrant women face double tensions. They have to balance work and family demands, and at the same time maintain transnational households with kin left in the country of origin. Despite this, they are still situated within the traditional gender roles of mother, sibling, daughter, caregiver and employee (Karjanen 2008:176). David Karjanen concludes: “While economic and bargaining power within households may have improved for many of these women, the traditional gender roles have not; they are still asked to contribute household work, participate in the formal labour force, as well as providing childrearing” (Karjanen 2008:177). According to such findings, it is unlikely that the majority of female migrants challenge traditional forms of gender knowledge and gender orders (Morokvasic 2007:71). Moreover, “the gender order is not only resistant to change, but under certain circumstances intersecting with class, migrancy and legality can be intensified” (Morokvasic et al 2008:14). Therefore, as is suggested, the “normality” of the traditional gender order has not necessarily been challenged by migration circumstances. While the economic and power relations within households of women may have improved, gender order can become even stronger (Morokvasic et al 2008).

However, on the other hand, Krystyna Slany (2008) claims that migrants cannot avoid “migration trauma” which also causes changes. Slany starts her argumentation from the list of four main sources of social and cultural changes: a) intensification of intercultural contact (increase of the globalization factor), which brings the confrontations of diverse cultures (sometimes resulting in tension and conflict), b) intensification of the spacial mobility of people who find themselves in the environment of an alien culture, c) changes in fundamental institutions, d) changes in ideas located at the level of beliefs, opinions, doctrines and ideologies (Slany 2008:44). The migration situation overlaps all the general sources of traumatic change listed above with a particular emphasis on: long distance movement for a particular purpose, the change of social and cultural environment, breaking direct relations with home country, the sense of deterritorialisation and uprooting in the host country, identity problems, limited civilisation competences and qualifications, experiencing different patterns of behaviour and symbolic world characteristic for migrants, various kind of adaptation difficulties (Slany 2008:41). Following this argumentation, it seems to be obvious that together with all social and cultural changes listed above, the gender roles, and gender beliefs and gender relations are also subject to change with the migration circumstances. The approach of Krystyna Slany can be supported by the changing nature of human identity in general. As Jill Steans

life but at the same time she is also a valuable professional worker.
claims: “identity is fluid and multilayered rather that stable and homogeneous” (Steans 1998:76). It also indicates that identity is influenced by the whole of human life and by different social and cultural factors in our everyday lives (Steans 1998).

Despite the opposing theoretical ideas on gender transition and migration presented above, the next part of the chapter presents important, selected, empirical examples mostly of anthropological studies on transnational family and gender, where we can find both, the research supporting the Morokvasic's arguments on gender transition and the empirical evidence which is consistent with the opposing approach.

Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo was one among the first anthropologists who applied gender theory to the empirical study of migration. Hondagneu-Sotelo in Gendered transition. Mexican experiences of Immigration (1994) argues that people do not migrate as a result of concerted household strategies, but as a result of negotiations full of conflicts within families and social networks. Family migration transforms long-held family arrangements and individual lifestyles. Traditional patterns are reshaped and, as a result of these changes, new relationships, very often more egalitarian ones, emerge. Hondagneu-Sotelo found that women usually gain greater personal autonomy and independence which was not previously possible, prior to migration. This follows their increase in participation in public life and gains in their social and economic power within their family.

“Transformations in patterns of family authority occurred following immigration. Some of the men has acted as the undisputed patriarchs in all family decision-making process in Mexico, but in the United States, these processes became more egalitarian, This trend toward more egalitarian patterns of shared authority occurred because many Mexican immigrant women became more autonomous and assertive through their immigration and settlement experiences. Egalitarianism was promoted by the relative increase in women's and the decrease in men's economic contributions to the family. As the balance of relative resources and contributions shifted, the women assumed more active roles in key decision-making process” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994: 194). From this point of view, the migration of women leads to the challenging of traditional gender roles and relations in the family. Consequently, following this, the concepts of gender and transnationalism and interaction between the two became key research issues in many anthropological studies. In 1996 for the first time a panel on gender and transnational migration was organized at the American Ethnological Association meeting. It was followed by several workshops and realized in the publication of the special volume of the journal, Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997) also directed their attention to transmigrant motherhood. They treat transnational migration not only as the separation between mothers and their children but also as the way migrant mothers redefine their parent's roles at the distance by finding alternatives to mothering. The ideal social construct of motherhood turned out to be now in conflict with the realities of migration. Once
again it is noticed that even if the migration was the only way women could financially help their children and the rest of the family, mothers feel that they are neglecting their children and they feel guilty. Migrants’ circumstances force them to arrange motherhood in a new way where financial aid can be used as an emotional substitute for the mothers’ absence. These transnational mothers, therefore, “advocate more flexible definitions of motherhood, including forms that may include long spatial and temporal separations of mothers and children (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997:566). Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila pointed out also a different social perception of female and male migration as well as radical gender transformation in the case of female migrants. “When men come north and leave their families in Mexico-as they did during the Bracero Program and as many continue to do today-they are fulfilling familial obligations defined as breadwinning for the family. When women do so, they are embarking not only on an immigration journey but on a more radical gender-transformative odyssey. They are initiating separations of space and time from their communities of origin, homes, children, and-sometimes-husbands. In doing so, they must cope with stigma, guilt, and criticism from others“(Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997:552). The changing power relationship within migrant families has also been studied by Mehrdad Darvishpour (1999, 2002) in an inquiry into Iranian families in Sweden. Sweden is one of the western countries where families are considered to have more egalitarian family arrangements, while Iranian families tend to endorse more patriarchal structures. Besides the stress of migration, there is also the cultural shock that often leads to new conflicts. Family adjustments to different values and practices imply important changes in the power relations within Iranian families in Sweden. Usually women are more open towards the new culture and society than men. They disagree also in the case of raising their children, particularly daughters; fathers try to keep strict control over them like they used to do in Iran while mothers want them to be more integrated in the host society. In the author’s words, “it can be said that among many immigrant families the men tend to live in yesterday, the women in today and the children in the future” (Darvishpour 2002:14). Darvishpour states that those who lose more power on the move tend to strongly maintain the original traditions.

Also Floya Anthias and Gabriella Lazaridis (2000) collected a number of papers in a book Gender and Migration in southern Europe: women on the move, which provided new insights into the forms of migration, and the impact of gender relations on migration and accommodation processes. Contributors examined the possible social, cultural and legal problems that migration may produce. They took gender as a point of reference and focused on; female migration and its relation to changing gender relations in the country of migration, working conditions and status of male and female migrants, migrant networks, and women’s' role in reproducing and maintaining ethnic culture. The majority of chapters in this volume also critique an economic approach to migration research. They stressed the importance of gendered households and social networks that support
migration. Some researchers (Lazaridis, Andall, and Escrive 2000) notice that, while referring to the enforced response to economic problems, migrant women point out migration also as an escape route from patriarchal structures as well as being motivated by the improvement of the economic situation of their families. Floya Anthias (2000) brings public attention to the foreign domestic servants, mostly from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Albania and Latin America, in southern Europe. A lack of formal regulation of some of migrants makes them particularly vulnerable and exploitable. Many local women turn to poor female migrants, to take on the multiple domestic tasks and responsibilities traditionally associated with women's role in the private sphere. “The expectations that families have on the wife and mother now are placed onto the domestic maid but without the potential emotional and other rewards as well as the reciprocities involved in family structures” (Anthias 2000:27). In this way, the traditional family arrangements, where women are responsible for the domestic sphere, are reproduced. Moreover, these female migrants are also very often responsible for supporting their families back home. “They thus carry the 'burden of reproduction' for their families and for its survival in the homeland or in the society of migration” (Anthias 2000:27). This shows that not only do local women improve their position at the expense of migrant women, but also it stresses that power relations not only exist between women and men but also among women. Another example of the research on transnational family gender arrangement from an anthropological point of view is the work of Patricia Pessar (1995). Pessar focused on the Dominican families in the United States. They observed that although families were patriarchal in the Dominican Republic, after they settled in New York, significant changes in gender relationships occurred. In the destination country it was much easier for female Dominican migrants find a job, even if they had never worked before, than Dominican men. Moreover, women were also earning more than their spouses and gained a voice in the distribution of household money. By introducing these new strains within immigrant families, the husbands' authority as head of the family was challenged. As a result, the traditional patriarchal gender arrangement was altered. In some families it resulted in new adaptations, in others, this transformation turned out to be destructive for their structure (Pessar 1995: 48-62).

The recent migration tendency toward a growing proportion of female emigration aroused the interests of scientists working on Polish family migration. Although the number of Polish migrant women is increasing, it is rarely followed by individualization or emancipation of Polish women. This is still mostly a family-centered migration, made for the sake of the family, and not for personal benefit (Hirschfeld, Kaczmarczyk 2000, Korczyńska 2003). There are few models adopted by Polish transnational families described in the literature. One of them has been recorded in Silesia by Brigida Solga (2002). When the migrant is a man (father and husband), the woman usually quits her job to fully take care of home duties and children. It has been proved that with the man
migrating, the left behind woman is overburdened with responsibilities and tasks to the point of the role-strain syndrome (Solga 2002). On the other side, the woman who has to cope on her own develops new skills and personality traits: becomes more self-sufficient and independent (Kukulowicz 2001 after Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006). When it is a woman who migrates, then according to the research conducted, the man left behind is copes poorly with the domestic responsibilities, and is often prone to pathologies (e.g. heavy drinking); moreover, he seeks assistance of relatives (parents), especially in taking care of children (Tukowski 2001 after Rosińska Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006). Tukowski notices the same pattern in case of Polish women as Morokvasic (2007) described with reference to women from post-socialist countries in general. Polish women tend to coordinate the family life even from a distance. Thus, even under migratory condition, families are able to reproduce the traditional division of labour in the household: absent woman still being responsible for the domestic sphere, the man not able to cope with running the home and taking care of children on his own, is thus assisted by females relatives (Turkowski 2001 after Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006).

As an exception to the qualitative studies, Ewa Kępińska (2008) carried out a quantitative comparative analysis of men and women involved in seasonal migration to Germany. She observed that seasonal migration is typically a family phenomenon in the sense that migrants go abroad in order to earn additional income for their families left behind. Kępińska emphasizes that even though migrants leave their families due to migration alone, seasonal migration is a familial enterprise. Family members participate in the migration of their kin in many ways; playing a major role in the decision making process, in shaping their behaviour during migration and in adjusting to their absence. All these actions taken by the migrants and their family members left behind, are aimed at increasing the benefits and reducing the costs of migration for the family as a whole. Although Kępińska's study makes a significant contribution to the research on Polish family migration, the basic socio-demographic characteristics of seasonal migrants differ from those of other migrants from Poland, especially those migrating to the UK and Ireland, in several important aspects: seasonal migrants are older, less educated, often married and having more children, and more often than not originate from rural areas and small or middle-sized towns and less than other kind of migrants are unemployed, as it is possible to combine work in Poland with seasonal work in Germany.

There are, however, few recent comprehensive studies exclusively about the emigration of Polish women. Empirical research, consisting of interviews conducted with women migrating to Germany (Jaroszewska 2003), the USA (Slany, Małek 2005), Italy (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz 2005; Slany, Małek 2005, Małek 2011, Banfi & Boccagni 2011) and Belgium (Kuźma 2005) covered a wide range of topics: motives and strategy of migration, family situation, employment and living
conditions abroad, plans and aspirations.

Krystyna Slany and Agnieszka Małek (2005), on the basis of interviews conducted with Polish female migrants working in Italy and the USA, developed a typology of motives for undertaking employment abroad in the context of the transitional situation of the Polish economy. In their sample, the major group of females undertaking employment abroad consisted of so-called ‘new-trauma’ emigrants who “very clearly felt the destabilizing effects of the transforming system” in the home country (Slany and Małek 2005:133). Migration as a survival strategy or economic necessity was particularly notable in the case of temporary labour mobility to Italy. According to the majority of researchers (Kuźma 2005; Rosińska-Kordasiewicz 2005; Slany, Małek 2005, Kępińska 2008), women undertake labour migration because of poverty and lack of employment prospects in Poland and send remittances to their families in Poland. In contrast to male migrants, females tend to undertake employment abroad only when gaining an additional income is an absolute necessity for their households in Poland (Kępińska 2008).

The literature on female migrants shows that the transnational situation turned out to be particularly difficult for transnational mothers. These mothers leave their children behind in the country of origin to be cared for by relatives. They have to deal with the feeling of loneliness and helplessness which they experience due to the separation from their children. Moreover, very often they feel guilty as they perceive themselves as 'bad mothers'. Most of them however, actively struggle to reconceptualise the idea of mothering, for instance by including breadwinning, economic support for children and intensive communication with them (Parreñas 2005). Within transnational families, practically regardless of cultural origins of migrants, it is “transnational motherhood” which “radically rearranges mother-child interactions and requires a concomitant radical reshaping of the meanings and definitions of appropriate mothering” (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 557). Such rearrangements are known to cause emotional distress, anxieties, sacrifices and financial pressures among transmigrants and their family members. The everyday care provided by the mother is changed into long-distance contact (that is writing e-mails, writing text messages, sending remittances and gifts) and rare visits. Transnational parents often rotate periods of migration to ensure that one of them remains with the children while the other works abroad. Therefore, aspects of gender relations are negotiated across space: “Their migration often involved leaving behind a set of limiting family relations and finding in the U.S. opportunities to question their more traditional roles as mothers and housewives” (Sørensen 2005:1-2). The research of Rachel Parreñas (2005), among Filipino transnational mothers indicates that the emotional strains of transnational mothering include feelings of anxiety, helplessness, loss, guilt, and the burden of loneliness. Mothers negotiate these emotional strains in three central ways: the commoditisation of love; the repression of emotional strains; and the rationalization of distance, that is, they use regular communication to
decrease distance. By doing this they very often overcompensate for their physical distance by sending money and intensive communication with their children by phone (Parreñas 2005:323). Parreñas calls it, after Sharon Hays (1996), ‘intensive mothering’ (Parreñas 2005:323). The regular communication through mobile phones is crucial in mother-child transnational relations. “Migrant mothers achieve intimacy in other ways. Many rely on sending an SMS to communicate with their children on a daily basis. Some children even told me that they wake up to biblical messages from their migrant mothers every morning” (Parreñas 2005:328). New communication possibilities like usage of the Internet or mobile phones facilitate more daily contact between transnational family members. The research on Filipino transnational families shows that the migrant mothers more than just communicate but continue to nurture their children from afar by trying to be involved in their everyday life (Parreñas 2005:328).

The double role of migrant women as both welfare and care providers is doubly difficult and can hardly be fulfilled without the feeling of loss from one or both sides, a care-giver or a care-receiver. The male point of view in transnational family studies is presented by Jason Pribilsky (2004). He firstly focuses on men and the “transnational fatherhood” and secondly on the transnational relations between spouses. Based on interviews with male Ecuadorian migrants in New York and their wives in Ecuador, Pribilsky presents men’s perspective and experience of transnational family life across large distances and a long time period of separation and “how they learn to live side-by-side (aprender a convivir)” (Pribilsky, 2004:313). He presents the problems of young couples in the face of transnational migration. The article shows how they communicate, raise their children, handle remittances and take care of their own relationship across continents. Pribilsky manages to ‘add’ a gendered perspective on men’s experiences and to present a more nuanced understanding of couples’ work to redefine roles, relationships and family life across long distances and extended periods of separation. Pribilsky (2004) suggests that transnational family migration, especially that with the temporary absence of only one of the partners, affects the family roles reflected in the division of labour within a family. The partner that stays home is generally responsible for more duties than while both partners were present. However, the situation differs for men and women and the strategies of coping depend on who stays home. While abroad, male migrants come to assume some traditional female roles such as cooking and cleaning, whereas women – in addition to handling remittances – come to take over tasks handled by their husbands before migration. Men’s attention to the necessary domestic duties brings “a new level of awareness of the gendered nature of work that otherwise might be routinely understood as natural and unchanging” (Pribilsky 2004:319). Wives left in Ecuador are similarly brought into gendered spaces and positions previously associated with men (e.g. driving trucks and hiring day labourers). The level of social control nevertheless seems to differ. While men consider unfaithfulness as a moral or economic
possibility whilst abroad, women do not consider infidelity. Partly because they are afraid that it would be reported to their husbands in the United States. In Pribilsky’s analysis it is not only relations between husbands and wife that change. Parental relationships towards the couple’s children are also altered. The traditional mother-child relationships based on trust (confianza) and father-child relationships based on respect (respeto) have been changed due to the migration of one of the parents. Long-term migration makes men realize that if they want to have any relationship with their small children they can no longer do it by exercising the expectations of respect across borders (across continents actually). Distance “made some hearts grow fonder” as Pribilsky puts it (Pribilsky 2004:330). In addition, economically successful transnational migrant households can afford to relieve their children of their obligations to the family farm economy and send them to school. Within the context of transnational parenting, the “transformation of children from ‘economically worthless’ to ‘emotionally priceless’ opens up new possibilities for the roles of father as well as mother” (Pribilsky 2004:331). Pribilsky’s analysis is interesting on several accounts. Apart from showing that the migration of a parent does not always leads to a ‘broken home’, his analysis also shows that a society’s expectation differ very much towards the roles and behaviour of women and men in transnational families.

Discussion about transnational motherhood and fatherhood should be completed by outlining the situation of transmigrants' children as well as the reintegration of family issues. In cases where the mother or father leaves the children, they usually remain mostly in the care of the parent who stays behind. In many other cases both parents go, leaving children in the care of extended family such as grandparents or aunts. Often, the reunification of the entire family can take a long time, even years, especially when complicated by financial hurdles or/and immigration laws. These migration separations result in two sets of disruptions for children; first from the parent or parents, and second from the caretaker to whom the child has been entrusted to the care of during the parent-child separation. While apart from the parent/parents, children may feel abandoned, once reunified they can miss those who have cared for them in their parent's absence (Arnold 2008). Marijorie Faulstich Orellana and other co-authors of the article about transnational childhood (2001) illustrate the creative ways of staying connected across long distances, with frequent contact and limited economic resources mainly using communication technologies such as: online communication, cheap phone calls, and sending videotapes. Based on the case studies of migrants from Mexico, Central America, Korea and Yemen, Orellana et al analyze children's presence in transnational social life but also present transnational communication patterns between parents and their children. On the basis of ethnographic research (inductive research of qualitative data) on transnational childhood they analyze the presence and participation of migrants’ children in the processes of migration and in the constitution of transnational social fields. They study how children help
transnational families to maintain contact across long distances and draw conclusions that children are important in the constitution and reconfiguration of transnational practices, and that at the same time their childhood is significantly shaped by these practices. Parreñas's study (2005) shows that the children of transmigrants seem to suffer more in absentee mother rather than absentee father families. This is because children “struggle to accept the reconstitution of mothers as more of an economic provider and less of a caretaker of the home” (Parreñas, 2005:164).

Another important aspect of transnationalism which deserves special attention in the context of discussion on transnational family migration and gender is remittances. Remittances are specifically, but not exclusively, linked to transnational family migration. They are generally defined as that portion of a migrant’s earnings which is sent from the migration destination to the place of origin. In most of the literature, the term is further limited to refer to migrant worker remittances, that is, to cash transfers transmitted by migrant workers to their families and communities back home. The sending of remittances by individual migrants takes place within the context of the family (Abrego 2009) and is often a part of a family’s survival strategy (Sørenson 2005). As a part of transnational family practices, remittances do not only represent a flow of capital which improves a family’s material condition, but they also embody specific familial values: reciprocity, solidarity and responsibility (Baldassar et al 2007). Through remittances, existing social ties may be reinforced and new ties may be formed between those who migrated and those who were left behind in the home country.

Remittances within the transnational family are noteworthy for several important reasons: they provide financial support for a family, they give a picture of the economic opportunities and standards of living in the host country, they stimulate transnational migration networks and finally they can influence or establish family relationships and roles by for example, changing power gender relations within the family.

Only a small amount of research has been done on gender differences in migrants’ remittance practices, and very little systematic research has been done on gender disparities in migrant earnings and remittances sent home (Sørensen 2005). Some studies find that migrant men, who earn more than migrant women, tend to send larger sums (Schmalzbauer 2004, Orozco, 2006). Other studies, however, emphasize that although women send smaller sums, they tend to be more consistent and reliable remitters (Vanwey, 2004) and mother-away families often thrive economically because of the mothers’ extreme sacrifices (Abrego 2009). It is generally believed that women send home a greater share of their earnings in remittances (Sørensen 2005) and that women also receive the greatest amount of remittances. Remittances can be a vehicle for changing gender relations – winning respect for those who remit, and providing more resources and control of resources to those
who receive them. However, family, kinship and community links, while providing networks of support, might also be a source of never ending obligations and expectations. James Carling develops an approach where transnational family practices, including remittances, is seen as a repaying the “gift of communality” (Carling 2008). He draws from Ghassan Hage’s argument on the moral implication of migration. Hage claims that most significant to the individual's life is the repayment of the ‘gift of communality’ through active membership in the family, community or whichever social group. This means that, ”one remains in the debt of the community, repaying in small instalments through a lifetime of participating in it” (Ghassan Hage 2002:203 after Carling 2008). According to this theory transnational family communication and practices can be seen as essential for repaying the debt to the family members left behind (Carling 2008). The moral dimensions of transnational family communication are also noticed by Lisa A˚kesson (2004). She wrote that “migrants are supposed to remember those at home, and through different kinds of support prove that they are not ingró’t (ungrateful) to those they have left behind” (A˚kesson 2004: 147). It is significant that ‘ingratitude’ refers to the migrant who fails to remit or stay in touch, and not to non-migrants who fail to appreciate what they receive.

Eventually Celia Falicov (2007:162) also stresses the role of previous family migration experiences that shape the quality of transnational family care and a kinship work across national borders: “Another aspect of collaborative transnational care is the quality of the relationships among the adults and the efforts they make to cooperate with and include each other. In the case of immigrants, the quality of the relationship among adults depends on whether the caretakers approve or disapprove the fact that mother or father is leaving child/children. This approval in turn hinges partly on whether the family belongs to a “culture of migration.” In some countries (i.e., the Caribbean, Mexico) cultures of migration have developed for generations. These provide multiple informal models of separation and reunion, and hopeful narratives that revolve around well-known themes, such as economic survival or education for the next generation (Falicov, 2007:162).

Falicov highlights that the migration experiences of previous family generations is a guide that provides an appropriate model for transnational family care exchange. The “culture of migration” is a kind of family knowledge or “know-how” that has been developed for generations.

Family separation due to migration is very often seen as a process which potentially leads not only to family disintegration but it can also be a reason for family breakdown and many other social problems like a male alcoholism, teenage pregnancies, children’s school problems, delinquency or even a high rate of child suicide (Sørensen, 2007). Transnational family life is therefore considered as "abnormal," "broken homes," seen as a social and cultural tragedy because the maintenance of this household diverges from traditional expectations of cohabitation in the family(Parreñas 2001).
Transnational family members do not follow the traditional division of labour in the family, and they swerve from traditional practices of socialization in the family (Parreñas 2001). This point of view is shared by Orellana, Thorne, Chee and Eva Lam (2001:585): “The immigration process shifts real or perceived relationships of power and reciprocity among family members, and the shift may strain family relation” and by Basch et al (2004:242): “These costs have a number of dimensions: the personal, emotional cost for the individual involved, who must live daily with the pain and strain of separation; a shift in the quality of family relationships away from ties built in the process of daily interactions and conversations to relationships built on brief interactions, occasional phone conversations, and voice or video tapes; and the stress that accompanies surviving in a transnational double world that forces migrants to adapt to considerable shifts in habits, expectations, and locale much too rapidly and frequently” (Basch et al 2004:242).

It is difficult to disagree that transnational migration in general and transnational family migration in particular can bring costs, however on the other hand Herrera Lima (2001:89) argues that the forces which hold the transnational family together are stronger than the physical space which separates individual family members. She claims that transnational family members, by keeping emotional and financial ties with each other, create common transnational space and transnational family networks. These transnational practices allow them to form a fluid continuum, rather than divide family life into two separate worlds (Herrera Lima, 2001:91).

In summary, neither in theoretical discussion nor in empirical research is common stand taken a on the issue of the gender transition phenomenon in transnational families, its direction and circumstances under which gender roles and gender relations are subject to change or they are not. There is a group of researchers who present empirical evidence which definitely support the theory about gender transition toward more egalitarian gender roles and relations within the family. On the other hand there are also those scientists who present the opposite hypothesis. On the basis of fieldwork research they prove that transnational family migration is only a process in which the traditional gender roles and traditional family relations do not change significantly or are even being strengthened.

The examples of the research on Polish migration movement and gender presented above suggest that job mobility (even international one) does not strongly affect the traditional division of duties between partners in Polish families. Nevertheless, on the other hand it has been also proven that migrating women become more independent – “liberated” (Morokvasic 2007, 2008) and they gain more self-confidence.
III.III.c. Transnational family reunification

Separation is difficult for family members, but when family reunification occurs it can be also stressful. Firstly, substantial shifts in family roles that have taken place during a migrant-parent’s absence (linked to single parenting of mother or father) must be re-organized again, reflecting a reiteration of the changes in family gender roles or establishment a new gender order after the family reunification. Secondly, when separation has been protracted emotional ties between family members; parents and children as well as between spouses, may weaken over time (Forman 1993 after Suárez-Orozco, Todorova and Louie 2002:625). There can be also other complications in family relations. Parents tend to expect their children to be grateful for their sacrifices linked to migration. However, children often are ambivalent about joining their parents in the migratory process. This may cause difficulties in reasserting control over children. Additionally, restoration of parental authority may be hampered by parental guilt. As research by Elaine Arnold on reunification of migrant West Indian children in the United Kingdom show, this may result in overindulgence and inconsistencies (Arnold 1997, 2006, 2008). “The difficulties of transition do not end when parents and children are reunified...the parents may have also missed the children's formative years, but when the children arrive, the parents must undertake the parental roles. This often results in conflict around family relationships, communication and the discipline of children especially when they clash with the new culture” (Arnold 1997:247 after Sewell-Coker, Hamilton-Collins, Fein, 1985).

Focusing on the relation between mothers and their reunited children, Arnold cited the research of social worker James Robertson (1975) and noticed that successful reunification depends on the maternal bond before separation, on the age of children and age discrepancy between siblings. Simply put, if stronger maternal bonds exist before separation then it is easier to re-build close mother-child relationship. In terms of children age and discrepancy between siblings Arnold agrees that: “The older the reunited children and the more discrepant in age siblings were, the better the relationship with mothers. The younger the reunited child and the closer in age his/her siblings were, the more difficult it was for children to relate to mothers. Apparently, older offspring who are close in age require less attention and may not compete for the mother's undivided attention” (Arnold 1997:247).

However, neither in Arnold’s nor in Robertson's work is the picture of the relations between parents and reunited children complete. They present a selective “mother- centered” approach and like other

45 The concept of family reunification in my paper refers to the situation where family members separated by migration re-unite with another member or members of the family who is/are already living in a country other than their country of origin. Very often family reunification laws try to balance the rights of a family to live together with the country's right to control immigration. However, in the case of migrants within the EU who have EU citizenship there are no significant restrictions on family reunification.
researchers (ex. Roopnarine and Shin 2003) investigating the child-parents relationships in the face of reunification, they do not take into account the relationship between fathers and reunited children. They also do not take into account the sex of the children left behind despite the fact that the separation from either mother or father may affects girls differently to boys (Pierce 1978 after Hickam and Hunter 1981:6).

Family reunification requires the re-establishment of the family gender role order. This re-establishment does not necessarily mean a return to the gender rules in place prior to the transnational family period. For instance, assuming that during the transnational family stage one or both spouses has changed their approach to gender beliefs then it is very likely that this situation may cause new family gender arrangements. This may also cause some problems with adaptation to the new gender roles and straggling. For example, if transnational migration caused an increase in the independence of the migrant woman and made her willing to accept an egalitarian family gender order compared to what she experienced before her migration, then her husband, who still subscribes to more traditional gender roles may be, at the very least, discontent with the new situation.

**III.IV. Conclusion and expectations**

This chapter has paid particular attention to the following aspects associated with the transnational family migration: first, on the basis of the literature on family, gender and migration I emphasize the important role of gender beliefs and family gender roles for the whole process of the transnational family migration. I present both the theoretical discussion on the character of gender in the face of migration as well as a literature review of empirical studies on gender and migration and family and migration.

Second, I argue that transnational family migration is a process in time and it should be studied as such in order to get the most complete picture of family life engaged in transnational migration. Therefore, inspired by the Rubicon model of migration stages, I decided to introduce in my research the three stage migration model that covers the initial migration phase which relates to decision making and planning migration time (pre-transnational family stage), the time of actual transnational family experience (transnational family stage), and the time during and after family reunification in the host country (post-transnational family stage).

My expectations related to this study are based on the assumption that gender social roles and gender beliefs are shaped by one's culture. They are subject to change together with the social and
economic circumstances that the roles exist within (Coltrane 1996:25). Thus, my question is: how do these gender roles, mostly traditional ones - as is most common in Polish families - change and are subjected to change in the face of transnational family migration?

The way in which my research expectations are formulated results from the anthropological approach which I follow in my study and its inductive tradition of conducting research. (More about the methodological approach used in this study can be found in chapter 4).

The traditional aspects of family gender roles are deeply rooted in Polish society through its history and traditions and are visible in much qualitative as well as quantitative research. Therefore, with a view to gender role theory I assume that the cultural traditions (Polish cultural and religious traditions) in which gender role beliefs have been formulated play a crucial role when deciding which family member is going to be the pioneer of family migration and about the time of this migration and family reunification. Moreover, gender role beliefs and family gender relations not only affect those who make a decision about migration and who and when they migrates, but they also effect the desire to migrate, and the ability to realize migration intentions.

I expect that due to the common cultural and religious socialization of Polish women to place family goals above their individual desires, wives play a subsidiary role in the migration decision making process and men more often than women have a deciding voice when making decisions about migration. I assume that this is true regardless of individual human capital and the personal resources of family members. I expect also that men are pioneers of family migration more often than women due to the common gender beliefs about their traditional role as family breadwinner responsible for the economic well-being of the family, while their wives more often than their husbands stay behind.

Moreover, traditional beliefs about the role of women allows for the presumption that the presence of children in the family reinforce traditional family gender roles in the face of family migration decisions.

Even in the most modern societies, females still bear the majority of the responsibility for the children, so if there are children in the family the number of restrictions on the female partner is higher than on the male partner. The presence of children in the family decreases the probability of pioneering transnational migration of women, and increases the probability of pioneering transnational migration of men. Mothers are more likely to become tied movers dependent on their husbands than childless women.

Moreover, the migration of mothers is less socially accepted and less understood than male migration. Migrating mothers much more than migrating fathers, are exposed to having the stigma...
of being a “bad parent” imposed upon them by their relatives, friends and other acquaintances that are left behind. Women also feel guiltier than men when they leave their families, especially children, and they more willingly than men involve themselves in everyday transnational communications, care exchange and visits to family members left behind.

With Mika Toyota’s claim (2007:160) in mind, that reversed gender roles tend to be “shaky, I also assume that the possible changes during the transnational family stage in the everyday behaviour of family members related to household duties resulting from family separation (for instance at the absence of his wife due to transnational migration a migrant men is more likely to perform household work typically ascribed as the role of woman such as cooking or cleaning), are likely to only be temporary adjustments of gender labour tasks rather than a permanent change of gender beliefs.

Therefore, in general, I presume that traditional beliefs and the practice of the roles of mothers and wives as well as husbands and fathers among Polish transnational families in Ireland remain hardly challengeable at all three stages of transnational family migration, namely pre-transnational family stage, transnational family stage and post-transnational family stage, due to specific deeply rooted cultural and religious Polish traditions of gender socialization.
Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
IV. New transmigrants from Poland

IV. I. Poland - the country of emigration.

Poland has a long history of being a country that sends migrants. Starting in the 19th century, migration was a widespread strategy undertaken throughout centuries for economic as well as political reasons (Hirsfeld, Kaczmarczyk 2000). Even the Polish national anthem reflects migration as an inseparable part of Polish history and culture and includes the motive of remigration⁴⁶. Emigration, both politically and economically determined, has always been a phenomenon firmly present in the history as well as in the consciousness of Poles. As Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska (2006:121) wrote: “The mobility culture in Poland is a migration culture”.

Throughout Polish history, migrants have belonged to two main categories: political dissidents and/or economic migrants leaving ‘in search of bread’. The second half of the 18th century and the whole of the 19th were dominated by the emigration of political refugees (leaders and soldiers of defeated uprisings), while mass economically driven outflows started at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Koryś 2003). It is estimated that between 1860 to 1940, in the time of global transcontinental emigration, around 5 million Poles left the country, of whom about 1.7 million left for the United States. This data increases if we add the difficult to estimate but numerous seasonal migrants (chiefly to France and Germany). In the years following World War II there was also a phase of increased mobility to and from Poland (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2007). However this migration movement was different in nature. This was mainly the effect of the establishment of a ‘post-Yalta’ order that led to the division of Europe into two opposing camps (with Poland left under Soviet rule) (Koryś 2003). At the end of WWII about 5 million people (20% of population) who survived the war, were located beyond the Polish border (incorporated into the USSR). In the mass resettlement after WWII up to 1950 up to 4 million Poles were affected (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2007). The Poles and Polish citizens of other nationality, who stayed abroad after WWII, settled in the US, Australia, Israel, Canada, France, East Africa, Brazil and Argentina. They maintained relationships with families in Poland, though as the migratory network pioneers, they would often facilitate the emigration of family members from Poland. (Koryś 2003).

By comparison, during the period of communist time in Poland its population was relatively

⁴⁶ “March! March!, Dąbrowski! From Italian land to Poland!” Under your command we shall reach our land / join our nation.”. 
immobile. One of the terms used to define this stage in emigrant literature is the ‘Great Closing’ (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2007). Official statistics for emigration in the early 1950s refer to annual emigration by only a few thousand people, or else somewhere in the range of 10,000 to 20,000. The figures increased only in the second half of the decade. The increase in migration was associated first with the political “thaw” in the mid-1950s and then with liberalization in cross-border movements and the normalization of Polish-German relations in the 1970s (Koryś 2003). The 1960s were a period of slow growth in terms of the scale of migration, in this case it was chiefly accounted for by departures to Eastern Bloc countries; according to data from the Central Statistical Office (GUS), the total number emigrating in the decade was about 240,000 (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2003). This was the effect of the new opportunities for legal employment in these countries (mainly in Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic) (Koryś 2003). The next decade saw a relaxation in the rules for foreign travel, reaching a high point in 1988 when changes in passport policy were announced. The effects of specific policy decisions (simplification of exit formalities, ability to exchange foreign currency, and the like) were clearly visible: in 1971 there were 200,000 departures to East Germany, and in 1972, 9.5 million; in the case of Czechoslovakia, there were 290,000 departures in 1970, and in 1977, 1.1 million. In addition to migration within the Eastern Bloc, there was also an increasing economic migration to the U.S. and western European countries (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2007). The declaration of an “open door” policy for political migrants from Central and Eastern Europe allowed Poles to function easier within host countries (Koryś 2003). It is estimated that in the years 1971-1980, a total of 4.2 million people left for the countries of Western Europe, including 3 million in the years 1976-1980. These trends continued into the next decade. The 1980s were not only an era of the slow lifting of restrictions, but also a time of political and economic crisis which led to a high desire for mobility. The effects were clearly visible: in 1984 there were 588,000 departures to the West; in 1985, 1.1 million; in 1988, 2.8 million; and in 1989, 19 million people went abroad (multiple departures). The total number of emigrants in 1980-1989 has been estimated at 2.20-2.35 million (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2007). The feeling of insecurity caused by the deep economic and political crisis in 1980s, together with well developed migration networks and resurrected aspirations towards consumption caused the “migratory psychosis” in that time- the belief that the only accessible and acceptable life option was emigration to the West (Golinowska, Marek 1994 after Koryś 2003). Migration was not only an accepted, but highly valued life strategy (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006). As mentioned above, especially during the period of the “iron curtain” migration was not accepted but highly valued and admirable (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006:121). Those who migrated were regarded as the resourceful ones, as those who had “dojścia” (patronage and informal networks) (Morawska 2000:11, Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and
The interesting fact is that the children of migrants are being socialized to migration. They claim they will migrate just after they finish school (Hirszfeld Kaczmarczyk 2000, Topacka-Dyjak 2006 after Rosinska-Kordasiewicz and Urbanska 2006:121). Similar processes and behaviour are described by Douglas Massey and his colleagues when formulating the concept of the “culture of migration” (1993, 1998). When explaining the concept they argued that migration brings new ideas about life styles, consumer goods as well as experiences which are impossible to attain in the local environment. Thus, if someone has migrated once, it is very likely that he/she will migrate again. The concept also explains the values and perception of migration that follow the migration. Together with an increase in the number of migrants coming from a community “it changes values and cultural perception in ways that increase the probability of future migration (…) Migration becomes a part of a normal life, part of people's behaviour. Migration becomes part of the community's values. “For young men, and in many settings young women as well, migration becomes a rite of passage, and those who do not attempt to elevate their status through international movement are considered lazy, unenterprising, and undesirable” (Massey et al. 1993; 452-453, 1998:47). As has been stated above, the cultural concept of migration gives the migrant a privileged position.

The Polish attitude to migration in the time of the Iron curtain, and before, could definitely be described as a culture of migration, which was very much grounded in social networks.

A turning point in Polish history came in 1989. The transition from communism to a free-market democracy had a great influence on mobility. According to register data, the official statistics for emigration in Poland, from 1990 through to the middle of 2006 about 378,000 emigrants left Poland. These data reveal little about the true scale of migration. They refer only to the migration of people who left the country with the intention of settling abroad and de-registered themselves as permanent residents of Poland. There was also a fundamental shift observed from the prevalence of long-term migration to short-term mobility, very often cyclical in nature. This migration flow was influenced by the fact that the transformation in 1989 entailed drastic changes in many spheres of life, including those related to the labour market. Besides, complete freedom of mobility (not necessarily free access to the labour markets of host countries) meant that temporary excursions, often circulatory in nature, became relatively more favourable (Kaczmarczyk and Tyrowicz 2007).

According to the Micro census from 1995, the number of Polish permanent residents staying abroad temporarily was estimated at about 900,000, or 2% of the population. According to the most recent National Census from 2002, 786,000 Polish residents were abroad on a temporary stay (1.8% of the population). In terms of the education of migrants the educational structure of the people staying outside Poland for more than 2 months was far better than those of the whole population (aged 15+). The percentage of migrants with a scientific degree had doubled, the percentage of migrants...
with a professional MA (or equivalent) increased by 2.7 points (36%), and the percentage of migrants having another type of higher degree (engineers etc.) was by 0.7 point (26%) higher than among all other inhabitants of Poland (National Census 2002). Regardless of the fact that Polish migrants were, at least to some extent, positively selected with respect to the human capital, they were concentrated predominantly in the secondary sectors of receiving economies and taking jobs in “typical” migrant sectors such as construction, agriculture, cleaning, restaurants, and hotels (Kaczmarczyk and Łukowski 2004). The table below presents a scheme of the main trends of Polish migration in the European context, (without stage 2004/07)( Marek Okólski in: Kicinger and Weinar 2007:9).

Tabela 3: Main trends of Polish migration in the European context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Epitome characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 1945-1947</td>
<td>Post-war reconstruction; new partition of Europe; adjustment migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 1948-1973</td>
<td>Political bi-polarity: &quot;cold war “and “arm race”, blooming western market economies vis-à-vis state controlled and non-efficient economies of Southern and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE); western economic integration (EEC); strong labour flow from the South to the West and suppressed labour mobility in the East.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 1974-1988</td>
<td>Political ”détente”; major cracks in political system in CEE (1980, Poland); globalisation challenges: economic restructuring and deeper integration (inclusion of the South); search for available low-cost labour inflow of irregular migrants from CEE (including many “ethnic Germans” leaving their CEE countries of origin and entering Germany as tourists) and non-European countries; failure of “socialist modernisation”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1989-2004</td>
<td>Breakdown of the communist bloc: end of bi-polarity; sudden decrease in population displacements: regional conflicts and wars, new political entities; a complete project of European integration (incl. common immigration policy and management); economic transition in CEE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another turning point in for the history of Polish migration was the 1st of May 2004. The importance of the accession of Poland to the EU stems from the fact that after a period of struggling for the freedom to move, it provided a real opportunity to Polish people to choose their country of destination, the form of mobility, residence status in a host country and the length of stay or
employment there.

The 2004 EU enlargement constituted one of the most important emigration stimuli in the whole contemporary history of Poland. No other historical event has caused such a rapid outflow and fundamental change in directions of migration and the socio-demographic structure of migrants. The estimates of the scale of the migration after the accession of Poland to the EU differ greatly and depend upon the initial assumptions.

The increase in inflow from Poland was observed in all European countries, but the three countries that did open their labour markets in 2004 to Polish citizens, were namely: United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden, which became major magnets for migration. Although Germany still receives very important migration streams from Poland, the UK and Ireland were the countries which gained the highest number of Polish migrants following enlargement. The enlargement and the principle of the free movement of labour have legitimized a long standing, as in the UK, and dense web of migration networks, as well as creating new ones, as is the case with Polish immigrants in Ireland (Reed-Danahay and Brettell 2008). In the second quarter of 2005, the UK and Ireland registered the greatest increase in migration in comparison to the second quarter of 2004: 221% and 150% respectively. Consequently, in the second quarter of 2005 the share of migrants to the UK from the total number of temporary migrants from Poland reached 20% (in 2000 – 4%) and into Ireland it was 6% (0%)(Fihel, Kaczmarczyk, Okólski 2006). Since May 1st 2004, labour restrictions were lifted in the following countries:

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The date of labour market accession for Polish citizens</th>
<th>EU member state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 1st, 2004</td>
<td>Ireland, Sweden and the UK, and all the new EU-10, with the exception of Malta, which constricts access, and of Hungary, which imposes some restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1st, 2006</td>
<td>Finland, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Iceland (EEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1st, 2006</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1st, 2007</td>
<td>Two new EU member states: Bulgaria and Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1st, 2007</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1st, 2007</td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1st, 2008</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Germany, Austria and Malta adopted transitional periods with regard to labour migrants from the new EU member states. However, free movement of labour is a fundamental right in the EU. Therefore, the curbs could only be maintained for a maximum of seven years—until May 2011 in the case of workers from the eight countries that joined the Union in 2004.

**IV.I.a. Patterns of labour mobility from Poland after 2004**

It is very difficult to estimate the scale and destination of the emigration movement from Poland after 2004. The numbers of migrants proposed by different institutions and experts fluctuate from 66 000 people (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy), 1120000 according to European Citizen Action Service, to even four million estimated by some Polish media (Kłos, 2006). The most reliable data however, seems to be estimated by the Central Statistical Office (GUS, 2011) based on the Polish LFS (the Labour Force Survey) and data gathered in the destination countries.

**Tabela 5: The number of Polish citizens staying abroad for longer than two months (2002-2006) and longer than three months (2007-2010) in destination country, estimated in thousands.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>2002 (May-National Census)</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010&lt;sup&gt;47&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1450</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>2270</td>
<td>2210</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>1615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EU-27)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>47</sup> At the end of 2010.
The number of Polish nationals staying abroad for longer than two months increased from 1 million in 2004 to almost 2.3 million in 2007. In 2008, in some countries, the number of Polish migrants started to slightly decrease. In the three years following the EU enlargement the United Kingdom and Ireland became the most important receiving countries for Polish migrants, attracting almost 700,000 persons to the United Kingdom, and 200,000 to Ireland. It was an almost 29-fold increase since 2002 in the UK and a 100-fold increase in Ireland! After 2008 the situation changed. The global economic crisis has brought about a decrease in the number of Polish migrants in Ireland, the UK and Spain, with some increase in other EU countries (the sub-chapter below: Polish migrants in Ireland in the face of the global crisis details the impact of the global crisis on migration patterns of Polish migrants). The global crisis also made emigration from Poland less popular than before. This trend has not been changed even by the restrictions-free job markets from May 2011, for Eastern European citizens of the EU in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Several important features of contemporary migration from Poland become obvious while analysing the existing data on migration (European Integration Consortium, VC/2007/0293, Kaczmarczyk 2009; Grabowska-Lusińska and Okolśki 2009).

First of all, this is mainly labour migration. The motivation of the migration movement of Poles to Ireland and the UK can be seen in relation to the theory of "push-pull factors" (E. Lee, 1966). Economic factors in both the sending and the receiving country play very important roles. Economic motivation is by far the most important reasons to migrate from Poland- 63% of respondents (Milewski, Ruszczak-Zbikowska 2008). Slightly less important was a pull-factor linked to the desire to improve language skills-46% of respondents. The third most popular motivation, which in turn, "pushes" Poles from their homeland, is a bad politico-economic situation...
in the country- 44% of respondents (The survey was conducted in late 2006 and 2007).

### Tabela 6: Reasons of the migration flow from Poland to Ireland and the UK after 2004.\(^{49}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chance to find a better job</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn or improve English</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic situation of Poland</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to find a job without problems</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to get new experience</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and family situation</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of professional experience</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility to get know a new culture</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational reasons</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reason</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Analysis of the relationship between the different types of motivations for migration, based on answers to the questions (cluster analysis), allowed Maciej Milewski and Joanna Ruszczak-Żbikowska (2008) to divide migrants into three separate groups: migrants treating migration as an opportunity to gain new life and professional experience (27% of respondents), migrants disappointed with the situation in Poland and leaving the country in search of a well-paid job and better future prospects (49%), and migrants who claim that they were forced to emigrate because of the limited employment market in the home-country or because of a family situation (24%).

The economic aspects of migration are crucial - especially in the case of transnational families. As some researchers indicate (Hirszfeld, Kaczmarczyk 2000, Korczyńska 2003) remittances from Poles abroad are mostly for the family’s current consumption, often conspicuous; and seldom for investments. Therefore, transnational migration is a survival strategy for the family rather than an investment in individual human capital (Hirszfeld, Kaczmarczyk 2000, Korczyńska 2003). However, for some migrants migration has been an option which allowed them to escape difficult family circumstances (Ryan et al., 2009).

The analysis done by Kaczmarczyk (2004) pertained to the consequences of seasonal migration from Poland to Germany. The result of Kaczmarczyk’s research (2004), proved that, the seasonal

\(^{49}\) Multiple-choice question.
migration of Poles has a character of transactions, engaging households. The correlation analysis shows a rather limited positive relationship between the situation of the households and the scale of savings transferred. It shows that the altruistic motives are not decisive and that migration is more a result of a family decision. The trip is very often financed by other members of the household, and the transfer of savings can be understood as a stage in such a “transaction”. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the married individuals tended to save more. He also found that the related remittances had a significant and positive impact upon migrant households. However, it is important to stress that the author only took into account economic effects and standard of living, not the impact of remittances on the quality of family life, family relations and roles.

It was noted in 1998 (Frejka et al.) that the savings are not very often transferred through banks (maybe it has changed already but some people still prefer not to send money through banks because of for example additional costs), and a considerable part of migrants savings are transferred in kind, i.e. migrants send home goods for sale in their countries of origin or for household use. All this makes it very difficult to reliably estimate remittances in Poland and at the same time dramatically limits analyses of the impact of remittances both in macro and micro-scale. However, the situation might have significantly changed since 1998. The increase of the usage of new communication technologies such as the Internet could also increase the migrant's usage of bank money transfers (especially with the development of e-banking). Since 1st May 2004 with a greater number of immigrants, substantial growth of remittances sent by Poles from abroad has been observed, especially coming from Ireland and the UK. Remittances in 2007 were almost three times higher than in 2004.

The official data from the Polish National Bank (2008)\(^{50}\) shows, that in years 2004 – 2007 the transfer of remittances rose from most EU countries, mainly from Great Britain and Ireland. In 2007 remittances from Ireland represented 34% of the total remittances sent by Polish migrants in this year. At the same time the size of remittances from Germany and the United States have remained largely unchanged since 2004 (33% of the whole).

The most important source of information on EU intra and extra flow of remittances is the Eurostat data. It shows that in 2010, remittance outflows remained similar to the levels of 2009 in the majority of EU member states. The highest increase was reported in Poland and this tendency was also continued in the first two quarters of 2011.

\(^{50}\) Narodowy Bank Polski, Department Statystyki, 2008, Nowa Metoda Szacunku Dochódów z Pracy Polaków za Granicą-Bilans Płatniczy.
Tabela 7: Workers' remittances inflow in Poland, in million euros.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Intra EU</th>
<th>Extra EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3 192</td>
<td>2 918</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2 633</td>
<td>2 412</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2 725</td>
<td>2 494</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat 4/2012. EU remittances back on the increase in 2010

The Eurostat report also presents evidence that in the receiving country, remittance supported national household consumption, and also represented an important source for foreign exchange. In Poland (also Bulgaria, Romania and Portugal) net remittances make a substantial contribution to balancing a negative currency account.

However, as mentioned above, it is very difficult to estimate the actual amount of money sent by Polish migrants to their families left behind. Secondly, after 2004 selectivity of outmigration with regard to sex had been more visible. Before 2004 men constituted 57% of Polish migrants, while after the EU enlargement this increased to 65%, in comparison to the percentage of men in the general adult population in Poland (47%). This pattern had been observed in most of the destination countries including Ireland. The situation changed slightly after 2008. The global economic crisis was followed by the crisis in the construction sector which caused a decrease in the number of immigrant men hired in this sector. This can be seen in the results of the recent National Census in Ireland in 2011 (59 609 of men, 55 584 of women), while in 2006 there was a 2:1 ratio of Polish men to women in Ireland. Another selective factor of the post-accession migration outflow from Poland is linked to the age of migrants. Since the EU enlargement the age of Polish migrants has become significantly younger. Migrants are mainly young people, in their 20s and 30s. The median age is around 25. Migrants who are aged 20-29 constitute 52% of the total.

Unlike most of the Polish migrants in the 1990s, Poles migrating after 2004 are highly-qualified. Every fifth post-accession migrant has graduated from university. This is particularly the case for female migrants, out of whom 27% were highly-educated persons. The age of migrants and the change in migrants' educational background has been caused by the increasing importance of the UK and Ireland among the destination countries. These two countries to greatest large extent attract young and highly educated Poles. As the authors of the report for the European Integration Consortium notice: “This means that the possibility of working without restrictions in the EU15 gave an impulse for emigration to a new group of persons, mostly those who would not cope with working regulations abroad in the previous time. It might be also probable that, to some extent, young migrants who before May 1st 2004 went to countries other than Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom, after the Polish accession have changed their hitherto directions of mobility and

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moved to the three above-mentioned countries” (European Integration Consortium, VC/2007/0293: 20).

However, the high level of education of Polish post-accession migrants is not coupled with highly-skilled or well-paid jobs in their destination countries. Among Polish migrants in Ireland and the UK 39% of them perform work requiring only low-level of qualifications, and 40%-medium qualifications. The smallest group of migrants consists of people who are employed in positions requiring higher qualifications (12%). The remaining 9% are people for whom professional work is not the main source of income or are unemployed persons (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008).

Apart from gender, age and education, the place of living could be another selective factor in terms of the outflow of migrants from Poland. Most migrants who left Poland after 2004 come from rural areas and small cities (less than 50 thousand inhabitants). They constitute 67% of the entire number of post-accession migrants. Migrants coming from medium cities (50-100 thousand inhabitants) constitute 9% and those coming from large cities (over 100 thousand inhabitants) constitute 24%.

Moreover, Polish migrants are mostly recruited from Eastern and Southern Poland. This pattern is strongly related to work opportunities in these regions. The East and the South-East of Poland is mostly rural and underdeveloped, and the South-Centre and the South-West remain the most populated areas. These regional economic and social demographic problems are crucial push factors for migration. (European Integration Consortium, VC/2007/0293).

IV. I.b. Features of new transmigrants.

Ewa Morawska (2000), taking Polish migrants as an example, describes the particular character of transnational migrants from East Central Europe.

Principally, she emphasizes the importance of social networks as a part of the long Polish migration tradition. “The importance of local migration traditions and social support networks in shaping transnational migrations has not been unique to present-day East Central Europe”(Morawska 2000:10). According to Morawska, between 33% and 66% of potential Polish migrants, when planning their migration, relied on information and the assistance of their family members or friends who had already worked abroad or had “connections” there (Morawska 2000:10). The current character of the migration movement from the East-Central Europe has been anchored in the accustomed homo sovieticus syndrome (Morawska 2000:11). The syndrome takes its origin in the

51 The term was created by Soviet sociologist Aleksandr Zinovyev (1986) and popularized in Poland by Józef Tischner (1992) It is a sarcastic and critical reference to a category of people characterized by indifference to the results of their labor and common property, isolation from world culture and obedience or passive acceptance everything that government imposes on them (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_Sovieticus).
permanent inefficiency of the state-socialist economies in providing and distributing consumer goods. This “fostered in the citizenry entrepreneurial spirit of the opportunistic-defibrillator (rather than modern-rational) kind, forcing it to use 'unofficial' (informal/extra-legal) means to make everyday life possible and turning this behaviour into the social norm” (Morawska 2000:11).

According to Morawska current migration is characterized by the *homo sovieticus* syndrome of Poles, namely by; ant-institutionalized modes of operation in order to achieve the desired purposes and accustomed reliance upon social and family and friend networks rather than formal infrastructure. Some 40% of Poles who contemplate future labour migration rely on information and assistance from their relatives at home or in the destination country or unofficial or shady arrangements (kombinacje) (Morawska 2000:16). However, it is worth noting that Poland’s accession to the EU removed many barriers related to free movement within the EU and opened access to the EU labour market. Polish immigrants in the EU do not have to struggle to obtain permission to work or visas any more. Therefore, the persistence of the *homo sovieticus* syndrome can be questionable.

Morawska also emphasizes the restrictions of immigration into the US which has caused the increase in the emigration of East Central Europeans to the geographically closer West European countries. Besides, as Morawska pointed out, the impact on the character of Polish emigration after 1989 might have the increased the knowledge and identification with Western values and lifestyles among the potential migrants and fostered a tendency to temporary international migration.

Another factor which facilitates current transnational migration is the possibility of dual (or more) citizenships, between the country of origin and the host country (Morawska 1998:28-29). All these factors lead to the conclusion made by Morawska: “In this situation and as the result of easy international travel and communication, migrant's lives: their homes, work, incomes, friends, and entertainment actually (not only symbolically) 'happen' in-between, here and there on two (or more) sides of state's borders” (Morawska 1998:29).

When studying migration incentives it is also very interesting to examine the reasons of those who do not consider migration in their future plans. Ewa Morawska (2000:18) indicates three main reasons for Poles not to consider leaving the country for migration purposes, namely: family obligations, fear of taking risks connected with migration and, what is very interesting, a common belief among Poles (50%-60% of Morawska's respondents) about “lack of respect” for foreigners in West European countries (Morawska 2000:18).

Since Morawska wrote her paper (1998) one important factor has changed the migration patterns of migrants from East-Central Europe namely the EU enlargement in 2004. Recent migration trends within the EU after 2004 differ from other large migration trends; post-colonial, guest-worker and asylum migration, which the EU experienced after the Second War World. Since 2004, Eastern
European migrants are not, in fact, immigrants any more but rather regional ‘free movers’. They are characterized also by temporary circular mobility across borders governed by the ebb and flow of economic demand, (Favell 2008). They are more likely to engage in transnational practices. They use a vast array of communication technologies like the Internet, mobile phones etc. to keep in contact with relatives left behind creating transnational family networks.

These migration flows, though mainly economic, do not have a uniform character: migrants come from all social and cultural backgrounds and present various types of transnational engagement. As mentioned above, the particular pattern of this migration lies in the fact the majority of migrating people are young (at a productive age) in their 20s and 30s who very often have left their families: wives, husbands, dependent children behind. They do not only leave family members, they also leave established family roles and relations within their families. The migration situation locates them in new social, cultural and economical circumstances which may challenge the previous order in their families. “The opening up of Eastern Europe has led to the development of what has been called pendulum (Kupiszewski 2001), rotational (Morokvasic 1996) or incomplete (Okólski 2001) migration where the objective is to spend short periods of time in the receiving countries without the intention of settling. Hence, family members are often left behind, sometimes resulting in the destabilization and break-up of families (Kupiszewski 2001)” (Kofman 2004:250).

Krystyna Slany (2008:43-45) has listed patterns characteristic of male and female migrants from Central-Eastern Europe, in relation to the division of productive and reproductive work at the household level. She noticed that the reasons for male migration are still mainly economically motivated, while the reasons for female migration are most often motivated by connections to family and reunification. However, this trend is slowly changing and more women than before migrate as independent subjects. Nevertheless, migrating women are most often young and many of them stop travelling after they have established their families, while male migrants constitute both the younger aged migrant groups and the older ones. Krystyna Slany also noted that the economic migration of women is often associated with a socio-psychological burden. Migrant women often experience migration trauma despite the fact they migrate more frequently for shorter distances than men. Female job opportunities abroad are usually limited to domestic service and trade. Slany noticed also that the migration of women generates global care chains which are reflected in a phenomenon called “virtual motherhood”. For instance, female migrants from poorer sending countries are paid to take care of the children of women in the receiving country. Nevertheless, according to Slany, female migration usually contributes to the emancipation of women. The level of autonomy and independence gained due to migration often leads to changes in family life, including its breakup.

The migration of women from Central-Eastern European countries has also been described by

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Morkovasic et al (2008:9). They claim that Central-Eastern European women migrated mainly because transnational migration had become a life-style, or the best tactic for keeping the social status at home and coping with “de-skilling”. “They [sociological and anthropological studies-MM] adopt a transnational perspective in analysing women's spatial mobility which has become both a life-style and a strategy for maintaining migrant women's social status at home and their coping with de-skilling.” (Morokvasic et al, 2008:9).

This migration lifestyle is characterized by transnational practices which are alternative to emigration (Morokvasic 2008:14). By commuting back and forth between the country of origin and the host country women do not have to make a decision whether to migrate permanently or come back to the home country. This approach suggests that the recent labour migration is more a question of life choice than as a result of economic need. Morokvasic et al (2008) seem to ignore the fact that very often the labour migration of those women is forced by their life circumstances. This hardly considers the migration of women as a consequence of a bad economic situation and the will for improvement of theirs and their family members’ life conditions.

While the theories about migration can be helpful when discussing general migration patterns, empirical studies of migration can offer explanations for individual migration cases.


IV.I.c. Polish transnational families.

Although, there is also a more individualistic type of migration which concerns professionals, specialists and students who look for better, more encouraging environments for personal development abroad (Kaczmarczyk and Łukowski 2004), Polish migration studies have a tendency to examine migration from the perspective of the family function, and not from the point of view of individuals. The impulse to look at the family as the social unit rather than the set of individuals is firstly, the high position of “family” in the value system of Poles (CBOS BS/77/2006), and secondly, the strong role of the family network compensating for the inefficiencies of the market and state institutions (Rosińska Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006). Moreover, most migration in Poland is not an individual strategy but rather a family livelihood strategy (or family-centered strategy of an individual), both in terms of the motivation to migrate (to support family via remittances), and in terms of the family networks utilised. Migrants rely on established networks,
learn specific competences and go for specific destinations (Jończy 2003, Solga 2002). The migration stream from Poland is still dominated by men. The statistics of Central Statistical Office (GUS-2008) show that 58.8% of migrants are men and 42.2% are women. The number of long-term migrants is dominated by those who have not established their own families (47%), however the proportion of married people is also significant (35%)\(^{52}\). In the case of parental migration for longer than two months, the average participation in migration by fathers is 73% (Walczak 2008). It is worth noting, that usually, family migration in the Polish literature has been examined with regard to only one type of family: heterosexual, married couple with or without children. Other popular family forms such as cohabiting couples or single parent families remain unnoticed (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbąńska 2006). This is despite the fact that according to the Demographic Yearbook of Poland (2008) 12.6% of Polish families constituted single parent families. In the case of migrants in Ireland and the UK, most migrants tried to reconstruct existing family relationships in the new environment. Only a quarter of them did not have any family member in the host country. One third of respondents were abroad, together with his/her partner, and 24% - with a spouse, 16% with children, 21% with siblings, 8% with parent/s and 13% with some extended family member\(^{53}\) (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008: 16-17).

The structure of the social and family networks of migrants is naturally linked to the age and personal situation of the respondents. As the migrant age increases so does the probability that he or she stays/resides abroad with the spouse. Among migrants aged over 30 about 40% migrate together with husband or wife (in the case of younger groups more or less the same proportion of migrants have his/her partner in the country of residence. This pattern is especially visible among migrants with lower levels of education and among those who stay abroad for a relatively long time. Within the last group mentioned, the majority of migrants (65%) live abroad together with his/her spouse, and over half of them (53%) with a child or children. Mixed marriages and partnerships with people of other nationalities are rare among Polish migrants. Only 6% of those respondents who have a husband, wife or partner, are in a relationship with a person of a nationality other than Polish (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008).

Different social and family problems relating to transnational family migration are linked to the children of migrants. When it comes to the impact on children, it is stated that the negative consequences start appearing with the long-term separation of the parents. The negative impact in reflected in worse performance at school and in the vulnerability of the child to pathologies (e.g. drug addiction, juvenile criminality). The problem of so-called Polish “euro-orphans” has been widely discussed by the media and was recorded in the report prepared by the European Law

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\(^{52}\) GU-2008 (single-46.7%, married-34.8%, divorced-4%, widowed- 1%, unidentified- 13.5%).

\(^{53}\) Multiple-choice question
Foundation (Fundacja Prawo Europejskie)\textsuperscript{54} in 2008. It turned out that in 2007 2,1\% of all Polish pupils (aged under 18) are “euro-orphans”.\textsuperscript{55} What is a “euro-orphan”? In the media the concept is usually used with reference to children who live in Poland and suffer emotionally as a result of the absence of one or both of their parents due to migration abroad. So the term “orphan” is used to stress the children’s feeling of being abandoned (White 2011:118). Most often children are left in the care of grandparents, especially grandmothers, who take care of the children left behind (Hirszfeld, Kaczmarczyk 2000). This way of coping is supported by the traditional notion of an extended family where not only parents but also other relatives take part in children’s upbringing.

As the research of the European Law Foundation (2008) on “euro-orphans” shows, in the situation when there are both parents absent, in most cases it is grandparents who take care of children left behind (67,7\%), then adult siblings (10,3\%), other relatives (14,2\%), orphanages and other institutions (0,2\%) and others (7,6\%).

Due to the fact that the mass migration of Poles after the EU enlargement in 2004 is a new phenomenon, there is still lack of developed and reliable studies on the recent migration patterns and their consequences for the Polish family. However, significant work has been undertaken recently by Louise Ryan \textit{et al} (2009) who studied transnational migration patterns using recent Polish migrants in London as an example. Based on 30 interviews and four focus groups with Polish migrants in London, authors tried to answer the questions about the transnational family members responsibilities “here” and “there” and about the migration decision.

Emigration from Poland after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the EU enlargement in 2004 has tended to be viewed mainly as short-term, transient and predominantly male. However, recent statistics (e.g. Demographic Yearbook of Poland 2008) indicate that there is a significant increase in female migration from Poland. The high migration rate among Poles is strongly linked to the high level of female unemployment in Poland. This increase may bring about many changes in the transnational migrant's behaviour as female migration is very often more tied to family migration strategies than the migration of men.

Polish women more often than ever before are not only “followers”, migrating to join their husbands, but also active players in the decision-making process about migrations and in decisions about extending the stay in London. They make these decisions taking into account the long-term

\textsuperscript{54} Rapport prepared by Fundację Prawo Europejskie and Instytut Europejski in Warszawie on the basis of the research of dr Bartłomiej Walczak implemented on the initiative and resources of Biura Rzecznika Praw Dziecka: \textit{Szkoła i uczeń wobec migracji poakcesyjnych. Wstępna diagnoza społecznych i pedagogicznych skutków „euro-migracji” rodziców i opiekunów} (February-March 2008) and \textit{Społeczne, edukacyjne i wychowawcze konsekwencje migracji rodziców i opiekunów prawnych uczniów szkół podstawowych, gimnazjalnych i ponadgimnazjalnych} (May-June 2008 r.).

\textsuperscript{55} The surveys were conducted among pupils in 12 Polish provinces (first survey) and in 15 provinces (second survey), N= 2597. An important limitation of these surveys is the fact that the research sample was limited to families covered by social care and judicial care/services, which could have significantly affected the results.
consequences and almost always what would be best for their families. Migration allows them to make lifestyle choices that would not be possible in other situations.

“It was apparent in our focus group with young Polish mothers that many welcomed the opportunity to be full-time mothers” (Ryan et al., 2009:68).

Money earned by their husbands provides opportunities to both women who stayed in Poland and to those who followed their husbands to take care of their children full-time. Mothers who cannot afford to be full-time mothers and are mothers “from a distance” try to play an active mothering role to their children by frequent and intensive communication. I suppose that notions of the idealised Polish woman, a common image of “Matka Polka”-Mother Pole constructed through the discourses of religion, nationalism and tradition (Jaworski and Pietrow-Ennker 1992; Zarnowska 2004 after Ryan et al.,2009) and which means the nurturing wife and mother, put additional social pressure on Polish women. Therefore, very often they feel obliged to fulfil the image of the ideal mother and they feel guilty if their efforts are impossible to realize.

Important contribution to the literature on transnational family migration has been done also by Agnieszka Małek (2011). The main aim of her book “Female migrants-caregivers” is to present the phenomenon of Polish female migration by taking into account women’s subjective experiences in various spheres of migration life from the initial choices related to migration by building and maintaining migration social networks, negotiating job positions with employers, to the role of the Church and religion. The important part of the Małek’s research is analysis the role of transmigrant mother and transmigrant wife; tensions arising from migrants’ attempts to meet the cultural and social requirements associated with common gender beliefs about the role of mother and wife on the one hand, and requirements linked to the position of migrant worker on the other.

The fact that migration is often experienced by people with family status (married, often with children) means that the impact of migration is very often analysed within the framework of “family disruption”. A family in the migration condition, when one of the parents is temporary absent, is seen as a temporary incomplete family. This common Polish social approach can be illustrated by the titles of some magazine and newspaper articles (Balicki, Dębski, Pawlus 2009, 73-74): Emigration breaks relationships, 110 thousand of euro-orphans, What do euro-orphans feel?, Parents abroad, children in the country. An appeal to the government: help euro-orphans.

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56 Polish title:”Migrantki-opiekunki. Doświadczenia migracyjne Polek pracujących w Rzymie.”
57 Emigracja rozbija związki, „Polish Express” 09.11.2007
58 110 tys. Eurosierot, „Gazeta Wyborcza” 12.05.2008
59 Co czują Eurosieroty?, „Gazeta Wyborcza” 21.05.2008
60 Rodzice na Zachodzie, dzieci w kraju. Apel do rządu: Pomóżcie eurosierotom, „Goniec Polski” 10.06.2008
orphans: every tenth father left\textsuperscript{61}, Migrant women want divorces\textsuperscript{62}, Report on Polish migration. 600 thousand of marriages will divorce\textsuperscript{63}. Parents are leaving, children are suffering from the lack of care. Every fourth Polish pupil is a euro-orphan\textsuperscript{64} (Balicki, Dębski, Pawlus 2009, 73-74).

However, the issues which concern the impact of migration on the quality of family life, a part of the specific occupational groups (e.g. sailors) have rarely been examined scientifically (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska, 2006). The general conclusion of the studies on Polish migration is that migration overall has a negative impact of on family, and that migratory decisions are forced by economic factors “at the cost” of the family values (Solga 2002; Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006 ). The bonds between family members weaken and become more and more superficial, which results in conflicts, parallel relationships and divorces. It is worth noting that prior to migration a family crisis could constitute a migratory push-factor; so migration is not always a cause of family crisis, but at times can be a symptom (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006).

However, the intensity of the negative consequences varies. Besides families subjected to a high negative impact of migration, there are also cases of transnational families that do not suffer any negative consequences, and migration can even become a stimulus for the integration of family members and further involvement everyday activities. Families struggle to cope with prolonged separation through intensive and frequent communication, visiting home as frequently as possible, in exceptional cases cooperating with other migrants to “change the shift” abroad in order to come home more frequently (Tukowski 2001 after Rosińska-Kordasiewicz and Urbańska 2006).

Between 1989 and 2004 the migratory opportunities changed dramatically for Poles meaning that migration is no longer a dream, and it can be realized at any time. Anyone can become a migrant. As previously mentioned, Poland has a long tradition of international migration. Migration has been commonly accepted as a coping and survival strategy for life.

**IV.II. Ireland- a major destination of Polish transmigrants**

Historically Ireland has been both one the most significant European countries that has sent migrants and also one the most important migrant receiving countries. For most of the past two

\textsuperscript{61} Eurosieroty: co dziesiąty ojciec wyjechał, „Gazeta Wyborcza” 10.06.2008
\textsuperscript{62} Emigrantki chcą rozvodów, „Goniec Polski” 22.08.2008,
\textsuperscript{63} Raport o polskiej emigracji. Rozpadnie się 600 tysięcy małżeństw, „Dziennik” 12.09.2008,
\textsuperscript{64} Rodzice wyjeżdżają, dzieciom brak opieki. Co czwarty polski uczeń jest eurosierotą, „Dziennik” 01.10.2008.
centuries, Ireland was a country of emigration. Emigration was one of the major reasons which helped to reduce 6.5 Irish million residents in 1841 to 5.1 million in 1851, 4.4 million in 1861, 3.2 million in 1901, and a low of 2.8 million in 1961. In 2004, the Irish population was 4 million, with an estimated three million Irish citizens abroad. This Diaspora of Irish migrants included 1.2 million persons born in Ireland (National Economic and Social Council 2006).

Within the past decade the situation has changed and suddenly emigration is at an all-time low and immigration at an all-time high. Once a place of emigration, Ireland has now become a destination for immigration. How did this change come about? There are several interrelated causes including the Celtic Tiger of the 1990s and the 1998 Good Friday Agreement signed by the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and England (Reed-Danahay and Brettell, 2008: 64). These events resulted in growing prosperity and closer political ties with the European Union. Further the peace accord signalled an effort to bring about an end to the violence and thus promoted a new political vision for the whole island, which further helped to boost the economy (Crowley and MacLaughlin 1997). The dramatic improvement in economic growth in the 1990s that led to falling unemployment also produced an increase in return migration (approx. 218,000 Irish people and their families returned in the period 1995-2004), and a sharp and sustained growth in immigration. It is estimated that returning Irish formed a majority of all returning migrants in the late 1990s (55% in 1999) but this had dropped to 38% by 2002 (Immigrant Council of Ireland 2003). The homogeneity of Ireland (up to the mid-1990s) turned out to also be attractive for workers from other EU countries, as well as for significant number of non-EU immigrants, including asylum seekers, students and those with short-term work permits (Einri 2007). In just six years (between 1996 and 2002) the foreign-born population increased fourfold; in particular, the non-EU Europeans rose to over seven times their numbers in 1996, Africans increased more than five-fold and Asians more than three-fold (Immigrant Council of Ireland 2003).

The EU enlargement in 2004 is one of the turning points in the migratory history of Ireland. After 1st May 2004, EU-10 nationals no longer needed a permit to work in Ireland. This decision involved both groups; newcomers who arrived after the 1st May 2004 and those immigrants who had been living in Ireland before this EU enlargement. For those from the second group who had been working illegally the date of the 1st May 2004 was a day of amnesty. While it is not possible to discern exactly how many of these workers were already in Ireland before May 2004, statistics from the Department of Social and Family Affairs show that 85,114 workers from the new EU-10 were issued with PPS numbers between 1 May 2004 and 30 April 2005: 48% of these workers were

65 Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta, Cyprus.
66 http://www.welfare.ie/EN/Pages/immigrant.aspx
Polish, 21% were Lithuanian and 11% were Latvian. Most were young-60% between 18 and 30 years old (Central Statistics Office, Statistical Yearbook of Ireland 2008).

By 2006 over 15 percent of the overall labour force in Ireland were foreign nationals aged 15 and over. In the twelve months leading up to the census day in 2006, 121,700 persons immigrated into Ireland. In terms of non-nationals, Polish (33,400), British (22,600) and Lithuanians (7,400) were the leading immigrant groups (Central Statistics Office, Statistical Yearbook of Ireland 2008).

Irish people are no strangers to migration but inward migration from other countries into Ireland is a relatively new phenomenon. In 2002, just over 91% of the population were ethnically Irish and white. Since then, the population has increased by 8.1% due largely to higher rates of immigration from Europe and Africa and a smaller number of asylum seekers and refugees. Almost 10% of the workforce was foreign nationals by 2006 and for the first time in 2006 the national census included a question on ethnic and cultural background (Watt 2006). So, the question facing Ireland is no longer whether to accept migration, but rather how to manage migration more effectively to enhance the positive whilst minimizing the negative outcomes of migration.

Despite the fact that Ireland provided general access to the labour market for workers from the new member states, access to welfare benefits and other forms of social assistance is still to some extent restricted for new EU workers in Ireland. Ireland put in place the HRC (Habitual Residence Condition) which restricted access to welfare benefits for all EU and EEA67 citizens. In order to satisfy the HRC, applicants have to be present and working in Ireland for 2 years or more, and have an intention to remain for the long term. Some of the key payments that the HRC affects are Unemployment Assistance, Supplementary Welfare Allowance and Child Benefit. Contrary to non-EU citizens, EU citizens do not face any problems with reunification their families in Ireland and have a right for equal treatment in relation to employment and insurance related rights, access to education, housing and health services (Conroy and Ralaheen, 2005 after IOM 2006). Under EU law there are some exceptions for EEA nationals in Ireland who are classified as ‘workers’:

- EEA workers in Ireland do not have to satisfy the HRC for family payments such as Child Benefit.
- EEA workers in Ireland can be granted Supplementary Welfare Allowance without satisfying the HRC depending on the period of time they have worked in Ireland68.

IV.II.a. Poles in Ireland.

67 European Economic Area which comprises of the EU member states and three EFTA (European Free Trade Association) states: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

68 www.emigrantadvice.ie
In the enlarged European Union, Poles have quickly become the heroes or antiheroes of public opinion in debates over immigration. The fear of waves of Polish migrants has been fed by a mythical Polish plumber undercutting local workers (in France especially). Despite such a negative atmosphere surrounding migration from East-Central Europe, three countries; The UK, Ireland and Sweden decided to open their labour market in 2004 for potential workers from the EU-10. Since then, Ireland continues to be one of the favoured destinations for Polish migrants after Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom. (Reed-Danahay and Brettell 2008).

According to Home Office statistics, between May 2004 and April 2009, 312,626 Poles registered to work in Ireland applying for PPS numbers, however, it is impossible to estimate based on this the total number of Polish migrants living in Ireland due to the dynamism and circularity of this migration. It is important to stress that Ireland has become a relatively new destination country for Polish migrants. Differently to the UK, where the migration process from Poland was already well established before 2004, in Ireland there were few migrants from Poland before that time. Migration networks and transnational social fields have been actually created since 2004 (Reed-Danahay and Brettell 2008:128). However, Irish employers and state agencies due to skill and labour shortages had already started active recruitment of non-EEA nationals in 1999. The influx of new workers was considered the lifeblood of the Irish economy and was certainly needed to sustain the country’s economic growth. Due to these factors favouring migration, Polish workers were already present in Ireland prior to the EU enlargement in 2004 (Grabowska-Lusińska 2007). Highly skilled employees of multinational companies were pioneers of the Polish migration flow into Ireland. They started to arrive at the beginning of the Irish economic boom, the majority of them being posted to Irish “mother” companies through their Polish branches. Subsequently, the patterns of migration gradually shifted to short-term seasonal jobs that required lower qualifications. However, it was still young and educated Poles that constituted the group with the highest propensity to migrate to Ireland (Grabowska-Lusińska, 2007).

Therefore, taking into account the relatively weak migration links between the two countries, the emergence of Ireland as an important destination country for Polish emigration remains an interesting phenomenon undoubtedly worthy of further study.

The early pre-accession research conducted by Grabowska-Lusińska (2007) demonstrated that the main push factors for migration to Ireland were employment-related, such as Poland’s low wages and lack of well-paid jobs to match people’s education. The desire to improve living conditions was also found to play a significant role in migratory decisions, along with the lack of, or limited

69 The PPS number is granted for life even if an applicant does not live and work in Ireland any more.
opportunities for, professional development, and difficult workplace relationships resulting from the worsening state of the Polish economy and rising unemployment. The earlier links with the country (e.g. working holidays, scholarships) also played a role, as did the fact that Ireland is an English-speaking country and relatively easier to migrate to than the United Kingdom. What is also worth pointing out is that Irish employers seemed to be very pleased with Polish workers, to the extent that Irish society developed a positive attitude towards Poles (Grabowska-Lusińska, 2007).

The first factor to be mentioned as a determinant behind the choice of Ireland as a destination country for a considerable proportion of post-EU-accession Polish emigrants, is the decision of the Irish government to forego any transitional period for the free flow of workers from the enlarged European Union. The transitional period was one of the hottest issues covered by the Polish media leading up to enlargement. Additionally, as Izabela Grabowska-Lusińska, expected, Ireland was perceived to welcome nationals of the new member states, and appeared to harbour no negative stereotypes of Poles.

Economic factors were obviously of the utmost importance, especially the demand for labour on the Irish labour market. As Grabowska-Lusińska, pointed out (2007) the growth of the Irish economy in the 1990s resulted in niche sectors for migrant workers. At the same time, the economic situation in Poland ensured the presence of strong push factors. These co-occurring, and in a sense, complementary factors (push from Poland and pull from Ireland) resulted in the considerable migration from the former to the latter. This view is supported by an AIB report (2006:10) which notes that “the ready availability of jobs has attracted a growing number of non-nationals to Ireland.” The economic growth producing an increasing demand for workers was balanced by a growing labour supply, due to both increasing labour-force participation rates of the local population and the inflow of non-national workers into Ireland. The least-attractive, low-paid jobs were very largely left to the immigrants. These jobs, still with wages relatively higher than was achievable in Poland, are being filled by low-skilled and/or non-English speaking Polish immigrants. On the other hand, the high demand for professionals and specialists in banking, IT and engineering, attracts young and educated Poles offering working conditions and chances for professional development far better than those available in Poland (Grabowska-Lusińska, 2007).

Ireland is also perceived as business-friendly proving attractive to those wanting to establish a first small company of their own. Furthermore, although the taxes in Ireland are high, the large amount of tax-free income lessens the burden both to the employed and to entrepreneurs. Besides, a factor that might contribute to the economic attractiveness of migration to Ireland, is a favourable double taxation agreement between Ireland and Poland signed in 1995. According to this agreement, the earnings of Poles in Ireland are not subject to taxation in Poland.

Another important factor which might influence the decision of Poles to choose Ireland as a
destination country is the English language. Over half of young people in Poland aged 18-24, claim to speak English (CBOS, 2004). Knowledge of English is commonly perceived as a basic requirement for the successful performance of migrants on the Irish labour market. Additionally, the radical decrease in travel costs between Poland and Ireland, resulting from the expansion of cheap airlines and the launching of direct flights after 1 May 2004 must have played a role in raising the attractiveness of Ireland to potential migrants from Poland.

The common emigration history, and the dominance of the Catholic faith have contributed to Irish society being viewed as very similar to Polish society. This sense of cultural similarity between the two nations may contribute to the perception of Ireland as a potential destination. Despite the cultural and religious transformation associated with the economic boom in Ireland, which was followed by the increase of the society’s affluence and ethnic transformation, Ireland still remains a country with relatively high rates of religiosity compared to other Western European countries. Although since the early 1990s there has been serious and sharp decline recorded in individual religious participation and identification with the institutional form of religion, though the role of religion is still significant in social life in Ireland. In this respect, the country is similar to Poland. Comparative studies and sociological analysis of Irish and Polish religiosity indicates a high level of similarities between the two ethnic religious traditions. It is further expressed in the similar number of those who declare themselves to be Roman Catholics and the relatively high level of religious practices (Andersen and Lavan, 2007). However, the recent national census in Ireland (2011) indicates that there has been an increase of 45 percent in people saying they have no religion (that’s 269,800 in 2011 as opposed to 186,300 in 2006). The 25-29 year old age range was the group with the biggest proportion to mark the no religion option. However, more people identified themselves as Roman Catholic in 2011 than in 2006 (3.68 million in 2006; 3.83 million in 2011). Within this number there were 110,410 Poles who declared themselves to be Roman Catholics, which constitutes over 95% of all Poles living in Ireland. So, the increase of the number of people in Ireland who identify themselves as Roman Catholic is probably caused by the influx of large numbers of catholic migrants from Poland.

Last but not least, the cheap flights between Poland and Ireland were created especially with regard to the needs for travelling transmigrants. Together with the increasing number of Polish migrants in Ireland after the accession of Poland to the EU in 2004, Irish Ryan air International Airlines (2005) and Polish Central wings International Airlines (2005) opened cheap flight connections between Dublin, Cork and Shannon in Ireland and the biggest Polish cities: Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk, Katowice, Wrocław, Łódź and Szczecin. In 2006 Ryanair and Centralwings served about 2,500,000 passengers travelling from Poland to Ireland and from Ireland to Poland (www.ryanair.com, www.centralwings.com). The situation has changed in the face of the recent global economic crisis.

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
Since some Poles decided to come back to Poland due to the fact that the Irish labour market has worsened, the air transport between Poland and Ireland has been limited. However, there are still regular flight connections that provide travellers with the option of choosing a flight to Poland or back to Ireland on any day they wish.

Although, all of the factors are very important, it is impossible to weight which one is the most crucial. Rather, the different factors should be treated as parts of an entire whole composition that eventually leads to the choice of Ireland as the destination country for Polish migrants.

It is very difficult to precisely estimate migration flows from new EU member states to Ireland. Accessible and relevant Irish data sources have substantial limitations in the free movement regime of the European Union. The primary sources of information on migrant stocks rather than flows are recorded in the censuses which were conducted in 1991, 1996, 2002, 2006 and 2011. The first three censuses contain detailed information on birthplace and nationality, employment status, and sector of work. The results of Census in 2011 have not yet been fully published. The very basic information on migrants in Ireland can be drawn from the Preliminary Report. Further information about the number of Polish immigrants in Ireland may be derived from the allocation of Public Personal Service Numbers (PPSN), necessary for legal employment. From the data provided by the Irish Ministry of Social Affairs and Family it follows that between May 1st 2004 and the end of February 2005 more than 30,000 Polish citizens have registered with the system. The increase was spectacular – compared with 2003, the number of applications from Poland was seven times higher. Between May 2004 and July 2007, a total of 235,037 numbers were issued to immigrants from Poland, accounting for approximately two-thirds of all numbers allocated to the ten new member states. By the end of 2006, 134,000 Polish people were reported as being actively employed and, along with immigrants from the other accession states, tended to stay the longest in the labour force compared with other immigrant groups (Central Statistics Office 2006). A total of 324 345 of Poles have registered in Ireland from 2004 until May 2010. However, the scale of Poles who applied for PPSNs does not reflect the actual number of Poles living in Ireland as the PPSN is granted for a life-time regardless of future residence of an applicant. Thus, many Poles, who worked temporarily in Ireland and had already left the country are also taken into account in the PPSN data. More detailed socio-demographic information is available from the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS). This is a large-scale, nationwide survey of households in Ireland. It is designed to

More detailed data about migrants in Ireland is going to be published by the Central Statistic Office Ireland on Oct. 2012, in the Profile 6: Migration and Diversity in Ireland – A profile of diversity in Ireland.


DOI: 10.2870/49969
produce quarterly labour force estimates that include the official measure of employment and unemployment (ILO basis). Approximately 39,000 households are interviewed each quarter. The first survey was conducted in September 1997. The nationalities included in the QNHS are however limited. Before 2005 it recorded: Irish, UK, Rest of EU, Other, American. From 2005 it records: Irish, UK, EU-15 (excluding Ireland and UK), New Member States, Other, American. Without any further diversification of nationalities. Nevertheless, some other sources also present valuable, though somewhat limited information (Garapich and Osipovič 2007; Milewski and Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008; Drinkwater, Eade and Garapich 2006; Grabowska-Lusińska, Okólski 2009; Grabowska-Lusińska 2006, 2007;).

The Irish Census figures (2006) indicate that there were 63,090 Polish people resident in Ireland in 2006. The majority of them (90%) arrived in 2004 or later. As the results of the 2006 Census show, the majority of Poles living in Ireland were single (62%). In the Polish men group 59% were single while in the female group up to 67% women was not married. Married Poles represented 33% of the whole Polish population in Ireland. In 2011 there were 115,193 Poles in Ireland who were usually resident and present in the state on census night (excluding guests).

The online research in 2008 (Milewski and Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008) shows that in Ireland and Great Britain, 26% of female migrants and 22% of male migrants live with their spouse, 39% of women and 28% of men with a partner, only 15% of women and 16% of men with children, 20% of women and 23% of men were abroad with his/her siblings, and 8% of women and 7% of men lived with their parents. The likelihood that the migrant resides with spouse increases with age. In the group of migrants aged over 30 years, over 40% are migrants who resided in Ireland or Great Britain with a husband or wife. This family migration strategy is chosen most often by people with a basic level of education and migrants living abroad for the longest time. This group also has also the biggest tendency to live with their children (55%). This means that still, many migrants prefer to leave their children in Poland. The problem and the scale of the children left behind, so called euroorphans, has been mentioned above. The research also suggests that migration strongly correlates with the age of the youngest child in the family (Milewski and Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008).

According to the 2006 Census, Poles represented the most one-sided male/female ratio of the ten nationality groups in Ireland. With 64% being male and 36% being female. Seven out of ten Polish migrants were in the 20-34 age group, the average age was 27.5 years (29 years for males and 25 for females), 62% were single, 34% were married and 4% were divorced or separated. Significantly 59% of married males and 18% of married females were not living with their spouse at the time of the census. This data indicates the scale of Polish transnational families, however it is difficult to accurately estimate. In 2011 young migrants still constituted the most numerous age group among Poles in Ireland (0-14 years-14,172, 15-24 years-12,416, 25-44 years-79,125, 45-64 years-9,218, 65
years and over-262) (The Irish Census 2011).

Polish immigrants in Ireland live mostly in Polish-only households. Some 93% of them declared themselves to be Roman Catholic. While only 2% of Poles aged 15 and over were in school or college in Ireland, fifteen of those who were at work or unemployed, indicated here that they had not finished their full time education. More than a quarter of Poles in Ireland aged 15 or over whose education was finished had completed third level courses at degree or higher level. A quarter of third level qualifications among Polish males were in engineering, manufacturing or construction. The third level qualifications of a third of Polish females were in social sciences, business or law. Some 13 percent of Poles whose education was finished said it ended when they were aged 25 years or older.

Despite the relatively high level of education, the majority of Poles (84%) aged 15 years and over were in work, mainly as employees. Over half of males were employed in construction and manufacturing and half of all females were in shops, hotels and restaurants. The predominant occupations were sales assistants (7%), building labourers (6%), cleaners and domestics (5%) and carpenters and joiners (4%). Only 9% of Poles in Ireland were unemployed (National Census 2006).

In the group of unskilled workers there are a significant proportion of people aged 24 years or less and migrants with secondary education. Most of the migrants from this group are also those people who stay abroad for the shortest time. Among them, nearly half (49%) were engaged in positions requiring minimal skills (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008). The analysis of the research (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008) indicates that the largest group among migrants constitutes those who have not changed their occupational status; that means their occupation status neither decreased nor increased in comparison to the one that they had had in Poland. This group involves 61% of respondents who worked professionally in Poland before they left for Ireland. The second group, in terms of size (29%), is migrants who have a job requiring lower qualifications compared with a job in the home country. The smallest group (10%) constitutes those migrants who had managed to increase their professional status. Migrants with higher education levels were most affected by the reduction in their occupational status. In this group, more than one third of respondents have jobs below their qualifications (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008). At the time of the National Census in 2006 most Poles lived in big Irish cities, mainly Dublin (29%), with only 12% of them living in rural areas. Dublin is also a place where most of the Polish organizations in Ireland function, namely: the Polish Information & Culture Centre in Dublin, the Polish Socio-Cultural Centre, the Irish-Polish Society, the Polish Dublin Association, the Polish

73 The published results of the Census 2011 were only preliminary (25 06.2012).
Community Centre “Biblary”, the Polish Doctors in Ireland Association, the Polish Psychologists in Ireland Association, the Polish Fans from Ireland Association, and the Polish Medical Centre in Dublin. Polish children can attend lessons in two Polish schools in Dublin. Outside Dublin Polish-Irish organizations were formed only in Cork - MyCork Association - and in Galway - Galway Irish-Polish Association.74

It is difficult to predict what trajectory today’s Polish emigrants in Ireland will follow in the future – whether they decide to return to Poland, or extend their stay abroad, or perhaps settle there permanently. In 2007 only one third of Poles living in Ireland had specified plans as for the length of their stay in Ireland. A total of 33 % declared that they would like to live in Ireland for some time, but eventually they planned to return to Poland. The majority (67 %) had long-range plans: 46% of Poles declared that they would stay in Ireland as long as was possible and they would return to Poland in the distant future, whereas as many as 18 % declared, that they would stay in Ireland permanently (Paś 2007). The most significant factor influencing possible declarations of migration return was the length of stay abroad. Those who had been abroad for less than a year, were less likely to declare their desire to stay abroad permanently than respondents who had abroad longer than a year, (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008). The research of Milewski and Ruszczak-Żbikowska suggests that over time this attitude is characterised by further indecision as to future life plans . Among the migrants who live abroad for at least five years, very fourth respondent (27%) decided to settle permanently in the country of current residence. Over 40% of respondents could not determine their future plans (Milewski, Ruszczak-Żbikowska 2008) How have migrants' plans have been affected by the recent global economic crisis?

IV.II.b. Polish migrants in Ireland in the face of the global crisis.

In 2008 and 2009 the global economy faced a breakdown which negatively affected virtually all European national economies. Has the global economic crisis of 2008/2009 caused the change in the patterns Polish migration ?

This question is especially significant as the Irish economy witnessed a sharp downturn precipitated by the worldwide financial crisis. In 2008 GDP fell by 1.7 percent, meaning that the Irish economy was in recession, for the first time since 1983. In 2009 the economic downturn reduced the Irish GDP by an additional 1.7 per cent and the unemployment level was 7.8 per cent. According to CSO data in 2010 the unemployment level increased to 13.6%, and kept growing. In May 2011 14% of

74 http://dublin.gazeta.pl/Dublin/1,88637,4977434.html
people living in Ireland were unemployed. It turned out that in Ireland the economic outlook was far worse than that in the sending countries. Taking into account these economic circumstances, some experts expected a sharp drop in immigration rates and a sharp rise in remigration\textsuperscript{75}. Following the initial effects of the global economic crisis in 2008, the deteriorating economic situation in Western European countries created an atmosphere of fear in Poland. The common assumption was that since working abroad became less profitable than before, then the majority of Polish migrants, especially those in the UK and in Ireland, would decide to return to the home country. In reality, the analyses of the Central Statistical Office\textsuperscript{76} indicate that this assumption turned out to be incorrect. Importantly, the decision of leaving the host country does not necessarily mean a return to their homeland. Many Polish migrants just changed the country of immigration and did not consider returning to Poland. In 2007-2010 the number of Polish migrants to Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and The Netherlands increased(GUS 2011).

The report of the Centre for International Relation pertaining to the return of Polish migrants in the face of the global crisis (1/09, 2009), shows that during the 2008/2009 economic crisis, the dynamics of Polish migration decreased significantly. Contrary to popular belief and expectations, a survey under the direction of Krystyna Iglicka (2009:5), indicated that “so far the economic crisis has not caused massive returns”. According to the CIR report only a small number of emigrants returned to the home-country. The recent economic crisis affected migration movements in the same way that was observed in previous periods of economic recession, the outflow from the sending country stopped.

These observations are also confirmed by consulates and immigrant organizations\textsuperscript{77}. Most Polish migrants in the UK and in Ireland have attempted to survive the crisis in the destination country. This decision is being made especially by those with strong social protection in the country of destination, those who have resided abroad for a considerable period of time and with family ties, and those with strong social networks, which can support them in difficult economic times. Many migrants have adopted a “wait and see” approach preferring to take on new employment opportunities or irregular employment, using social welfare benefits or counting on family help


\textsuperscript{77} http://www.rp.pl/artykul/309458.html

DOI: 10.2870/49969
while waiting for an economic upturn (Centre for International Relation, 1/09, 2009).

The research of Krystyna Iglicka (2009), the author of the report on the Polish emigration, shows that Polish migrants are trying to survive in exile, even if this involves a reduction in their living standards or short-term unemployment. Those who have lost their jobs either try to live on savings, social benefits, count on the help from the family, accept lower salary or they move to the grey sphere. Why do they not - contrary to common expectations- come back to Poland? Poles work abroad usually at levels below their qualifications, and therefore they do not increase their competitiveness in the domestic labour market. This causes lack of job security if they return to Poland. Besides, although the economic crisis in the European Union caused an increase in unemployment levels both among locals and among immigrants, it was not followed by the dramatic return migration of Poles to the home country. This is a result of the fragmentation of the job market, i.e. there are jobs, mostly low-skilled and low-paid ones, which are less likely to be done by locals than by immigrants. As a result, immigrants could keep their jobs even in the face of the deep economic crisis in the host country (Grabowska-Lusińska 2012). Additionally, returning migrants may also have some problems with re-acclimatization in the home-country.

Migration often caused a twofold economic marginalization of those who returned to Poland (Iglicka 2009). Therefore, regardless of how many Poles return to the home country, the main strategy for surviving the crisis is to stay abroad, in the host country. The main factors driving the Poles to stay in the country of emigration are the global nature of the crisis, the family in the country of emigration and a long stay abroad. It seems that Polish migrants know that their return to Poland does not automatically mean employment. Similar patterns were apparent during previous economic crises. In most cases, the recession reduced emigration from the country of origin, but did not significantly affect the number of people leaving the country of destination (Iglicka 2009).

This conclusion about the small impact of the global crisis on the return migration of Poles can be supported by the data on the reasons for return recorded among Poles who had already returned to their home country. Those who returned from emigration in 2009-2011, stated less frequently than

78 This pattern also concerns Ireland: demand for low-skilled and low-paid jobs is lower among Irish locals and higher among immigrants.


80 In 2007 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy implemented a program called “Comeback” (Powrót) which promotes the return of Polish migrants. Within the framework of this program, a special website was created that includes useful information regarding Polish taxes and insurance, documents and job offers on the Polish labour market (European Integration Consortium, VC/2007/0293)
those respondents who returned earlier that the reason for their return was for economic reasons. Only 23.3% of respondents in 2011 declared that their return migration was associated with the loss of his/her job in the host country. In 2011 more often than in 2009 (33.5% in 2011 and 28.5% in 2009), the return was indicated as part of the initial migration plan.

**Table 8. Why do Polish economic migrants return? (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/he finished or lost her/his job</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries in the host country got lower in comparison with salaries in Poland</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/he could not find a job abroad</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was my plan from the beginning</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family reasons</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health reasons</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary return only in order to settle the matter</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/hard to say/ I finished my education</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Diagnoza Społeczna 2011: 141.

This can also be supported by the results of the latest Census in Ireland which was held on Sunday, 10 April 2011. The preliminary report from the 2011 Census reveals that for the first time in the history of the state, the largest migrant group in the country is not from the UK. Poles have now taken the top position, with a 93.7% increase in the number of Poles living in Ireland since 2006 (from 63,276 to 122,585 in April 2011). Nevertheless, the results of the Census also show that the rate of influx of Polish immigrants to Ireland is clearly slowing down. Only 3,825 Polish migrants arrived in the year to April 2011, leading to the conclusion that most of the increase happened in the earlier part of the inter-censal cycle 2006 to 2011. The gender profile of Polish migrants to Ireland has also changed. By 2011, there were relatively equal numbers of Polish males and females entering Ireland (men 59,609, women 55,584). This is in stark contrast to 2006 when there was a 2:1 ratio of men to women. The number of Polish females living in Ireland has increased by 32,642 since 2006. This is a strong indicator of re-uniting families among the Polish community in Ireland; wives who had previously lived in Poland have joined their husbands in Ireland. This is further

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emphasized by the number of Polish children (0-14) which has more than tripled over the period from 4,485 in 2006 to 14,172 in 2011 and by the overall fall in non-family households. This may suggest also that a large number of Polish migrants are doing well in Ireland and intend to settle permanently.

Therefore, since the economic crisis of 2008/2009 has a global character many Polish migrants prefer to stay in the host country and deal with it in the UK or Ireland rather than in their country of origin.

IV.III. Conclusions

Migration has been always an accepted life strategy in Poland. In the time of the Iron Curtain it was a life strategy which was also highly valued. The specific “migration culture” of Poles was very much grounded in migrants’ social networks. The date of the 1st of May of 2004 was a turning point for the history of Polish migration. After a long time struggling for the freedom to move, the accession of Poland into the EU gave Poles a real opportunity to choose the country of destination, the form of mobility, residence status or employment. Three EU countries; the United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden, which opened their labour markets in 2004 became major migration destinations for Polish citizens who had been migrating mainly for economic reasons. In three years after the EU enlargement the United Kingdom and Ireland became the most important receiving countries for Polish migrants. After 2004 Polish migrants tend to mainly be young and relatively highly educated, however they are frequently employed in low-skilled and low-paid jobs in the destination countries. Although migrants come from all social and cultural backgrounds a large number of them emigrate from the rural and underdeveloped areas of Poland. Migration is often experienced by people with a family status (married, often with children). Many migrants leave their family members behind in Poland and engage themselves and their families in various transnational communication practices.

Due to the global crisis the number of Poles in Ireland is systematically decreasing, nevertheless it still continues to be one of the most favoured destinations for Polish migrants. Poles have been attracted by the open and receptive (at least before the crisis) Irish labour market, sense of cultural similarity (the Catholic faith) or cheap flight connections between Poland and Ireland. Due to the changing economic situation in Ireland, it is difficult to predict the future decisions of Polish migrants in Ireland—whether they return to Poland, extend their stay abroad or decide to settle in Ireland permanently. It is important to stress that the decision to leave the host country does not necessarily mean a return to the homeland but simply a change in the country of immigration. As

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
the research of Iglicka (2009) indicates, even some of those who returned to Poland did so only temporarily and considered re-emigration. So even return does not necessarily mean the “return of failure” (White 2011), but “Thanks to the insights of transnationalism and social network theory, return is no longer viewed as the end of the migration cycle; rather it constitutes one step in the migration process” (Cassarino 2004:268 after White 2011:198).
V. Methodological issues, design and challenges.

In this chapter firstly, I present the main assumptions of anthropological and feminist approaches, and explain why this way of undertaking research is the most appropriate to my study. I also outline grounded theory and explain why some elements of this theory were used in my research. Secondly, I present the life-cycle approach and explain why this perspective seems to be the most appropriate in the dynamic research on the transnational family processes and changes. In the following part of the chapter, I write about the main methods of data-gathering in my studies. Eventually, I present details related to my fieldwork that answer the questions: who, where, when and how was my investigation.

V.I. Anthropological approach and gender perspective in my study.

V.I. a. Anthropological approach

"Ethnography lies at the heart of the social sciences because of its inherently holistic and naturalistic character (...). Whether it is the study of the macro-structures and processes that organize or affect society, such as race, ethnicity, gender and class stratification; institution of a social, religious, political or commercial nature; or micro-processes such as interpersonal interactions and the socialization of individuals, ethnography has an important role to play" (Bray 2008:298).

The questions: who moves, why and what happens after they move are subjects studied by scholars from a range of disciplines, diverse theoretical perspectives, different levels (the micro, the meso, the macro) and units of analysis; the individual, the household, the state.

For many years anthropology, although the phenomenon of migration was ever present, didn't take the subject up, as for a long time it was not compatible with the idea of culture that framed anthropological analyses. Anthropologists had to “mature” to the topic of migration. The change came in the 1950s and 1960s when many anthropologists agreed that the migration phenomenon deserves more systematic and deeper anthropological research (Brettell 2003). First anthropological studies on migration were focused on rural-urban migration and were followed by more developed peasant studies and urban anthropology concentrated on migrants from rural areas living in big cities (Brettell 2003). Today migration has become one of the most popular topics in anthropology, and anthropologists continue to examine a wide array of migratory processes. They turn their
attention both to migrant populations in receiving countries and to the impact of out-migration on
the sending communities (Brettell 2003).

Realene Wilding (2007), in her article about the value of ethnographic research\textsuperscript{82} for the scientific
exploration of transnational processes, starts from the localization of migration studies in the
tradition of anthropological studies: „At the heart of anthropology is a notion of the migrancy of not
just members of the discipline, but especially of ideas, perceptions, frameworks and worldviews,
enabling the familiar to be rendered unfamiliar, and the unfamiliar, familiar” (Wilding 2007:332).
According to Wilding traditional ethnographic fieldwork is based on two central ideas. The first is
the field located in a particular place and the second is the movement of ethnographic research;
between places, shifts in identity and status, between conceptual frameworks. Research on
transnationalism moved ethnologists and anthropologists from research on a particular place to a
‘following the idea’ approach to commodity or relationships (Wilding 2007)
“That is, the place is conceptually de- emphasised in favour of an emphasis on processes, even as the
multi-local ‘being there’ is being asserted” (Wilding 2007:337). Anthropologists by the focusing on
micro and meso levels have significantly contributed to the understanding, documenting and
theorising of the details of everyday transnational life. They have also made important contributions
in the explanation of how different groups are involved in transnational processes through the recent
transnational migration patterns. By introducing the notion of transnationalism to migration studies
(e.g. Basch et al. 1994;) anthropologists have been central in studying the taken-for-granted nature
of transnational processes (Wilding 2007). The anthropological methods of investigations are very
helpful in drawing data from individuals, including from sensitive characters and individual stories
of life experiences. Anthropologists therefore have made a unique contribution to examining how
the transnational processes look “from the inside out and from the ground up” (Brettell 2003:43).
Anthropological generalizations not only often confirm economic and sociological theories about
transnational migration but “ethnographic data often suggest other dimensions that ultimately lend
important support to a more comprehensive approach that combines levels and units of analysis”
(Brettell 2003:43). Moreover, as Caroline Brettell notices, another advantage of anthropological
research on transnationalism is the fact that anthropologists try to investigate transnational
processes in a comprehensive way, starting from motives for migration and migration decisions.
“Anthropologists, by contrast to sociologists\textsuperscript{83}, have tended to work at both ends of the migration
process, beginning in the country of origin and asking what prompts individuals to leave particular

\textsuperscript{82} Ethnography itself comes from cultural anthropology (Punch 2005:149). Ethnographic investigations are grounded in
anthropological assumptions for carrying out research. Therefore, both the “anthropological approach” and the
“ethnographic approach” have the same background and relate to the same way of constructing a research design and
methodological approach.

\textsuperscript{83} To sociologists who, according to Brettell, usually look at issues of the integration of migrants in host countries only
without looking at the entire complexity of the migration process (Brettell 2000:1).
communities and then what happens to them in their place of destination, including if and how they remain connected to their places of origin” (Brettell 2003:1). This pattern of anthropological study is also reflected in my research. I examine the nature of transnational family life by looking not only at transnational family practices across national borders, but also by studying the migration decision processes. An anthropological approach is also reliable when studying family life itself. Besides the argument for the traditionally long anthropological studies on kinship allow for complex research of dynamic family relations. The methodological background such as in-depth interviews and life-stories makes it possible to investigate very often intimate and sensitive family issues, which are hardly measurable when using for instance quantitative methods. In-depth interviews or life-story interviews are very effective methodological tools in sensitive exploration and understanding family relations and family member's understanding of one another. They are also used when the researcher is interested in informants' feelings, thoughts, and accounts that are very often complex, qualified, ambivalent, situational, or changeable over time (Rosenblatt and Fisher 1993:173). Besides, “people's verbal accounts of their own life couched in their own terms always take us beyond our theories and because it is people’s own account that speak best to many research questions and to most consumers of social science research” (Rosenblatt and Fisher 1993: 175).

There are different styles of social research that use the same dominant language. This may lead to misunderstandings as the questions about hypotheses or measurements for some social research styles might be less relevant than for others (Agar 1986:12). For anthropologists and ethnographers, for instance, “hypotheses, measurement, samples, and instruments are the wrong guidelines” (Agar 1986:12). Ethnographic and anthropological research requires rather: “an intensive personal involvement, abandonment of traditional scientific control, an improvisational style to meet situations not of the researcher's making, and an ability to learn from a long series of mistakes. The language of the received view of science just doesn't fit the details of the research process very well if you are doing ethnography” (Agar 1986:12).

While reading Agar's position, one can get an impression that anthropological and ethnological approaches produce more subjective “story-telling” than scientific work. However, there are concrete and solid rules for anthropological and ethnological ways of undertaking research which make anthropologist's work verifiable and scientifically valuable.

The basic assumption of anthropology is to study and understand the cultural and symbolic aspects of human behaviour and the context of that behaviour with a specific focus for the research (groups of people or cases) (Punch 2005:152). Anthropological and ethnological research is naturalistic (Bray, 2008:300-302). The naturalistic feature of this research comprises of attempting to influence

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84 Anthropological kinship studies are usually associated with Lewis Henry Morgan, who established kinship as a dominant topic in the discipline (Eriksen 2004:102).
or control the subject of the research as little as possible (Bray 2008:298). Additionally a researcher
links the objectively observed behaviour of people with their subjective interpretation of this
behaviour. In this way he interprets how people give meaning to their experience according to their
beliefs and the conventions of society (Bray 2008:302). The researcher generalizes and develops
explanatory interpretations about how societies work, in particular contexts and time spans (Bray
Peacock explains the nature of ethnographic generalization: "Ethnography is a way of generalizing.
This way differs from the standard scientific model, however, and in some ways is closer to the arts.
The scientific model is based on principles some would trace to Aristotle. Inductively surveying
many instances, positivist science ascertains a principle or trend common to all, or traces co-
variation. Commonality and co-variation can then be stated as typologies, laws, or statistical
correlations (...) Ethnography reveals the general through the particular, the abstract through the
concrete (...). From the Kula ring, we learn about order and integration; from the shaky-handed
circumciser, about the interplay of tradition and conflict; and from the cockfight, about hierarchy”.
Researchers draw the final, general conclusions from the individual, particular stories and
examples. Anthropologists also emphasize the inductive character of research as being more
applicable and valuable in ethnographic research than a deductive one. In deductive research
hypotheses is created on the basis of the existing theory and empirical research are conducted in
order to test the truth or fallacy of the hypothesis. It is the so-called theory-before-research method
(Berg 2004 after O'Reilly 2005:26). Therefore, new theories that might challenge existing ones
cannot be developed (O'Reilly 2005:26). Franz Boas proposed the inductive approach to
anthropological research. According to Boas starting fieldwork with a hypothesis in mind would
narrow the researcher's focus enough so that important information would be overlooked (Eriksen
2004). Therefore theories are formulated in the 'bottom-up' rather than the 'top-down' matter. This
means that the researcher starts from the fieldwork and then develops a tentative hypothesis that can
be verified and turned into a theory. To paraphrase Berg inductive study means research-before-
theory. “Exploration and inductive reasoning are important in science in part because deductive
logic alone can never uncover new ideas and observations” (Stebbins 2001:8).
The inductive approach is therefore more flexible when it comes to addressing human societies, as
it helps the researcher let go of their own preconceived (and often culturally biased) ideas of what
the society they are studying is like. While the inductive approach is still used in cultural
anthropology today, currently researchers start their investigations with some preconceptions, with a
few general questions to answer so that there is enough of a framework to focus the research and
allow theory to emerge from collected data. Most ethnologists and anthropologists start their
research by familiarizing themselves with the literature on the issues they want to research and with the existing theories. It informs them but they are still open and flexible over the outcomes of the research recorded (O'Reilly 2005: 26-27). “In this more sophisticated inductivism, theory is precursor, medium and outcome of ethnographic study and writing” (Willis and Trondman 2000 quoted in: O'Reilly 2005:27). Karen O'Reilly calls it the iterative-inductive approach (2005:3) emphasizing that words iterative and inductive explain the nature of research which is “informed by a variety of philosophical positions” and flexible, and fluid at the same time (O'Reilly 2005:27). These words are “the best way to capture something that moves steadily forward yet forward and back at the same time. Iterative implies both a spiral and a straight line, a loop and a tail (...); inductive as open a mind as possible, allowing the data to speak for themselves as far as possible” (2005:27). However, it does not mean that ethnographic and anthropological research begins without a research design. “It simply means that design has to leave space for fluidity and flexibility. (...). It is far easier to decide what you want to study and aim to do that but allow yourself the freedom to more focus: that is, to be both iterative and inductive” (O'Reilly 2005:27).

My research design also satisfies the more specific requirements related to anthropological studies of migration, formulated by anthropologist Caroline Brettell (2003) in her book, Anthropology and Migration. In the introduction she wrote: "An anthropological approach to migration should emphasize both structure and agency; it should look at macro-social contextual issues, micro-level strategies and decision-making, and the meso-level relational structure within which individuals operate. It needs to articulate both people and process” (Brettell 2003:7).

Traditionally, anthropologists work at a micro and meso level, however they often use the macro level which constitutes „the structural and historical context” for individual’s behaviour (Brettell 2003:2). The structural and historical context within which individuals (including migrants) act and make their choices is outlined out, and helps to attain a more complete picture of the studied phenomenon.

“In all these ways, anthropologists recognize, theoretically, how global capitalism has fostered the often exploitative relationships that exist between developing and labour-supplying countries and developed and labour-receiving countries” (Brettell 2003:2).

The macro perspective helps to recognize the conditions that lead to emigration in general and, what is mostly the case in anthropological studies, relating it to the individual migration history and experience. This simply means that in anthropological research macro-data (statistical data etc.) is used to present micro-data from a wider perspective.

Although, I focus mainly on the micro level (transnational migrants) in relation to the meso level (transnational families), I also introduce a macro-social context which constitutes a statistical illustration of the phenomenon upon the research and a starting point for a main, qualitative part of
my research.

Even if sociologists also use ethnographic research methods (the tradition of the Chicago School of sociology) (O'Reilly 2005:28), in anthropology they play a predominant role. The main data-gathering techniques of ethnographic research are participant observation, life-story interviews and in-depth interviews. All of them are used in fieldwork which is always central to anthropological investigation (Bray 2008:298, Punch 2005:153). The fieldwork constitutes a basis for major conclusions.

V.I. b. Feminism

Research on gender should refer to feminist approaches in social sciences. There are five main themes that constitute the basis of feminist studies: 1. social construction of gender as a central concept, 2. commitment to gender equality and social change, 3. feminist practice, 4. questioning the family, 5. centrality of women's lives and experiences (Thompson and Walker, 1995:847). The cornerstone of feminist studies is making the social construction of gender a central concept. Since gender is constructed at all levels of social life, feminist scholars investigate the cultural, historical, structural and individual relations that create distinctions and power relations between women and men (Thompson and Walker 1995). They promote and also advocate the well-being of women and gender equality in families. They state openly that men's interests are often more privileged than women's interests in public life as well as women being often disadvantaged in family life. This requires placing feminist ideas into everyday practice, according to feminist scholars, and focus on research, policies, and programs promoting gender equality and the well-being of women. As Thompson and Walker (1995) notice, the feminist stream in social studies tends to also critique the family as a unitary notion. It means that the family should not be seen as “the standard package” but rather the diversity of family life should be taken into consideration. Family diversity turned out to be important in feminist studies “because prevailing notions of 'the family' did not match the experience of women or consider gender inequalities in families” (Thompson and Walker 1995:858). And finally when studying gender issues scholars emphasize the life experiences of women. The feminist literature that aspires to investigate gender relations within the family, almost exclusively focuses on the female experience as mothers and daughters.

Although the gender perspective is the one I use in my studies, I do not follow strictly follow the feminist approach. Since the concept of gender by definition relates to that which is considered female and that which is considered male, then the research focused only on women's views and female life experience giving only a partially accurate picture. To complete the picture of gender
relations we also have to take into account the male perspective.

In order to move beyond gender as individual property, feminist scholars who work on family issues take into account various broader contexts, usually structural, cultural or socio-historical (Thompson and Walker 1995). Those who support microstructural perspectives ask what structural conditions underlie gender differences, what makes people follow particular gender beliefs. The most extreme microstructural approaches state that even individual gender differences disappear when women and men are placed in the same situation (Risman 1986, Voydanoff and Donnelly 1989 after Thompson and Walker 1995). Scholars who take into account the cultural context state that gender is created symbolically in everyday interactions, also in the family. Usually the focus is on how women and men in marriage create their gender relations in everyday life. Many feminist scholars also claim that in order to have a broader view of the problem and go beyond specific interpersonal relations it is necessary to analyse gender issues in a wider sociohistorical context (Thompson and Walker 1995). Linda Thompson and Alexis Walker (1995) highlighted several contexts which are the most popular in gender studies on family life: military life, neighbourhood impoverishment, kinship and social networks structures, culture of day care, service economy, historical era and gender stratification.

Feminist scholars maintain a critical perspective toward some of the assumptions which exist in social science. They challenge the assumption that the researcher must be a neutral observer standing outside the issues he or she studies. “This assumption is challenged by the feminist critique of social science that documents the male bias of theory and research that has previously been taken as a neutral account of human society” (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1996:63). Thus, feminist scholars deal with the issues of objectivity and with the relationship between the researcher and the research participant. “The research process becomes a dialogue between the researcher and the researched, an effort to explore and clarify the topic under discussion, an attempt to clarify and expand understandings; the researcher and the researched are assumed to be individuals who reflect upon their experience and who can communicate those reflections. This is inherent in the situation; neither the subjectivity of the researcher nor the subjectivity of the researched can be eliminated in the process” (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1996:68). Thus, we cannot separate ourselves as scientists from our research subject. We should use our personal experience and prejudgments as part of generating new knowledge. “Through attentiveness to others and rigorous awareness of ourselves, we create knowledge that is as close to social reality as we are going to get” (Thompson 1992:10).

What implications does this feminist perspective have for research methods?

Feminist research applies a variety of dynamic and changing methodologies that are implemented and combined depending upon the research question. However, qualitative methods represent the most common framework for feminist research. “This epistemological stance is more akin to
interpretive approaches to social science. (...) This implies qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. (...) It is possible for both qualitative and quantitative researchers to be truthful about their intent and honest and humble about their conclusions, but some of the other characteristics of constructed knowledge may not be so simple for quantitative researchers to accommodate” (Thompson 1992:11).

Judith Stacey directly advocates qualitative methods by stressing the usefulness of ethnography: “Like a good deal of feminism, ethnography emphasizes the experiential. Its approach to knowledge is contextual and interpersonal, attentive like most women, therefore, to the concrete realm of everyday reality and human agency. Moreover, because in ethnographic studies the researcher herself is the primary medium, the 'instrument' of research, this method draws on those resources of empathy, connection, and concern that many feminists consider to be women's special strengths and that they argue should be germinal in feminist research. Ethnographic method also appears to provide much greater respect for and power to one's research 'subjects” (Stacey 1996:89).

Nevertheless, qualitative methodology cannot be considered the only proper methodology for the feminist approach, which in fact has no “single qualitative idiom” (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997: 215).

V.II. The life- course approach

Taking into consideration the dynamic and processual character of the studied phenomenon as well as the three stage model of transnational family life which I introduced into my studies, I decided to situate my research within the framework of the life-course approach.

The history of life-course studies can be traced back to the research of the Chicago school of sociology in a study by Thomas and Znaniecki on Polish peasants in Europe and America (1918-1920), the current approach with its methods, data resources and developments had been formed in the 1960s (Elder 1985: 15-16, 24). The life-course approach has become a research paradigm in many areas of the social sciences. According to this approach, an individual’s life is composed of a series of life events embedded in trajectories that give them a distinct form and meaning (Elder 1985: 31, Elder 1994: 5). It examines the life trajectories of individuals with the aim of explaining their movements between various statuses and roles. While individual life events and patterns of life trajectories are the focus of empirical analysis, the wider objective is to explain and understand social change and social phenomena (Mayer and Tuma 1990:4– 5 after Kulu and Milewski 2007).

The life course approach involves a contextual, processual, and dynamic approach to the study of change in the lives of individual family members over time, and of families as social units
(Bengtson and Allen 1993:470). The assumption of this approach is “the family is a microsocial group within the macrosocial context, a collection of individuals with a shared history who interact within everchanging social contexts across ever-increasing time and space” (Bengtson and Allen 1993: 470).

There are a few methodological features which, taken together distinguish the life-course approach from other approaches in the social sciences and are valuable to my study. In order to explain social change we need to explain individual actions. The life-course approach is based on the methodological individualism which states that social phenomena emerge from the interactions of individual agents; (Elster 1989:13). Therefore, it is indispensable to those “who wish to analyze social structure at the level of individual action and thus at the level where its impact is most visible and where it is reproduced” (Kohli, 2007:253).

The second feature is the dynamic approach to human life. It emphasises the importance of time, context, process, and the meaning of family life and human development when explaining individual actions (Bengtson and Allen 1993: 471). The focus on time refers to the multiple temporal contexts of development. Time may be conceptualized as a short-term life change (a transition) or as change over a substantial period in life that covers two or more life stages (a trajectory). The individuals are treated as active agents living within social contexts and social structures, including the family. The life course approach also takes a dynamic rather than static approach to the study of family emphasizing process and change.

Thus, as Martin Kohli noticed, the life-course approach shows “the temporality of what has long been conceptualized as positions and states” (Kohli, 2007:253), so also the temporality of the family (Kohli, 2007). An important implication of the life course approach is the recognition of social change the increasing diversity over time and in this way, the recognition of the processes and outcomes of individual development. The life course perspective “focuses attention on the social roles in which personal relationships are formed. Life course events and transitions usually involve a change in social roles and situations, often altering the basis for the social relationships that were formed in the context of the role” (Cochan et al. 1990: 182 after Evergeti & Ryan 2011:362-3).

Eventually, the life-course approach also promotes multidisciplinary perspectives. As Vern Bengtson and Katherine Allen noticed: “the cross-disciplinary aspects of development are becoming more and more evident in family studies (...). The trend toward pluralism is most explicit in contemporary writing on the life course perspective” (Bengtson and Allen 1993: 471-472).

In summary, the life course approach focuses on transition from one individual life stage to another and on the change between different individual social statuses. It also concentrates on how the various actions of people are determined by their earlier experiences and how individual “resources and opportunities” develop over time as well as how the different aspects of life and professional
careers are combined by individuals (Kohli, 2007:253-254).

V.III. Grounded theory

Although, my research was not initially inspired by grounded theory, I found some elements of this theory very interesting and valuable in my studies. Many of the aspects of anthropological and feminist approaches for carrying out the research mentioned above, conform to a grounded theory design, including purposive sampling, the use of flexible interview guides that can explore new themes as they emerge, and theoretical saturation. According to grounded theory, theory is driven by data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process. Rather than beginning by developing a hypothesis, the researcher starts with data collection, through a variety of methods. This is contradictory to the traditional model of research, where the first step is a theoretical framework and only then application of the model to the studied phenomenon. Important concepts of grounded theory are categories, codes, and coding. In their ground-breaking theory, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967 after Charmaz 2006:5), developed the main concepts of grounded theory: (a) Data collection and analysis come hand in hand, (b) Codes, concepts, and categories to sort the data come from the data not from hypotheses, (c) analyses proceed in stages with constant comparisons between data and ideas, (d) Theory is developed in stages, (e) Memos are used to elaborate/link/discuss/limit codes, (f) Sampling is for theory construction, not representativeness, (g) The literature review comes later, after the independent analysis. Grounded theory is linked to a micro-sociological perspective, therefore qualitative data gathering methods are those which are mostly used in order to generate theory (Strauss 1990, 1992, 1996). Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1996), when writing about the advantages of grounded theory highlight that, theory which is drawn from data is much more real than theory based on concepts and speculation. “Theory derived from data is more likely to resemble the ‘reality’ than is theory derived by putting together a series of concepts based on experience or solely through speculation (…). Grounded theories, because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action” (Strauss and Corbin 1996:12). Except grounding theories in data, Strauss and Corbin stress the creativity of researchers as the main feature of grounded theory. Analysis, according to the authors, is an outcome of the researcher’s creativity and the data

According to Strauss and Corbin, creativity of researchers requires: “a) being open to multiple possibilities; b) generating a list of options; c) exploring various possibilities before choosing any one; d) making use of multiple avenues of expression such as art, music, and metaphors to stimulate thinking; e) using nonlinear forms of thinking such as going back and forth and circumventing around the subject to get a fresh perspective; f) diverging from one’s usual ways of thinking and working, again to get a fresh perspective; g) trusting the process and not holding back; h) not taking shortcuts but rather putting energy and effort into the work; i) having fun while doing it” (Strauss and Corbin 1996:13).
collected. So, my assumption was, that the theory, that the researcher is equipped with when going into the field, might change (and probably will) during fieldwork. This might mean a change to the working hypothesis, the change of the research question or simply an adjustment of the questions the researcher is asking his informants. Some issues are deeply hidden under the surface and some problems emerge suddenly and turn out to be very important for the whole project. Since I wanted to understand the changing nature of family gender roles and relations in the face of migration, some of the problems raised by me before the fieldwork, for instance; the role of the communication tools such as the Internet and mobile phones in the nature of family roles and relations, turned out to be less important for my respondents than I had expected before, who instead stressed other issues. I wanted to avoid the mistake of some researchers who focused too much on the issues they were interested in and neglected the things valued by their respondents.

As Brettell (2003:4) suggests, the best way to get at some of these subtleties relating to private motives and the migration experience, is to listen carefully to “the voices of migrants themselves-how they tell their stories and what meanings they assign to their own actions.” By examining the experience of particular individuals we can build on the knowledge about the processes on meso-levels and those even more general, on macro-levels. The thesis attempts to approach the topic of migration from the micro and meso-levels, highlighting individual and family experiences.

From a micro-level perspective, it is the individual who decides to migrate and assesses potential costs and benefits of this decision in the future. From the meso-level point of view, this decision is consequence-full not only for a single migrant but also for his/her closest family members.

The theoretical assumptions presented above lead me to a more interdisciplinary research approach and thus, allow me to conduct a more comprehensive study of a multifaceted phenomenon of gender relations within transnational families.

I hope that the arguments presented above convince readers that an anthropological approach together with a feminist perspective brings a new quality to migration and family studies and, particularly in the case of my study, allows for better answers to the research questions.

V.IV. Methodology

V.IV.a. Qualitative methods of collecting and analyzing data

My methodological assumptions come together with qualitative methods of data gathering and analysis, which means (Bryman, 2001; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002 after...
Spencer et al., 2004,): In terms of approaches:

1. a concern with meanings, especially the subjective meanings of participants;
2. a commitment to viewing (and sometimes explaining) phenomena from the perspective of those being studied;
3. an awareness and consideration of the researcher’s role and perspective;
4. naturalistic inquiry in the ‘real world’ rather than in experimental or manipulated settings;
5. a concern with micro-social processes (i.e. their manifestation at the level of individuals, groups or organisations);
6. a mainly inductive rather than deductive analytical process (i.e. broadly, deriving theories or findings from empirical research data, rather than deducing a hypothesis a priori which is then tested by empirical research).

In terms of research conduct:

1. prolonged immersion in, or contact with, the research setting;
2. the absence of methodological orthodoxy and the use of a flexible (emergent) research strategy;
3. the use of non-standardized, semi-structured or unstructured methods of data collection which are sensitive to the social context of the study;
4. the capture of data which are detailed, rich and complex;
5. the collection and analysis of data that are mainly (although not exclusively) in the form of words and images rather than numbers.

In terms of the use and presentation of research data, the setting of data in context:

1. a commitment to retaining diversity and complexity in the analysis;
2. a respect for the uniqueness of each case as well as themes and patterns across cases;
3. attention paid to categories and theories which emerge from data rather than sole reliance on a priori of concepts and ideas;
4. explanations offered at the level of meaning (i.e. the individual and shared meanings that things hold for people) or in terms of local ‘causality’ (why certain interactions do or do not take place in individual cases) rather than context-free laws of general application.

Through qualitative methods “we first aim to see this world as our research participants do-from the inside. Although we cannot claim to replicate their views, we can try to enter their settings and situations to the extent possible. Seeing research participants' lives from the inside often gives a
researcher otherwise unobtainable views” (Charmaz 2006:14).

Eleonore Kofman et al (2000:14) highlight that female migration may be better understood through the use of qualitative data. “Qualitative data often provide a holistic view of women's experiences. These sources have been better able to reveal the different spatio-temporal dimensions of female migration, the multiplicity of causes for their moves and the often overlapping strategies used by women migrants. It provides a flavour of the heterogeneity of migration, the range of ages at which people migrate, the varying skills they bring with them, the different reasons for moving, and for staying or moving again, the social relations that facilitate migration and the regimes that influence migrant trajectories. They also highlight the significance of gender as a key variable in the experience of migration”.

Thus, a wide range of methods was used when collecting my data, including unstructured in-depth interviews and life histories and participant observation, in order to gain useful information on the way migrant family members, both women and men, perceive and interpret their experiences. These methods gave me a chance, on the one hand, to investigate transnational family life from the inside, and on the other, to test my results with existing theories; to confirm or refute these theories. Moreover, by going deeply into individual migration stories, these methods may provide the opportunity to examine ethnographic data in new dimensions and build existing knowledge.

“The methods of anthropology are well suited to the task of eliciting data from individuals, including the collection of individual stories of life experiences. In research on migration, anthropologists have a unique contribution to make by elucidating how the process looks from the inside out and from the ground up. What they learn often confirms economic and sociological theories (…), but ethnographic data often suggest other dimensions that ultimately lend important support to a more comprehensive approach that combines levels and units of analysis” (Brettell 2003:43).

The data I collected while using the qualitative methods can be divided into two groups: naturally occurring data and generated data. Naturally occurring data are collected in a ‘real world’ context, in their original settings. In my case it was participant observation.

This method is integral to anthropological research because it provides “direct experimental and observational access to the insiders' world of meaning” (Jorgenden, 1989:15 after Ritche 2003:35). Generally participant observations might be divided into two types: field driven and theory driven observations. The first ones are generally used as a tool to collect as much empirical data and evidence as possible, although the outcome might be unstructured and chaotic, these kinds of actions in the field were popular among the early anthropologists, who tried to collect as much data as possible, especially when they dealt with groups unfamiliar to the readers. The second one are used when before entering the field the researcher chooses some social theory and the research tries
to prove it or to falsify it by observing people and their behaviour, looking for evidence supporting the theory and keeping in mind and noting down anomalies, that would undermine it. The theoretical pre-structuring of the observation also allows examination of both the micro (interactional) and meso (organizational) levels of peoples' behaviour, so that the researcher might overcome the problem with applying the results of the observation beyond the single field site (although concerns about how general the outcomes are and to what extent the particular group represents the society are always present in the discussion). Thus, before entering the field, the researcher already has some idea about what he / she might see, what kinds of actions or discourses to observe - he / she has some expectations towards the field, and those have to be as explicit as possible. A good example of this could be Paul Lichtermans' books on American Greens, where he entered the field with a 'seesaw concept' referring to the American idea of individualism that was supposed to limit political and collective activism. Entering the field with an already constructed concept also helps to pick up important and significant behaviours, ways of using language (different for public and internal communication for example), dress codes etc. And since the best occasions to begin a talk with a potential interviewee is during small activities (like handing out leaflets as in Lichterman's case), participant observation might smoothly turn into other forms of undertaking research.

And as Melucci points out: “Knowledge today becomes desirable resource for actors, allowing for the recognition of a difference between actors and researchers in terms of skills and interests. The researcher is a particular type of actor who can provide cognitive resources, which help to make the relational point of view more transparent” (Melucci 1995:59-60).

This kind of data might be very helpful when the behaviour that is observed is subconscious or instinctive, complex or delicate in its manifestation or, “where there is are concerns about the likely veracity of participants' representations of what has occurred” (Ritchie 2003:34). This was the case during my participant observation. By observing I wanted to confirm the data I had collected while using an in-depth interview method. I conducted a two-week observation of two Polish families. One of these families I visited once again about one year later and stayed with them for another two weeks. Thanks to the great hospitality of these families, I was able to participate in their everyday life, observe their everyday behaviour, relations and duties, and eventually confront these with the information I had gathered up while interviewing them. Nevertheless, the second kind of data-generated data played a key-role in my data analysis. Generated data yields 'reconstruction' (Bryman 2001 after Ritche 2003) and involves re-processing and re-telling of opinions, beliefs, behaviours and experiences, and attitudes. Everything is “mentally re-processed and verbally recounted by study participants” (Ritche 2003:36). This kind of data allows the researcher to look into people's personal understandings of the meanings that they attach to their beliefs, thoughts or
motivations. The methods I used, namely in-depth interviews and life story interviews allowed me to collect data that covered a wide spectrum of issues that could not be explained while observing only.

The usage of biographical methods such as in-depth interviews and life-story interviews in migration studies was initiated by Florian Znaniecki and William Thomas (1927) in their research on Polish peasants in America and Poland. The essence of this method was in getting the immigrants to tell their own life stories, or by finding documents, especially letters, in which they wrote about their experiences. These methods give us the chance for systematic and in-depth research of all complex aspects of social life. The researcher is more aware of all of the possible roles and standards that exist in social life. The researcher when using life stories and conducting in-depth interviews has a chance to explain or confirm the experience of respondents through the moral, ethical, or social context of a given situation. These methods can help with the explanation of: “individual's understanding of social events, movements, and political causes or how individual members of a group, generation, or cohort see certain events or movements and how the way they see, experience, or interpret those social events links to their individual development” (Steward 1994 after Atkinson 1998: 13-14).

Caroline Brettell (2003) conjectures that since migration is as much a cultural as a material phenomenon, much can be learned about migration from individual stories. What a researcher achieves from collecting and interpreting life-stories and in-depth interviews is “the detail, depth and precise documentation of the ongoing process of making choices against a broader and undoubtedly more representative statistical sample that catches a group at a single moment in time” (Brettell, 2003:5).

The key feature is their ability to provide a strict focus on the individual from his or her personal perspective and a detailed understanding of this perspective (Ritchie 2003:36). This fact makes the in-depth interview method particularly helpful when the research requires “an understanding of deeply rooted or delicate phenomena or responses to complex systems, processes or experiences” (Ritchie 2003; 36-37). In-depth interviews are particularly well suited to receive an emotional experience and response. In-depth interviewing can uncover the varied meanings people give to their lives and their actions, how people rationalize or explain family choices (Legard, et al 2003).

The value of in-depth interviewing for work and family studies derives from the ability to gain rich qualitative data about particular processes or subjects from the perspective of selected individuals. Because many family processes are routine, and taken for granted, this method allows the researcher to uncover hidden information. Furthermore, in-depth interviews permit people to share
their stories in a way they recall them so it is an excellent method for understanding the different meanings that people create for family arrangements and their own roles within the family. Finally, the life story interview is concerned with understanding cultural and social reality through concentration on an individual's entire life. This method involves intensive and extended data collection and several interviews with each respondent. Participants can shape their own narratives (Legard, Keegan, Ward, 2003:141). In-depth interviewing and life story interviewing also bring potential problems that include: selective memory, self presentation biases, and unwillingness or inability to confess to certain things. Interviewers depend on what respondents say (rather than actually observing what respondents do) and must rely on assumptions about things that have been unobserved, and these assumptions can be incorrect (Taylor & Bogdan, 1988). Therefore, I tried to have more than one informant from a given family (wife and husband preferably) to get a different perspective, and to provide the opportunity to check for validity. Depending on the researcher’s preference and the topic under study, some researchers use detailed questions throughout the interview while others use short, summary main topics as guides for questions. Narrative analysis is particularly suitable to understand how participants organize their knowledge and experience to make sense in their daily lives. I used a less structured approach in which general topics and issues were covered but the exact wording and sequence of questions were decided during the interview. Open interviews were conducted just with a general guideline, therefore allowing interviewees to become more personal and uniquely narrators their own story. I tried to formulate questions in a way that was familiar and comfortable to interviewees and that was appropriate for their educational and social backgrounds.

V.IV.b. Relations between the researcher and research participants.

In order to obtain an independent perspective in the gendered transnational family experience, I decided to interview women and men separately. This was associated with different issues and dilemmas linked to the researcher- research participants relations when conducting interviews with men and during my interviews with women. Thus, I decided to outline some of these problems below.

Men being interviewed by a woman.

As Michael Schwalbe and Michelle Wolkomir note, the interview situation itself could be potentially threatening to the masculine self, as it requires the relinquishment of something that the
practicing of is a basic way in which masculinity is signified- control (Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001:204). This male control is exercised especially in relations with women. This is a characteristic feature linked to gender norms in Western culture. “In Western culture, men who wish to claim the full privileges of manhood must distinguish themselves from women by signifying greater desires and capacities for control of people and the world, autonomous thought and action, rational thought and action, risk and experiment, and (hetero) sexual pleasure and prowess” (Connell 1985 after Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001:204).

Clearly, I have generalized this male attitude, however, with this general idea in mind allows greater understanding of the problems that I faced when conducting interviews with men during my fieldwork. It was not uncommon, that during the interviews, men being interviewed tried to exert a sort of compensatory control over the interview situation. Following the argumentation of Schwalbe and Wolkomir, their behaviour could be caused by their possible perception of the interview situation as interrogative and thus, putting their masculinity at further risk.

When conducting my interviews with men, I have experienced more less the same problems as described by Schwalbe and Wolkomir (2001:207), namely: testing, sexualizing, and minimizing. Testing, in these circumstances, is defined as an attempt to expose a researcher's agenda and/or inferiority during the interview (Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001: 207). One of my male respondents at the beginning of the interview highlighted his material superiority over me, by telling how rich he had become during his migration time, listing his properties and asking me about my earnings. Secondly, he put his marital status over my non-marital status, even asking me with sarcasm: “And you are asking married men about their relationships?” , “Wouldn't it be better to find a rich husband and stop bothering about studying, or something like that?” By this kind of behaviour my respondent sought to test my legitimacy as an interrogator, as well as my ability to maintain control of the situation. My reaction was twofold: either I ignored the remarks of my respondent or I challenged the interviewee to take charge as an expert, a kind of a teacher who explains things to me. I used phrases like: “I do not entirely understand how...”, “I am not sure whether I understood correctly...”, “You know I am not married so could you explain these issues to me more...?” The later strategy allowed my respondent to feel in control of the situation and, at the same time, it gave me a chance to acquire useful data. This is this kind of strategy which Schwalbe and Wolkomir call “research aikido-the martial art of turning the other's movement and energy to one's own advantage”(Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001: 208). They explain the usage of this metaphor by suggesting that “in interviews with men the subtle threat to control, hence to masculinity, can generate a kind of struggle -of which men themselves may be only dimly aware” (Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001: 208). Nevertheless, the researcher should be aware of it and use this awareness “to keep things from going awry” (Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001:208).
Another problem which I faced during my interviews with male respondents was sexualizing. And once again, it is all about control. Sexual innuendoes and remarks on appearance, although construed as harmless and innocent, could also be an attempt to preserve a man's control of the situation. This kind of situation did not happen to me very often during my fieldwork, and all of these I ignored. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that “sexualizing, like any other kind of masculinity-signifying behaviour in an interview, is data” (Schwalbe, Wolkomir 2001:209).

The third type of problem highlighted out in the literature and noticed by me during my fieldwork in Ireland, is minimizing. It takes place when the respondent gives terse answers that tell very little or nothing. Schwalbe and Wolkomir also received this kind of male reaction during the interview and explained it as a desire to control the interview situation and thus to protect the masculine self. Whether for reasons of insecurity or not, minimizing also took place during my interviews with male respondents and made my work more difficult and the data I collected less complete. In some cases, besides limited generalization about others, it was actually impossible to draw out more personal information. It created a particular problem when I wanted to find out not only what it is that men thought and did but what they felt. "Bad" or “good” it was how some of my respondents explained their feelings. Therefore, it is after all not surprising, that men were less willing to openly participate in my research. More husbands than wives refused to cooperate. In fact, the initial response of many women to my request for an interview with the husbands was: “I don't think he would like to talk to you”, He is so overworked that he would probably refuse talking to you”, “He is never at home, and when he is, he is so tired”, “My husband? No, he wouldn't be interested”.

Eventually, I managed to conduct fourteen interviews with men.

Women being interviewed by a woman.

In the early years of the Chicago school, the gender of the interviewer was unproblematic, either unacknowledged or presumably. By the 1970s women were being encouraged to conduct interviews with women taking into account the empathic standpoint of gender (Warren 2001:95). In the late 1990s the consideration of respondent subjectivity became more complex. Simply, “Although all women's experiences are gendered, no two women's experiences are identical” (Reinharz and Chase 2001:221).

Even if both interviewer and interviewee are women, they may not share the same values, feminist or anti-feminist approaches, class, education and many other aspects that make them different from each other and may potentially introduce some tension into their interview. Donna Luff (1999) concluded her research experiences after she had conducted qualitative interviews with anti-feminist women while being feminist herself: “...women have been divided from each other, by
'race', class, culture, sexual orientation and many other factors” (1999:693). She argue also that: “the simultaneity of 'race', social class, gender, (assumed) sexuality and age make it extremely difficult to tease apart the aspects of the interviewer which are having an impact on the interviewee or on the power dynamics between interviewer and interviewee” (Luff 1999:694).

How do the similar or different social locations (race, ethnicity, class, age and others) of the interviewer and the interviewee influence the interview situation? It seems to be natural that, when the researcher and research participants share similar social characteristics, then mutual understanding is much easier to achieve. However, when the social location of the researcher and the research participant differ radically, then uncertainty and discomfort are likely to arise for both sides (Reinharz and Chase 2001: 230-231).

Although, I do not differ radically from my interviewees in terms of racial and ethnic background, and even age, I differ from them in two aspects that sometimes seemed to be influential during my interviews- I am not married, unlike most of them, and I do not have children, unlike some of them. Maybe because of my themes regarding family roles and relations these social differences between us turned out to be important during some interviews.

Women in Poland gain higher social status with marriage, and then even higher when they become mothers. As mentioned already in chapter 1, femininity in Poland is very often defined by motherhood. Then, it did not surprise me when I heard from my respondents: “My way of thinking has changed since I have my child. We, mothers, we will always...” or: “Some things a woman who is not a mother will never understand.” According to Simone de Beauvoir (1997)86, the general opinion is that an unmarried woman is not a complete unit, like a defective product. Beauvoir in her classic book The Second Sex argues that: "A lonely woman (...) is being socially incomplete, even if she earns for herself. If you want to receive the full dignity of the person and obtain their full rights, he must wear a wedding ring.”(de Beauvoir 1997: 451).

My impression when interviewing some Polish mothers and wives was similar to Ellen Lewin’s (1998) experiences during her study of lesbian mothers, while she herself was lesbian but childless. “By the time I unraveled the narratives mothers offered me, I began to understand that among other dynamics they had formulated their stories for a non-mother. The mothers tended to emphasize the moral attributes of motherhood and the central part motherhood played in the way they constructed and conceptualized their identities, highlighting the ways that they saw themselves as fundamentally different from women who did not have children” ( Ellen Lewin 1998: 40-41 after Reinharz and Chase 2001:231).

Polish society expects a woman to be a mother. Firstly, with the pregnancy the woman’s position

86 The book The Second Sex was first published in 1949 in French, then translated by H.M. Parshley.
changes. While becoming a mother, she stops being a woman in a sense, that her first and main social role is that of a mother. It is followed by a higher place in the social hierarchy. Suddenly, a woman-mother is noticed, her needs begin to count - the environment is ready to meet the strangest whims - all for the sake of the child. A pregnant woman is seen as being mystical. As Beauvoir puts it: "There is already no longer the object of sexual abuse, is the incarnation of the species, represents the promise of life, eternity." (Beauvoir, 1997: 518) Such a mystical perception of motherhood contributes to its sanctity.

This explanation clarifies to some extent why some mothers greatly value their status, and strongly distinguish themselves from non-mothers.

Ellen Lewin concludes her experiences with interviewing mothers: “How their narratives would have been shaped had I also been a mother I cannot know, but I feel sure that they would have been different, if not in substance, then in emphasis” (Ellen Lewin 1998: 40-41 after Reinharz and Chase 2001:231).

Sometimes the status I shared with my female respondents as women was also overshadowed by the educational differences between us. It happened several times in the case of women with a lower level of education. They felt that what they had to say would be of little interest. They were not sure whether I would be interested in their opinions and they doubted whether their experience “is worth something, especially writing about in the PhD thesis” (Mirka, 31). The problem of uncertainty among my informants, especially women was also manifested by questions such as: “Was I good enough?, What did other people say?, or “What did my husband say?”.

Some authors (Reinharz and Chase 2001) suggest that in many societies women still feel powerless and with little to say. Even well educated women are very often under pressure to self-censor or silence. Therefore, for some women the interviews about their intimate thoughts and feelings turned out to be an extraordinary experience (Reinharz and Chase 2001:225). “Researchers who interview women should thus understand the possibly radical impact of the interview on the woman herself (...). Furthermore, under some circumstances, an interview may be traumatic” (Reinharz and Chase 2001:225).

The theme of my research, particularly detailing the separation time due to migration, elicited big emotional responses in some of my female interviewees. One of my respondents burst into tears without any explanation every time I asked her about or referred to the separation time. Other respondents were crying or close to tears when talking about separation from children. In a few cases the emotional reaction of my research participants caused my partial self-disclosure. It happened several times that I was so touched by the story being was told to me, that I could not stifle my tears.

“Neither observer nor observed come to a scene untouched by the world. Researchers and research
participants make assumption about what is real, possess stocks of knowledge, occupy social statuses, and pursue purposes that influence their perspective views and actions in the presence of each other”. However, I always keep in my mind that “researchers, not participants, are obligated to be reflexive about what we bring to the scene, what we see, and how we see it” (Charmaz 2006:15). Women expressed their feelings to a much greater extent than men. For some of them the interview was like therapy. They told me that they had never before thought about the important issues I asked about, and they looked at things with fresh eyes, from a distance.

One woman even admitted that what she told me she has never told/divulged to anyone before. This observation of female and male reactions and behaviour seems to confirm an old gender stereotype that women are more sensitive and men, as a popular Polish pop-song says, “boys don't cry”.

In general, interviews proceeded in a friendly, open and helpful atmosphere. Some of the female interviewees I had met and formed a friendship with prior to starting my fieldwork in Ireland. Thus, some of my interviewees treated the interview as a friend's favour. There were also those (a few highly educated women) who treated the interview as their contribution to the development of science, and they talked about their family roles and relations “for the sake of science.”

Given that the power differences between researcher and research participants cannot be entirely eliminated I attempted to deal with these unequal relations by offering a kind of reciprocity. Usually at the end of the interview I told my interviewees something about myself if I had not done it earlier. Often, I did not have to offer it as it was a request made to me. I talked about aspects of my life that were similar to the things which had been discussed during the interviews- relationships, partners, migration, separation due to migration with family members, Poland. My own experience in this matter very often turned out to be ice-breaking in my relationship with respondents and made them more open with expressing their own emotions, feelings and experiences. This often meant that our relationship was seen as something which existed beyond the limits of my research purposes. I formed friendships with many of my informants. However, there was sometimes tension between friendship and the research goal. It was especially the case during my two week observation of each of the two families I was friends with. My goal was to gather information, thus the danger involved manipulating friendships to aid my research. As I recognized it I also tried to avoid it.

V.IV.c. The interview scheme

The main focus of the interviews was the migration experience, i.e., the complete process from the decision to migrate to the actual living situation. This was supplemented by questions about the
subjectively perceived changes in gender relations. As previously mentioned in the second chapter I have introduced three stages of transnational family life, so when interviewing my informants I asked about their pre-transnational, transnational and post-transnational family life. The questions linked to the pre-transnational stage applied to the migration decision making process and the time of gathering information and preparation for migration. Therefore, the focus of this part of the interview was on how the decision to migrate occurred, and how the relocation decision was interpreted and negotiated within the family. I was not able to research the family migration decision-making process as it occurred, therefore, I asked my respondents to recall their memories so I could reconstruct the processes from a retrospective perspective. While responses contained retrospective rationalizations, participants were often eager to reflect on their migration decision making process because it had changed their lives. Although motives often reflect ex post facto rationalizations, my intention was to follow power relations within the family and internal family gender dynamics while making migration decisions, and uncover the direct and indirect motivations of individual family members with regard to their family gender roles. In order to take into account the broader social context in which the migration decision making processes took place, before I held our talks around the topic of the migration decision and transnational family migration life, I found it necessary to recognize my respondents’ beliefs and everyday practice regarding their family gender roles as mothers/fathers, wives/husbands. Given all of the different circumstances families faced, I tried to find a framework in which to describe the influences that affected the participants in the family migration decision making process, particularly, the female and male contribution to this process and an individual gendered retrospective perception of it.

The next phase of transnational family life refers to the actual transnational family life; the situation where at least one family member is abroad and various ties with the family left behind (daily communication, remittances) are being maintained. When talking about this stage with respondents I was interested in forms and frequency of transnational family communication, informants’ perception of their family situation, their feelings and experiences at that time. Most of my respondents answered these questions from a retrospective perspective, as they were already reunified with their families in Ireland or had experienced family disintegration.

And eventually, the post-transnational family stage concerning a reunification or disintegration of the family. The post-transnational stage is a key-stage in my research as it reflects the long-term effects of transnational family migration on family gender roles and family relations. Therefore, the interviews had been conducted at this stage of in transnational family life and with the retrospective lens focused on the previous stages. I also decided to take into account family reunification only in Ireland. It illustrates the more constant, visible and direct effects of transnational family migration on family gender roles and relations.
When interviewing my informants I tried to investigate two dimensions associated with each other; time\textsuperscript{87} and subjects of the research\textsuperscript{88}. This meant that I tried to get information about every individual family member involved in transnational family migration at each stage of migration. Interviews were conducted in a narrative manner which means that they were open to new insights, which in turn led to new ideas about the theory and the sample.

\textbf{V.IV.d. The sample.}

I focus my research mostly on the transmigration experience of married couples of Polish nationality with or without children. However, I also take into account single parents and couples who constitute a stable relationship (cohabitants) with or without children who, similar to married couples, have experienced no less than one year of transnational family migration. Moreover, to get a complete picture of basic family roles and relations I take into account the role of the extended transnational family members; relatives indicated by transmigrants as key-actors in their family life, who significantly contribute to transnational family by, for instance, taking care of children left behind.

Therefore, in my sample I differentiated transnational families first with reference to marriage gender roles and relations: 1. reunified family where man migrated first, 2. reunified family where woman migrated first, 3. single women (divorce/break up during migration time), 4 single man (divorce/break up during migration time); and second with reference to parent's gender roles and parents-children relations: 1. parents migrated first and children joined them after some time, 2. father migrated first and then the rest family joined him, 3. mother migrated first and then the rest family joined her. I also decided to present the opinions of people who have a contact with transnational families in their professional life. Therefore, I have interviewed Anna Paś, a journalist, an editor of Polish Express; psychologists Katarzyna Piwońska and Ola Hydro-Kiwała from the psychological counselling service “Parasol”, and a father Marek\textsuperscript{89}, a Dominican friar. Additionally I had a short talk with Emilia Marchelewska, an activist who cooperates with Forum Polonia. Besides, taking into account the statement in the literature which says that the role and relations of migrant women and men should be investigated in relation to the intersection of gender, ethnic and

\textsuperscript{87} 1. migration decision time (when, who, why, thoughts, opinions, feelings of the participants and others in his opinion, preparation etc.), 2. separation time, 3. reunification time, 4. time of settlement in Ireland of whole family, 5. future plans.


\textsuperscript{89} Since 2006 he offers a ministry to Poles in Ireland in connection with the Dominican Polish Chaplaincy. His work consists of individual talks with Poles, celebration of the Masses, giving sacraments, organizing and conducting premartial courses and other kinds of courses and lectures for Poles in Dublin. www.dominikanie-dlapolakow.ie
national boundaries as well as demographic and social profile of migrants (Lazaridis, Anthias 2000), I differentiated my male and female respondents according to: education, place of living in Poland, occupation in Ireland and family structure (with child/children or without). I decided not to take into account the age of my respondents as there was not a significant variation between them. My respondents follow the characteristic pattern of the recent transnational migration from Poland to Ireland, which involves mostly young people in their 20s and 30s. Therefore, none of my migrant respondents was more than 45 years old, while the youngest one was 25.

I have conducted 45 interviews in total including four life story interviews with two married couples (the first one childless at the beginning of my fieldwork and at the end of the fieldwork with a child, the second one with a child) that I lived with. I observed and participated in their daily life for two weeks with each family. All interviews took place in Dublin or in the neighbourhood. I have interviewed 28 women and 14 men, married or in cohabitation and three children (girls, aged 9, 12, 14). I also had a short talk with a 6-year old boy in the presence of his mother. While being invited to the wedding reception of the couple I had interviewed, I also leapt at the chance of talking to their parents (the mothers and the father of the bridegroom). Overall, men were less willing to talk to me about their family migration experiences and justified their refusal through lack of time or from being overworked. 42 interviews were conducted in my respondent's homes, three in public places (a pub and a cafeteria). Most of my interviewees originally come from small towns or villages in Poland which is compatible with the general demographic profile of migrants to Ireland and the UK presented in chapter 3.

V.IV.e. Sampling frame.

Typically for qualitative research, I used a small sample of informants, selected according to criteria, that allowed me to collect diverse, rich and extensive data which would be typologically indicative and explanatory. Identifying people to participate in a qualitative in-depth interview study was challenging. I used a method called snowball sampling (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam, 2003:94). I used several starting points for the recruitment of research participants. Firstly, I obtained potential respondents through personal contacts, including colleagues, friends, neighbours, and other acquaintances. Personal network facilitated access to further potential respondents because the researcher and participant have people in common.

Secondly, I decided to try to find respondents in the Polish school in Dublin. At the beginning, I prepared an advertisement explaining myself, my research and the purpose of my study. In the

90 Address: New Town Park Avenue, Blackrock, Dublin, www.polskaszkoladublin.org

DOI: 10.2870/49969
announcement I promised a lottery-drawing of precious gadgets (an i-pod) for those who took part in my research. I put the note on the board in the school corridor. Unfortunately, it turned out to be ineffective. None of the parents who walked their children to the school and read my announcement about my research called me. Secondly, following the failure of the announcement I decided to work more directly and get more personal contact with my potential interviewees. To be more credible and get more trust from the parent of school children', I decided to be present in the Polish school in Blackrock every Sunday morning, the day when Polish children have their lessons, over the three months of my fieldwork in Dublin. To not be perceived by parents in an unusual way I went the school in the company of my friend, whose child attended Sunday lessons. In this way I entered, to a certain extent, the school parents' social network. While chatting and waiting with my friend and other parents for the end of the lessons I managed to recruit many of my informants. It helped me greatly to vary my points of entry and to limit referrals from only one source.

V.IV.f. Time and place of the interviews

A large amount of my interviews were conducted between the end of September and the end of December 2009, when I was an exchange student at University Collage Dublin. I conducted 22 interviews during these three months. In November 2009 I also did a month of training at the Polish embassy in Dublin. It gave me an opportunity to meet some of the key-actors in the Polish community in Ireland and establish contacts with others (the ambassador, consuls, psychologists, teachers, etc.). Then, between 15 January-29 January 2010 I conducted 13 interviews, and between 22 February-8 of March 2010 I collected 10 interviews and attended the Forum Polonia Symposium of which I am also a member (6 March 2010). I conducted 45 interviews in total. Additionally, in July 2011, on the occasion of the wedding party of the respondents with whom I am friends, I had an opportunity to talk to three extended family members who live in Poland.
The topic of family relations and roles demands special provisions for privacy and psychological comfort, and thus the interviewee's home may be the best venue. Besides, female respondents often preferred to meet at homes due to their child care responsibilities (a limitation to go out). Sometimes they excused themselves by saying that they were too tired or they did not have time to meet somewhere other than their home. Men, similarly to their wives, also often felt overworked, tired and that they had no time to meet somewhere other than home. Additionally, they felt more
loyal to their wives when they could talk to me in their houses. According to some of them, a meeting with a strange woman outside the home, even if only due to the interview, could be seen as improper behaviour. There are advantages and disadvantages to conducting interviews at a respondent’s house. On the one hand, it often brings more distractions which cause breaks in the interview, however on the other hand the possibility of observing the respondent’s home life can offer further insight into the interviewee’s family privacy that may not be accessible in a public environment (Esterberg, 2002).

V.IV.g. Gaining trust

Family relationship issues could be very sensitive and so it was very important to gain the trust of my research participants. This trust provided meant that there was a chance that their answers would be more consistent with the real experiences and attitudes (for better quality data).

How I was gaining my respondents' trust?

Besides the obvious advantages I had by being of the same nationality and speaking the same language, the snowball method I used to collect my sample was very helpful in gaining the trust of my respondents. Since I was introduced to my potential interviewee by people he/she knew before, I was not entirely a stranger to him/her any more. Secondly, in order to become more familiar with the worker-migrant situation and problems and be closer to my respondents' reality I decided to work a few hours per week in a bar as waitress. In this way I was not only a student who wanted to question them but I shared, to some extent, the same worker-migrant's problems. Therefore, I was seen more as somebody who had an idea about their problems. I stressed my own migration experiences. The fact that I have been a migrant for almost three years made me, in the opinion of my respondents, a person who 'knows what they are talking about' (as one of my respondent said). In their perception, very often I was somebody who probably experienced similar problems. They were also curious about my migration experience in Italy. I often shared my opinions and feelings about my residence in Florence in order to deepen my relations with respondents and to develop their trust. Especially when talking about serious family problems, for instance: divorces, breaking up etc., it turned to be very helpful to build feelings of security and a friendly atmosphere. At those moments I was not only in the position of somebody who asks but also of somebody who shows empathy. This empathy from my side, made my interviewees feel comfortable and I left with the impression that I gave them something in return for their openness and very personal confidences. Therefore, according to Charmaz’s statement (2006:30) the gaining of trust depended on my attitude to the respondent’s sensitive answers.

However, I got the impression that the fact that I was not familiar with their lives and people they
knew, made them more secure and that I could not give away their secrets or personal feelings. It made some of my respondents feel more comfortable during the interview. It resulted in more openness. They presented an “I will tell her and I will never see her again” attitude. First and foremost, I think that the anonymity of my research that I guaranteed my respondents was the most positively influential factor for gaining trust. On some of my respondents’ request I have changed their names while writing the thesis. Additionally, the fact that I am Polish myself made my respondents feel more comfortable and credited me with their trust from the beginning.

V.IV.h. The language and nationality

The fact that I am Polish myself gives me a chance to better understand the cultural code common for me and my respondents, better understanding of their attitudes, their experience in Poland, social reality in Poland, etc., they do not have to explain in details some issues that are clear and obvious to us both. Also, since my mother tongue is Polish I was able to record some of the nuances characteristic for the Polish language. Besides, language also indicates emotional attachment to some issues, reflects the attitude of the speaker, and their class and intellectual background. However, some concepts might be difficult to translate into English and the colourfulness and the specificity of the phrases of the spoken language might get lost, as well as the process of translation may cause oversimplification of the initial contents. Although, in some specific cases this takes place with a benefit to the reader, especially when the respondents had a flow of thoughts.

V.IV.i. Tape recording

The role of technology used in order to record the interviews deserves a brief mention. On the one hand type recording makes possible complete and accurate transcriptions of interviews, allow the interviewer more freedom to explore and become involved in the interaction (active listening). The researcher can also be less concerned with note taking and problems of recall. Finally, transcriptions can be used to validate a study by allowing others to review the data for bias. On the other hand, transcribing an entire interview is time consuming, and first and foremost, some respondents may experience discomfort or become self-conscious in the presence of a recorder. Therefore, some of my data comes from off the record interviews. A substantial amount of data was obtained off-the-record (when I had already switched off my recorder, many of my respondents got more relaxed and started talking about more personal things, sometimes “non-official” versions of answers to questions I asked) during interviews or as off-the-record interviews as a whole making...
them difficult to quote or use in other ways. Nevertheless, this type of information can be used at least as part of the background check on the informants. Sometimes off-the-record information was an initial stage of the data collection process with a particular individual, when I was explaining my research and was getting to know the informant or when there were no conditions to record it (for example on a bus). The interviews which have been recorded, are also transcribed. I translated only the fragments of the interviews which I decided to quote in this paper.

**V.IV.j. Ethical issues.**

In-depth interview sometimes can be a therapeutic intervention. They can bring about various reactions, for instance informants may feel self-disclosed and upset (Rosenblatt and Fisher 1993:175). Another ethical issue concerns maintaining confidentiality. The respondent's feelings and thoughts might be very sensitive in contents, therefore, even if the research report omits or alters crucial confessions, or presents research participants as anonymous individuals, it still may be recognized who said what. Thus, it may create problems in family relationships (Rosenblatt and Fisher 1993:175). The ethical question is also: how far the interviewer should go in probing an interviewee's answer? As John Johnson concluded, referring to the doubts of Ruben and Ruben (1995:98 after Johnson 2001:115) about the connections between their interview and the suicide of one of their interviewees, sometimes it is difficult for a researcher to anticipate fully the consequences of such probing. It means also that researcher should feel obligated to protect the information that informants shared with her/him.

Besides, researchers must be aware that power relations between him/her and his/her interviewee may influence the truth of the interviewee's information. Following the rhetoric question of Robert Atkinson (2001:133): “If you ask someone to tell his or her life story, will what you get be in that person's authentic voice, or in a voice that he or she thinks you might be looking for?”, the researcher cannot be entirely sure that what she/he heard from the respondent is true or not.

The next chapters present the results and analysis of my empirical research.
VI. Family migration decision-making process.

This chapter is devoted to the process of making decisions about transnational family migration to Ireland within Polish families. The initial aim of this chapter is to see to what extent family gender roles play a part in the process of making the migration decision within the family, and the second aim is to uncover the most important family gender role dependencies which shape this decision. In the first part of the chapter I outline the gender beliefs of my respondents which were declared they had had before their migration to Ireland. The knowledge of my respondents' common gender beliefs is helpful for a better understanding of migration decisions presented in the second part of the chapter. And finally, the last sub-chapter is devoted to non-gender related factors, which were pointed out by respondents as important during the process of migration decision making.

VI.I. Gender before migration.

For the recognition of the family gender arrangements of my respondents and their gender beliefs at all stages of their transnational family migration, namely; pre-transnational stage, that means before migration when migration decisions were making, transnational family stage and eventually during and after the transnational family reunification, I have used the main theoretical assumptions of the gender-cultural family models introduced by Brigit Pfau-Effinger (1998, 1999, 2004).

Although my initial intention was to analyze comprehensively all family gender arrangements classified in the theoretical part, it turned out to be difficult. The family gender beliefs of most of my respondents largely reflect gender beliefs of the whole Polish population (see chapter 1). Therefore, the vast majority of my respondents support traditional gender arrangements, if not completely then at least in some respects. As a result, research on egalitarian gender arrangements is developed on traditional gender arrangements due to too few examples caused by a lack of satisfactory data.

Although most of my respondents come from polish villages or small towns none of them indicated the features of the family economy model when asked about their family gender arrangement or their gender beliefs. This was probably due to the fact that even if my respondents or their parents

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92 As mentioned already in the chapter 1, the models can be classified into three groups: traditional models (the family economy model, the housewife model of the male breadwinner), mixed model (the male breadwinner/female part-time career model), and egalitarian models (the dual breadwinner/external care model, and the dual breadwinner/dual career model) (Pfau-Effinger 2004, 2007:11).
have a farm, none of the migrants whom I talked to worked on the family farm to earn a living. They explained that their farms were too small to be profitable, so the profit from farming only provided additional financial support to the family budget. The main source of money for the family came from employment in a non-agricultural sector. As mentioned above, the vast majority of my respondents directed their preferences toward a rather traditional model of family gender arrangements. However, the traditional beliefs of some of the informants did not require male exclusivity when it comes to financial supporting for the family (especially in the situation when the family is in financial need) or female exclusivity in taking care of home and children. They opted instead for the gender arrangement where a man is more responsible for the financial well-being of the family than a woman, and a woman should feel more responsible for taking care of home and children than a man. So, to a limited extent, these gender beliefs do not exclude the professional work of women or some home work of men. So, it is very important to stress, despite of their rather traditional gender beliefs but mainly due to family financial needs, most of my respondents practice a mixed model of gender arrangement, where both the man and woman are in paid work (part-time or full-time) and care is developed as a specific task and allocated mostly to the women.

In that sense women are close to Morokvasic’s image “a socialist good-mother superwoman” (Morokvasic 2007:84, in this thesis chapter1:28). Importantly, during the early years of the period of active motherhood (most often until a child/children go to school) even before women were active professionally, they resigned from the job or reduced the number of working hours. Respondents who indicated an egalitarian gender arrangement as being preferable and, at the same time, as the one which was practiced by them, did not have children (two couples in my sample). These findings suggest that having children positively correlates with an increase in the traditional tendencies within marriage relationships and the family gender arrangement.

As presented in the chapter 1 and also above in the current chapter, traditional gender roles beliefs and the traditional division of household duties is not something marginal in Polish society, but rather common social practice which, with different intensity, concerns not only poorly educated, elder people from the countryside but also the young, well-educated population from urbanized areas. Even couples who declared an egalitarian relationship do not exclude, to some extent, traditional gender role practices and beliefs within their families. Below I present several family gender models presented both from the male and the female perspective which are representative of my research sample.

For example, Marianna, a 35 years old dressmaker, is one of many of my respondents who

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93 that means a model based on financial partnership and the assumption that women and men equally share the tasks of caring inside the family.
described his/her family arrangement as “normal”, and like “many others”. What does it mean? Marianna and her husband come from a small town in Poland and both have secondary education. As Marianna claimed, the chances of finding a good job where they had lived in Poland, if one didn't have any family or social connections, were almost zero. Besides, there being a high level unemployment way. Her husband Aleksander (40) ran a small business for several years but eventually it was bankrupted. Marianna worked professionally as a dressmaker but only for a short time. She gave up a job when she realized she was pregnant. Although her husband's earnings were hardly sufficient to support the whole family they decided that she would stay at home and take care of children. In her opinion mother-care is irreplaceable and essential for the development and education of children. She also performed all other household duties, such as cooking and cleaning which are traditionally assigned as the role of the housewife.

"You know, we were like many other normal families in Poland, nothing special. My husband was working, while I was at home taking care of our children, cooking, cleaning and doing other stuff that women usually do at home. When we got married I was working professionally as well, but then the children were born, and it would have been difficult to reconcile professional work with raising children, and children need mother-care, so I stayed at home. I think that my husband preferred me to take care of home rather than working. He wants a normal home for children and for himself. So do I. (Marianna age 35.).”

In other words, Marianna’s belief about the “normality” of family relations was closely associated with the traditional gender arrangement. Besides, Marianna was convinced that her husband’s idea of the family agreed with her idea. Marianna’s statement presented above also suggests that the traditional role of mother and wife was the conscious choice of my respondent, which is consistent with her gender beliefs about her role as mother and wife within the family rather than something which was imposed on her. However, further conversation with Marianna allowed me to find out that the traditional family gender arrangement of my respondent was strengthened after the birth of her first child, as a natural- in the opinion of Marianna- consequence of it.

Another respondent, 42 year old Beata, a cleaner in Ireland had a university level of education from Poland, and was a married mother of three children. Beata started her migration story by describing her financial situation in Poland. She highlighted the economic problems which her family had had to deal with in Poland. She mentioned also her financial dependency on her husband after she had lost her job. Besides, also she stressed that her life in Poland had been highly subordinated to the life of her family; the needs of her husband and the children. She found her family duties in Poland onerous.

*I adjusted to many things there, to everything actually. In fact, the situation was different, more
stressful. There were problems and quarrels all the time about different things. I became very nervous. But I couldn’t imagine there was something I could do to change it. I walked into this mine and I must take it because I can’t change anything. That is what I thought. Run away...but where? And what about children? And how? I couldn’t find any solution. (...) Everybody was important but me. I was doing everything for my husband, for my children, for other people, and not for myself. I was always at the end. There was never time for me enough, or space, or desire or whatever (Beata, 42).

In Poland Beata felt as she had no choice. She felt hopeless and powerless and she did not see opportunities to change her life. This was mostly because of the economic difficulties and the fact that she was the only one in the family who was burdened with child care. Family life and her role in the family, even if it was not satisfying, was something she felt that she had to adjust to. Additionally economic problems made the family atmosphere very tense and full of quarrels. Her traditional role as wife and mother was not something she was entirely at peace with, however, she felt forced to fulfil some aspects of these roles because of the circumstances. The “forced” aspects were related to the constant child-care almost without any help from her husband, and performing most of the household work. The role of mother, in her opinion, involved much greater responsibilities and duties than the role of the father.

Another example is Ela (39), a social worker in Poland with higher education, from a small town, in Ireland working as a cleaner. She presented her family gender role by saying: “like all mothers there, like all wives in Poland”. What does it mean in her case? She described her life before migration as such:

In Poland I was like all mothers there, like all wives in Poland. If they don’t do a professional career they take care of home, and even if they do this career they take care of home as well. Typical configuration. This was my case, for example. I have done a lot of trainings, courses, I was trying to develop my professional career, but at the same time I was trying to organize my time in a way that I could take care of home, because everybody expected me to do this.

So, Ela did not consider her gender role an exceptional one. Household work, according to her, is what “all mothers and wives in Poland” normally do, and additionally they have paid jobs outside. Thus, she was very active professionally in Poland, and at the same time she was trying to fulfil household duties. That was what “everybody” also expected from her. She presented one of the most popular Polish family models both in Poland and among my respondents. It is characterized

94 (CBOS BS/52/2006).
by the professional activity of both spouses, however the wife, additionally, does most of household
duties and takes care of children. Interestingly, Ela defined her relationship with her husband as
partnership-like, explaining that they respected each other’s different opinion, they discussed
everything with each other and they made decisions together. However, in the case of the household
duties, it was Ela who did most things, and her husband helped her only if he was asked for it. Thus,
the Ela’s partnership declaration is legitimized by the fact that both spouses were active in the
labour market, and they decided together about important things relating to family life (including
migration), aside from equal division of household duties. The “hearth vestal” role was still a
female domain in their relationship.

The next example, Gustaw, one of my male respondents, is a 35 year old blue collar worker. He
comes from a small village in Eastern Poland. He and his wife Mirka have secondary level of
education. Gustaw has been living in Ireland for five years. His wife and two 6-years old twin sons
joined him after nearly one year of transnational separation. In Ireland, Gustaw works as a truck
driver while his wife stays at home and takes care of the children. In Poland, he worked several jobs
trying to support his family. Mirka had worked as a shop-assistant until she got pregnant, then she
resigned. Gustaw perceives his family role mainly as a breadwinner. He associates bread-winning
for the family with the feeling of masculinity.

*Man has to be a man. If he decides to have a family he must know how to support his family. He is a
looser if he does not do it. (...) What a man would I be if my wife had to support me? She can work
if she wants, but the main financial responsibility is on a man” (Gustaw, 35).*

Gustaw, similar to many Polish men, strongly stressed the family role as a breadwinner. For most
men this is an obligatory and natural male duty which reflects their masculinity. According to
Gustaw, the primary family role of women is defined by the role of the mother.

“*Children need a mother. It is the best care for them, isn't it? When children are small this is the
best solution. If the man is able to earn enough money for whole family, a woman should be happy
that she can stay at home, does not have to work and can look for children” (Gustaw 35).*

The memories linked to the pre-migration time evoked feelings of irritability in Gustaw. He recalled
the financial difficulties of his family in Poland, debts they had to pay back, not having their own
flat or home, living with parents, a lack of opportunities. He admitted he had had very little time for
his family in Poland.

Another respondent Nadia, is 29 years old, a divorced mother of a 4 year old son. Like many other
Polish migrant women her age, she is highly educated, and she has a managerial position in a
international company in Ireland. Although, her position in the job market is exceptional compared
to the majority of Polish migrants in Ireland, she shares similar experiences linked to the transnational family migration with many other Polish women in Ireland.

Nadia was married to Maciej for five years. They got married in Poland. After two years of being together in Ireland, then divorced. When talking about her ex-husband and their relations Nadia declared that she supported the partnership model. However, at the same time she confessed that she was ready to sacrifice a lot of things for her man, just because he was a man and, above all, for the good of their relationship.

In fact, *I'm very traditional when it comes to roles in the relationship. Sure, it should be a partnership but at the same time I am able to give in a lot to a man just because he is a man. Not that I'm a kind of gray mouse that is kept behind a broom, I just think that the relationship works much better if you let your man be a man and decide in different situations* (Nadia, 29).

When Nadia talked about her relations with the ex-husband, she stated that they had shared everyday duties, respected each other opinions and made important decisions together. Thus, paradoxically her beliefs were more traditional than her practice. Nevertheless, she admitted that the situation changed slightly after the child was born. She stopped working for a few months in order to take care of the child. The ex-husband was much less engaged in child-care than her. This situation had been seen by both of them as a natural consequence of Nadia's role as a mother. In this case, once again, the traditional role of the mother had priority above any other roles and was unquestionable by both sides; female and male.

Also Daria and Marek are example of a young married couple that migrated for economic reasons. Daria has a university education and in Poland she worked as a pedagogue at school while in Ireland she worked as a cleaning lady. Marek has a vocational education and he worked both in Poland and in Ireland as a printer. Both spouses come from small villages in the south-west of Poland. Before migration, Daria and Marek’s the low income meant that they could not buy or rent an apartment. They lived in the same household as Marek's parents. Daria mentioned that financial constraints sometimes had caused tensions between her and her husband. In her opinion financial problems caused the disruption of the expected and proper gender behaviour of men and women in relation to each other. The example given by Daria suggests that she had traditional expectations from her husband.

*And there was also this bizarre feeling that...because in Poland it is that it's a man who always invites and pays for a woman...(...) So it was bizarre that Marek couldn't pay for me, and I think he felt guilty that he couldn't afford a stupid New Year eve party. (...) I think that for a man it's particularly difficult because he is a head of the family and so on, so his role is to provide for his*
Marek situated himself in the traditional role of a breadwinner whose main obligation was to support his family financially without bothering himself with “female” work. The Marek’s approach is closely associated with traditional patterns of gender arrangements which was practiced by his parents.

In my family home has been always a very traditional division of home labour because my mum doesn’t work, only my dad works. So, when my dad comes back from his work, dinner has to be done and waiting for him. Mum does all these female things like cooking, shopping, cleaning.

Also Daria confirmed the traditional gender arrangement in her husband's family. She mentioned that her mother-in-law performed all domestic duties by herself. Daria also described the overprotective behaviour of Marek’s mother toward her son as behaviour typical of mothers.

In Poland he was doing literally nothing, because we lived with his parents and his mother did everything for him. She was cooking, cleaning, and I was just helping her, but Marek was the apple of her eye. Besides, you know...she is just a typical mum, she has to do everything by herself.

Actually all my respondents had a very traditional approach towards child-parent relationships. In their opinion children are obliged to obey their parents. Parents state that they know better what is best for their children. Although almost all migrating parents claimed that the migration decision was made to assure a better future for their children, in their best interests, the majority of parents had made the decision to migrate without any consultation with children. Children were usually informed about parent's decision once the decision had definitely been made. The majority of parents of younger children believed that their children would not have understood the importance and the meaning of migration, so they were not involved in the process of decision making at all. It is similar to Naomi Bushin's (2009:439) findings in a study of the role of children in family decision-making: “It shows that some parents did not deliberately seek to exclude children from migration decision-making processes rather, they had never thought to include children. Their 'common-sense' understanding was that they, as parents, should make the decision for the family and in the best interests of the children, and that the involvement of the children themselves was unnecessary”.

As mentioned above, the gender beliefs and gender practices of my respondents within their families are more or less proportionally representative of the gender views within Polish society in general. It is evidenced by the high level of compatibility between my results on family gender arrangements and the surveys' findings presented in chapter 1.
VI.II. Family migration decision making scenarios.

This sub-chapter presents several narratives regarding the most popular family migration decision making processes which I observed during my fieldwork in Dublin. Although these stories describe the migration experiences of particular individuals, their character is not exceptional. Each of them embodies the wider pattern of migration in the decision making process based on gender roles beliefs and relations.

Surprisingly, most of my informants skipped over the decision making process when they began to tell their stories. In order to find out details related to the decision making time, I had to return the memories of my respondents to the beginning of their migration experience.

In general, my findings confirm the theory that there is a link between gender role beliefs and decisions about who migrates. Moreover, there is also a link between gender role beliefs and the way the decision about migration is made, and also what arguments develop. Different gender roles and family relations shape decisions about migration to a large extent, and they are the main factors that determine the female and male degree of choice, availability, desire and incentives to migrate.

In order to present a more complete picture of the family transnational migration decision making processes, both points of view of men and women, as well as the memories of those who migrated and those who stayed, are taken into account.

When man migrates first

Almost of all my respondents declared that financial problems made them consider migration abroad. These problems often resulted from lack of jobs, low-paid jobs or the bankruptcy of their own businesses, as it was the case for Marianna (35) and her husband Aleksander (40).

After Aleksander's small company was bankrupted, he decided to find a job abroad, first in Germany but with little success, and eventually in Ireland. Marianna described this situation as follows:

My husband was running a small company in Poland but he bankrupted. He started looking for a job but eventually he decided that he didn't want to work for very little money and he left for Germany. Now in Germany there is much more difficult to find a job than here in Ireland, so he looked for a job on the Internet, sent his offer, and in one week time he got a job and came here (Marianna 35).

At the beginning of the interview Marianna claimed that the migration decision was made jointly by her and her husband. However, when we talked about the process of taking the decision further, she confessed that actually her husband had convinced her to accept his decision because she had been
full of doubts. Eventually she told me, that she felt it was not her decision and she simply followed the decision of her husband. Aleksander had established a migration plan for the family which he only informed his wife about, rather than asking her opinion.

We made this decision together. It was that my husband told that it would be better we would leave the country. He had asked me before, of course. I mean, he said he would leave first, and then, after some time, me and our children would join him. Even if it is temporary it is difficult, we didn't know how long it was going to take us. In general, I wasn't sure whether it was a good decision but he convinced me. She continues: It was my husband's choice. We just followed him after some time, and frankly speaking, I felt that it wasn't my decision. Simply he came here and we followed him. (Marianna, 35, dressmaker, secondary education).

So, neither was the decision to migrate was a joint one, nor was the decision that Marianna would stay in Poland with the children and wait for the proper time to join Aleksander in Ireland discussed by the couple together. Like many other Polish women in her situation, Marianna was full of doubts and fears associated with her husband’s migration and his future plans. However, she also said that it was natural to her that it was she who stayed in Poland and took care of the children, while Aleksander “checked out” Ireland and prepared a place for living together in Dublin. One of the reasons why Marianna stayed in Poland was for the children’s academic. As she declared, the spouses had decided that it would be better for their children if they finished their academic year in Polish schools. Marianna could not imagine a different situation; that Aleksander would have taken care of the children and she had migrated first. She was convinced that she “wouldn't find herself” in a new country alone and without knowing the language. At the same time she did not believe that Aleksander would have been able to properly fulfil all of the responsibilities and duties linked to the single-parent role. In this way Marianna defended and reinforced her traditional role as mother and subordinated wife. Another important reason for delaying Marianna's migration was an important religious event which was approaching; the couple’s older son was supposed to take First Holy Communion in Poland, and preparation for this ceremony had already started. Marianna felt responsible for the religious life of her children, and she wanted her son’s First Holy Communion to take place in Poland, in the familiar church, with the well-known and traditional ceremony, and with the presence of the whole family. The Catholic religion next to the potential economic possibilities, was a deciding factor for Marianna and Aleksander when choosing Ireland as a destination country. When Marianna talked about her experience linked to the decision making process, it was clear that during the pre-transnational family stage she had been especially tormented about her husband’s migration plan and the future prospect of her own move. Although she shared her distress and emotions with her husband, she never summarily opposed her husband's migration. She was
convinced that Aleksander acted for the sake of the whole family. Similarly to Marianna, most of my female respondents who stayed behind, were not entirely convinced about their husbands move. However, all of them believed that it was for the sake of the whole family. They recognized the financial needs of their families and “the sake of their families” as an overriding principle, more important than their own personal fears, doubts and ambitions. Eventually, they agreed that “there was no other choice than to accept it (Marianna)”. Interestingly, very often there was no formal decision process between husband and wife. Instead, there were a series of conversations and emotions which were just a kind of foreplay to the inevitable move.

These findings are similar to Zvonkovic et al.'s conclusion (1996) made on basis of the study of the process of family and work decision making among married couples. Couples tended to consider their decisions as being made unanimously, but in reality there was contention underlying this consensus. Although couples held similar values, talked about their opinions openly, and often articulated that their decision was joint, the exterior explanation of consensus contrasted with the data which showed that "the decision enacted more often reflected what the husband wanted to happen" (Zvonkovic et al. 1996:96). The authors contended that the outcome of work decisions seemed to be formed through a process identified by Kompter (1989) as 'apparent consensus', occurring among couples who believe that they are in agreement about an issue, and who believe that this agreement reflects mere common sense, when in fact, their beliefs are based on male power and privilege" (Zvonkovic et al., 1996:97). Women who were left behind often expressed a sense of powerlessness regarding the migration decision making process. However, this feeling of powerlessness was more often self-imposed than resulting from an authoritative husband. Perhaps more accurately, the powerlessness was culturally imposed by the gender-role beliefs discussed earlier. Powerless women internalized the viewpoint that their traditionally reproductive role in the family was subordinate to their husband's role, as a family protector and breadwinner. Even in some dual-earner families, gender-role ideology created a belief that the husband's position was overriding.

Men who subscribed to traditional gender beliefs and identified themselves as family breadwinners, were usually the first in their family to come to Ireland, before their wives and children. They migrated in order to fulfil their breadwinner obligations, which they were not able to fulfil in Poland. They wanted to provide their family members with a good standard of living, to have enough money to secure a decent education for the children, and to earn enough to pay off debts, and to build a house or buy a flat in Poland. One of the examples is Gustaw. Gustaw’s decision about migration was motivated-as he described it-by “big financial problems”. The decision was rather spontaneous. Gustaw’s brother-in-law had already been working in Ireland for some time,
and also his wife’s sister had lived there. My respondent heard from them about better prospects and a calmer life in Ireland. They both had jobs, and managed to pay back their debts and were convincing Gustaw and his wife to join them in Dublin. They had also promised them some help in the beginning. Gustaw admitted, that before he had decided to migrate, he had talked to his male friends and discussed the potential migration with them. Then he made a decision. When talking about making the migration decision he did not mention his wife until I asked him about her reaction. He had presumed in advance his wife would agree, so in response to my question whether his wife had agreed with his decision or not, Gustaw reacted with slight surprise and incomprehension. According to him, his wife agreed in her family’s own business because there was no other option to make their financial situation better.

“Why wouldn't she have agreed? We had big financial problems and that seemed to be the only solution that time. I didn't have to explain her, she knew we were in trouble. Even if she wouldn't have agreed, she had accepted eventually because there was no other option. What else could I have done? (Gustaw 35).”

Some other men, who migrated before their family migration similar to Gustaw, reported that they had been the ones to make the migration decision. They said that they wives agreed with their decision because they understood perfectly the urgent economical needs of their families. Even if they did not entirely agree with the situation they resigned themselves to their fate and eventually accepted it. They stated that economic incentives were the reasons why their wives agreed with their decision or eventually accepted it. This pattern reflected the legitimacy of the husbands' authority to act autonomously. With reference to the observations of Thorne (1982) and Zvonkovic et al. (1996), they noticed that family life is characterized by a tangle of love and dominance. “In this way, interpersonal processes of dominance and similarity can interact with traditional ideas about gender in marriage. We found this interaction usually facilitated a positive perception of the decision and of the marriage in general. For the couples in this study, the perception of similarity generally reinforced a male-dominated pattern, an insidious one in a sense, because when couples shared similarity and apparent consensus, they did not openly discuss their ideas about gender in marriage” (Zvonkovic et al. 1996: 97). So, that is the case for some families of Polish migrants in Ireland, as the example of Gustaw’s family shows.

This pattern is also observable among some younger couples, for example in the case of Daria (28) and Marek’s (30) migration decision process. Marek, together with his male friend, who was in a similar financial situation, began to consider migrating abroad and started looking for a job in Ireland or in the UK. Marek confessed that he took the decision about migration without consultation with his wife. This reflects his patriarchal beliefs about gender relations between
spouses. He was convinced that Daria would understand and accept his decision because he had made it for the common good of both of them, and for the future of their family. Although Daria was not entirely happy with her husband’s decision, she was convinced that her objection would not have changed his decision. She calmed herself down by thinking that Marek's decision was for their own good.

*Marek and his friend just started sending CVs. He told me that he had started looking for a job somewhere abroad. My reaction? You know I couldn't disagree, it was his decision, what could I do? We talked about it a lot, about how it was going to be and so on, but I never told him not to go although maybe sometimes I thought like that...*

Daria placed herself in the position of the obedient wife. She perceived this approach as the best possible, and natural one at that moment. In her opinion Marek's right to independent decision about the future of the family was superior to her own anxiety related to this decision. They were talking together about organizational issues linked to the Marek’s migration. The initial plan was that Marek would go to Ireland, find a job and an apartment there, save some money and get used to the new environment for a while before bringing Daria to Dublin. The actual time of family reunification was not set.

Daria, unlike her husband Marek, had not herself considered migrating abroad although she was not entirely happy with her salary at the place she worked (at school). She was very afraid of the bad consequences of such a decision. Her husband Marek had a different, more courageous approach toward economic migration abroad, as a possible chance to improve their financial situation and housing condition. Social pressure and traditional social expectations related to the role as head of the family made Marek more determined than Daria, to seek new opportunities to improve the family's conditions in life, and become independent from his parents. Marek’s initial plan was to migrate abroad and earn enough money to be able to come back to Poland, and build a house close the place where his or his wife's parents live.

*I hoped that I would earn enough money. Because I had a plan already in my head that I wanted to earn enough money to be able to build a house in Poland, somewhere close to mine or Daria's family house. In Poland we lived with my parents and we really wanted to have something our own only and move out. Not that it was bad there, just you know, it would be good to become independent finally.*

Marek and Daria's initial plan to come back to Poland as soon as possible was motivated by strong family ties with extended family members and a deep sense of responsibility for the care of ageing parents. Daria and Marek’s motivation, in common with many others(e in a similar situation, so young childless couples or with small children who lived with the parents of one spouse at the time of migration decision making), creates another very important migration pattern among Polish
transnational families in Ireland. The economic motivation for migration is followed by the desire for an independent life, which is described by Daria as: „cutting a tail” from their parents.

Although Polish men are most often the pioneers of transnational family migration, they do not always come up with the migration idea. For example, in the case of Nadia, she had the initial migration idea, however it was her husband (now ex-husband) Maciej who was the first to migrate. The decision was made after Nadia's husband started having some problems at work, and eventually lost his job.

_In Poland, he was employed as a graphic designer and he worked very hard. It was also his fault because he had an argument with someone. And from day to day he was said that they didn't want such a quarrelsome man in their company. And he somehow blocked himself thinking that he would never find a job (Nadia, 29)._ 

Nadia declared that she had been emotionally supporting her husband after he lost his job and, at the same time, she had been convincing him that the best solution to his problems would be emigration to Ireland. Although he was not entirely convinced, he changed his mind after Nadia had found him a job (she had a friend in Ireland whom she asked for help in the matter). Thus, although it was Maciek who migrated first, the decision was taken actually by Nadia, in order to help her husband to increase his self-confidence and get some useful experience and English language skills.

(Who got this idea to migrate?-MM) Me. I felt really sorry for him (a husband). I knew that he needed a kind of drastic move so as not to break down. I decided that I would agree even for an internship, even for free. So I decided that we would go to Ireland, we don't care, we would start from the beginning, we would not work in such conditions. It was more for him this migration. (Nadia, 29, a manager).

Nadia had to stay in Poland for sometime time because of job obligations. Nevertheless, shortly after her husband left she joined him in Dublin, explaining that “the family should be together”. Despite the fact that she had a job in Poland, she resigned from her job in her home country and decided to join her husband in Ireland. She was convinced that she would also find a satisfactory job for herself: “I thought: I will manage somehow”.

Nadia’s example is a slightly exceptional family migration decision process. However, it is very interesting and relevant for my study in the sense that it shows that traditional gendered ideology plays a role in the decisional processes and the married lives of young and highly educated people like Nadia. Deeply rooted gender beliefs mean that even in the situation when a woman holds a privileged economic position, she maintains gender beliefs which were indoctrinated in her in the process of socialization. Nadia's example proves that even if women have greater human resources, their beliefs about gender make some of them relinquish their plans and ambitions in order to
support their husbands.

There is also the common assumption that men will be more resourceful, even if they do not have any previous migration experience, or they do not speak the language. Many female respondents who followed their husbands prioritized their husband’s endeavours over other family members' endeavours, including their own, when making decisions about migration. Thus, sometimes an economically irrational migration decision about who would migrate first was based on gender beliefs about the role of husbands and wives. In my research sample eight women out of nineteen who followed their husbands, gave up their own paid job in order to join their husband who had migrated first. Importantly, Nadia’s example also shows that although Polish women often surrender their own aspirations for the sake of their husband’s career, this does not necessarily mean that they have never anything to say in the family migration decision process.

Therefore, there were also respondents who declared that the migration decision was taken jointly by both husband and wife, as for example in the case of Ela and her husband. Even though both spouses were professionally employed in Poland, economic problems and spouses’ dreams about better future for themselves and their daughter were main reasons for migration. According to Ela’s declaration the decision about migration as well as the decision of who would migrate first, was made jointly by the couple. Ela’s husband had a professional job (a computer graphic designer) which had seemed to both spouses to have more earning potential in Ireland than Ela’s job as a social worker.

(Why did your husband migrate first?-MM) – He was the chosen one. We decided that his profession would be more required at the job market. My husband is a computer graphic designer. We decided that he would be first one who would go and look around so that me and our daughter could join him after he got a job. Six years ago it was easy to find a job here. His colleague went to Ireland and worked in the same industry so he managed to help us somehow. He asked in some companies and the manager of one of them agreed to hire my husband (...). Over one year he was there while me and our daughter in Poland (Ela 39, cleaner).

Ela’s statement that her husband was “chosen” to migrate because of his “better profession” suggested that men act within the context of better opportunities. It proposes that male work is seen as more profitable and more valuable than female work and a female professional career is perceived as secondary to the male career.

Additionally, Ela's husband had some social networks in Ireland, which they expected in the beginning to be helpful when looking for a job and organizing life in Ireland. A friend of the husband who worked in the same job sector in Ireland had promised his help. The spouses decided

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95 11 did not have to sacrifice their professional career because they were solely housewives (5) or lost their jobs before the decision and were unemployed (6).

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
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that Ela's job in Poland would act as security in case of her husband's failure in Ireland. As, Ela explained it to me, if something had gone wrong with her husband's job in Ireland, then they would at least have had her position in Poland, and it would have been much easier for him than for her to find a job in Poland again. As in many other cases, and also in the case of Ela's husband, the duration of the migration was not planned in advance. Ela's family initial assumption was to go to Ireland for long enough to earn enough money to pay back debts and buy a flat or a house in Poland. Another important reason for Ela to stay behind, was their daughter education. Ela felt obliged to stay and take care of her daughter who wanted to finish her primary education in Poland, and start secondary education in Ireland.

Analysis of the interviews clearly indicates that motherhood and the course of children’s lives to a large extent determines female migration. Small children as well as dependent elderly family members increase women’s' care responsibilities. Therefore, I have observed, that the presence of children reduces the female intention for migration. At the same time this factor increases the migration intentions of men because of increased financial family needs. This pattern is actually independent from the respondents' age, education and place of living. While men migrate for the sake of the family, women stay behind for the children' sake, (infantocentrism). So, the role of mother and motherhood is crucial to the family migration decision making process. Women are less likely to initiate migration when they have small children, and often delay movement until children are older. Also in the case of older children distant mothering was also often a dilemma for my female respondents. Similar beliefs have also been noted in Anne White’s (2011:93) research on Poles migrating to the UK. She observed that parents of children under 20 were particularly likely to agree that it is better if it is the father who migrates. Some 85,3% of respondents in Anne White’s research (2011:94) agreed that “mothers of small children should not leave their children and husbands to work abroad” and 56,5% claimed that mothers should not migrate without their children even if their children are teenagers already.

The mothers’ statement in my research reflect not only how strong traditional beliefs about the role of the mother are, but also that they are seen as something natural and unquestionable. They shape female life choices, including to a large extent decisions about migration. Moreover, other social roles, including fatherhood, are considered to be of secondary importance in relation to maternity. Similarly to Agnieszka Małek (2011:146) who did research among Polish women in Italy, I have also observed that my respondents hardly could imagine their husbands as primary care-giver to their children when they are abroad. For example Julia (33) confessed that before migration she would have preferred to stay at home with her small child, even if she had had a job arranged for her in Ireland. Julia emphasized the uniqueness and exceptionality of the motherhood experience which can only be understood by mothers alone. This seems to be the aftermath of a common

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symbolic sacralisation of motherhood in Poland (see chapter 1).

-What about if you had had friends in Ireland and they had offered you a job. Would you have gone? ”-MM

-[thinking a moment] No. [laugh] I have a child. I could not have left him. No, definitely no. With mothers it is different. This is such a special bond between a mother and a child...only a mother can understand that...

-What about the father? Couldn't he have stayed with your son instead of you?-MM

- My husband? I would have been too stressed about both of them then [laugh].

For Julia it was obvious that her husband neither would have managed to take proper care of their child, nor should he have done it instead of her. As the examples of Aleksander and Gustaw show, the role of father (so responsibilities linked to it) is not such much a dilemma for men, and certainly not a deciding factor (unlike in the case of female migration), when taking a decision about migration.

There are three important things which stand out in the histories of the transnational family migration decision processes that resulted in the migration of men as pioneers. The first one is the obvious predominance of economic reasons for migration. Usually financial troubles and the desire for a better future for the family made my respondents think about migration. Secondly, when deciding who migrates, the husband's efforts were noticeably more important, even though both spouses had had professional occupations. Significantly, this was a joint decision. And thirdly, motherhood plays a crucial role in the family migration decision making process. Traditional beliefs about the role of the mother which are popular among my respondents, strongly shape the decision about who migrates and when they migrate. Thus, the feelings of a mother's obligations often make the pioneering transnational family migration of Polish women unthinkable and impossible.

**When woman migrates first**

Although in the case of family migration there are still more Polish men migrating than Polish women, there were also women in my sample who were transnational family migration pioneers. Although all of the migration stories which I heard have their own individual character, they also contain common elements which, as the examples below demonstrate, may indicate broader migration patterns. For instance, the story of Beata provides one of the examples in which a woman became the migration pioneer in her family.

According to Beata migration was a “hot topic” among their friends and family, and it naturally turned out to be the only possible solution for Beata's family troubles. The decision about migration
was taken jointly by the spouses and very quickly, so there was not much discussion about the migration between her and her husband. The main reason given why it was her who migrated first, was the fact that she knew somebody in Ireland who could help her “to start”. Beata’s friend found her a job in Dublin and offered her a place to sleep for first two weeks.

Discussion wasn’t a case. It depends on circumstances, for one person it is easier, for another one more difficult. I was lucky that I had this colleague who was already in Ireland and promised to help me so I went. I could sleep at her place for two weeks. This is really a great help when you come here and somebody helps you to start with everything, tells you where and how you can find a job or writes you a several sentences in English. So it was not that we had planned that I or him should go first. I went first because I knew that colleague who was there already (Beata).

Besides the social networks, Beata also emphasized another circumstance which, according to her, increased her ability to migrate. Firstly, she was unemployed while her husband had a job in Poland. So, she risked less, than her husband. Secondly, the fact that their children were not very small, and, in Beata’s opinion, they did not need an intensive mother’s care anymore, made her only a slightly more comfortable and justified with the decision about abandoning the family due to migration. She was relieved when thinking that the oldest daughter (a teenager that time) would help her father to take care of her younger sister and with the household duties. Additionally, my interviewee could count on her mother, who promised to help her husband to take care of the children. Beata never took into account for the possibility of leaving the children with only their father. She feared that her husband would not have been able to cope with the traditional female responsibilities, which he had never taken up before, such as childcare, cooking and cleaning.

“I can't imagine my husband totally alone with three kids. So, it had to be somebody to help him. Usually it was a grandma.”(Beata, 42)

This situation resulted in forming a kind of global care chain (Hochschild 2000:131) where Beata takes care of somebody’s home in Ireland (by cleaning it) while her own home in Poland is under the care of her mother. Beata's anxiety was also intensified by the fact that no particular plan was set up for the period of migration, as Beata said: “any migration scenario”.

The approach and dilemmas of Beata are perfectly consistent with the findings of Rebecca Raijman et al., (2003 and Anne White (2011). The scholars found that in order to gain full legitimacy transnational motherhood needs to satisfy two conditions; mothers have to act in the best interests of the family (justified economical needs) and they have to be sure that the children left behind have appropriate care during their absence.

The results of my research as well as the results of Agnieszka Małek’s research (2011) on Polish migrant women in Italy show that female migration decisions depend also on their relatives’
agreement to help migrants’ husbands with everyday household duties. Because of the physical impossibility to fulfill the obligations of good wife at the distance, migrant women devolve their responsibilities on other women by asking their mothers, mothers-in-law or sisters to help their husbands. They do not simply let their husbands or partners take over all home responsibilities. They feel compelled to have control over home duties so as they want to meet cultural expectations at all costs (Malek 2011: 147). As Agnieszka Malek (2011:148-9) noticed, delegation of household duties on other women give migrant women a sense of being within the frame their social role.

However, Anne White (2011:27-39, 92) argues that attitudes towards migration among people from high-sending communities are pragmatic, “so it would not be surprising if usual gender roles could be abandoned in circumstances where only the mother had the opportunity to migrate” The analysis of the interviews with Poles in Ireland leads to similar conclusions. Moreover, Friar Marek, a Dominican working in the Dominican Polish Chaplaincy in Dublin, also stated that in the face of the huge financial gains, gender beliefs became less important in the family migration decision making process.

“Families which leave Poland usually feel a huge financial pressure, so the most important things is who will find a job faster rather than who it will be; a wife or a husband. Maybe later gender matters, when they make concrete decisions about details linked to migration.”

Besides, the absence of the mother due to economic migration is acceptable partly because hard work and responsibility for a child’s well-being is seen as an integral part of the Polish mother’s role.

Secondly, similarly to transnational Polish women in Italy (Malek 2011), female migrants in Ireland admitted that they were concerned about leaving their husbands alone with all of the household duties and child-care. Like most Poles, migrant women believe that domestic work is a female domain, so only the help of another trustworthy woman can to some extent justify their absence. Most female respondents emphasized that the care of the children left behind, involved not only the father, but other family members, usually female relatives; mother or sister of the respondents or female relatives of the husband. The mothers themselves also retained a care-giving role, but from a distance.

Despite the fact that leaving children was the most important among Beata's worries, she stated that she had not discussed the migration decision with their children. Parents simply informed them about the temporary future separation from their mother. When answering my question why they did not take children' opinion into account, Beata, said:

“Children are to listen to their parents. As long as we support them they have to obey us. Clearly, we don't want anything bad for them. They didn't have a choice. They had to accept the situation.”
So, migrant's children are often those whose welfare is perceived as most important when making decisions about migration, but their opinion about the parent's move is the least important.

Another example of a woman who migrated to Ireland before her husband was Iza. Iza lived a transnational family life with her husband and daughter left behind in Poland for almost two years. When she agreed to talk with me she was already determined to return to Poland and her husband Mikołaj (42) arrived in Dublin to help her with the move. I had a chance to talk to both of them. Iza is a 35 years old mother and a wife with a higher education degree. In Poland she was working as a secretary for a small company and living in a small town. In Ireland she worked as a cleaner. Migration was seen as one of the possible options to improve their standard of life and a chance to secure their daughter's future.

“Simply, we wanted to start living normally, without counting money all the time. And we wanted also our daughter to have a better life start that we had.”

Importantly, Iza as well as the other respondents who had children often stressed that their main motivation to migrate and improve their economic status was their desire to support their children. Living and earning in Ireland meant that they could give their children whatever they wanted and needed, especially money for a good education. Iza declared that the relationship with their husband was based on partnership, and that they made the decision about migration together. The couple had decided that Iza would try her luck abroad, because she had a less profitable job in Poland than her husband. They chose Ireland as the destination country. They heard about the open job market for Poles and about the mass emigration of Poles to Ireland. Nevertheless, Iza mentioned that the decision about her migration was not easy one. Similarly to Beata, her biggest doubts were related to the transnational separation with her 12 year old daughter. Eventually she came to the conclusion that the child at the age of 12 did not need constant mother-care as much as a younger child.

Iza managed to find a job in Ireland through the Internet, even before her arrival in Dublin. Interestingly, Iza’s migration as well as that of other women from my sample, was often associated with more intensive preparations than the migration of men from my sample. Unlike men, who are more disposed to risk, all migrant women I talked to went abroad when they had already found a job, or at least they knew somebody who could help them. In men’s migration this kind of pre-migration preparation was not always an issue.

Some of the migration patterns mentioned above were also present in the narrations of my male respondents whose wives migrated as pioneers, and were then followed their husbands. For example, Jarosław (31) is highly educated (university education), married to Roma (28) and
childless. He and his wife came to Dublin from a big city in north-west Poland (Szczecin) where Jarosław worked as a school teacher. When talking about gender relations between him and his wife, he declared a model of a dual-earner family with egalitarian gender beliefs. Jarosław's and his wife dream was to “stop struggling every day for money”. They had observed other people who had been successful in Ireland and they decided to follow them and try their luck. The decision was also facilitated by the fact that Jarosław's cousin had been living and working in Ireland for two years, so they could count his help in the new country. Additionally, Roma migrated with a friend Danka, a nurse from the hospital where she worked. As Jaroslaw related, the couple discussed it for some time before eventually making the migration decision together based on the practical calculation of potential gains and losses. Before the move they checked the Irish labour market and then they decided that Jarosław's wife would be the first one to migrate. They believed that her profession (a nurse), would allow her find a job in Ireland faster than Jarosław, and potentially without any problems.

“I don’t remember, really, who got that idea...I think we hit upon it together (…) The decision was not easy, we didn't want to risk. We were just calculating, we were asking people, reading various stuff about Ireland, and so, eventually we decided”.

Egalitarian relations are more likely to be associated with negotiations. However, as with other decisions relevant to family or work roles, negotiations on migration decisions can reveal patterns of power in marital relationships. Jacobsen and Levin (2000) claim that in families the migration decision-making process is reflected in “intra-household bargaining”. Power in these instances is usually hidden or less invisible and may involve an acceptance of particular gender role beliefs, for instance the predominance of a man's career (Hiller and McCaig 2007) or the predominance of a female's child care.

However, in the case of Jarosław and Roma, the wife’s profession, was in demand in the job market, gave the women a strong bargaining chip during the family migration decision-making processes.

As has been previously stated in this thesis and also in the literature (for instance, Bielby and Bielby 1992; Mincer 1978), traditional gender roles have given rise to the classic pattern of family migration: in one-earner couples, the wife used to move for the career of her husband and hence became a ‘tied mover’; in two-earner couples, the labour force participation of the woman might inhibit the move and the husband becomes a ‘tied stayer’ (Bielby and Bielby 1992; Mincer 1978). However, as the example of Jarosław shows, it is possible that a new pattern is emerging. Not only family-oriented but also career-oriented women with good labour market prospects use their power to initiate migration for their own career, and hence turn their husbands into ‘tied movers’. The example above also suggests that the migration decisions of couples without children are based
more on economic calculation than on the decision of couples with children. This is probably due to the fact that for obvious reasons the migration decisions of childless couples, unlike those of couples with children, are not shaped in any way by the parental roles.

VI.III. To go or not to go? Poland vs Ireland: restlessness and debts vs networks and opportunities.

Usually migrants themselves had a sense of being pushed and pulled in different directions. So, most often, my respondents indicated pushes and pulls in order to explain their desire to migrate. Polish transnational family migration after 2004 has mainly been for economic reasons. Almost all of the respondents I talked to during my fieldwork, regardless of age, education and place of living, stated that the main reason they left their families was due to migration associated with financial troubles, debts or the desire to assure a better future for their children. So, migration seemed to them to be the best option for the betterment of the family economic status. For example, debts and lack of money for basic family needs made Beata and her husband think about migration as a possible solution for their troubles.

Why...I think that 90% of cases it is a financial reason. If there is a moment when it turns out that your Polish salary it is not enough simply to live, and the only way to send a child to the school training camp is to take a credit, or the only way to buy a jacket or shoes is to take a credit, then it is misunderstanding. That is not possible to live like that. And either a man keeps living like that and eventually falls into some traps, or he decides on some other solution, for example migration. That was our case (Beata, 42, cleaner).

Beata also mentioned that family financial problems in Poland often caused problems within her marriage. She confessed, that the constant struggle for money resulted in a lack of family time and a tense atmosphere.

"Life was not calm. I was very nervous, everybody was more nervous. Always in pursuit of money. And eventually there was neither money, nor time for the family. (Beata, 42, cleaner)"

Other migrants had similar experiences, for example Daria:

When we were in Poland there was a kind of tension between us sometimes. (...)We worked and we still didn't have money (Daria).

No one expressed a desire to migrate but, instead, a wish for a “normal life”. The research results suggest that for most of my respondents the move to another country was not the only option they had, however it was the best one for them at time moment in their life. The “normal life” was strongly associated with financial comfort. One of my informants even expressed his surprise when
he heard my question about other possible reasons for migration, besides financial ones:

“Why would I want to leave my family and my country if I had a chance for normal life in Poland, to earn enough money to give my family what they need and want?”

So, this can be called “a normal life” migration strategy of the Polish migrant families. This view is supported by the observation of Friar Marek:

I think this economic reason is also in a sense of normal life. Even not to make a fortune but rather to find normality. I remember my conversations with women who stressed that they eventually can calmly manage their household expenditures without constant thinking weather there will be enough money to make ends meet. This normality motive for migration is particularly often present among migrant families with children.

Although economic motives prevailed, one of my male respondents mentioned that there were also relationship-related reasons for migration, which extended beyond the typical explanation of migration for work. This kind of type of migration Agnieszka Małek (2011: 135-137) described as an escapist type. Albert (31) was separated from his wife. He admitted, their problems were caused by financial troubles and his emotional immaturity. He left for Ireland to “test” himself and their relationship. He confessed honestly that migration was a good way to run away from the family and family pressure, and find out at a distance what he felt and what he expected from family life.

“Honestly? We had some problems before I had migrated...sort of marriage problems, and I needed some time to re-think my life, what I want and so on, without any pressure. It is easier to do that from a distance” (Albert).

Additionally, five respondents also mentioned the political atmosphere in Poland as factors which partially contributed to their desire to emigrate from the country. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the strongest push and pull factors indicated by migrants were associated with the different financial and job opportunities to Poland. What pushed the migrants from Poland most often was unemployment or a low salary. At the same time, the perception of much better possibilities on the Irish job market were encouraging factors in choosing Ireland as a destination country. The destination choice was determined by the information which potential migrants received from family and friends, migrant social networks, and destination-specific market information sources. For example, what convinced Marek to consider Ireland and the UK when he was choosing the country to migrate to, was the common opinion of people in the village where he lived about the receptive job market and high wages in the UK and Ireland, even in low-skilled jobs.

96 Respondents who emigrated from Poland in 2006 and 2007, at the time when Jarosław Kaczyński was a prime minister.
where a good knowledge of English is not essential.

“We heard that people migrate there and they earn good money there. Then they come back to Poland with savings, set up some businesses and live calmly. I thought: If they can then why not me? So we started looking for a job on the Internet.”

Marek also supplemented his knowledge of potential destination countries by reading opinions and articles on the Internet.

The examples of Beata or Gustaw (see above in this chapter) indicate that social networks also turned out to be important factors when choosing the destination country. For those who have family members or close friends who have migrated, migration is always a possibility. Analysis of the interviews also indicates that the migratory social networks of Poles are only partly gendered.

The gender composition of family migration networks is irrelevant to the gender of a potential migrant. The analysis of the interviews suggests that this is associated with a greater sense of security among potential migrants who were deciding about future migration, than in the case of other kinds of social networks. However, the gender tendency is obvious in relation to more distant social networks, like friends or acquaintances; migrant women rely more on female social networks (for instance a female colleague of Beata), while male migration is facilitated more by male social networks, for instance a male friend of Ela's husband. This pattern is consistent with what Sara Curran and Estela Rivero-Fuentes’ (2003:304) proposed on the basis of their research on Mexican migrants to the US. Women rely on female migrant social networks because migrant women might have knowledge about gender specific job opportunities. For instance, female migrants may have access only to jobs that men usually would not accept (e.g., as domestic workers or hotel maids), and vice versa.

For some migrants, however less of them than I had expected, religion was a factor that was taken into account when deciding about the destination country. It was most often associated with the desire to raise children in the Catholic religion and tradition. This aspect was more often emphasized by women than by men. Mothers feel more obligated to take care of children’s emotional, cultural and religious development than fathers, as it is a part of family responsibilities which are inherent in the traditional role of mother rather than that of the father.

For instance, Marianna stated that it would have been more difficult to accept a husband’s decision if it had not been to migrate to Ireland, a Catholic country. For her, a mother who feels fully responsible for her children’s education, the Catholic religion was a very important factor that she cared about greatly. She was afraid that in non-Catholic country their children would have been discriminated against for being Catholic.

This is a catholic country and we are Catholics. I didn't want to be afraid that, like in England or protestant Ireland, somebody would beat our children because we are Catholics. I wanted my
younger child to take a first Holy Communion normally and not be afraid.

Although some transnational migration movements in my sample were not solely or directly caused by economic problems, they were still structurally motivated-albeit in an indirect or invisible way-by the overarching sense of insecurity of the Polish labour market.

**VI.IV. Conclusion**

My research indicates several factors which affect the family decision to seek employment abroad. Firstly, migration can be caused by the desire to improve the financial status of the family. Spouses who opt for migration expect that, first of all, they will improve the material well-being of a family. Transnational family migration is an intentional strategy to secure and improve the family’s material wealth and to seek greater opportunities for children’s future. It can be also described as simply searching for a “normal life”, as was mentioned by the Dominican Friar Marek:

*This economic migration of them was their call for a decent life. Something what they did not experience in Poland. Money they earned here have changed their way of life because suddenly they had some more money than only for basic needs. It was a better world motive, their searching of normality. From what I remember from the talks I had with women, they emphasized that they could finally calmly and easily take care of home and family without thinking about money all the time any more. This was the case in families with children usually. (a Friar Marek)*

It should be noted that, although my informants were primarily motivated by economic conditions, many of them believe that departure was not an absolute necessity to them. In other words, the decision to leave was often taken when other options seemed to be less favourable for spouses than migration, and not because they were convinced that migration was the only solution to their problems. Another motivation is associated to the problem of unemployment, and migration was supposed to solve this problem. For some migrants, migration is also a form of withdrawal from family life. Marital or family problems which spouses cannot solve or name, as in the case of one of my informants-Albert, may also be an important motive for departure. Thus, migration can be a form of escape or a naive hope that migration separation will improve the marital relationship. Another reason to go abroad is a desire to break away from the influence of the extended family. So, especially for young spouses who, due to the lack of other opportunities, live in the same household with their parents or parents-in-law, migration is a chance to set up their family life independently from relatives who might be too intrusive in their lives. One way to do so is to earn enough money abroad to build an independent house or to buy an apartment Poland, and another way is to stay
abroad permanently and set up a new family life abroad.

This research also confirms what a large body of sociological and anthropological research has already suggested: that gender roles and gender beliefs are an important component of the migration decision processes within Polish families. The “discourse that defines migration” is embedded in how migrants define and understand gender roles (Malkin, 2004:77). On the basis of the narratives mentioned above as well as the rest of the interviews collected during my fieldwork, I have found a strong link between gender role beliefs and family gender relations, and a degree of choice to migrate over the ability and desire to migrate of men and women. The interests of women and men do not necessarily coincide and may affect decisions about who manages to migrate, for how long, and to what countries.

In general, the results support what had been already noted by Bileby and Bileby (1992) and (Cooke 2005, 2008) that more economically ‘rational’ migration decisions tend to occur when a couple shares egalitarian gender role beliefs, and gender-based decisions tend to be made by couples who live within a traditional gender arrangement.

The research results show that the family migration decision is usually an outcome of a combination of rationally calculated elements and gender beliefs-based arguments. The predominance of the first ones or the second ones is dependent upon the gender beliefs shared by the spouses; if they cultivate a more traditional family gender arrangement, then gender-based arguments dominate when making a decision who, when and for how long will migrate; if the couple share more liberal family gender beliefs, then they value economically rational arguments more when making decisions about migration. The predominance of gender-based arguments does not exclude the existence of economically rational arguments, however they are of secondary importance.

In general, the migration decision within Polish families is often dominated by the husband’s productive endeavours with less regard for the wife’s labour-market potential. This is due to dominant gender beliefs among Poles about men as the breadwinner and woman primarily as the mother. When making migration decisions women still often remain dependent either upon the decisions of men, or their own feelings about her family obligations, resulting from traditional beliefs about family gender roles.

It has also been observed that couples with children have more intensified gender role distinctions than couples without children, thereby the subsidiary role effect is more visible when taking into account their migration decision-making process. The asymmetry in the reasons for migration found in the case of couples with children does not exist to such extent among childless couples.

My research shows that men’s migration dilemmas are almost independent of being a parent, while for women, having children proves to be decisive. For women, unlike for men in that extent, children remain the main factor that shapes their decision if and when to migrate. So, the personal
resources of spouses are much more important in the migration decision making processes in the
case of childless couples or couples with older children (teenagers) than in families with small
child/children. Because of the general social belief (both of women and men), that small children
need the special attention and care of a mother, Polish mothers rarely leave their small children due
to migration.
Moreover, it has been noticed that the degree of this asymmetry between Polish men and women
often depends on the level of education of migrants. Usually among highly educated family
migration decision-makers this asymmetry is smaller, which means that the gender beliefs play a
less important role. Family decisions about migration are also based, to some extent, on a gender-
segregated labour market in the receiving areas, which offers different opportunities to female and
male migrants.
Importantly, there are also conditions in which migration decisions within traditional families
become more rational and less gender-based. Although most of my respondents, regardless of their
gender beliefs, admitted that migration was a way to improve their life conditions and support a
better future for their children, there was also a group of informants who declared that migration
was the only solution for the financial troubles which they had experienced at the moment of their
migration decision. In such families, as the above example of Beata’s family migration shows,
-economic calculation of potential gains and losses and social capital of each of the spouses (mostly
-social networks and a profession) were determining factors in their migration decisions, regardless
of individual family members’ gender beliefs. It also turned out that the gender aspect was
irrelevant in the case of family migration networks, however in the case of more distant social
networks these were more gender-dependent.
The migration decision of one family member is usually associated with a high level of uncertainty,
fear and hope of all of the family members. It is accompanied by a wide range of fears related to the
job possibilities in the host country, the language she/he does not speak, the unknown culture as
well as those concerns related to the consequences of family separation. Those fears are also to
some extent gendered. Migrant men tend to be worried about the potential failure to fulfil the role of
family breadwinner, while women more often than men expressed their concern about the well-
being of family left behind, and how migration would affect their family life; children’s’ emotional
stability, and contentment in marriage. At the same time, all migrants hoped to improve the
-economic situation of their families, and ensure a better future for their children.
It is important to stress that these determining factors are probably totally different for single
migrants, nevertheless the still deeply rooted feelings of gender obligations provide patterns for
family transnational making decisions.
VII. Transnational family stage.

This part of the thesis is devoted to the transnational family stage, or the time when family members live separated from each other yet foster family ties across national borders (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002). In order to present the most complete picture of transnational family relations, a multidimensional perspective has been taken into account; the male and female point of view, and memories of both transnational migrants and their family members who at the time of transnational family life lived in Poland. As mentioned already, most of my interviews were conducted from the retrospective perspective.

The chapter is organized as follows; in the first part it presents the analysis of various aspects of the transnational family life experience of Polish women and Polish men, both those who were transmigrants and those who stayed in Poland. The analysis in the latter parts of this chapter apply sequentially to transnational family communication and to the sense of temporariness among transmigrants.

VII.I. Women

The demographic profile of Polish migrants in Ireland clearly shows that men migrate more than women (Census 2006 in Ireland: 64% male and 36% female). Among them are 59% of married males and only 18% of married females who do not live with their spouse at the time of the census. This data indicates the scale of Polish transnational families in Ireland, and suggests that the number of husbands and fathers who left their families behind is much higher than the number of wives and mothers who did the same. The results of my research also suggest that most Polish migrant women still follow their husbands rather than precede them. Nevertheless, the number of women migrants has increased dramatically in recent years, and women are increasingly becoming the “lead migrant” within families. This trend has been described as “a mighty but silent river” (UN 2006). Previously female migration was mostly to facilitate family reunion, nowadays it is increasingly to ensure the economic betterment of the family as well as to improve women’s careers. Polish women who are pioneers of migration in their families are likely to be older, and better educated than women who follow their husbands.

The analysis of the interviews provides a picture of migrant mothers and wives calculating the potential profits and losses of the migration. However, the investment in migration is understood not only in strictly financial or material terms, but also in social, moral, emotional and eventually family-household duties. This is most evident in the case of migrant women who left their small
children in Poland. The calculation that had been made before the departure was not a simple summary of the arguments for and against migration, but it was a complicated process in which the weight of individual factors, both rational and emotional was not equal. Female migrants' narratives about their dilemmas linked to migration and transnational family life have also proven that cultural factors such as gender beliefs strongly shape the individual and family migrants' life and actions. Although migration was often indicated by transnational migrant women as a source of stress and concern about their own migrant situation in Ireland and the condition of their families in Poland, it was also very often a first step in the change of a migrant's psychophysical well-being and, for some women, also life's priorities. Regardless of job position, all transnational migrant women whom I talked to declared that the fact that they came to Ireland, managed to find a job there and cope with the new social environment, caused an increase in their self-esteem. It also encouraged them to start thinking about their own needs and plans, which they gave up when struggling with everyday life in Poland. Beata, a forty two year old working mother of three children, whom she left in Poland with their father, is one of the examples. First of all Beata expressed her satisfaction with her better financial position and job in Ireland as compared to Poland, which during the transnational separation with the family allowed her to survive in Dublin and send some money to her loved ones in Poland.

Beata’s level of satisfaction relates to comparison with alternatives. Although Beata was only a cleaner in Ireland, she could compare her position favourably against being unemployed in Poland or earning a Polish wage. An additional factor that was raised by Polish migrants in Ireland, more often by women than by men, was the Irish social welfare system. Although most of the Polish migrants in Ireland do not benefit from it, the extensive level of social assistance in Ireland gives migrant women a sense of social security.

What is more, one thing that amazed me here is the social system. It’s really great. Anyone who gets hurt won’t be ignored. They will help all of us (Beata 42).

Beata possessed also a certain level of job security and confidence that if you are ready to accept hard physical work you will be able to with cope in Ireland. And if you are willing to accept a poor salary and look around, sooner or later you will find a better job.

The migration situation also let Beata tear herself away from everyday family life. In Poland she was carrying out the traditional role of caring mother and wife, and she perceived her own needs as always less important than those of her husband and children. However in Ireland, the financial independence increased her self-esteem.

I could afford to rent a flat, buy some food and clothes. My situation proved to be better and I had still some money to send it to my children(...). I began to succeed in here. It boosted my courage, cheered me up. I began thinking a little bit about myself and about my situation, that so far,
everything was subordinated to everyone else but not me. Everything was important, because this has to be done for children, because that has to be done for the husband, because something else has to be done for someone else, for me everything was at the end, or it wasn't place for me, or time, or will, or who knows what. But here I started thinking: why it has to be like that? This life passes and will I not experience anything more? Nothing interesting is waiting for me in this life? No. I can still do something for myself. And there was a moment when I said to myself: From this moment I set the priorities which are important for me, and I won’t step back and I will not give up (Beata 42, cleaner).

So, temporary separation from the family also let her look at her family life from a distance and eventually it has drawn Beata's attention to her own needs. The newly gained self-esteem and financial independence, which followed her migration to Ireland, encouraged Beata to change her attitude to life.

Beata’s metamorphosis is clearly consistent with what Anna Triandafyllidou (2006:237) noticed: “Clearly the migration experience contributes in both material and emotional ways in changing the role of women in their families and their own understanding of who they are and what they want to achieve in their lives”.

Nevertheless, social demands directed toward migrant women are often mutually contradictory. It may be difficult or even impossible to meet them all, and as a result it may cause tensions in the individual life (Malek 2010:264). So, an attempt to reconcile their family roles with the role of a migrant worker and, at the same time, meet social requirements linked to the role of mother and wife, was a common experience among my female respondents. It was followed by numerous tensions felt by migrant women. For example, the experience of Iza illustrates these tensions. She had been living in transnational separation from her husband and a teenage daughter for almost 2 years.

“Every time I could I tried to call her, to talk to her [a daughter]. I wanted her to feel than she had a mother, and to be for her when she needed me, But I had to work also and I couldn't just go to them whenever I wanted, so it was difficult, and sometimes I was fed up with everything” (Iza 35).

The strongest emotional tension is associated with the mother-child relationship. Iza as with other female respondents did not transform their traditional beliefs about the ideal “Polish mother” and they tried to realize this image from a distance as much as they were able to. Similar tensions have been observed by Agnieszka Malek (2011) among Polish migrants women in Italy who tried to reconcile their family roles of mothers and wives with their role of migrants, but they also tried to meet social demands associated with the role of the mother only. „They [migrant women-MM] had to accept the situation when the mother has to leave her children in order to ensure their future. Migration of men is considered as a phenomenon deeply rooted in the culture, so the figure of the
absent father seems to be more natural. While in the case of women there is a complete inversion of the traditional model of motherhood which emphasized the presence of mother at home. Respondents stressed the belief about the necessity of being with the family. Being a parent means the necessity of fulfilling duties associated with this role.” (Małek, 2011:144).

In this situation of contradictory expectations coming from their roles in their families and from their position as a migrant worker, migrants usually try to reduce emerging tensions (Goode 2005). The analysis of my research suggests that migrant women were slightly relieved when they could justify their migration. Therefore, although most of the mothers from my sample said they felt guilty, they did not think of themselves as mothers who had abandoned their children (as mothers in Parreñas research did). These mothers have found an appropriate- in their opinion- justification which, to some extent, reinforced their “choice” to migrate – they were earning money for their children. They saw themselves as mothers who gave their children better chances for development. This would not have been possible if they had stayed in Poland. Thus, transnational mothers who left their children in the home country perceived their migration as a tremendous dedication. For example, Beata, like other migrant mothers with whom I talked, believed that her dedication, besides improving her children’s material well-being and educational opportunities, would also be taken as a sign of their affection to their children, and it would be appreciated by the children in the future.

“It was everything for the better future of our children, to educate them, to give them a chance for better life. Maybe, one day they will appreciate this, because it wasn't easy [to leave the children]” (Beata, 42).

She has a strong sense of responsibility for the family and she identifies her happiness with happiness of her family members. The same trends were observed by Agnieszka Małek (2011:130) among Polish mothers in Italy. Migrants’ children are in the center of their families. This is confirmed by declarations of respondents: “family is everything for me”, “this is for children” especially in the context of children’s education. Perspective thinking appears exclusively in relation to their children, not in relation to their own future. In Polish migrant women’s perception the best thing they can do is to help their children to achieve better life in the future.

In order to better understand a mother’s explanations or rather justifications for their migration, we should also consider the non-intentional influence of me, as a researcher and as a woman with the same cultural background, which could create migrants’ apprehension of being judged by me as good or bad mothers. It could contribute to the creation of mothers’ justifications for leaving (economic reasons and a better future for their children) as well creating opposing views (feeling guilty for having left their children). Obviously, it is difficult to predict to what extent my influence was relevant.
The mother’s sense of guilt and her need for the justification of the transnational separation with her children is strengthened by the fact that mothers are considered by the Polish society and also by themselves as the main caregivers for their kids (see chapter 1). However, while being economic family providers from a distance, these women knew and felt that they could not supply all their children’s emotional necessities. Therefore, they are often criticized for having left their children due to migration. As a result of separation as well as from social pressure migrant mothers feel responsible for the possible negative consequences which the separation may have on their children. For example, although Iza's child did not need constant care anymore, Iza faced sharp criticism and incomprehension from other mothers in Poland, especially those who had children of a similar age or younger. Unlike the family roles of men, the family involvement of women, especially the role of mother, insures that women’s migration is viewed by outsiders as morally unacceptable. As my respondent Iza noticed, a father’s migration is perceived as a more natural one than the migration of mothers.

As I was talking to my husband: it is much easier for a father when he migrates, when he leaves the family because it is socially more acceptable, he is perceived differently than woman who stays abroad and her child is in Poland.

It turned out that the migration of mothers is judged particularly negatively by other mothers, especially when children experiencing separation are of school age or younger. The long transnational separation of mothers and children seemed to them almost unnatural. However, this attitude, as my respondents suggested, is characteristic only for those women who have never migrated by themselves. For example, Iza told about her experience:

And some younger people, mothers who also have children in school age or younger, they don’t understand the situation that a mother could migrate and leave her child. They don’t understand how I could go and leave my daughter. When I talk with my female friends in Poland, they all ask me always the same question; how could you, a mother, leave you child?(…) I'm trying not to think about what other people think but is not so easy (Iza 35, cleaner).

Migrant mothers for obvious reasons tend to treat transnational motherhood due to financial reasons with much more understanding. The analysis of the interviews shows that, on the one hand the respondents highlighted the strength of cultural pressures that placed them in the role of family care-giver and they took into account the opinion of other family members, friends and neighbours. However, on the other hand, it seems that women internalized the perception of their traditional role and they found it very difficult or even unacceptable to resign from it. Similarly to Polish women in Italy described by Agnieszka Małek (2011), they wanted to fulfill their gender roles according to the common social and cultural norms and at the same time they were afraid that they may be condemned by the environment. Therefore, as a result: "It has the status of cultural certainty that
provision of care services to others, especially loved ones, is ascribed to the role of Polish women” (Titkow 2007:157). In other words, the approach of many Polish migrant mothers seem to perfectly correlate with the Morokvasic’s “ideal of a socialist good worker-mother superwoman” model, which is specific to women from East-Central Europe (Morokvasic 2007: 84), and the national, self-sacrificing image of the Polish Mother.

In the end, the literature on the topic as well as all emotional and sometimes dramatic stories of my female respondents who experienced transnational separation from their children, convinced me to make a strong statement that transnational motherhood comes at a great emotional cost both to mothers and their children. This kind of mother and child suffering Parreñas called „the pain of mothering from a distance” and” the pain of growing up in transnational families” (Parreñas 2001:370, 375). However, very often mothers who experienced “the pain of mothering” also expected other mothers in a similar situation to suffer. “The pain of mothering” was seen as an expected and proper feeling of mothers separated from their children. A similar conclusion was also drawn by Joanna Dreby: “Transnational mothers expect that they, and other mothers in their situation, will call home regularly and suffer greatly without their children(...)Mothers who do not suffer without their children are accused of abandoning them” (Dreby 2006:52).

Another factor which differently shapes the migration of women and men is the social perception related to the common social perception of their marriage roles.

Iza emphasized a different social approach in Poland towards the transnational migration of a woman leaving behind her husband and towards the transnational migration of men leaving behind a wife. This is particularly noticeable in the opinion of older people.

‘Yes, it’s a tragedy. Especially for older people; aunts, uncles couldn’t understand our situation that we were married and lived apart. They did not even care about our child but were worried what would happen if I met someone else and had an affair. A woman is usually treated more with suspicion, because she went abroad alone, she could feel lonely and need somebody, she could be adored by another man (Iza 35, cleaner).

So, the example above clearly indicates that the common perception of adultery is gendered. The stereotypical thought about adultery seems to be even more intensified in the case of transnational migrants and their spouses. In the opinion of Iza’s relatives, migrant women are more often than their husbands who are left behind exposed to the temptation to betray the spouse because of the natural female need to be adored and protected by a man, and because of feelings of loneliness. This is in the aftermath of socially constructed gender beliefs about the subordination of a woman to a man; a woman needs protection and the presence of a man. Iza’s relatives believe that if a woman is deprived of this protection, no matter whether this is of her own will or not and whether it is temporary due to migration or permanent, there is a natural tendency to look for another
“protector”. The potential infidelity of migrant wives or wives who remained in Poland, is also less socially acceptable than the infidelity of men, both those who emigrated and those who stayed at home. This arises from the family gender role traditionally ascribed to women- an idealized image of the devoted wife and mother fully dedicated to her children. While the adultery of men is seen as a potential danger for the marriage, the adultery of a woman poses a threat to the entire family and violation of the female role within the family.

For example, one of my respondents noticed;

“I don’t like it, but people condemn more women than men [ for adultery-MM]. When it's a man then they say; well, it’s not good but at least he stayed with the family, but when it's a woman, then they call her a whore, and that she ruined the family.” (Jola, 25, waitress)

Despite some similarities, there are still much more differences between the transnational family life of transnational migrant women and women who stayed in Poland while their husbands migrated. Although migrant women often see their migration situation as a kind of mission and dedication to the family- it also allowed them to think of themselves as modern martyrs- they usually gain financial independence and self-esteem is increased. While women who stay in Poland often perceived the transnational family stage as a time of stagnation, a time of waiting, and eventually a time of preparation for the move and reunification in Ireland.

For example, one of my female respondents described her time in Poland during the transnational stage of her family as follows:

In Poland, for me and Asia, our daughter, it was time of waiting only. I didn't make any decisions, I didn't look for a better job, we were in kind of limbo and waiting. We gave ourselves enough time that allowed him to prepare everything for us, to rent a flat, to find a good school for the child. It was this kind of period of time, counting months. For my husband it was very intensive time because he had to get used to the language, to the new job, to the new tools in work, he had a lot of trainings (Ela 39, cleaner).

For many women it was also a time of tentative plans, hopes and dreams for their future life in Ireland, as it was for Daria:

I tried to think positively about our future in Ireland. That Marek would get a job there and everything would be all right and he would bring me to Ireland eventually. And maybe I would find a job there but if not then...yes...but we would be together and this was the most important. That's what I was thinking that time (Daria).

Women who joined their husbands in Ireland often highlighted two dimensions of their transnational family experience in Poland; on the one hand they noted the material benefits coming from remittances, but on the other hand, they emphasized emotional difficulties related to family separation, most often a sense of loneliness and the fear of problems in the marriage. Most of my
female respondents mentioned that usually their biggest concern during the transnational family stage was related to the husband's life conditions abroad, his health and mental well-being. For example Daria mentioned:

“He is very ambitious, and I know that he would have broken down if he hadn't succeed. So I was worried about him. He didn't want to worry me so he didn't tell me how he had lived. So I was making stories in my head about this too; whether he was healthy or had everything what he needed...(...) Yea, I was more worried about him than about myself...(laugh)”

Sometimes spouses, both men and women shared the same feelings of concern about the influence of the transnational separation on the quality of their marriage. For instance, at the beginning of the interview Marek declared that while he was deciding to migrate abroad his biggest anxiety was related to his lack of knowledge of the English language. Later however, he admitted that he was also worried about the quality of the relationship with his wife. He described a situation of transnational marriage as “unhealthy”. His wife's concern in Poland was:

What did I feel that time? I felt uncertainty whether all these plans would succeed and whether we would manage to keep our relationship as it was before. Yes, I was afraid a little bit although I trusted him. I did not take into account betrayals or that he would leave me. I mean, I tried not to think about it (Daria).

The feelings of loneliness and fear over the family dissolution were sometimes very strong. So, although all interviewed women who followed their husbands during transnational family stage had actually benefited financially from remittances and despite the fact that a family’s dire economic situation was the primary motivation for their husband’s migration, two of my respondents confessed to me that sometimes they had wished their husbands had never migrated. The concern about potential dissolution, and that the marriage would fall apart due to the long separation was sometimes directly expressed to me. For example Mirka (31) described her transnational family time as “terrible”. She emphasized her constant fear that the separated lives, her in Poland and her husband in Ireland would eventually result in family problems. Mirka also suggested the commonality of the situation in which a wife remains in the home country and a husband goes abroad and earns for the family. She is also convinced that transnational separation of spouses is a frequent reason for the break up of a marriage.

It was so terrible time that I cannot even describe it, and I don’t recommend it to anyone. Whenever I hear about someone’s departure it is always the same: woman stays with children and her husband goes abroad to seek a better life. It usually ends up in breaking off the relationship, divorce or those people just... When my husband left he had his own life there and I had my own here. Although he called very often, so that I knew everything, but it was just a telephone conversation (Mirka, 31).
Although not all respondents felt that their marriage had suffered because of the migration separation, almost all of them reported how hard it had been for them to live apart. Their comments on the matter echoed the declarations of the informants in Anne White’s research on Polish migrant families in the UK (White 2011). Similar findings can also be found in other studies on the transnational separation of families, for instance in Salgado de Snyder’s (1993) research. Many respondents also mentioned their experience of a growing sense of distance between spouses. The emotional distance between family members grew along with the prolonged separation. The spouses very often confessed that during their transnational family time they had organized their lives almost fully independently of each other. They had become accustomed to the new daily routines. For example Aniela (37) was surprised how fast and easy it was for her to become used to her husband’s absence. Aniela was waiting for reunification but at the same time she was sorry to leave the comfortable and organized life which she had lived during the transnational separation.

When he was abroad I managed to arrange my life somehow, I knew what time my children went to school, what time they came back. We had meals at regular time and after they went to bed I had some free time. Just for me. It was quiet, I could do whatever I wanted to.

However, apart from emotional dilemmas the transnational separation of spouses also brought some practical difficulties into everyday life. A lot of women, who remained in the home country during the transnational family stage, mentioned that they had suffered from the added workload and responsibilities which suddenly fell to them following their husbands’ migration. They were overwhelmed by everyday problems with which they had to cope alone. For many of them additional responsibilities meant dealing with duties which had previously been performed by their husbands. As a result, although male migrants were responsible for earning money in Ireland for the family in Poland, their wives in the home country were forced to perform the role of managers, dealing with debt collectors, organizing their move to Ireland, renting their apartments in Poland before the move etc. For example one of my female respondents (Julia, 33), who had experienced transnational family life for one and half years, described her responsibilities in Poland during that time as such:

“It knew that I would stay with all these decisions and responsibilities alone. I could always count on him but it is not the same when he is so far: (...) So, my life was organized with a watch, and always on the run. It was very difficult for me”.

Fortunately, when some help with childcare was needed she could count on her mother.

“When my child got sick then either I had to take a few days off at work, or my mum was coming and helping me. So, this is how I was dealing with everyday matters”.

Julia also confessed that she was responsible for all of the organizational matters in Poland associated with her and her child’s move to Ireland.
“When I already knew when we would go to Ireland, I still had to arrange everything in Poland before my leave, finish some things, repay debts and other claims, and rent our flat. So, the time before our move was very busy, so busy that I almost had no time to think about my fears (laugh). Everything was on my head.”

Only a few women in my research sample who were left behind during the transnational family time found the additional tasks a source of new-found self-confidence. The majority of them perceived new responsibilities resulting from separation as an additional burden which they had no choice but to endure.

Similar findings are presented in the article by Neily Salgado de Snyder (1993) on Mexican women living in their home country and married to immigrant workers residing in the United States. Salgado de Snyder (1993) noted that, although for some Mexican women who were left behind, new responsibilities were a source of empowerment, they were also exposed to new stress filled situations. They experienced stress associated with the welfare of the absent husband, acquisition of new responsibilities and obligations, and family disintegration. Other studies, such as a comparative study of the wives left behind in Guatemala and Armenia (Menjívar and Agadjanian; 2007), indicates that male migration may even strengthen traditional female dependence and gender inequality.

Thus, women often devoted much more time and energy to tasks previously shared with their husbands, including tasks associated with bringing up children. A number of women said that during transnational separation from their husbands and the fathers of their children they had to fulfil a double role for their children; of both mother and father. For example Julia confessed it resulted in a change in her parenting methods. She became more firm with her son.

“At that time I had to be a father and a mother at the same time. I had to become more firm with my son.” (Julia, 33)

Nevertheless, Julia repeatedly stressed that despite her attempts she could not fully replace the father’s parenting role. This resulted in Julia’s great concern about her child missing the father. A similar pattern has also been noticed among other female respondents with a similar lifestyle as well as by some researchers, for example Anne White (White 2011:95) “The father’s absence makes everyone in the family realise that he is a parent as well as a breadwinner and that conventional gender roles are not the only guide as to who in the family should migrate.” Even respondents with a traditional point of view on gender roles declared that fathers have special parental duties which are irreplaceable and cannot be performed by mothers. In addition to their socially imposed image of Polish Mother, Polish women who stayed alone in the home country and took care of their children, became engaged in what Sharon Hays (1996) called ‘intensive mothering’- “construed as child-centered, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labor-intensive, and financially expensive”
(Hays 1996:8, italics in the text). She argued that “intensive mothering” continues to place women in the role of an all-caring, self-sacrificing ideal "the Mother". According to Hays “intensive mothering” is the ideology of proper motherhood common for contemporary women regardless of race and social class, even if not all women actually practice it (1996:9, 86).

These rather pessimistic assessments of the increased female burdens were interspersed with the respondents’ positive perceptions of improved material conditions resulting from the remittances sent by their husbands or partners. Unlike transnational migrant women, wives in Poland were often dependent on the money earned by their migrant husbands. Gifts and remittances from migrants carried a dual function for their wives; first, it provided direct financial help to them, and second, it was also a sign that their relationships were doing well. One of my female respondents, 29 year old Aneta, although not talking directly about her own experience, presented her opinion about the material and emotional role of remittances for marital and family relations.

“There are some people for whom this Ireland is like an escape from the family. They go and there is no trace left of them, no money sent to the family, no messages, nothing. No matter if they are frequent or not but phone calls are important. And money also, because a woman who stayed in Poland has to make ends meet somehow. And she knows that this man doesn't do whatever and he feels responsible for the family (Aneta, 29).

Thus, remittances and gifts seemed to minimize, in the women's eyes at least, the significant female concerns about family dissolution and make women feel safer in their marriage. As Bryceson and Vuorela (2002:14) noted, the exchange of remittances allow people to ‘relativize’\(^{97}\) relationships with family members.

VII.II. Man

Although for all respondents regardless of sex transnational family time was perceived as difficult, the experiences of migrant men and migrant women differ from each other.

The transnational migration of Polish men is usually a few months longer than the transnational migration of Polish women. This trend has also been observed among other migrants (Súarez-Orozco, Todorova, & Louie, 2002). A possible explanation lies in the fact that male respondents usually emphasized the necessity for preparing proper living conditions prior to family reunification in Ireland; usually a bigger and better equipped apartment and some savings. This was seen as part

\(^{97}\) "Relativizing refers to modes of materializing the family as an imaged community with shared feelings and mutual obligations. Given the physical distances that separate them, many family members are not subject to daily or frequent face-to-face interaction with each other. Individuals ‘relativize’ family membership against a background of declining contact time or spatial proximity associated with transnational mobility. Relativizing involves the selective formation of familial emotional and material attachments on the basis of temporal, spatial and need-related considerations” (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002:14).
of the obligations ascribed to the male role within the family. Women, in turn, wanted to reunify the family as soon as possible. They attached less importance to housing conditions and more often than men emphasized care about good emotional relationships within the family. While women perceived migration mostly as dedication to their families, migrant men treated it more like an opportunity to fulfil their family duties. In the opinion of most of my male migrant respondents, the basic responsibility of a man is to ensure the material and financial comfort of his family, so during the transnational family stage they were mainly focused on earning money for the family.

The most common feeling among transnational migrants was homesickness. However, migrant men more often than migrant women also mentioned their sense of alienation abroad, and that they had only themselves to trust. They had the impression that they could not count on any help. Unlike migrant women, whose greater concern was related to the family left behind, some of my male respondents also perceived their own migrant situation as being worse than the their wives situation in Poland.

For instance Albert, husband to Agata, and a father of two children, expressed the opinion that the transnational family situation that they had experienced for one year, was much easier to bear for his wife left with the children in Poland than for him, a migrant. He explained it through the importance of family support. He emphasized the fact that his wife could count on some help from relatives, while he was alone abroad and had to cope with all problems on his own.

“Alone..., whole family is in Poland so she wasn't alone like I was in Ireland. She had some help from my family and from her family as well, well, so it wasn't so bad.” (Albert, 31)

A similar point of view was also shared by other men, for instance Gustaw:

“I left for Ireland and I had to cope with so many new things, new problems. She stayed at home. She had family around. Anytime she wanted she could asked them for some help. It is different when you are alone, you feel lonely and lost in a different country, you don't know the language and you desperately look for a job (Gustaw 35)”.

The transnational separation of some of my male respondents was perceived as even more difficult when they mentioned their new responsibilities linked to housework. Therefore, the importance of ostensibly ‘mundane’ domestic tasks should not be overlooked in the lives of transmigrant men. For many of my male respondents who emigrated first, the transnational family stage has meant learning skills, such as cooking and cleaning, from scratch and without female guidance. Thus, almost all immigrant men who migrated first confessed that they were impelled to learn and undertake some traditional “women's work” they had not had to do before. Some of them stressed that some things that they had been doing prior to migration and that it was nothing new to them, nevertheless there was always something that they had to learn. The most common problem and at the same time the most difficult one to learn was cooking. For instance, Kristian remembered that
until he learned how to cook he had only been eating sandwiches.

“I managed somehow. It wasn't so bad, only with cooking I had a small problem (laugh). At the beginning I was eating mostly sandwiches” (Kristian, 33).

Some respondents also admitted that prior to migration they had not appreciated enough their wife's work at home. Nonetheless, on the question of whether they would continue cooking after their family reunification, most of them answered that it was their wife who cooked and they who would help sometimes. Only one man Miłosz, a chef by profession, declared that he had cooked before the migration time, and also after the family reunification and that it was mostly him who cooked.

“I am a chef by profession, so I have no problem with cooking. But cleaning or washing I leave to my wife. (...) Well, when I was here alone I had to learn how to use a washing machine (laugh), but since my wife arrived she does washing.” (Miłosz, 39)

Similar life challenges during the transnational family stage were also mentioned by men whose wives had migrated first ones. For example Mikołaj (42), Iza's husband, recalled the transnational family time when he stayed in Poland with a daughter as the time when he had had to face a lot of new challenges and experiences. Most of them were linked to home duties which had been performed by his wife prior to her migration.

I tried to learn how to cook, just simple things which you can learn how to cook from the package, from the recipe which is written there. Usually on Saturdays and Sunday we were going either to my mother for dinner or to my sister. (...) I had many other responsibilities that I hadn't have before, female stuff. I had to go to my daughter's school for example, or help her with homework (Mikołaj 42).

Iza (35) also remembered her husband’s struggle during nearly two years of transnational family separation. She noticed that:

You know, you can learn everything if you have to. He learned how to cook. First, he learned how to cook water in a kettle, then he started preparing Chinese soups [a ramen noodle instant soup-MM], then some products with the instruction how to prepare it. When, the product in the shop doesn't have a instruction how to cook it, it doesn't exist for him. So, over that time, he learned how to cook, how to take care about home, and he became a sort of housewife. But now, after he found a job, he comes back from work tired, the daughter also comes back from school tired, because in Polish schools is much difficult than in Irish. (...) I asked my mother-in-law who lives close to them to help them (Iza 35, cleaner).

Iza was happy that her husband tried to cope with the housework, which he had not done before her migration, however she treated it as out-of-the-ordinary behaviour and as only a temporary response necessary to the situation. As soon as her husband found a job, Iza came to the conclusion that new responsibilities might be a burden on her husband and she decided to provide Mikołaj with female
help (from his mother). Iza also confessed that she had not believed that the greater engagement of her husband in household duties during the transnational separation would continue any longer than her absence.

Mika Toyota et al. (2007) noticed the reversed gender roles related to daily responsibilities are very often regarded both by women and men as “shaky” and only temporary. The assumption about the inconstancy of the gender change in exceptional situations consolidates the traditionally established gender arrangement: “To help allay the discomfort of reversed, ‘shaky’ gender roles, both women and men view wives’ migration as distinctly temporary and ad hoc. In other words, despite the practical day-to-day need for left-behind men to engage with ‘women’s work’, the community continues to position this role reversal discursively as an exception and, in doing so, reinforce the established gender norms” (Toyota et al. 2007:160).

The division of family roles and the responsibilities of transmigrants usually mirrors the gendered nature of parental engagement in the countries of origin (e.g., Parreñas, 2008). This is largely true in the case of Polish transnational families in Ireland. The dominant migration pattern is one in which fathers seek financial resources for the family in Ireland while mothers stay with children in Poland. Most recent studies on transnational families explore the emotional consequences for migrant mothers who live apart from their children while far less research has been focused on migrant fathers and how their experiences are comparable to those of migrant mothers (Parreñas, 2008). For many years, migrant fathers have been characterized as “fathers only by check” (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994: 68). Parreñas’s research (2008) on transnational fathering in the Philippines shows that fathers raise their bread-winning role above the emotional needs of their children. These research results partially confirm the analysis of the interviews I collected among Polish transnational fathers in Ireland. While female migrant’s feelings of increased self-confidence were in most cases disturbed by the deep feeling of guilt in the case of migrant mothers, transnational migrant fathers whom I talked to did not have such feelings. In their opinion, providing for the family is a part of responsibilities linked to the role of the father. In order to fulfil social expectations as well as their individual sense of duty and responsibility they were even ready to risk close relations with their children. So, unlike the migration of mothers, the migration of fathers is not in opposition to traditional male beliefs about the proper behaviour of the father. For example Kristian, a father of 3 year old Allan, identified bread-winning as fulfilling his obligations as head of the family, a father and a husband. In order to improve his family’s financial situation he did not see any choice other than migration. At the same time he was aware that this decision could bring negative consequences for the relationship with his son.

“I wish I hadn’t had to leave. Yes, I know that it might be like I will be a little bit like a stranger to him and it hurts me when I think about that, but what can I do?” (Kristian, 33)
All of the interviewed fathers expressed pity that they had to leave their children. However, concern over the relationship with his son was accompanied by the conviction that even if problems occurred they would only be temporary.

“Well, for the moment it must be how it is but later [after the family reunification-MM] everything will return to normal.”

Kristian justified his migration and his absence in his son's life by also emphasizing his belief about the role of a mother as a primary care-giver to a small child:

“The lesser evil for him is if it is me who left for Ireland and he stayed with his mum” (Why less evil?-MM) When we were together my wife had been spending with him more time than I had anyway. And besides, he is a small child and in this age the mother is more important, normally (Kristian, 33).

Thus, women continue to be seen as the primary, central caregivers of children. As Hays (1996:8) argues: "there is an underlying assumption that the child absolutely requires consistent nurture by a single primary caretaker and that the mother is the best person for the job. When the mother is unavailable, it is other women who should serve as temporary substitutes."

Although transnational fathers confessed that they missed their children left behind in Poland, at the same time they did not feel guilty for the temporary abandonment of their families due to the migration. They perceived migration as a chance to fulfil a duty in order to become a good father who provides for his family.

The research results indicate that male migration is seen as a phenomenon deeply rooted in the culture. The absence of the father seems to be perceived as more natural than a mother's absence. In the case of women, the migration is a complete reversal of the traditional model of motherhood, which emphasizes the presence of the mother at home. Being a parent means carrying out necessary responsibilities associated with that role. The role of the mother consists primarily of expressive functions; emotional, psychological ones reflected in affection and empathy, while the role of the father is linked to instrumental functions such as breadwinning (Lesińska-Sawicka 2008 after Małek 2010).

VII.III. Transnational family communication

Although transnational communication also existed among migrants in the past, the current travel possibilities and communication technology allow more frequent and regular contact between migrants and their homelands than ever before (Foner 1997). High-tech forms of communication,
including telephone and the internet, play a crucial role in building ties across borders between migrants and their non-migrants relatives left behind (Glick Schiller 1995 et al.; Mahler 2001). Portes et al. (1999: 219) observed that “it is the intensity of exchanges, the new modes of transacting, and the multiplication of activities that constitute a unique phenomenon among immigrants today.”

Frequent contact with family left behind was equally important for migrant men as for migrant women. Respondents of both sexes stressed that frequent transnational communication allowed them to keep relatively close family relationships with loved ones, have a sense of security in terms of the quality of the marriage, and decrease the risk of family dissolution. In some cases, intensive transnational family communication gave migrants a sense (however limited a one) of participation in the everyday life of spouses and children left in Poland.

The communication sphere of Polish migrants in Ireland and their non-migrants family members left behind in the home country was mostly created by phone calls and Internet communication (mostly skype and social forums such as Nasza Klasa or Facebook). Access to online communication tools did not differ significantly with regard to a respondent’s level of education, age or place of living in Poland. However, some respondents with lower levels of education, and often those coming from small villages, admitted that before migration they had been slightly less familiar with high-tech communication tools such as the Internet. Usually respondents were using the same term- phone-talk- when talking about a phone conversation or an online conversation on Skype. The frequency of this form of communication most often depended upon: lack of money (mentioned more often by these respondents who remained in Poland) and free time (usually mentioned by informants who migrated first). Most contact between family members took place several times a week, however there were also transnational families where phone talks or other contact were no more than once a week. None of my respondents mentioned communication by post. When asked, one of my male respondent answered that communication through sending letters by post “would be waste of time if you can call by phone”. All respondents also appreciated low cost flights between Poland and Ireland. They declared that the fact that if they need they can be in Poland in a few hours, which made them feel much more comfortable and relaxed. Nevertheless, due to migrants’ savings plans and lack of time, face-to-face visits were usually limited to two to three visits a year, usually during summer holidays and religious holidays such as Christmas and Eastern. Most of my respondents who had been left behind, especially women, suggested that during the transnational separation phone calls and other transnational contact with their husbands meant more to them than simply receiving information about their loved ones. Women interpreted any kind of communication such as telephone calls, remittances or visits as an indication that their husbands were thinking about the family left behind and still cared for them and loved them. The
regular communication gave family members who remained in Poland emotional comfort and often decreased their fears over family dissolution. For example in the opinion of Patrycja (32) the regular phone calls helped her marriage survive the transnational separation. Patrycja emphasised that she and her husband had established the frequency of phone calls before his migration. She treated it as her husband’s family duty.

*We agreed from the beginning that he would be calling me, so he was calling almost every day. And if not every day, then every Friday, Saturday and Sunday he was going to the city centre to called me. And it was very important because we both agreed for that. And it was not like that- baby, you can do what you want and call whenever you want. No, he knew that I was waiting for the phone, he had to call. And that is why we were very close to each other all that time and we did not fall apart.*

Her husband Bartosz stressed that intensive transnational communication together with love and a sense of common responsibility for their daughter were the most important factors that made his marriage persevere through transnational separation.

*I think we managed to survive because...we kept in contact almost non-stop and we had talks like we would have lived together, normal talks about everyday things... and I thought about family nothing else. (...) And I think that also Mila. She is something what always joins us, no matter what. And love most of all, right?*

Transnational conversations were usually focused on the economic aspects and future migration plans, and everyday life; external goings-on, day-today chores and responsibilities.

“...you can’t hug but still you can have everyday conversation about everything, what happened etc., especially if you call so often as I did. It is not that you meet somebody after years and you don’t know what to say. We had normal talks, you know bla bla bla and so on (Bartosz).

Other respondents had similar memories in the matter. For example Daria remembered that:

*We were talking about everyday life. I tried to keep him involved in my everyday life, so I was talking about everything for example how I spent my day, what I was doing, who I met, what people were talking to me about, etc. Talks similar to those we had when he was in Poland with me. So I was calmer and I did not have a feeling that something could go wrong in our relationships because of this distance.*

Another important topic of transnational conversations between spouses was related to children. For instance Patrycja mentioned that her husband’s engagement in regular phone talks allowed Bartosz to always be up to date with the everyday life of his daughter. Thanks to that Mila endured the separation with her father more easily.

*We were non-stop in contact so he was engaged in all cases, all problems of Mila, he knew about everything, and Mila talked to him very often so I think, thanks to that she didn’t miss him so much*
As Bartosz’s example shows, although Polish migrant fathers stressed the importance of economic contributions to their children, most of them were also engaged in other types of transnational parenting activities, such as phone calls or visits. However, it may also be that the rise in transnational communication, which has made transnational family communication significantly easier, increased the probability that fathers remain engaged in their children’s lives by online or phone conversations. Transnational communication was also a way in which women were trying to “practice” their motherhood, as it was in the case of Iza:

“We talked about everything, about my day, about her day, about the school, even sometimes I helped her in her homework by phone. I wanted her to feel that despite the fact that I’m far away I take care of her.”

Although feelings such as fear and loneliness were almost always present in the life of transnational families, they were rarely the subject of conversation. Shame or concern for the family’s happiness caused by problems experienced by migrants were not always admitted to during conversations with their families. It was the case for Bartosz who did not tell his wife Patrycja that during the first four weeks in Ireland he almost became homeless.

I didn’t tell her all details I was experiencing here, there was no point to do that, I didn’t want to worry her. So I was cheering her up, you know...everything is fine and nice...

For some spouses left behind the regular contact with a migrant husband or wife was so important that even a justified decrease in the intensity of transnational family communication caused concern, as was the case for Mirka.

- Usually we talked very often, maybe four, five times per week. Only when he found a second job and was working more hours, we talked much less. I knew that he had less time and was tired after work but...you know...maybe it was stupid but I felt something like anxiety or something...
- Anxiety concerning what?-MM
- I don’t know...that he missed us less... (Mirka, 31)

Although all my respondents declared that transnational communication was a very important element in their transnational family life, communication by phone or Internet or remittances was not always enough to replace face-to-face everyday contact and keep family intimacy and close relationships. Iza, one of my female respondents, decided to return to Poland when she had felt that her relationship with her daughter and husband had become strained due to transnational separation.

But I feel that it’s high time I should come back home. It is too much, you can lose some important bonds, family ties that you could not rebuild in future even by a frequent contact. Because it is so
that you say something, you talk about something that comes to your mind, what is important. You can talk any time you want, in the afternoon, in the evening. You can talk for half an hour or for an hour. But at home there are more situations, you recall something, ask about something etc. During the telephone conversation you usually talk about the most important things, but if you don’t ask about something you just don’t know about it. But when you call her and she is sad you can easily notice it and talk to her, cheer her up. The same is with my husband. But after you finish the conversation, their problems do not exist for you because you have your own ones. So in the long run it is possible to forget about your family (Iza 35).’

As the example above shows to a certain extent, the separate lives of family members also means separate problems and interests. This can also cause an increase in emotional distance. Another important feature of the transnational communication of my respondents, which shaped relationships within their families, was the fact that due to the lower cost of phone calls and the greater financial possibilities of migrants in Ireland, it was usually migrants who initiated telephone contact with their family members in Poland. For example Julia, a thirty three year old orderly, rarely called her husband in Ireland. Usually it was Julia’s husband who was contacting the family in Poland.

„So I was waiting for his calls. [How often did you call him? -MM]. Not often. It was rather him who was calling. It was cheaper for him to call us that for us to call him. Sometimes I called him but it was when I had something important to tell him. Usually he was calling us. Actually, almost every day.

This situation was not only shaped by the greater financial opportunities of migrants but it was also a matter of time and availability.

„At the beginning I was buying phone cards and calling home from the public phone. It was much cheaper for me to buy these cards than for them to call me on my cellphone. After some time, when I bought a laptop we started communicating by skype, and then it was much easier. (...) Yes, still I call them more often than vice versa cause I work a lot, and it’s easier for me to catch them online than them to catch me “(Iza).

The situation was similar in the case of other respondents. For instance, Daria called her husband very rarely because of the high cost of the phone calls. Other communication such as the Internet, was impossible due to the lack of technical facilities in the place where Daria lived in Poland. Thus, financial constraints and technical limitations made Daria dependent on her husband in terms of the time and duration of their transnational communication. So, their communication was determined by the free time, money and will of her husband.
He was calling me because for me it was too expensive, for him it was much cheaper, obviously. It was a few times per week usually during weekends, sometimes three times per week sometimes once..., sometime there was also a text message on the phone. So I was waiting. Sometimes I wished he had called me more often... So I was waiting for his calls....(Daria).

This differential access to communication exposed important asymmetries of power within the family in the context of transnational family relations and, as a result, it deepened gender inequalities within the family. Similar patterns in transnational family life have also been observed among migrants from Honduras in the United States (see Mahler 2001; Menjivar and Agadjanian 2007).

In general, the transnational family communication patterns of Polish transnational men and women were similar; migrant men as well as migrant women had relatively frequent contact with their family in their home country, usually by phone, through Internet communicators or they visited their spouses and children in Poland. Most migrants, regardless of gender, called home at least once a week (most of them 3-4 times per week) and talked to their children and spouses about daily life. Also in terms of sending remittances and other material help, women and men declared similar frequencies: once or twice a month. However, it was difficult to collect information on the amount of remittances. Other research suggests that women generally send less money home than men (Schmalzbauer 2004, Orozco, 2006). A plausible explanation for this difference is the lower earnings of female migrants. Although they boast the same level of education, migrant women usually earn less and are hired for less prestigious positions than male migrants (Waldinger & Gilbertson, 1994). Other researchers (Ambrego 2009, Vanwey 2004) claim that mothers are more reliable remitters than men. “Even when they earned meager wages, they deprived themselves and sent higher percentages of their earnings” (Ambrego 2009:1078).

Although for both sexes transnational communication was seen as necessary to keep emotional intimacy within the family, the weight attached to different types of communication differed depending on female and male perception of their family roles and their sense of duty towards their families. Men were more likely to view their duties towards family in economic terms, reinforcing their familial obligations through the sending of remittances to their family in Poland. Whereas for Polish migrant women, especially mothers, frequent contact by phone or by the Internet was at least as important an expression of caring as sending remittances and gifts.

These findings partly overlap with the research results on Mexican transnational parenting and

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family roles (Dreby 2006, 2010). Joanna Dreby (2006, 2010) noted that most family members (including fathers themselves) described migrant fathers’ financial contribution as less important than nonfinancial investments, while in the case of migrant women it is other way around: “If transnational fathers fail when they do not send money, transnational mothers fail when their emotional attentions are diverted elsewhere” (Dreby 2006:52).

The expression of caring mattered more to Mexican mothers than material goods, so they did not necessarily feel that their relationship with their children deteriorated if they did send money or gifts. In contrast the opinion of Mexican fathers was that remittances were what improved the quality of their relationship with children left behind the most (Dreby 2006:55).

VII.IV. The sense of temporariness

Many of my respondents—especially during the transnational family stage—perceived their transnational migration as only a temporary move. This caused a great sense of the temporariness of migration among transmigrants. This sense was very often expressed in a transmigrant’s life style. The belief that "I am here only for a moment," and "what I do here is not permanent" brought a provisional character to migrant's lives in many ways. This sense of temporariness also had particular social and family consequences.

Most respondents who declared that their migration was temporary in character also admitted that they were making little effort to learn the language of the host country. They neither tried to get to know the local culture nor formed friendships with the natives. They did not even develop extensive contacts with compatriots. Consequently, they experienced a feeling of alienation and marginalization. Additionally, they felt worse because they were seen as strangers and they felt like guests, sometimes not even welcome ones. Sometimes, the actual marginalization of the migrant together/or with their subjective feelings of marginalization in the host country included most spheres of everyday life. As Kristian Wojaczeck noticed, this sense of temporariness and the migrants’ goal to send the largest amount of money possible to the family in Poland, often made migrants accept terrible lifestyles and working conditions (Wojaczeck, 2005:213). They often performed low-qualified and low-paid jobs. This decreased their self-esteem even further. A similar pattern related to temporary migrants has been noted by Silvia Pedraza (1991:312): “Newcomers that arrive as temporary migrants- as "birds of passage," in Michael Piore's (1979) phrase work with

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100 Pedraza Silvia (1991), Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender, Annual Review of Sociology, Vol.17, pp. 303-325,
the goal to return home, tolerating the most abysmal working conditions to accumulate capital for their investments back home. By contrast, permanent immigrants must make their future in the new land and cannot tolerate abysmal working conditions by thinking they are temporary”.

My observations and interviews among Poles in Ireland leads me to also suggest that sometimes the sense of temporariness, lack of family and local social control in the new environment where migrants are anonymous individuals, combine with a change in moral attitudes among migrants. The anonymity they face abroad make migrants independent from the social pressures which they experienced in the home country, especially if they come from small towns or villages where: “people know each other for generations, and there is a neighbour's curiosity who has what and so on” (Jola, 25).

One of my female respondents Jola shared her observations of her compatriots in Dublin with me:

*Here you have the feeling of temporariness and impunity. I’m not talking about all people but some of them behave very strangely. They come here alone, don’t care about others’ opinion. There is not a single person from their society, no one who knows them. In few years they will come back home and leave everything behind. They act here like they would never act in Poland, especially in their home town. I cannot even imagine that in a small town in Poland people would not comment on the situation that, for example, someone broke someone else’s marriage. They would not do it in their society, but here they don’t have any obstacles. It’s just they don’t have to explain their behaviour to anybody* (Jola, 25).

Even though transmigrants often raise concerns about family relationships during the transnational separation, the behaviour of some is not always consistent with their declarations of strong emotional attachments to their families in Poland. For example, one of my male respondents, Gustaw, shared with me his own observation:

*And I see that some men have got used to it even more than necessary, actually they forgot that they have wives in Poland, at least they behave like they forgot...But if I had wanted to be a bachelor I would not have got married, no? (laugh) So, maybe it is comfortable to live here as a single, but I wanted them to be with me as soon as possible. I didn't want to be excluded from the life of my own family* (Gustaw, 35).

Nevertheless, Gustaw compared his lifestyle at the time of living alone in Ireland during the transnational family stage to his bachelor days:

“That was a bit like I was a bachelor again (laugh), well not entirely like bachelor but in many things similar. So, on the on hand, you just go to work and come back and you do want you want, no additional responsibilities, no kids, you don’t have to worry about many small things etc ., it is easy to get used to it.
For this man transnational family time was a time on the boundary between family life and everyday responsibilities, and a time when he did not have a family and related responsibilities. So, not only in the physical sense does he live a transnational family life. The perception of his physical and emotional participation in family life also seems to be on the fringe.

Changes in moral attitudes related to conjugal fidelity or other behaviours seen as socially reprehensible are less common among spouses or partners who stayed in Poland. The sense of a lack of social control is the domain only of those family members who emigrated, and impossible for those who stayed and who remain a subject of social control exercised by the local community, friends and family members to comprehend. For example, one of my respondents noticed that:

*And if a husband is here and his family is in Poland then his family doesn’t know what he is doing here. If he did something stupid and didn't tell about this to his family then there is little chance that the family in Poland would get to know about it, because there is nobody to tell them. But the family in Poland has people around and these people may tell him everything while he is independent here* (Daria, 28).

Katarzyna Piwońska, a psychologist who works with Poles in Ireland, stressed that the sense of temporariness, together with other factors such as the feeling of loneliness, experience of migration uncertainty related to the new environment and greater financial resources, sometimes cause problems with alcohol or drugs. Piwońska also assumed that this greater sense of temporariness and its consequences are more the case for Polish migrant men than Polish migrant women. My observations and interviews with my respondents fully confirm these propositions. Most of my respondents declared that they were more familiar with examples of migrant men who have "*strayed from the family path*" when their families were in Poland, than migrant women. This might be explained by greater emotional and practical involvement of migrant women in family life. As my interlocutor Jola noticed:

“*it is natural, women more than men are involved in the house and family and children life even if the house and the children are far away*”(Jola, 25).

The obviousness ("*it is natural.*)" expressed by Jola, in relation to the greater involvement of migrant women than migrant men in the family life left behind, clearly comes from traditional gender beliefs about the female caring role within the family. So, gender expectations are also addressed to migrant women who are wives and mothers at a distance. It is also worth noting that, as opposed to some of the male respondents, none of the migrant women whom I talked to during my research and who were the pioneers of transnational family migration- migrated at first and left their husbands in Poland- associated or compared their transnational migration time to single life.
VII.V. Conclusions

My research showed that family men are still considerably more likely to be the migration pioneers than family women. As discussed in the previous chapter, this is mainly the result of the traditional gender-based relationships between the couples. However, it was also apparent that gender beliefs were not irrelevant to family relationships later, during the transnational family stage. Migrating men perceived their migration as a duty resulting from their role of as head of the family. The perception of migrant men is that the economic needs of their families often supersede their emotional needs, while migrating women tend to see their migration as being at the cost of their female role in the family. Nevertheless, a recurring outcome of women’s pioneering migration which was clear from my research, was the increased self-confidence of female transmigrants. This was mostly due to the newly gained financial independence and was often followed by the female reflection on their past life and their role within the family. Although family members who remained in their home countries do not have to face the strains of adapting to a new environment, they still experience heightened levels of stress and concern over the absence of their loved ones. The transnational family time of women who stayed in their own country was dominated by feelings of loneliness and preparation for family reunification in Ireland. The prospect of departure for Ireland meant that women stopped “investing” in their professional development in Poland. Many women became more dependent on money earned by their husbands in Ireland than before the migration. Additionally, women were burdened with new responsibilities that engaged them in what Shanon Hays (1996) called “intensive mothering”.

For many of the migrant men I talked to, new challenges associated with migration did not only mean a foreign country, language and a new job. Most of them had to struggle to learn new skills such as cooking or cleaning, which were also relatively new for them. However, despite this experience, the compulsion to practice “female work” did not change the traditional gender belief about male and female responsibilities of most of my male respondents. This also applies to men who remained in Poland, though it was to a lesser extent. Migrant women were often worried about the well-being of their husbands left behind, and felt obliged to find someone (a female relative) to help them.

The analysis of transnational motherhood and fatherhood sheds light not only on the ways in which traditional gender beliefs and expectations are present in contemporary Polish parenting but also in the situation when family relationships are disrupted by transnational migration. The interviews conducted with Polish migrants in Ireland have also shown that the transnational family migration period does not significantly alter traditional gender beliefs related to the role of
the mother and father. Most transnational mothers and fathers continue to consider their family roles in terms of female care giving and male providing, even from a distance. So, analysis of how parents understand their family roles when separated from their children proves that traditional Polish gender ideology is highly durable in the transnational context; women’s maternal roles are sacred, whereas father's roles are tied to financial provision. Therefore, the migration of mothers is generally criticized and causes a feeling of guilt among migrants mothers whilst the migration of fathers is much more socially acceptable.

An integral part of transnational family life is transnational communication. It became clear that an increase of free time and money controls the intensity and frequency of transnational communication between couples rather than gender. As a result, the family members who stayed in Poland, more often women than men, depend on their migrant spouses for the frequency and time of phone calls or other contact.

However, the significance attributed to the individual forms of communication is clearly gendered; women indicate first of all the importance of the expression of emotions through phone calls and visits, while migrant men regard remittances, in conjunction with phone talks and visits, as essential in order to fulfil their family role and maintain good transnational family relationships. Despite relatively frequent transnational family communication, family separation due to migration often brings with it the increasing emotional distance of family members. This is not as a result of ill will but rather it is as a consequence of the physical separation and living in completely different realities and having different problems.
VIII. Reunification and post-transnational family stage.

This chapter continues the discussion on gender relations within the transnational family, and presents the complexity of transnational family reunification in the host country\(^{101}\). The focus in this chapter is solely on marital gender relations; directions and circumstances of gender transitions in the face of migration, and its social and familial consequences.

The literature and my research analysis suggest that family reunification is not a one-time event. Rather, it is a process of reintegration of family members into the family environment. However, this environment may have changed significantly from how it was before the transnational separation. As discussed in the previous chapter, during the time spent apart both, the migrant and his/her loved ones in Poland may have encountered new experiences, developed new relationships, and formed new expectations about the nature of their relationship.

VIII.I. Joyful and stressful family reunification

The period of the transnational family stage was usually planned by my respondents to be as short as possible; either just long enough to save some money and to rent a proper house in Ireland for the whole family once reunited, or for the period of time which would allow for the earning of enough money to make family dreams come true; to buy a flat or to build a house. Some couples agreed from the beginning that their families would reunite in Ireland or in Poland, but in most cases the couples knew that they wanted to be together but they were not sure whether the reunification would take place in Ireland or in Poland, and when it was going to be. They made this decision dependent upon future life circumstances such as life conditions in Ireland, job, and adaptation to the new environment.

The reunification process was usually preceded by the wife’s “inspection visit” to the host country to familiarize herself with the new place before the family settled abroad. It gave them the opportunity to see and judge whether the new environment was suitable for her and her family, and if not, they definitely had a right to refuse to join their husbands. It took from a few days to one or two months.

A number of respondents talked about these visits as if they were standard practice. For example, Marianna (35) described her inspection visit to Dublin: “I went there to see the place and...”

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\(^{101}\) The reason for only considering the transnational family reunification in the host country has been explained in the chapter 4: Methodological issues, design and challenges.
“everything. I wanted to know before what I should be prepared for and whether this place would be good for children.”

The commonality of such an “inspection” suggests that the wife, even in the families with a very traditional gender arrangement, such as Marianna’s family, has a role to play in the family migration process. As Anne White (2011:107) noticed, these kinds of visits “may be also used by the wife to reconnoitre, with thoughts of moving” to Ireland herself. The visits were also important for husbands who wanted their wives feel at home in the future place of living and positively disposed toward migration to Ireland.

The declarations of my respondents indicate that the average period for the transnational family stage was between six months and one year. For many respondents one year of separation was seen as the maximum period of time that was still “safe” in terms of maintaining the quality of family relationships. For example Mirka (31, a housewife), who had been separated from her husband Gustaw for eleven months, did not want to prolong the transnational family stage for fear of potential problems developing in the marital relationship caused by a longer separation:

*I didn't want to prolong our separation any more. I think that one year, it is a boundary for the marriage. If there is a longer separation then you may notice that you have nothing to talk about with you husband, you became more like two strangers to each other.*

Her opinion coincides with the observation of Friar Marek, a Dominican working with Poles in Ireland, that separation longer than one year is conducive to the formation of emotional distance between couples, and can cause problems in the marriage or even its dissolution.

*Separation of spouses that takes longer than one year causes often problems in their relationship. Women as well as men start thinking about new relationship, possibly also about building a new family.*

Even if the transnational separation of spouses does not end with dissolution of the marriage, it definitely results in increasing the emotional distance between them. When they meet or eventually reunite the family, they can feel like strangers to one another and have to “learn each other once again”.

For example Aniela (37) and her husband only lived with transnational separation for two months. The couple wanted to reunite as quickly as possible because they still remembered the family reunification they had experienced following her husband's previous migration, when the transnational separation was for over two years. Unlike the previous family reunification, the one that took place in Ireland after two months of separation was not shocking or challenging for their relationship. Aniela recollected the memories of reunification after two years of transnational separation with her husband:

*After he came back I felt terrible. He disturbed me all the time. (...) After my husband came back I*
had more obligations; to prepare supper, to do this or that. My life turned upside down again. I knew that I should have been happy that he came back. I was, indeed, but it was something different than I expected. People change, everyone has his or her own habits. You cannot tell the difference if you stay with somebody all the time, day by day. You are more tolerant and get used to very quickly. When it comes to departure and separation, you have to be aware of the fact that after coming back you have to get known each other again, learn how to live together again (Aniela 37).

Aniela and her husband missed and waited for each other during the transnational family stage, but once they had eventually reunified the family they faced a person whose problems were incomprehensible and often held different life attitudes than before. This was a source of frustration for both sides.

Another important reason why migrants and their family members usually strive for as short a transnational family time as possible, was related to the quality of the relationship between a migrant parent and their children who remained in Poland. Concern over the deterioration of the parent-child relationship caused by the prolonged transnational family separation was present both in the narratives of migrant women and migrant men. So, while reunification itself was often described as a happy and joyful event- the event the entire family was waiting for, it was often interlaced with or/and followed by contradictory emotions, both at the level of marriage relations and between parents and children. There are also generational stresses on the issue of return- these are presented in the chapter dedicated to the transnational relations between parents and children.

VIII.II. Return to the “normal life”

For most of the respondents family reunification was associated with the hope of beginning a “normal life” in the host country. They support the strategy which is mentioned in Ryan et al.’s article (2004:9) as the “stay and live a normal life” strategy. The idea of a “normal life” was usually associated by respondents with the lack of financial problems and the presence of the closest family members; spouse and children. For example, one of my male respondents was very happy when his wife eventually arrived for good in Dublin:

There is such a huge difference when you live with somebody you love. You are coming home and you know that there is somebody waiting for you, you have somebody to talk to, to share your experiences(...) I wanted to have a normal life eventually (Marek).

For another respondent Bartosz, the family reunification and “normal life” meant returning to the family gender work arrangement in the way it was prior to the migration. Family reunification was
also associated with the re-establishment of his family roles; the role of father and husband, in which his direct fulfilment of was in practice suspended to some extent because of the transnational family separation.

“When my wife arrived in Dublin, my life here has changed diametrically. (...) And suddenly from a grass widower I became again a husband, a father, a head of the family.”

After the reunification Patrycja (Bartosz’s wife) took over the majority of the household work that had been performed by Bartosz himself during the transnational separation. Although the husband had been in Ireland much longer than the wife, her knowledge of English was much better than Bartosz’s. This resulted in Patrycja’s being burdened with additional responsibilities and duties-which she hadn’t had in Poland- where sufficient English language skills were required, for instance in offices. She had to rely only on herself also when organizing hers and her daughter’s life in Ireland. Although it caused Patrycja a certain amount of stress, her first successes in the host country made her feel proud of herself and increased her self-esteem.

I was immediately thrown into the deep water because nobody helped me with any simple things, like PPS number or a doctor or other things. (...) I had to ask random Irish people on the street for directions, and I had to make myself understood somehow. But I wasn't scared rather proud of myself that I did make myself understood, that I managed to get what I wanted. (...) At the beginning there were some arguments between us, because I had to do this, I had to do that, and my English wasn’t very good. Bartosz couldn't help me in that matter. So I was stressed and I had to unload this stress on someone... but that was only a temporary situation (Patrycja).

However, Patrycja’s decisive power within the family increased together with the additional duties. Bartosz confessed that all these new situations which placed him as dependent on his wife’s language skills in everyday issues made him feel ashamed and abashed.

At the beginning Patrycja had to face many problems, everything was on her head because my English was and still is really bad. (...) I need to rely more on Patrycja here than in Poland. She is doing all these things at offices, and at Mila's school and in other places you know... talk with our landlord, and there was a problem with the gas bill and she had to deal with it. Probably in Poland I would have done it but here....maybe it is a little shameful but I am still dependent on her in these matter (Bartosz).

Nevertheless, Patrycja was also positively surprised and very proud of her husband that although he hadn’t spoken English he had managed to find a job in Ireland and organize the family reunification. Additionally, Patrycja was saddled with more daily household work than when she and her family had lived in Poland. The couple rented a house in Dublin. For financial reasons they shared it with an uncle of Patrycja and a male friend of Bartosz. However, in Patrycja's opinion, this
was at the cost of their family life and their privacy. Patrycja was also afraid that the behaviour of co-residents in relation to alcohol consumption and their constant problems with jobs and relationships might have a bad influence on their 10 year old daughter Mila.

“Okay, it is my uncle and so on but the family needs to live alone. Besides, I hate when Sebek [a man who they share the house with] is drunk, they both [the uncle and Sebek] drink a lot, and his never-ending problems with a job, with a girl and so on. I am fed up with all of it, and I do want Mila has a normal family without having to watch it.

Besides, Patrycja found herself as the only one who cleaned the communal areas in the house, namely; the kitchen, the living room, the bathroom and corridors. She also carried out all other work associated with caring for the house. However, although Patrycja performed the double job; of traditional housewife and professional worker, and was additionally developing professional skills at school, she still did not expect equal division of labour at home but rather just some help when she asked.

“None of them was taught to help their mothers with housework so they do not see the problem with the fact that I do almost everything, that they do not help me. Only my husband helps me from time to time when I ask him. I manage to do everything, and house and work, and school. So I think that they consider the situation as just fine, since it does not bother them."

In Patrycja’s situation the gender expectations, which placed her in the traditional female role as the one delegated to do most of the household duties, were reinforced by kinship obligations. The role of kinship obligations in strengthening the traditional gender arrangement was also noticed in the research of Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994:107) on Mexican immigrants. Hondagneu-Sotelo reports that women respondents in her study often complained about the increased domestic burdens associated with the presence of male visitors. Patrycja’s dream was to find a nice, cheap house exclusively for her family, without any housemates.

So, although Patrycja found a full-time job in Ireland with the aim of starting her own business in the future and she also took a cosmetic course, she could not count on Bartosz to share everyday household duties. The gender arrangement of daily work at Patrycja and Bartosz’s home has not changed from the one they were used to in Poland.

She is also going to this cosmetic school, except her job here. So sometimes I need to do things like cooking for Mila. I am totally not good at it. I always help her when she asks me. (Do you clean?-MM) Sure I clean, I always clean up after myself...(But who clean the house for instance?-MM) O, the house...then it's Patrycja mostly (Bartosz).

In Bartosz’s opinion part of the role of wife and mother is taking care of the home. Bartosz had nothing against Patrycja’s professional job and her ambition unless it was at the expense of her

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
family responsibilities, such as caring for children, cooking, cleaning etc.

I have nothing against Patrycja working, it is good that she has a contact with other people, and it is also some extra money. But the family is the most important, and I don’t want my family suffering because of too much work of Patrycja. I earn enough to support family, so Patrycja can work part-time if she wants (Bartosz).

In the end, both Patrycja and Bartosz believed that, despite some initial tensions just after reunification, migration to Ireland allowed them to deal with their marriage problems alone and resolve them without the interference of extended family, contrary to how it used to be in Poland. Paradoxically, although Patrycja and Bartosz experienced increased difficulties in their marriage in Ireland, migration was a factor that made their relationship stronger.

You know...this migration actually has made us closer to each other. I see a lot of positives because, at the end, we can rely only on each other here, there are no parents, no grandmother who could take care of the child. My husband cannot run away from the problems to his mother and complain about me to her (laugh). He knows and I know that here we have to solve our problems together if they appear: (...) I would say that this migration perhaps even has solved our marriage....because I'm not sure whether it would have worked out in Poland....(...) I think that the fact that we have solved these problems together [in Ireland-MM] resulted that we have become closer to each other than before (Patrycja).

VIII.III. First family home in Ireland = first family home in general

For some of my youngest respondents migration was a chance to establish their first independent family household. Mobility peaks when people are in their 20s (Glick, 1993). This is consistent with the high rates of family formation and the establishment of independent households among the young. The EU enlargement in 2004 encouraged many young Polish families to establish independent households abroad. They made their dreams about independent life come true. They had a chance to establish their own family gender arrangement without any control over it from relatives. For example, Marek and Daria were one of the couples for whom migration provided a chance for independent family life. Daria remembered the moment when they eventually met after the long separation as the most beautiful and touching moment in her life.

So, we live here alone, only the two of us, and we are sort of bound to be together, and responsible for each other. I can’t count on mum that when I come back from work she would help us. It's only now the two of us have become a separated family, not dependent on anyone. And this is cool (...).
On the one hand I miss my parents, but on the other hand there is no control from their side, and we can feel free (Marek).

Similarly to Marek, Daria missed her parents too, but at the same time she confessed that it was better that her parents did not interfere in their private life as much as they had when Daria and her husband were living with Marek’s parents in Poland. The couple had a chance to establish their own gender arrangement without the intervention of any other family member but also without any help. We started learning here how to live in separation from the family, and we have to count only on each other, not on others. When we were in Poland we could always ask somebody from the family or friends for some help, but here we have to manage to do everything by our own, and rely on each other. We have to help each other because we don't have anybody else to help us. Marek can't say for example; “I'm moving to my mum”, because there is not his mum here (laugh). I think that this migration is a kind of survival school for our marriage. Either marriages survive and will be stronger, or people will split up (Daria).

For Daria, building her family life in Ireland was filled with many sacrifices and fears. So Marek's idea of “normal life” was not necessarily the same as his wife’s, however she did not see any other option than to follow her husband's plan in order to keep the family together. Family reunification in Ireland was linked with Daria’s professional deprivation as she had worked in Poland as a school counsellor. She faced the possibility of being unemployed in Ireland and so financially dependent on her husband. She was uncomfortable with this dependency.

I followed Marek after one year. I did not have a job here and I left the one I had in Poland. But what could I do? The separation could not be forever so we had to decide(...)My husband told me a little bit about the country and about Irish people and so on, so it made me a bit more optimistic and calmer. I was afraid whether I would find a job or not. I wanted to have my own money. I did not want to be financially dependent on Marek.

Eventually Daria found a job as a cleaning lady. She was aware that her English language knowledge would not allow her to find a more prestigious job at that moment, so, although her salary in Ireland was higher than in Poland, she did not perceive working as a cleaner as a job that gave her a sense of satisfaction or a chance for self-development.

Maybe sometimes I feel a little bit humiliated but I don’t regret. And at the end of the day- money is money(...). Being together with my husband is more important than that. I wish I had a better job but with my English I wouldn't get any better probably. Besides, I liked the working hours I had. I was almost whole day at home, so I could calmly do home duties, do shopping, cook, clean a little bit and then go to work. Maybe the fact that I had less time for my husband in the evenings was not convenience, but I was still glad. I had my own money (Daria).

The statement above proves that Daria perceived her family life as of utmost value in her life and
valued it more highly than her own ambitions. She was happy that flexible working hours allowed her to easily perform dual work responsibilities; as a housewife and as a paid worker. Despite the undeniable fact that most of the household duties were on her shoulders, Daria highlighted the fact that migration gave her and Marek the opportunity of organizing their life differently from the way her parents-in-law lives were, and set up new rules in their relationship. The new rules consisted of Marek’s partial involvement in the household duties at times when Daria was working professionally.

So it was quite obvious for us that if Marek works and I don’t have a job then I would take care of home and everything, so cooking, cleaning and so on. And after I found a job and I was working in the morning I used to come back home before Marek and cook dinner so it was like that usually. I must say also, that sometimes, not often though, when I had to stay longer at work and I couldn't come back home before him, then he cooked (Daria).

Even though Marek declared that one year of living alone in Ireland had made him learn how to do more housework, such as cleaning, cooking and shopping than ever before when he had lived with his parents in Poland, he also confessed that as soon as Daria joined him in Dublin it was mostly her who did the majority of the work in the home.

One year later¹⁰², the couple declared that their son’s birth was a big turning point in their life, and all of the things which happened after were the natural consequences of it. So, the biggest changes in their family life were related to the new parental and gender roles they both had to face; the mother and the father. They both felt a greater sense of responsibility. For Marek, as he confessed, to a great extent it was a further responsibility for the family and its material well-being, while Daria began to feel responsible for the well-being of the child. When Daria got pregnant and stopped working in the cleaning company, she took almost all household duties onto her shoulders, including those which had previously been performed before by Marek.

VIII.IV. Women, mothers, tied-movers...

The fact of Daria being a mother to a small child reinforced the traditional division of everyday gender-based duties within Marek’s and Daria's household, as well as the traditional family gender role beliefs of the couple.

We shared more of these home duties when Daria was working. Now Daria is pregnant so she doesn't work and she is at home all the time, so she cooks and cleans and other does things like

¹⁰² There were two interviews conducted with the couple one year after the other.
that.....so now it's that she has taken over mum's responsibilities and I go to work and provide for the family (Marek).

Also Daria declared that, it was the natural order for her that she resigned from a job and devoted herself to childcare when the son is still very small. She found the traditional division of responsibilities according to gender fair and convenient to her at that moment in her life. While her husband concentrated on providing for the family, she could focus on building the “spirit” of the family, take care of the child and the household duties. However, Daria mentioned that migration deprived her of help with childcare from female family members. Thus, it confirms that child-care in Polish families is the domain of women.

“If we lived in Poland there would be a plenty of people to help me, my mum, my sister, my mother-in-law...All of them adore Kuba and they would be happy to help me. My mum is retired already and has more time, so it would not be a problem to her at all. Sometimes I talk to my mother through Skype so I ask her about various things, or I ask Kasia [Daria’s friend -MM), she has three kids so she can give me some advices... But in general I have to rely only on myself.”

So, Daria did not have the traditional support from extended family which she could have relied on while living in Poland. Many mothers with whom I talked to declared that before their migration they could have counted on some support for mothering and child-care activities. Usually the respondent’s mothers or sisters helped. The loss of this support system has a significant impact on the workload of migrant women. The work which in Poland was often partially shared by female relatives, in Ireland migrant women have to take entirely on their own shoulders. Daria and Marek’s family gender arrangement and their family gender roles beliefs have been re-established during migration and even strengthened after Daria became a mother. Daria's motherhood in Ireland turned out to be more time consuming and energy absorbing than it could have been in Poland while living with or close to other relatives. The help of other family members would have helped her return to professional work more easily if she had decided to consider it. In other words, in practice migration made her role of mother more traditional than it could have been in Poland.

Marek's assistance with childcare is limited to the less burdensome care of his son associated with fun, relaxation and entertainment. (He plays with him or goes for a walk so I have some time for myself. - Daria) Daria explained her greater engagement in the childcare compared to her husband as a special emotional bond that connects a mother and a child. In her opinion the mother naturally knows what and how to carry out child-care, while the father has to learn it.

Importantly, my observations and research results allow me to suggest that the different ages of respondents (up to 20 years), unlike the fact of having a child or children, is not a factor which would determine their approach to the family roles. So, even when single and childless men and women had more modern approaches to marriage, after marriage and children their approach...
became more traditional than before. The approaches of women in their twenties towards the role of the mother is actually the same as the approach of mothers who are twenty years older. Younger men are more willingly to do housework than older men, nevertheless it is still only limited help if their wives asked for it, not on their own initiative. Additionally, Daria confessed that since she stopped working professionally and became a mother and full time housewife, she has neglected her English lessons. Although she was aware that knowledge of English would make her life in Ireland easier, she decided to postpone English lessons for a while as most of her time was focused on childcare and staying at home. She explained, that she did not have many opportunities to practice or improve her English language skills anyway.

The examples above have demonstrated that couples with traditional gender beliefs prior to migration are also likely to re-arrange their traditional gender relations in the host country.

The transnational family migration of Daria and Marek was economically motivated on the part of the husband. Daria’s submission to her husband's decisions about migration were consistent with her system of family values and her beliefs about gender roles within the family. The migration situation has not caused much change in the arrangement of responsibilities associated with gender. Migration has placed Daria in a position of tied-mover dependent on her husband. However, although it did not cause any relationship problems between the couple and the financial stability has made her marriage relationship more compatible, Daria confessed that financial dependency on her husband sometimes made her feel uncomfortable. Additionally, although motherhood brought Daria enormous happiness and satisfaction, she sometimes felt lonely. She confessed that she missed Poland because it is the country where she was brought up, and where her family and friends live.

Similar to Daria, most Polish females who followed their husbands in Ireland are tied-movers. At least at the beginning of their migration experience, just after reunification in the host country, hardly any of them speak English or their English knowledge is not sufficient to find a job that would satisfy their aspirations and qualifications. Despite their work experience in Poland or/ and graduate-level education, they face a reduction in the level of skills and education in the jobs available to them in Ireland. Polish women who migrate as tied-movers, and without the skills and resources that would facilitate their life and integration in Ireland, are far more dependent on their husbands than if their families had remained in Poland. Migration has deprived them of contact with people; family and friends, who comprised their everyday social life. Migration has thrown them into an unfamiliar social environment where they have neither friends nor know the language. This results in feelings of loneliness and frustration.
The psychologist Katarzyna Piwońska, who works with Poles in Ireland, noticed the pattern of a tied-mover and consequences of it for individual well-being and adaptation to the new environment. *It is often a woman goes ahead and a man, her husband, looks back and wants to go back to Poland as soon as possible. But equally often is opposite. For example I am talking about a man who came here, has a good job and money, and the feeling of satisfaction, and there is his wife, who followed him. And she is just like a kind of a supplement to her husband, she cannot find herself here. And she cannot find a job neither. And this is very difficult. As if her mind was still in Poland...*(Katarzyna Piwońska)

Friar Marek also noticed the phenomenon of a tied-mover and claimed that gender aspects count when individual family members face the new migration reality. *I know many families which had problems with adaptation here. For example women who have never worked in Poland because they have taken care of their three of four children, so it wasn't so obvious that they could easily find a job in Ireland. So, usually they do not find one. And they stay at home, in the foreign country, without knowledge of English etc. This brings them to the feeling of frustration, sometimes. They would like to go back but they have to stay.*

Similarly Jennifer Hirsch (2003:238) noticed, based on her research on Mexican transnational families in the United States, that “For a woman who migrates with her husband but without any of her own family or the resources (English skills, driver's license, working papers) necessary to enjoy the possibilities for independence offered by life in the United States, the loneliness and boredom of being shut in a small apartment or a trailer all day alone can be intense.”

Thus, the results of my research and the literature (for instance Hiromi and Gillian 2011) suggest that the decision about who migrates first seems to have consequences reflected in the consolidation or changes in family gender relations not only during the transnational family stage but also after transnational family reunification. “If arriving first is advantageous, perhaps in terms of gaining a head start on adaptation to a new society, or allowing the hoarding or controlling of knowledge and resources, then the gendered pattern in which husbands arrive before their wives may support a domestic environment in which resources and access to those resources are gendered and possibly contested” (Hiromi and Gillian 2011: 539).

Especially, in the beginning, many women find themselves lost and isolated in the new environment, mainly due to the language barrier, different values and norms, and the lack of a job. The feelings of stress and frustration among migrants are very often coupled with loneliness. Many

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103 The Centre’s practitioners are committed to providing high quality and confidential services in counseling and psychotherapy to individuals, couples and families. Counseling and therapy is provided on a range of issues including: depression, anxiety, bereavement and loss, family and relationship difficulties, stress, trauma, violence and abuse Adult Child of Alcoholics (ACA), loneliness and adaptation issues, sexuality, eating disorders, decision making difficulties.
of my female respondents confessed that they felt lonely and missed family and, friends, and, as one of my respondents, Mirka, described—“familiar environment”.

“Yes, I feel very lonely sometimes. When my husband is at work I have nobody to talk to. I miss Poland in that matter very much, this familiar environment, you know, you have always somebody you can visit, friends and family. (…) Maybe if I knew the language better, then I could talk to Irish people, could meet local people, not only Poles (Mirka, 31).

Loneliness is also directly linked to the women’s lack of skills or confidence in speaking English. Immigrant mothers must overcome many cultural, linguistic, and institutional barriers that are absent or at least invisible for citizens. I realized that very often simple things such as shopping become a source of stress to my respondents:

“I went to the shop to buy a sour cream and I came back with all kinds of milky products but a sour cream. Sometimes I was laughing at myself but sometimes I felt really frustrated. It is a stupid feeling when you are like an illiterate” (Aniela 37). The lack of language skills also limits their social contact with their families or Polish-speaking friends. Most of my interviewees highlighted that knowledge of English is the major factor that makes the adaptation to the social environment of the host country and the Irish job market easier. The results of the analysis of the social background of my respondents suggests that higher education in migrants is usually tantamount to better English language knowledge at the time of arrival in Ireland, as compared to migrants with a lower education. Better educated migrants (university education) are also usually more eager to learn English and develop their professional skills, even if it is not required in their work place.

For some migrant woman with limited resources, the role of the traditional mother and wife, who is completely involved in family life and household duties, is the only way they can feel like they are actively and significantly contributing to the establishment of their household and the family life. The perfect example is the situation of Mirka who joined her husband in Ireland after eleven months of transnational family life:

I don't have a job, and actually I don't go out anywhere, only to the shop and to the school for boys. It is a normal life of a housewife, nothing interesting. So now I'm more involved in the family than in Poland. Actually, I have nothing else to do, so I'm doing my best to be for my family, for my sons, and take care our home (Mirka, 31, housewife).

From this perspective, migration “unfolds as a process that transports migrants from one situation of deprivation and dispossession to another” (Arya and Roy 2006: 31).
VIII.V. Migration “gives you wings”, migration “clips your wings”

The majority of Polish female migrants, regardless of their education, take less-skilled jobs upon entry in Ireland. Almost half of my female respondents worked as cleaners and there was only a small group who worked in better positions. They tended to go into what can be broadly classified as the welfare and social professions (health, social work: four nurses and two psychologists) – traditionally female jobs. Only one of my female respondent had a managerial position (Nadia). Nevertheless, the financial independence and the perception of the Irish job market as a relatively predictable and receptive one, resulted in an increased self-confidence among Polish migrants, including among women.

Most of all – greater self-confidence. Already today I can say that I have changed my attitude toward many things(...) Firstly, I am more self-confident. I don’t feel this inner fear, something like: God! I will not go to work and they will fire me, and I will have to look for another job again. Here is also the fear linked to the recession, but it does not influence my approach to my job or my self-confidence. I’m not afraid that tomorrow I will not have money to buy some food. Even if I lose a job I will find another one (Aniela, 37).

Most of the working women among my respondents, gained increased power in the family. The process of change in the power relationships between Polish men and women is not only reflected among my respondents, but also in the culture as a whole both in Poland and in Ireland and my respondents often see the change in power relationships as a direct result of their migration.

For example, Beata (42) is convinced that the change in her attitude toward her marriage is a result of greater financial and mental independence caused by the migration and the better financial well-being of her and her family. She realized that working women in Ireland, unlike in Poland, are able to financially support themselves and their children even without any help from their husbands. So, financial independence made her realize that she no longer was under pressure to accept what she did not like or want to accept, including her marriage.

This metamorphosis is connected with this place. I couldn’t be that kind of ‘ dodger ’ in Poland. We would have had to communicate, get on with each other, no matter whether it had been good or not. Here, we have such financial possibilities that I don’t have to accept what I don’t like. (..)

Here the situation is completely different. There is no one that can force me do something what I don’t want. Interestingly, the first thing I realized after I moved here was that we don’t have to be together if we don’t get on well. There is no obligation, no pressure. It depends on what we feel. If we want to be together, then we can. (..) Because here, it turned out that you would do well even without man. It turned out that these possibilities which are here, make a woman feeling not like a dead weight anymore, and she can live here alone and in a dignified way (Beata 42).
The example above is supported by the results of other studies on transnational family gender relations. Patricia Pessar (1986) and Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) as well as others scholars (Blumberg 1991) suggest that the increase in immigrant women's contributions to the family economy makes them more powerful in family decision-making situations. As Pessar (1986:281) noticed “Work enhances women's self-esteem as wives and mothers, affords them income to actualize these roles more fully, and provides them with a heightened leverage to participate equally with men in household decision-making”. Also Pirrette Hondagneu-Sotelo claims that the increase of female financial contributions to the family budget matters a lot in terms of power relations between genders within the family. „These new economic arrangements signify a vast change, especially in those cases where prior to migration, women did not earn an income, or earned only a supplementary income” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994:101).

However, although my female interviewees often declared that their self-confidence and self-esteem increased after they had arrived in Ireland and found a job there, at the same time no significant change had occurred in the division of household duties between them and their male partners. I also found little indication that couples re-negotiated their responsibilities. Although some women claimed that their husbands started helping more around the house, it became clear that the male tasks in the home which constituted help, only comprised a minimal degree of change. So, despite the fact that the professional full-time employment of woman and their significant contributions to the family budget, migrant couples usually sustained a traditional gender arrangement with regard to the household duties.

Surprisingly, it turned out that in the case of some women the lack of change in their daily housework was a result of their own conscious choice. The newly gained sense of independence and increased sense of freedom over their life choices did not cause them to change the traditional gender arrangement of housework duties in their families.

For example, Beata’s increase in self-confidence and sense of independence was not followed by a change in the division of household duties in her family.

There is no need to make a revolution. I have this comfort that I can do whatever I want, but it doesn't mean that I will do whatever. I have family, I still have my children to take care of, so in terms of everyday life it hasn't change much (Beata, 42).

Beata emphasized that the arrangement of duties in her family after reunification in Ireland was the result of her free and conscious choice. So, she implied she has the emotional comfort to do what she wants to do, not what she has to. She agreed that her rather traditional role of a mother and a wife was a result of her own choice, not as something that was imposed on her from above, without her acceptance. Beata did not perceive her dedication and subordination to the family as compulsory any more. Interestingly, she emphasized that her experience was not exceptional, that
this is a part of a wider phenomenon which she observed among other Polish migrant women in Ireland.

For some women, including me, opportunities open up here, and they begin to appreciate themselves. They begin to notice they have possibilities, power and energy. They notice: I can still do something in my life and, in principle, I live for myself and I don't have to serve anyone (Beata 42).

Migrant women who share an attitude to life similar to that of Beata, in the opinion of their relatives as well as themselves are the powerhouses of their families. They cultivate the image of "Mother Pole” but in many cases it is their choice, not a social pressure any more. They re-build a sort of domestic matriarchy abroad. This gives them a sense of power within the family.

However, this is not always the case. For example, Aniela (37) who has a full-time job, unlike Beata, did not perceive her traditional household duties as something that she had a chance to choose or reject after she became financially independent and her self-esteem increased in Ireland. For Aniela, the traditional gender-based housework arrangements, where most of the domestic burdens fall to the female, are so socially grounded that it is very difficult to change, irrespective of life circumstances. So, she did not even try to change it.

I do the same things which I was doing in Poland, no less, no more. I think is too much grounded to change it. If the woman does not fight to make her husband more helping her from the beginning, it will be very difficult to change it later, even if she works full-time (Aniela 37).

As already shown above, migrant women are usually significantly more involved in everyday responsibilities linked to housework and child-care than men. However, paradoxically, I noticed that the necessity of fulfilling activities linked to traditional family gender roles might foster faster integration of Polish women than Polish men. For instance, the traditionally practiced role of mother makes women much more connected with local authorities (for instance kindergarten, school, social services) than their partners. As a result, women can become more familiar with the host country’s culture and customs than men. Additionally, it also forces them to practice and improve their English skills. A similar observation has also been shared by the psychologist Katarzyna Piwońska:

And so I have noticed that some women are forced to manage with new reality, because they have to go with children to kindergarten, they go to school, they run an errands, and thus they become more socialized, more open,... They also organize some kind of network of self-help among women in a similar situation (Katarzyna Piwońska, psychologist).

Katarzyna Piwońska also noticed that many Polish migrant women in Ireland organize informal support groups. These female networks help women to overcome daily challenges resulting from their everyday duties as wives and mothers, for example the exchange of information about the
school system in Ireland. This common female experience in overcoming similar problems does not only result in the practical knowledge associated with everyday life in the host country, but it also increases and strengthens female self-confidence. The stronger involvement of Polish migrant women than Polish migrant men in various aspects of social life in the host country has been also noticed by Anna Paś, a Polish journalist and activist in Ireland. Although Polish migrant women are often burdened with double the amount of work – the professional one and the one performed at home - they tend to invest their free time in self-development, social activities and education more often than their husbands.

Women more than men are involved in most of social activities or other activities outside of work. Immigration adds wings to women; women start investing in themselves, they improve their skills, they go to school or to various professional courses more often than men. (Anna Paś, journalist and activist).

So, Anna Paś noticed that although Polish migrant women are often better educated and tend to invest more time and resources in their professional self-development than their husbands, they still earn less money than men, and perform subordinate gender role as dependant wives and self-sacrificing mothers. These wives who attempted to alter the way in which the gender arrangement was constructed in their marriages, usually met with passivity or opposition from their husbands. For example, this was the case in the relationship of Nadia and her husband Maciej. Nadia is better educated than Maciej. In Poland, however, this does not necessarily translate into higher earnings, better job positions or even better chances for women in the job market\textsuperscript{104}. Migration made a difference to Nadia in that matter. In Ireland, she found a job which was much better paid and much more prestigious than the one she had in Poland and than her husband’s job.

I graduated from a linguistics department. I was actually fluent in English from the beginning. I also had the advantage that I know 4 languages and I was sure that I would find a job. My ex-husband has a secondary education. I had arranged a job interview the next day after I arrived. I went to this interview and on the same day they told me to be at work next day. But he got the job only after 4 weeks since he arrived, and only as a dish washer (Nadia, 29, a manager).

Some researchers (White 2011, Triandafyllidou 2006) have noticed that an individual’s linguistic skills and employment status play out within the family. “Gender roles can be altered depending on the different integration experiences of the spouses” (White 2011:141). So, the relationship of Nadia and Maciej began to deteriorate. Maciej felt inferior and started reacting angrily. Nadia admitted that she had blamed herself for her husband’s moodiness. Although she appreciated her newly acquired position, at the same time, unconsciously she felt guilty that her entrepreneurship made her


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husband lose his privileged position in the family. At some point she started being even more supportive toward Maciej than before. Nadia confessed that she had tried to "reward" her husband after he lost the privileged position of family breadwinner by fulfilling the traditional female housework duties even more than before. However, instead of gratitude she was met by her husband’s anger and aggression.

I believe I was very supporting, I'd never said anything bad about his work. I was always saying that the kitchen is also some kind of career. But he, instead of being glad that it he has a supportive wife, he was mad at me. He couldn’t bear that I was earning much more than him, that I was actually supporting financially our family. In his opinion my job consisted in sitting in the office, drinking tea in the warmth, and being on the phone with my mother. (...). Then, I settled him with better job. But instead of thanking me, he said “no favours” and that he didn't have to work at all. No discussion was not possible on any subject, because if I told him, for example, that we should drink coffee in cups rather than mugs, he interpreted it so that I had a great job and I thought about myself that I knew everything better. Men's pride was hurt. (...)It all started pissing me off. I had too much on my shoulders. I had a very responsible job and I was very tired. The child was still breastfed, so I couldn’t sleep whole night even once since we've come here because I was waking up four times per night, my back ached, and my husband was making a continuing demand, and he was pouring out his frustration on me (Nadia, 29, a manager).

Sometimes, as the example of Nadia and Maciej shows, the dual support position of women, who became breadwinners, makes their men feel even more dependent, and thus more frustrated and aggressive. Nadia's professional development and higher financial contribution to the family budget were perceived by her husband as a source of humiliation and degradation of his position as the head of the family. Despite Nadia’s well-paid and responsible job, Maciej belittled her professional occupation as requiring no effort.

The example above supports the “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman, 1987) theory. The counter-traditional gender situation of the couple where Nadia became the primary breadwinner resulted in Nadia doing more housework and being more supportive to her husband than before migration. Maciej reacted to the new situation with aggression and by doing less housework in order to keep his sense of the dominant position within the family.

The growing conflict in the marriage which, in Nadia’s opinion, was caused by the disruption of Maciej’s idea of the gender power balance, together with the different social and professional positions of the couple and Maciej's poor knowledge of English resulted in the separation of their social lives.

Moreover, we could not go out with my friends from work or something, because he spoke no English. I did not want to put him in this kind of situation when we laugh at jokes which he doesn't

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understand. And so, our social life suffered. At the beginning I didn’t want to leave him alone at home, but then I was going out from time to time without him. This was making him mad (Nadia, 29, a manager).

So, the inability to reconcile the new family gender situation - on the one hand, the woman's newly gained independence and on the other hand the loss of the traditional male dominance - leads to conflict between spouses. The woman felt undervalued and overburdened by responsibilities, while the man felt lost in the new reality and frustrated that his individual sense of masculinity was challenged.

And so he was frustrated that he couldn't be a father of the family, a head of the family, that his position is much worse than mine, that I have a better job, and that I earn more. And even though I tried to bolster his confidence, appreciate his work and so on, it still didn't work. He couldn't stand that I was better than him, that he is a step behind me (Nadia, 29, a manager).

So, it was very difficult for Nadia's husband to accept the new power relations within his family. According to him, family equilibrium was destroyed together with Nadia's becoming the family breadwinner. The examples above show that migration sometimes gives provides the opportunity to re-think and to look at the relationship from a different perspective. The lack of social pressure and the sense of independence sometimes makes migrants thinking about the conditions of their family relationship. For example, Nadia told me that migration allowed her to look at her marriage independently, without the family pressure which she felt when the couple lived in Poland.

Our friends and families knew that we were together for such a long time. It happened once, before our getting married, that we were about to break up. But my father said that it only meant that we didn't love each other at all, that there was never anything like a true love between us and that we must have cheated each other. What he said was incomprehensible for me, however, I worried about it so, in this situation, I decided to stay. My parents are old-fashioned, very traditional and my father constantly put pressure on me. Here I felt completely detached from all those family relations, from their opinion. I concentrated on my own, put attention to my own needs. It helped me to make a decision based on my feelings and needs. I didn't even take their opinion into consideration. Even if they are my family, they put pressure on me, no matter whether it’s consciously or not. They have their own belief and opinion and think that they know what's good for me. (Nadia, 29, manager)

So, sometimes migrant spouses also realize that the only thing that kept them together in Poland was their family and friends’ expectations. Also the psychologist, Katarzyna Piwońska stressed that migration very often causes migrant to reflect on their own life as well as on the quality of their family relations.

Very often the family put pressure on spouses and promote this relationship, and these spouses don't know themselves why they are in this relationship. Well, migration then is a chance for separation,
for their own space. And then the question arises: Where am I? Am I happy with what I have? Before migration, very often we hadn't thought about that in this way (Katarzyna Piwońska, psychologist).

Eventually, Nadia admitted that migration not only made possible the transformation of gender roles within her family, but it also let her examine her marriage from a different perspective and eventually end it.

So we had a small child, my mother was in a hospital with some serious problems and I had no support from him. And all of this I had to take on my shoulders. And eventually in Ireland it became clear and I finally realized that I don't have to have another child to take care of (Nadia, 29, a manager).

So, the impulse for family change was outside of the family. Simply, the change would not probably have happened if the couple had not migrated. As mentioned above, the situation when a husband loses his position as breadwinner to his wife, it challenges men’s sense of identity and self-esteem. One of my male interviewees described how difficult a time he had with this new gender arrangement and how much this new situation had shaped various aspects of his life:

“And suddenly she had a good job and I had none. I didn't earn any money. This was a big change for me, sort of challenge. I lost my self-esteem, because what kind of man am I if I don't make money and my woman supports me? I felt horrible. And I was simply bored. I had nothing to do, you know...simply during the day” (Jędrzej, 25).

Many of my male informants stressed that earning money was generally deemed to be central to a man’s self-esteem and to his role as head of the family. The experience of transnational migration hardly changed their perceived gender roles, even if some of them experienced unemployment and a shift in the bread-winning position within the family. The maladjustment of men’s’ gender beliefs to the changing gender arrangement in their families caused even higher levels of frustration among my respondents. Katarzyna Piwońska observed that this frustration can lead to social problems which are much more common among migrant men than among migrant women, mostly alcoholism and gambling.

They [men] find it difficult to get out of the role for which they were socialized their whole life. For example, I know the pair; when the woman found opportunities for professional self-development, the man could not cope with such feeling that he began to be less male, that he wasn't a 100% bedrock for her any more. And what next...? He started drinking and gambling... There is a big problem with gambling among migrants, and it is more common among men than among women...(Katarzyna Piwońska)

This carries echoes of the so-called ‘crisis of masculinity’ remarked upon in Lina McDowell’s research (2002) of the social construction of masculinities among the white working-class youth in
contemporary Britain.

In other words, often the transnational migration experiences of men and women differ from each other in a very visible way. Significant changes in family gender roles, for example a reverse of the family breadwinner role, causes in some families, considerable instability. This is reflected in single parent families and high divorce rates (Pessar 1995). Similar observations and opinions are also shared by journalist and activist Anna Paś. According to her, the disintegration of Polish migrant marriages in Ireland is primarily the result of the changing gender attitudes of Polish women. The financial independence which could be achieved in Ireland even from low-skilled jobs, allows many Polish women to re-think their marriage.

*Migration increases the emancipation of Polish women. Women come here and regardless of their qualifications, their earnings let them be financially independent. Life of a single woman here is much easier than in Poland. They can pay and increase their skills and education, they can also increase their standard of living. And besides, you can observe how many migrant marriages broke up precisely because of this reason. When women feel more independent from their husbands it causes that it is much easier to make decision to terminate unhappy and unsatisfactory relationship. So, it is possible that in Poland economic impossibilities for single life keeps spouses together” (Anna Paś).*

The same observation is also shared by Marek, the Dominican Friar. In his opinion the processes of the emancipation of Polish women are integrated with their migration reality. Female migrants from Poland find financial opportunities in Ireland which they had never had in Poland, and which allow them to sustain themselves, improve their education, and travel around.

*And this lack of economic pressure here results in emancipation of women. If you can save some money then you have a chance to think about yourself finally. It changes the way you see the world. You discover a different world. It creates a new kind of life. But this not only about money. This is also the way of how people perceive the new reality, and that they discover various possibilities.*

Katarzyna Piwońska emphasized different levels of socialization and adaptation to the new environment of Polish migrant men and women:

*“Polish men in Ireland, many of whom work in construction, don’t socialize and are just focused on working and sending money home. But the women seem to be socializing more; they work in clubs and pubs as waitresses, so it is much easier for them to meet people”.*

She also noticed that migrants often begin to discover in their own personalities something which they hadn't known before. This often caused difficulties for the relationship.

*“I have two examples now in my mind, where women became so much focused on themselves that they stated „It is my time now”. And it also causes a crisis in the family. They gasp at the new possibilities for self-development. And they find new things in themselves which they hadn’t found*
before. And this is a very difficult moment for the relationship. And if there is lack of this flexibility in the relationship, then migration and chances for self-development impact destructively on the family (Katarzyna Piwońska).

Moreover, the importance of external factors associated with the culture of the receiving society cannot be overlooked. For example Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) as well as Darvishpour (1999, 2002) show that when moving to more egalitarian societies where partnership between spouses is more common than in their original societies, women often adopt egalitarian attitudes to their family life. It is difficult to say unequivocally whether this trend is also present among Polish migrants in Ireland. As international comparative studies suggest (see chapter 1, p.43-45) Ireland is a country with relatively traditional gender divisions, similar to Poland. However, in the opinion of most of the respondents and social activists I talked to there is a bigger drift towards gender equality than in Poland, and these changes happen in Ireland much faster than in Poland. Nevertheless, none of my informants indicated external cultural factors as having any impact on their attitudes to their marriage or gender.

The research results also suggest that the reverse of the main breadwinner position within the family or significant differences between the level of socialization to the new social environment of one of the spouses, often cause dilemmas related to the family decision about the potential return home, and may potentially be a “flashpoint” in family relations.

**VIII.VI. To return or not to return?**

A decision about the return is at some point similar to the decision about emigration. It can also bring about family conflicts. My findings show that migration has given many of my female respondents a chance to gain more financial independence, develop their social life and professional skills, and eventually, to re-think their life choices. So, it is no wonder that most women were more willing to settle in the host country for longer or even permanently than their husbands. They often struggle to maintain the advantages that migration and employment has brought them, and so they are likely to avoid or postpone a return to the home country. They are afraid that it would mean the loss of their new-found independence. For example Beata, unlike her husband, did not see a reason to return to Poland

*Comparing a daily life here and there, I haven’t even thought about it. Well, what for there? For a nice weather? For a nice winter? For snow? No, it is not a reason for me. You can write a book about the idea but I cannot live for the idea. (And what about your husband? -MM) - He is missing Poland, especially the family he left there. Sometimes I have this impression that he does not feel so*
comfortable here [in Ireland] as I do. (Why? - MM) Hmm, I do not know... I have a more energetic personality than him, he is more withdrawn and it takes him much more time to get used to new conditions etc... (Beata 42, cleaner).

As has been shown above, migrants’ desire to return correlates with their level of social integration in the new society. So, the male sense of success and profit gained abroad is often much lower than that of their wives. This trend has been particularly noticeable among those male informants who remained faithful to traditional gender beliefs during the transnational family stage and after family reunification in Ireland. These men are usually eager to return to Poland. They hope to use their savings earned in Ireland to improve their well-being in Poland and, those who feel that they have lost the superior family position as breadwinner and authority, believe that in the home country they will reclaim it. For example, this kind of attitude was described by Nadia when she talked about her husband Maciej:

The complexes of my husband have been very much deepened by migration. And he was talking about going back to Poland repeatedly. Because in Poland, after all, you are in your own country, but in Ireland, there were these situations when he was not able to do any simple thing in the office or wherever, because he didn't speak English (Nadia, 29).

A similar trend has also been noticed in the literature. Walton-Roberts and Pratt (2005:187), writing about Sikh immigrants in Canada, suggest that men often attempt to return home more frequently and sooner than women in order to maintain their status in the home country which had been destabilised by migration. Also an anthropologist Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994, 98-101) based on her research on Mexican migrants in the United States, noticed that with increased appreciation for their independence, new immigrant women have become more sympathetic towards staying in the United States than Mexican immigrant men. The male migrants from Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo's research characterized their life in Mexico as having greater autonomy and where they “would assume the family role that his deceased father previously held” (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994:99).

In the end, it is also important to stress other factors which strongly shape the family decision and the individual motives related to the potential return to the homeland. The interviewees’ discussion about the decision to return to Poland constantly referred to the presence of their children and their interests. The children’s well-being was paramount even if their parents were homesick. It was a crucial factor which strongly shaped the family decision about whether and when they would leave Ireland. As Orellana et al. (2001:587) observed “the presence of children in central to the families’ decision-making process”. School-age children clearly constitute a very powerful reason to remain in Ireland. Some parents also pointed out another argument for staying in Ireland; they wanted their children to learn English fluently. Good knowledge of English was perceived as a great resource.
which increases their children’s chances in the Polish job market in the future. A similar observation has been made by Anne White (2011:212) among Poles in the UK: “Parents of younger children understand that children can quickly become embedded in their English environment once they start school (…). In other words, to have a child starting school can be perceived as a point of no return, the end of temporariness and flexibility for young parents”

The parents’ main concern when considering the return migration is uprooting their children from their social environment and school system. It reminds parents of the dilemma they faced when they made the initial decision to migrate to Ireland. However, whereas previously the migration motive was mainly economic, now the non-economic factors are the most important. Only a multitude of very strong factors would encourage parents with school-age children to uproot them and return to Poland. “A simple turn in economic fortunes on a national level is unlikely to be enough to dislodge them. Even if one spouse loses his or her job it is not easy for the family to go” (White 2011:201-202). However, migrants’ intentions about the length of stay in the host country changes over time (Spencer 2007:77).

There are also other problems associated with the family decision about their return to the home country. Transmigrants live “in between” two countries not only in the physical but also in the sociological and psychological sense. They do not feel comfortable either in Poland or in Ireland. In Ireland they still feel like guests while in Poland they are not entirely at home anymore. This brings confusion into their lives and makes their decision about a possible return to the home country or stay in the host country even more difficult and frustrating. As one of my respondent confessed “neither in Ireland nor in Poland I feel like at home anymore.”

In sum, there are at least two aspects which characterize return migration; first, the economic factors are much less important in comparison to non-economic ones in the decision to emigrate, and second, the experience of migration and acculturation abroad gave migrants a feeling of being “a different person“ than before migration. “This feeling is often accentuated because of the reception given to return migrants by local people, who do not let them forget their migrant identities” (King 2000:20 after White 2011:198).

Friar Marek also noticed that many migrants, even if they want to return to the home country, are not prepared for the changes they would meet in Poland. They are afraid of potential failures and difficulties in the home country much more than they had been afraid of potential challenges before their migration to Ireland.

Very often I hear the question: come back and what next? I think that it was much easier for them to come here than to go back now. This is because of several things. They enjoy the return if they have everything prepared and carefully thought out. However, there is a lot of people who would like to go back to Poland but they do not know what for and how. Behind this attitude are issues such as

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that they have got used to certain things, for instance the new standard of living, the way employees are treated by employers, how they are treated in offices etc. I have noticed a clear difference between those who have fixed the specific time of their migration, so they are preparing for going back by improving their education or organizing something in Poland, and the second group which is lost in this matter, and they keep repeating; in one year maybe I will go back. And they are staying for years (Friar Marek).

There are two groups of Polish migrants in Ireland differentiated by Friar Marek with regard to their future plans to return to the home country. In the first group are people who from the beginning had a clearly defined returned date and definite plans for life after migration. These people strive for their goal without any confusion. The second group constitutes people who migrated in order to pay back debts and without any explicit plans for the future. They often declare their desire to return to Poland, however they do nothing or very little to make this wish come true. They do not know exactly when or what for they would return. Migrants tend to hope to return, and this hope brings them to the belief that some day they will. The term “myth of return” is used to refer to this phenomenon (White 2011). “The myth of return is conceptualized as the completion of migration. Return is therefore the opposite of emigration. It will be a rest from migration, an opportunity to spend money earned abroad” (White 2011:200). In other words, for many migrants the decision about emigration was much easier than the decision about the return to Poland. Additionally, there is also strong evidence in the literature (ex. Ruhs 2005, Burrell 2009, Iglicka 2009, White 2011)-also presented in this thesis- to suggest that a significant proportion of post-accession Polish migrants do not plan to return to their home country. Moreover, as the research of Iglicka (2009) indicates, some of those migrants who returned to Poland, did it only temporarily and considered re-emigration. So even return does not necessarily mean the “return of failure” and the end of migration process (White 2011), but “Thanks to the insights of transnationalism and social network theory, return is no longer viewed as the end of the migration cycle; rather it constitutes one step in the migration process” (Cassarino 2004:268 after White 2011:198).

VIII. VII. Conclusions

Although often the most awaited aspect in the migration process, family reunification is not always a happy family event, and more frequently it is not a one time event. Transnational family reunification has its own unexpected effects. Initially, the reunification of couples after long period of transnational separation can put marriages under strain. It is not only accompanied by the process of the initial re-adaptation of one of the spouses to the new social and cultural environment, but also
with the possible re-establishment of gender power relations. Migration often creates changes within the structure of the family; former family leaders can be ‘demoted’ and the nature of gender relations can shift.

The shift in the gender power balance within the family usually causes marriage problem if it is not accepted by one of the spouses. Similar to Rebecca Elmhirst’ observation in Indonesia (2007), I have noticed that the link between a man providing for his family (for women and children) and ‘masculine’ identity is also powerful and enduring among Polish transnational families in Ireland. Judith Butler has also acknowledged that gendered performances are „not finally dissociable from the ways in which material life is organized” (Butler, 2004: 214), and the general “cultural function of masculine identity is to motivate men to work” (Connell, 1995: 33).

My research results suggest that transnational migration consolidates rather than challenges the traditional gender beliefs of men who prior to transnational family migration had held traditional gender beliefs and had been accustomed to a traditional gender-based arrangement of housework. This is especially the case when their wives, who prior to migration had been practicing the traditional family role arrangement, move into a workplace that brings new-found financial independence and higher earnings than their husbands. It may cause tensions within the marriage, or even its dissolution, as it has been shown above in the example of Nadia and Maciej. My research results also indicate that many migrant men experience downward social mobility. They tend to limit their social contacts to their families and Polish colleagues from the work place. As a result, they hardly speak English and find adaptation to the host society difficult. The example of Nadia’s husband, as well as other similar examples of migrants who hardly speak English, suggests that poor English was the main factor inhibiting social integration, further education and employment. In other words: “to acquire language is to do more than acquire the ability to communicate; it is to acquire culture” (Alexander et al., 2007:785 after White 2011:151).

Unlike men, the experience of migrant women is often associated with upward social mobility and increasing independence due to their engagement in income-generating activities. As a result, migrant women often prefer to remain in the destination country while male migrants are often eager to return to Poland hoping to regain their social and family position.

Migration causes the emotional emancipation of Polish women. The female financial contribution to the family budget after migration increases women’s self-esteem and the ability to make powerful decisions within the family. However, female empowerment within the family and female professional work rarely goes hand in hand with a change in traditional gender arrangement of household duties. On the one hand, for example, Beata for who this choice was consistent with her beliefs. She consciously and not under any pressure decided to take on double roles and duties; as a
professional worker, and a traditional housewife and mother. On the other hand, other women, such as Aniela, explained their double amount of work as a result of grounded traditions and their husbands’ expectations and habits that are difficult to change after years. So, the research findings also indicate that the role of a migrant woman is often oriented around her husband's occupational concerns and her family life. Migrant women tend to emphasize above all the role of mothers. Regardless of other changes in their attitude to life, beliefs related to the role of the mother have not been changed in the face of migration. The traditional role of the mother continues to be an overwhelming priority for all Polish migrant mothers whom I talked to in Ireland. Moreover, duties related to the role of the mother have often been reinforced by migration. This is due to the lack of help with child-caring from other female relatives such as grandmothers, that women could often rely on in Poland.

However, as the examples in this chapter show, this does not necessarily limit their activity in the labour market since their skills, and human resources help with adaptation to the new situation. However, if women followed their husbands and remained unemployed in the host country they often feel lost and more dependent on their husbands than they had felt in Poland. Eventually, personal psychological disposition cannot be ignored when observing how individuals deal with the stress of immigration and family separation.

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IX. Parents and children from the transnational migration perspective.

In this chapter I take into account two dimensions of the transnational parent-child relationship. The first one is the relationship of juvenile children and their parents who migrated abroad as labour migrants during the transnational migration time and after the reunification in the host country. I explore the lives of families in which fathers or mothers have migrated alone or together with the intention of sending for the rest of their family at a later date. I pay particular attention to ways in which gender roles and gender beliefs shape family members’ experiences. I also include the children’s perspective in order to more completely evaluate the consequences of transnational family migration over a child's life.

Although children are very often an important factor that pushes migrants to keep transnational activities and transnational ties with their homeland alive (Dreby 2007), there are adults who are treated as the principal players in migration. However, in the last decade, the topic of transnational families and the effects of such transnational living arrangements on children has emerged in the increasing number of studies on migration (Borraz, 2005; Dreby, 2007; Schmalzbauer, 2008, Artico, 2003; Parreñas, 2005; Smith et al., 2004; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002, Dreby 2010).

Even if children’s experience of migration is taken into account it has mostly been studied from the parental point of view or relying on adults reporting on their childhood experience (Huang and Yeoh 2005). Very few scholars have decided to make the children’s point of view the core of their research (for instance Fog Olwig 1999; Jones-Correa 2002).

I managed to conduct three unstructured in-depth interviews with girls of different ages and with different migration experiences and talk to a 6 year old boy, in the presence of his mother. I did not record the interviews in order to maintain an open and relaxed atmosphere in our talks. Nevertheless I was trying to memorize as much as possible and take notes when the things children talked were significant for my studies.

The parent-child relationships from the transnational perspective should not only be limited to discussion about migrants and their juvenile children but also the complex transnational relationship of migrants with their parents who stayed in the home country should be taken into consideration. Thus, the second dimension of transnational parent-child relationship which I take into account is the transnational relationship of adult migrants themselves with their elderly parents in Poland.

There are two stages in transnational childhood; the first one concerns the time when one or both parents are abroad, and the second – the time after the family reunification.
IX.I. Transnational family stage

Although parents who migrate state that they move out of a desire to improve the lives of their children, a child's experience of parental migration has been likened specifically to that experienced during a parent’s divorce (Dreby, 2007) and is akin to suffering an ambiguous loss (Falicov, 2007). Most parents kept saying that their migration is not for them but for a better future of their children. Migrant parents expect that through migration and working in Ireland, they will be able to enhance their children's opportunities.

They feel conflicted when trying to reconcile the demands of work in Ireland and family life. On the one hand they want to stay in the host country in order to improve the economic situation of their family. On the other, they wish that they were with their children, which in turn would not lead to the solution of financial problems for their families. Parents who choose to stay abroad often try to compensate for their absence by sending excessive gifts and money for their children and use gift-giving practices to maintain relationships across borders (Dreby 2010).

Julia mentioned that her son Arek’s the initial reaction to the migration of his father was very bad. The child couldn't understand the new situation.

*The first months were very difficult for us. The child was constantly asking when dad would come. He was three when his father left, so he felt that there was no dad anymore around him(...) Just before our flight to Ireland, it was very difficult for me to observe that the relationship between them was not so close as before any more. Arek was very happy when he saw a father but just because the father was this one who was giving him nice and fancy toys”* (Julia 33, cleaner in the hospital.)

After some time, the relations between the transnational parent and the child in Poland became more superficial than based on close ties. For Arek, his father became a “temporary father” who brought toys. The source of happiness during these visits was not the presence of the father but the gifts he was bringing for the boy. While for Arek's father these gifts were to compensate for not being with his son, and also an attempt to maintain close relations with the child, Arek started to perceive his father through the perspective of what presents he was getting. The intimate relations between parent and child seemed to be broken, or at least the proper balance was disturbed. Suárez-Orozco et al. (2010) commented on the reaction of small children to their parent’s absence:

“Children missed their parents but most adapted to their caretaking situations especially, if it happened early in their childhood, was over a sustained period of time, and was in a caring environment” (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2010: 26). Also Katarzyna Piwońska, a psychologist,
recognized the problem of “euro-orphans” and the disturbance in the child-parent relationship in the face of transnational migration of a parent.

*Children don’t know how to deal with the new situation, they don’t understand it, they feel betrayed...Children feel like they lost a father, but on the other hand they are satisfied with money and gifts, so...there is this kind of strange balance but it doesn't entirely compensate the absence of a parent* (Katarzyna Piwońska, psychologist).

Qualitative studies of Honduran (Schmalzbauer, 2004) and Salvadoran (Abrego, 2009) or Mexican (Dreby 2010) transnational families have emphasized the importance of financial transfers for children’s needs. Dreby (2010) found that parents’ remittances in the form of money and gifts are often directed at children’s education. However, the conclusion of many studies was that children might benefit from remittances while suffering emotionally from prolonged separation (Borraz; Dreby; Heymann *et al.*, 2009; Markham Piper, & Heymann, 2009; Suarez-Orozco *et al.*, 2002; Schmalzbauer, 2004).

Another respondent, Matylda described how her nine year old daughter experienced transnational separation from her father. The Matylda's daughter’s experience of clearly shows that the permanent physical absence of the parent in everyday life which causes the child's feeling of loss related to the migration of the parent is slowly decreasing. Instead of the former, close parent-child relationship the emotional distance appears gradually.

* She was nine years old and she missed him very much. But this is like that, you miss very much for a month or two. My husband phoned every two, three day, so we were waiting for these calls. After some time, you actually have nothing to talk about and these talks become shorter and more concrete; about how the day passed. And these talks were shorter and shorter* (Matylda 39, a waitress).

Aniela, a thirty seven year old cleaner told me about the reaction of her sons to the two year transnational separation from their father.

*My younger son didn’t know his father because when my husband left he was almost one year old, and when we joined he was three. It was sad because we are family and my son treated his father like he was a stranger. The word ‘daddy’ did not exist for him, and it was painful, especially for my husband. The older son became very malicious and negatively disposed. He did not understand that daddy left so that we had better life, so that we could afford more things. He thought it was his fault that my husband left, and that he doesn’t love us and, therefore, he doesn’t have a father any more* (Aniela 37, a cleaner).

As the examples above shows, eventually a parent may become a stranger to the child, or the child may express his/her grudge against the migrant parent or/ and feel guilty for the parent’s migration.
The possible emotional shift in the relationships of children with their parents, who had left them behind due to migration for a considerable period of time and under care of other relatives, has also been noted by psychologists working on the separation of migrant families (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2010:25-26).

“For the immigrants’ parents, the children maintained a very real presence in their daily existences. Parents framed the daily rigors of their lives as a narrative of sacrifice for their children and dreamed of the longed-for-reunification as a way to sustain them through the painful separations. However, for the children who underwent lengthy separations, over time, the absent biological parent(s) began to fade to an abstraction” (Suárez-Orozco et al 2010:25-26).

An extremely difficult family experience is the situation when both parents migrate and leave their children in Poland, as was the case for Ewa, a thirty-nine-year old nurse and her husband Adam. They left to migrate to Ireland leaving behind three children; two daughters (10 and 12) and a 10-year-old son. They had been living in transnational separation from their children for one year.

Ewa was on the verge of tears when our conversation turned to her transnational separation and the phone talks during the separation from her three children:

*So, over this one year, in the meantime Arkadiusz also found a job and our financial situation got much better, we could start sending some money home, for our children. (the respondent’s phone is ringing so there is a short break in the interview). We had in our work a public phone in the corridor. And somebody told us about this kind of phone cards that you put a pin code and you can call. So, we started calling to the kids on a mass scale. Until now we have a full box of these cards. We were buying them on a mass scale and we were calling them every day. But you know, at the beginning, when children are 9 or 7 then they talk about what happened to them today and that's it. There is no big conversation. I wanted to hear them every day, and I was trying to call them every day. But they were...I don’t know.... as if every day was too hard for them, too much. So we agreed that, we would be calling them once per week and they would talk us about what they were doing over the whole week. So, that’s how it was. Sometimes it was very difficult, they were crying when talking to us that they are not understood by the grandmother or by the teacher at school. These were normal situations. Sometimes children exaggerated but sometimes there was really a problem and we couldn’t help them or protected them. So, sometimes it was a huge family tragedy simply made from a small thing. They were crying to the handset and I was crying to the handset, and then Arkadiusz was taking over the handset. So, that’s how it was.*

Ewa admitted that although they often phoned their children, it was very difficult to be present in their children’s everyday life and help them if they needed parental assistance and protection. It also
turned out that the everyday phone conversations were too emotional a burden on the children. Eventually they limited phone contact to once a week.

Three months after their departure, Ewa returned to Poland to visit the children for the first time. Ewa has traumatic memories associated with that time. It turned out that not only was her absence a source of stress for them all but also was the short visit and saying goodbye again was psychological torture.

So, I went to Poland to visit our children after three months of being in Ireland. As I was employed already in Ireland I could go home for a few days only. So it was five days only. Just to see the children after these three months. Arkadiusz didn't go with me. These were terrible five days. I was so happy that I saw them but it was terrible mental drudgery, equally for me and for them. Because I knew that I would have to leave and they knew it to. Over these five days they were always with me, like glued to me. We even slept together in the same bed. I remember...it was horrible moment... (the respondent is crying). I remember when my friends came to pick me up to the airport, and when I was saying goodbye to the children in front of the house...I simply turned out and got to the car...And when I was in the car and the car was going my friend told me: look back. I looked back and I saw my small Paweł, you know, on such a small baby bicycle, and listen, he was biking and chasing the car...and he was pedalling so much, and was screaming: mum! mum! (the respondent is crying, and me too)(...). So, these kind of separations are bad, very bad for the family”.

The couple decided that it would be better for the children if the mother who visited them. Ewa and Adam’s opinion, although their children missed them both, they needed the presence of their mother more than the presence of their father, even if it was only a temporary visit. Therefore, they assumed that children take their mother's migration harder than that of their father.

Some researchers argue that psychological and economic relations between transmigrant parents and their children are also gendered. For example, in her work on fathering from a distance among Filipino transnational families Parreñas (2005, 2008) found that due to the traditional gender norms regarding the role of women as mothers and primary care-givers, the children of migrant mothers are more prone to anger, feelings of being abandoned or unloved, confusion, and worries than the children of migrant fathers. The limitation of this study was that it contained only a small number of interviews with children, which did not allow for the drawing of unequivocal conclusions. Nevertheless, based on the assumptions of the parents I interviewed, as the example of Ewa and Arkadiusz above shows, the belief that children suffer from the absence of the mother more than from the absence of the father is present and common among Polish migrants.
IX.II. Reunification

The reunification of migrant parents and children is undoubtedly an exciting and joyful family event. However, it does not mean that this process is not fraught with challenges.

Family migration usually imposes a cost on children. The migration of children with the aim of joining their parents abroad is seen by parents as something natural and unquestionable. According to the general parenting approach among Polish parent’s children should listen to their parents as parents want the best for them. As a consequence of this, children are rarely asked to express their opinion about migration plans, despite that, the children' reactions to their movement to the new country clearly determine to a large extent a happy family reunification.

Children are subordinate to their parent’s decisions, though very often they do not agree with them. In most cases their schooling is interrupted and their friendships are terminated. In order to minimize these costs, the reunification of children with their parents abroad is likely to be timed to occur during the summer months when school is not in session.

The reaction of children who had been forced to move abroad was similar in most cases in my research sample. The migration turned out to be a traumatic experience for most of them. Usually for several months or up to one year the children were faced with the difficulties of adapting to the new situation, environment and language. Rejection of the new life often manifested in aggression or nervous behaviour, fear of contact with the external world, reluctance to go out, to go to school, even bed-wetting and insomnia.

Aniela, a mother of a seven year old boy described her son’s reaction of during the first three months as such:

*During the first three months he cried every morning. He didn’t want to go to school. There were many reasons; the sun didn’t shine or just because he didn’t understand other children. It always ended up that two teachers waited for him in front of the school because he was so hysterical that it was the only way to take him inside. He was taking it very hard, he was wetting his bed, couldn’t sleep, was screaming, he was very nervous (Aniela, 37, cleaner.)*

Children who join their parents abroad often also have to struggle with differences in language, school and social systems. Ewa recalled her memories of the reaction of her three children in the first year following the family reunification in Ireland.

*They didn’t want to go out at all. There were a lot of kids living around us, but they [children of the respondent-MM] didn’t want to go out the house. The first months of school were also horrible. For example, once Karolina came back from the school crying and said that she didn’t understand the teacher, that the teacher said something to her and she didn’t understand, and the teacher*
wanted her to change the seat although she did nothing\textsuperscript{105}. She could not defend herself. (...) At the beginning they wanted to know such basic sentences as for example how to say that I need to go to the toilet, because they didn’t know that. This first year was very difficult for them. At the end of the first year, they started going out to the playground. Pawel came out first. I was trying to convince the girls that they had to go outside; they couldn’t be at home all the time because they wouldn’t know anybody, that they had to take a risk.

Often the first few months were so hard for children that parents felt conscience-stricken that they had uprooted them and began to consider returning to Poland. In extreme cases of a child’s bad reaction to the new life, parents decide to take children back to Poland. Friar Marek mentioned two such examples which he had come across in his professional career in Ireland:  

*I know two examples when husbands brought the whole families to Ireland, and the children didn't adapt to the new environment at all. And the mothers had to go back to Poland. This was the case of children who already in Poland had started attending school. And this change was too difficult for them. And it was not the language problem; it was the problem with adaptation to the environment where they felt like strangers, they didn't have friends and so on. Even the psychologist couldn't help them and the families had to go back to Poland.*

Most parents feel guilty that they forced their children to migrate, to leave their schools, their friends, their grandparents and other relatives they were close to. Nevertheless, they didn't give the children a choice. Children had to face a new country, a new home, a new school and people and in many cases a new language. Parents try to make the right decision about migration though it causes a lot of inconveniences to and problems for their children. Ewa, who together with her husband decided to migrate and left their children under the care of their grandmother for over a year, suffered a similar experience:

*I was racked with guilt very much as I left with them first, and then I put them in this life here, and I told them to deal with it.*

Ewa continued:

*When they came here it seemed to me that I should reward them this separation. And they had never had nice clothes in their life before; sometimes my friend gave them something, after her children. So, when they finally arrived in Dublin we went to the shops and they got what they wanted, I swear to you. It wasn't very educational (laugh). Now, as I look at it, it was horrible. They really put on weight very much. Lots of sweets were always at home. They were as fat as ducks.*

\textsuperscript{105}This kind of punishment (change seat) is often used in Polish schools for children who do not behave well or talk or don’t answer during the class.
The sense of guilt among parents who left their children in Poland while they themselves migrated was also noted by the psychologist Katarzyna Piwońska. She also noticed that the parent's sense of guilt is often coupled by the awareness of the double deprivation of children. The first deprivation is caused by the migration of a parent or parents, and the second one results from the child's separation from his/her environment in Poland (school, family, friends etc.) in order to reunify the family abroad.

As my professional experience indicates, the next important aspect is a problem of children. A lot of people have left their children in Poland with the second parent or with grandparents, and they feel very guilty because of that. The second reason to feel guilty is when they bring their children to Ireland. They feel guilty that they have deprived their children of something again (Katarzyna Piwońska, a psychologist)

The migrant parent’s care for their children is often expressed in their concern over the dangers of the new environment, including the potential of becoming too similar to Irish children and copying their behaviour which very often is seen by Polish parents as inappropriate, and in the case of teenagers- debauched. For example Patrycja, a mother of 10 year old Mila confessed that she was very afraid of the bad influence of Irish children on Mila;

I see how they behave, how 12, 13 year old girls look like, and I am afraid that Mila will simply sink into it, although she also attends a Polish school here. Then it would be very difficult for us to change something, because most of her friends are Irish and obviously, at some point every teenager wants to be like any others. But these others look like they look, and I am afraid of it.

Also the level of education in Irish school, after initial enthusiasm among Polish parents, later on often causes serious doubts. Bartosz, the father of Mila explained his concern about the Irish education system as such:

At the beginning I was delighted that Mila would be here, in Ireland, in the West. I thought; probably she will get a better education, she would learn English, she would have better chances than in Poland. Now I see, that it is like everywhere- it depends on money. And maybe even in Poland she would have gotten better education than here. (... ) So, my enthusiasm has become much smaller when Mila started going to school, nevertheless our methods of rising Mila haven't changed.

Nevertheless, despite an unsatisfactory level of education in Irish schools – for some migrant parents- children developed language skills quicker than their parents.

And although my respondents' foreign language capabilities usually increased over time, some immigrant parents lose the motivation to ‘practise’ speaking English or learn it. Sometimes, they try to avoid the situations in which they would have to speak English, and if it is necessary, they often
count either on their partners who speak the foreign language better, or on their children whose ability and confidence in speaking English had grown. For example Janusz confessed that:

“I even took a few lessons at the beginning. But I work with Poles and Slovaks so I don’t need English (laugh). In the shops I don’t need to talk, I just put things to the basket then I see how much I need to pay and I pay. We have a son to deal with all these things in English, in offices or somewhere else. He is going to high school here, so he speaks English like Irish people.”

(Janusz, 41)

As the example of Janusz shows, children of migrants who speak English poorly are often expected to serve as interpreters for their parents. It also happens that parents came to feel at some point dependent upon their children and worried about how their children perceived their weak language skills. As has been noticed by psychologists (Mirkin et al. 2005:91-92), “Their sense of empowerment in the new world can influence how their children perceive them and how they (the mothers) negotiate the dilemmas of their home or the outside world on behalf of their children”.

For example, Aniela felt ashamed in front of her children that she couldn't understand what people around her were saying.

“They asked me for example: mum, what that lady said to you? And I didn't know what to answer them because I simply didn’t understand that woman. I felt ashamed that I couldn't explain such simple things”. [Did you take it as you were losing your parental authority?-MM]. “I think it was something like that. Maybe it wasn't true but I felt a little bit that in the eyes of my children I was losing the position of a person who knows everything and can explain the world to them..” (Aniela)

So, the children's relatively rapid adaptation to the new life may cause particular tension in the parent-child relationship. Parents face the stress of risking losing a certain degree of power or alternating the child-parent power relationship.

**Transnationalism of children**

As Laura Sigad and Rivka Eisikovits (2010) noticed, the various dimensions of the cultural life of transmigrants such as emotional, political, financial or cultural can occur daily. However, the activities of daily life cannot be fully carried out in two countries at the same time (Sigad and Eisikovits 2010). The physical activities such as daily school or social lives are, in an obvious way, fixed in one place at a time, and so far "even the tremendous accessibility of modern telecommunications cannot bridge all the divides in a transnational life” (Sigad and Eisikovits 2010:1018). So, although they are tied to both countries, they alternate between cultural spheres
(Sigad and Eisikovits 2010).

The life experience of children in my research reflects this reality. Most of the children I interviewed and I talked about with their parents share their life experiences between two countries: Poland and Ireland. Ireland is a country of daily life for all of them. All of them attend Irish schools and most of them, as their parents and those children who were interviewed personally declared, have Irish friends at school or somewhere else. The greatest part of their social life takes place in the English speaking environment and the Irish cultural realm. However, there is also time in the year which is fully Polish to most of them. Most children of recent Polish migrants in Ireland spend their summers or at least part of it, and some of their other vacations in Poland. This time in Poland is a periodic reality. Their experience is similar to that described by Sigad and Eisikovits (2010) of Israeli children living in the US and visiting Israel only from time to time.

When Polish migrants' children are in Ireland, their reality and experiences in Poland become their imagined life. Whereas Ireland is for them the land of daily life, full of obligations and school duties, they associate Poland as the land where they spend vacation, where they have plenty of free time and fun. Poland is also the land of their grandparents. Some children feel strong emotional connections to the place and the relatives left behind, where and with whom they had been living prior to the migration. They still perceive those places as their second homes, where they have their toys and their pets.

For example Julia’s 6 year old son Arek is, as Julia admitted, more transnational than his parents. Julia and her husband decided to settle in Ireland permanently but their son Arek maintains part of his life in Poland. His second home is at his grandparents' place. He is excited by that home because his dog is there, and his own hive and bees. He is very excited when he talks about it and he admits he misses his pets and grandparents very much. In Poland there are also cousins with whom he may play. In order to cheer him up Julia bought him a bunny to take care of. Arek spends his winter and summer holidays in Poland. On the other hand, in Ireland he has his school which he likes very much. At the beginning there was a problem with adapting to the new environment, especially the language barrier. Arek, like many other Polish children got some extra English lessons and learned the language very quickly. Arek has a dilemma when asked where his home is. He says: “You know, I have a dog! And bees!” “Really? So show me them, where is your dog and bees?”, “O not here, at home, at my grandpa's place” “Where is it?”, “In Poland”, “And what about Ireland, is this your home you live in or not?”, moment of consternation, “Yeeaaaaa....., this is my home too...” Arek couldn't decide which home is more "home-like". He listed things in Ireland which are important to him (his room, school and friends) and no less important in Poland (another room of his, grandparents, the dog, the cousin of the same age he plays with every time he is in Poland.) These different lives and different homes which Arek experiences during his daily life in Ireland.
and while spending his summer holiday or other holidays in Poland clearly shapes and colours his perceptions of the two locales.

However, in most cases the “imagined life” in Poland is more desired when it remains imagined. If there is an option to turn it into the daily experience it becomes less attractive. For instance, Patrycja and Bartosz’s 10 year old daughter Mila, has unknown feelings about going back to Poland for good. She misses her grandparents and her dog that she has in Poland very much, she likes also spending summer vacations in the Polish country side, however all her friends, schools, problems and other things important to her are in Ireland. It is difficult for her to imagine her everyday life in Poland.

- Yea, I'm looking forward to the summer! I will go to my grandparents! And my dog! Do you know that I have a dog there? I have two dogs! Toffi in Ireland and Goofy in Szczeglacin!(a small village located in the east of Poland, about 100 km from Warsaw- MM)
- How often do you visit your grandparents and your dog in Szczeglacin?-MM
- Hmmm....in summer usually, and sometimes for winter holidays, and last time when the grandpa was ill we went there with mum.
- Would you like to go back to your grandparents for good if you parent decided like that? You know, live there all the time, not only during the summer, go to school there?-MM
- And depart from Dublin forever?
- Yes-MM
- But I have to go to school here...
- So?-MM
- I don’t know...

Mila was also asked to draw the most important things and people in her life taking into account their location. I had thought the picture might show things about their transnational life which maybe a ten year old girl was not yet conscious about and thus could not tell and explain during our conversations.
In her drawing Mila indeed expressed her two-fold associations, relationships and connections that span her cross-border childhood in a clearer way. Poland is presented as most of all, the country of Mila's grandparents, with whom the girl is very close emotionally. Significantly, the only building presented in the drawing and signed as “a home” is her grandparents' home in Szczeglacin, in Poland. The house in Poland is important to her not only due to the fact that her grandparents live there but also because she also considers it as partially her home (her own room in her grandparents’ house). A similar situation exists with her grandparents' dog, which Mila regards as her pet in Poland. On the other hand, Ireland is the country where Mila placed her parents and pets with whom she lives in Ireland. These two worlds seem to be equivalent to each other, and it is difficult to unambiguously state which of these two worlds is more important. Clearly, Mila's life, like the lives of many other Polish transnational children in Ireland, is both “here and there”, full of the contradictions and ambiguities that compose their experience.

The ambivalent behaviour and feelings of transnational children, such as those felt by Mila and other children of Polish migrants in Ireland, are similar to what had been observed by Laura Sigad and Rivka Eisikovits (2010) among transnational Israeli children in the US:
“Children of transnationals may involve themselves in imagining life in their other world, yet they cling to familiar experiences. The preference for the imagined only exists while it is unattainable; once the imagined shows the semblance of reality, its magic is lost. The youngsters live within an emotional chasm: between the potential loss of their ideal world, and the impending dangers of their real world. Transnational adolescence brings simultaneous gains and risks” (Sigad and Eisikovits, 2010:1019-1020).

It seems plausible that the children's attachments to the culture of the country which their parents recognize as their motherland is, at least partially, the outcome of the either unconscious or purposeful induction of their parents. Parents who are afraid of losing their children to the new culture or want to protect their children against bad influences coming- in their opinion-from the culture of the host country, may induct children “into a cultural revival” (Falicov, 2005:402). It helps to create or re-create children's cultural, social and emotional bridges between the country where they live and the country which their parents perceive as the home-country. In this way, transnationalism may become a family process that is being passed down the generations.

It could be argued that the transnational life of Polish children in Ireland consists of three different worlds: the first one is the Polish world of their parents, the second one is the world of the host country as they meet it at school, and the third world is the world of migrants, their immediate environment.

They moderate their behaviour depending upon the site where they are; Polish (in Poland and/or among Poles in Ireland) or Irish (in Ireland and among Irish). For example Mila admitted that she has a group of Polish friends and a group of Irish friends but these two groups do not know each other. The girl meets with Polish or Irish friends at a certain times, for instance often with Poles on national-oriented events such as Holy Mass in the Polish church or Sunday classes at the Polish school.

-I have friends in the Irish school and in the Polish school as well. I meet them [Polish friends-MM] on Sundays at the Polish school and sometimes at the Holy Mass in the Polish Church and after.

- And Irish friends?-MM

- At school, at the Irish school, and after school in the backyard we often play together.

Many children of Polish migrants in Ireland are often equal participants in both societies and cultures; the Irish one and the Polish one, while their parents usually feel more comfortable with the culture of their ancestors and in the company of their compatriots. Children of Polish migrants in Ireland often become a link for their parents - in a symbolic and also in a practical sense – between them and the host society in which they are living.

However, there are also circumstances when the adaptation of children to the new migratory life
and the host country is more problematic. A teenager Krystyna (12), while living in Ireland, strongly argued that their "place on earth" is in Poland. Krystyna considered her home to be in Poland at her aunt’s house, where she had been living for three years while her mother (single parent) was abroad. She said she had "everything" there. All that is important to her and to which she is emotionally attached is in Poland. She loves her mother (Karolina, mid 30s) but everything in Ireland is new to her and she does not feel emotionally attached to anything in Ireland. Additionally, Krystyna had to face not only a new culture, language and country but also a totally new family situation. During the three years of transnational separation with her daughter, Krystyna's mother Karolina found a partner, set up new home and gave birth to Krystyna two step-brothers (twins). At the time of our talk she had already been living in Ireland for one year, but she still considered her aunt's home in Poland (where she lived during transnational migration time with her mother) as the place where she had “everything”.

“Actually I left everything in Poland. [What do you mean by 'everything'?-MM]. Everything, my school, my cousins, my auntie, my friends, my swimming team...”

So, Krystyna as with many other children of migrants who reunified their families in the host country, experienced a double migratory separation. First, she was separated from a migrant parent and then, in order to reunite with the parent abroad, she was separated from the surrogate care-giver - her aunt and friends to whom she had grown accustomed over the years. Moreover, upon arrival in the host country she faced reconstituted families with a step-parent and siblings and had to figure out how to fit in with this new family. So, despite many valiant attempts to keep relationships alive, the meeting of children and parents separated by migration is more a meeting of strangers than a true family reunion. “The strangeness may be compounded by added life complexities. The mother may now have a man living with her, or she may have a new child.” (Falikov, 2007:163)

- I love my mum.... and my new brothers. I take care of them and so on...there is always a lot of work with them. (...) Yea, I miss my auntie very much and I wish I could go back there. I don’t like this school, these Irish girls are stupid, I have nothing to talk to them about, and sometimes I have difficulties with English, I don’t know how to express myself in English sometimes. And there is not any swimming team at the school...

-Do you have any friends in Ireland?-MM

-No, I don't.

-Any?-MM

- Any.

Clearly, Krystyna's mother’s decision to migrate and later the decision to reunite the family in Ireland has placed her daughter in an extremely difficult situation. Unsurprisingly, the aunt and her
family, the caretakers with whom Krystyna had daily physical contact, had been seen by the girl as the most important people in her live. She declared that she was ready to resign from life with her mother and her new family in Ireland and come back home. So the observation of Suárez-Orozco et al. that “While parents were often appreciated and loved in their imagination, it was their daily care-givers who were their de facto parents” (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2010:25-26), was also true for Krystyna. Due to the migration of a parent or parents the stability of children’s living arrangements is disturbed. It often results in the re-arrangement of care. Over time children may form not only new attachments to their surrogate care-givers (Schmalzbauer, 2004) but also change their perceptions of authority figures in the household (Dreby, 2010; Su´arez-Orozco et al., 2002). And then, during reunification, especially adolescents may have trouble with re-adapting once again to the authority of their parents (Artico 2003).

Krystyna is torn between, on the one hand love for her mother and new brothers, and, on the other hand, longing for the life, people and places which she left in Poland. She does not like her new school and peers. She does not have any friends in Ireland. When talking with Krystyna I got the impression that she did not care much about or hadn’t made any effort to adapt to the new life situation. Everything in Poland was in her opinion better than in Ireland, and everything she found in Ireland was worse than in Poland.

Similar findings are presented by Anne White (2011:163) about Polish teenagers in the UK: “Interviewees with teenage children sometimes did have the impression that they had found it harder to mix with other children and that to some extent this was connected to their friendships back in Poland”.

So, an important factor which seems to play a significant role in the process of the reunification of parents and children abroad and children’s adaptation to their new social, cultural and sometimes also family environment is the children’s age. Sigrid Bafekr (1999:296) based on the study of Polish children in Brussels, observed that older children, especially adolescents who arrive in Belgium more often bring with them severe problems related to their psychological situation than younger children.

In the case of Krystyna the family reunification occurred in adolescence – the time when teens form their personal identities and try to figure out where they belong. Krystyna was very much engaged in her social life in Poland where she had all her friends, where she was going to school and pursuing various hobbies, for example swimming in the swimming team. As she described she “had the whole world in Poland and nothing in Ireland”. The reunification with her mother in Ireland meant drastic change to Krystyna’s life. This was a change which, on the one hand she wanted because she loved her mother, but on the other hand she did not want it because it ruined her past life.
Extremely different from the previous case is that of Klaudia (age 14) who left Poland when she was 5, and has already been living in Ireland for 9 years. She feels much more tied to Ireland than to Poland, and she rejects all aspects associated with Poland, the Polish culture and her parent's as the “old-fashioned” way of behaviour which she calls “Polishness” (polskość). She does not accept it and she is ashamed of it to such extent that she prefers to use the English version of her name – Claudia- instead of the Polish one- Klaudia. Although Klaudia's parents are building a house in Poland, their daughter does not want to go to Poland even for summer holidays. She gets irritated with her parents when they try to convince her to practice “Polishness”.

“Sometimes I am really pissed off that my parents forced me to do this Polishness. They want me to think their way but I'm not like them. Fortunately, they didn't force to me to go to the Polish school, but they are talking about the house in Poland that they are building”

So, there is a strong cultural conflict between parents who retain their old cultural ideals rigidly and their children who were born in Ireland and/or live in Ireland for a long time and have already established their social, cultural, emotional life in Ireland. Misunderstandings usually occur in adolescence. As has already been observed by clinical psychologists working on migrant families (Pravder Mirkin et.al., 2005:93-94) in many cases generational tensions have their roots in the contrary relations between the traditions of parents and the new approaches of children. Adolescents usually pursue host country-like cultural patterns, while their parents are more oriented towards home-country culture and tradition. Even if these children maintain limited contact with the motherland of their parents, as in the case of Klaudia, it more as a result of their parents' pressure than their own will. Transnational parents share their lives between two countries and often plan to go back to Poland, while their children, most often after years of socialization in Ireland from an early age, as for instance Klaudia, have less strong feelings or they feel intense embarrassment or objection with regard to their parent's plans or their “old-country”.

These opposite approaches may cause generational stresses within the family, in daily life and in the matter of a possible return to Poland, as the example of Klaudia shows:

“Yea, I can't imagine my life in Poland [why?]-MM] It's not my world! [why not?-MM] It's crappy! I don't want to live in this backwoods village where my parents are building a house. My whole life is here.”(Klaudia)

Another area of generational stress is linked to the power relationships between children and their immigrant parents. Migrant parents sometimes treat their children as objects who do not have a right to decide for themselves. This applies both to the decision about migration and the decision about a potential return. An example of this is the attitude of 14 year old Klaudia’s father. Miłosz directly expresses his opinion about his daughter's rejection of his idea to return the whole family to Poland.
"So long as I rule in this house, she would have to go, no matter what".

Immigrant parents often make dramatic sacrifices for what they hope will be a better future for their children. They tend to expect their offspring to be grateful for their sacrifices. Instead of this they notice that their children are very often ambivalent about joining their parents in the transnational migration process. This kind of inter-generational family conflict between migrant parents and their children can lead to the perception of family closeness, co-operation and family solidarity, as a negative form of parental control and care.

The conflict is not only between generations but also an inner conflict of the parents who are in a dilemma over whether they should break the social ties of their children once again. After years of living in Ireland, the parent's decision about returning to the home country means the separation of children from the social environment to which they already have become accustomed. This creates an analogous situation about the decision over emigration from Poland. So, although formally it is “a return” to the home country, practically (taking social ties etc.) for socialized children it is emigration from the country they are socialized in to the country which they do not know, or / and do not want to know, or they know only to a very limited extent, as the country of their holidays and the country of their parents and grandparents.

The potential family problems associated with the parent's desire to return to the home country with the whole family, including children who are already highly socialized with the host country, has been mentioned also by Friar Marek.

Inability to return is a result of many various things. From my observation I can say that one of the reasons are children. If they are from 1 to 5 years old it is much easier to return. The dilemma appears when a child goes to the Irish school, enters the Irish environment, starts learning the language, he begins to be ahead of his parents, he has more social ties with Irish society than his parents (Friar Marek).

Transnational children are raised in the cultural borderlands, where many aspects of two or sometimes more than two different cultures meet. Knowing that differences are seldom neutral towards each other, relations between migrants and their children might very often be full of conflicts and opposite attitudes.

Although Polish children are frequently raised in families where values, goods, claims and traditions from Poland are present on a daily basis, it is clear that for most of them transnational activities will not be central to their lives and they will not participate in these activities with the same intensity, affection and frequency as their parents. “Therefore, it is possible to think of children of immigrants as emotional transmigrants (Wolf, 2002) to the extent that their cultural attachments are mediated through the parent's attachments” (Falicov 2005:402).

To some extent the transnationalism of children seems to be forced by parents who see their own
and their children’s future in Poland, or they are unclear about their future plans (for instance in the case of in the case of C(K)laudia). It seems that the problem is increasing together with the time children spend abroad. The age of the children at the time when they left for Ireland is also significant. The younger the children when they arrive in the new country and the longer they live abroad, the transnational practices of children seem to have a forced nature resulted from their parents’ requirements rather than children’s own preferences.

IX.III. Relations between adult migrants and their parents in Poland

Although family reunification of a nuclear family excludes the continuation of transnational relations between the closest family members, transnational family relations are very strongly cultivated between migrants and members of their extended family, such as elderly parents, siblings, cousins and others. In other words, at the nuclear level the family it is not a transnational one anymore, but it is still a transnational family at the extended family level. This means that transnational family communication and challenges associated with transnational family relationship are often still present within the life of the migrant family. Transnational relations between adult migrants and their elderly parents in Poland constitute an important part of the general phenomenon of the transnational relationship between children and their parents. My research results show that- similarly to the transnational relationships of migrant parents and their juvenile children- many aspects of the transnational relations between migrants and their elderly parents in Poland are often shaped by the common beliefs about the “proper” behaviour related to the particular gender roles.

According to the opinion of my respondents, older people who remain in Poland often suffer because their adult children have migrated abroad. Many interviewees, equally women and men mentioned their parents expected them to come back to Poland. Although elderly parents understand the economic motivation for their migration, nevertheless, they still express concerns over their children’s decision. For example, one of my respondents quoted his father: „Why don't go there, earn some money and come back? What reasons for living there for so long?” The elderly generation hardly understands why their children stay abroad for a long time or decide to settle down in Ireland forever. They often put direct or indirect pressure on their migrant children in order to force them to come back to Poland. They refer to “family responsibilities” such as; the family property in Poland which needs to be taken care of by the next generation, most often a farm or/and a big house which the parents have built for themselves and for the younger generation of their

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
family. They also expect their children to live with them or close to them, and take care of them when they are old and need help. Migrants’ parents intimate that their adult migrant children have a symbolic debt to pay back to their elderly parents.

*They want me to come back and live with them in that big house they have built. They say that it was built for us. I feel sorry for them but they don’t want to understand that it will never happen. They think that I should be happy and grateful, but their expectations are just a kind of a burden to me* (Julia, 33).

In Poland it is still uncommon for older people to live in residential homes. There is a strong, common expectation that children will directly take care of older parents (White 2011:125), so living in a residential home is often seen as a sign of ingratitude on the part of the younger family members. Therefore, some transmigrants expressed the impression that their parents in Poland feel partially betrayed by their children because of their migration.

Nevertheless, my respondents declared that usually both, adult migrants and their parents viewed migration as a necessity arising from financial problems or lack of satisfactory job opportunities in their home country. Even low-level jobs in Ireland such as factory, restaurant or domestic work, were viewed more positively and clearly preferable to being unemployed in Poland. Some migrants admitted that their parents derive pride from their child’s occupational or social success in the new country even if their children had to leave Poland to do so. Parents of newly-weds usually saw little alternative to the child’s migration, given the limited opportunities to make a living locally. They support the labour migration of their children as they want to save them from the economic difficulties they have experienced in their life. Parents as well as their migrant children viewed agricultural work in a negative light, as hard and unprofitable.

The Marek’s mother, one of my informants, with whom I had a chance to talk to at her son's wedding reception in Poland, conceded with a note of regret in her voice that:

‘If he stayed here, he wouldn’t get anywhere. There was no work for him. Going there, he could earn a proper money. (...) ‘I told him to go.” (Marek’s mother)

However, although Marek’s parents understand the economic motives for their son’s migration, they still expressed no hidden grief about their migration. They hope that he will come back to Poland to take care of them when they are old and senile.

*It's a pity. I wish they could have been here, live in Poland. But what to do here?. Money, my dear, money. But it is difficult to the old mother...yes, very difficult. And I cannot see my only grandchild. I see him twice per year maybe. I wish them the best. I want them see someday in Poland. I am not getting younger, so I would like to have somebody to give me a glass of water when I won't be able to take it by myself...* (Marek’s mother)

There was also a shadow of resentment and expectation of generational reciprocity in Marek’s
mother’s statement. Once a child is raised by their parents he/she should repay them for it by providing care and company when parents need it. A similar feeling was also shared by the mother of his wife Daria.

Well, children...you rise them up and then you are alone. But what can you do? Maybe someday... (Daria’s mother).

Until me and my husband have still a little strength we can manage to work at the farm. But how long? It would be good to leave it soon to the younger generation. Our whole life we have been working to improve this farm, and for whom? Obviously for the children. Until they are in Ireland there is no point to even think about giving them this farm. Somebody has to take care of everything, if they are not here then it is only us to do it (Marek’s mother).

Marek’s parents hope that sooner or later Marek and Daria will come back to Poland to take care of the family farm. The example of Marek’s parents and Daria’s mother expectations toward their children suggests that parents’ expectations differ depending on the gender of the child and the number of children in the family. Parental expectations can sometimes fall more heavily on a migrant if he or she is an only child than when she or he has siblings. Marek is an only child. Therefore, whereas Marek’s parents expect him to take care of them and their farm in their old age, Daria’s mother, who has three children, would tend to select the child with the greater potential to provide support (Fortunately not all children run away abroad, so there is always someone close if I need.) The literature suggests (for example Roberts and Blanton 2001)\(^{106}\) that parents’ expectations are often reflected in the attitude and sense of obligation of the child. The most consistent self-perceived future responsibility of an only child was associated with being the sole caretaker of elderly parents. Although this sense of responsibility is also expressed by Marek, he does not want to dwell on it. He has made this issue of secondary importance in his life at the moment. Marek’s parents are in their mid 50s and do not have any serious health problems yet. These circumstances mean that their expectations towards Marek reflect concern for the future rather than the present. Therefore, unlike much older migrant’s parents, for example Roma’s father who is in his late 70s and ill (see below), younger parents, such as Marek’ parents, do not have expectations or needs to be fulfilled immediately or they have relatively less demanding expectations than parents of a more advanced age or with serious health problems. This suggests that care reciprocity between adult migrants and their parents in Poland is not a simple generational issue, but it is often shaped by more subtle family conditions, such as the number of children or age of parents and their health.

Importantly, most interviewees from my sample come from Polish villages or small cities. Respondents from rural areas often expressed stronger commitments and a sense of duty towards

their parents than migrants from big cities. They were also often emotionally tied to the farms and places where they come from. They treated them as their heritage which they are obligated to take care of after their parents’ death. Nevertheless, this sense of duty seems to be a kind of burden for some migrants, for example for Marek, as it limits his choice of life possibilities.

Another aspect which shapes intergenerational relations between adult migrants and their parents who remain in Poland are the social norms and beliefs associated with gender roles. The reaction of parents to a migration decision very often depended upon a migrant’s gender. According to Marek's parents, the migration of their son was seen as a chance for a better future for him and for his family. In the opinion of his father it was a good way to fulfil the traditional male obligations towards the family as long as Marek could be the main breadwinner.

“It's normal. He had to somehow earn money to support the family, no? We couldn't help him so he had to find out something and thus he went to this Ireland. As long as he earns money there it is god for him” (Marek's father).

Daria’s migration to Ireland in order to join her husband was seen by her mother and parents in law as the natural gender order; Daria should behave like a proper wife and so follow her husband. According to the older generation of her relatives, Daria's role in Ireland was to support her husband, and her self-development was seen as an important, but nevertheless secondary issue (“What could I say? A woman should follow her husband, so what could I say?”(Daria's mother).

Daria, more than her husband, is expected to give personal help on everyday daily basis and to take care of old parents when it would be necessary. The expectation of care for the elderly is more often directed to female migrants than male ones, so the lack of this care is more onerous for older parents when women migrate. Besides, women are not only - as noticed by Kohli and Künemund (2003:139)- more keen on unconditional and less on conditional family transfers than men, but also many of my female respondents feel more guilty than male respondents that they do not meet the needs of their parents. For example, Marianna mentioned that she felt that she owed her parents some care in their old age and she disappointed them by staying in Ireland.

“We left behind our parents in Poland. They are old. I call them very often and visit them also very often. (...) It is my big worry, that I left my elderly parents, and if something bad happens I will not be able to help them because I am here, and I have to take care of the children here. Even if something wrong happens to them, I will not be able to leave everything here and go there and help them”.

Even if women do not help, they express regret for that more often than men. Feelings of guilt were significantly less intensive and less frequently expressed by my male respondents, as the example of Marianna's husband Aleksander shows. Aleksander, a father of three children who had already been living in Ireland for four years, expressed his rather traditional beliefs about gender roles and gender responsibilities.
duties toward the older generation left behind in Poland. These beliefs clearly did not lose their raison d'être in the transnational family migration situation, moreover, in his opinion migration was a good way to fulfil the traditional social expectations coming from his role of father and family breadwinner.

_I couldn't be tied to my parents my whole life, a man has to go his own way at some point. And now I have to care more about my own family first of all. I am trying to earn some money to ensure better future to my children._ [How do you feel about the fact that you left them alone in old age in Poland?-MM] _Besides there is no problem because my sister lives in Poland so there is always somebody to help them if they need it, especially with everyday things. If they had problems with money or something like that, and I would be able to help them, then I would do it, obviously (Aleksander)._ 

Thus, Aleksander suggests that the role of care-giver for elderly parents is the role of his sister who lives in Poland rather than his role. Unlike Marianna, Aleksander does not feel guilty by not being able to take care of his parents anytime his help is needed. Aleksander is convinced that his role as a man is first of all to protect the material situation and the future of his own closest family members; a wife and children. Nevertheless, he is ready to compensate the lack of his personal help with money.

Unlike Aleksander, Roma a 28 year old nurse, feels very much obligated to help her sick father, whom she left in Poland when migrated to Ireland. Although she is not an only child, in her opinion her brother, who is also a migrant in Ireland, is engaged in their father's care to a lesser extent. Roma's brother help is limited mainly to financial help while Roma has to care about all of the other organizational issues associated with proper medical treatment for their father.

_“There is also my brother living in Ireland, but I cannot count on him in that matter. He is too busy with his own things and he expect me to take care about everything if there is some help needed to our father. He said that he didn't have time to do it by his own, he said that I am better organized etc., at least he helps financially if it is needed.”_ 

The experiences of Polish women are similar to those observed by Lazaridis (2000) concerning Greek female migrants. As Lazaridis notices “Urbanization and emigration in the 1960s and 1970s have weakened the traditional family relationships and inter-generational reciprocal arrangements” (Lazaridis 2000: 57 after Lazaridis 1992). As a result of migration, gradually traditional family structures with three or four generations started transforming into the nuclear family unit. This has caused problems in terms of the care of dependents, especially the elderly parents left behind. Similar to Poland traditions, in Greece it has been the expected norm that sacrifices which parents have made to educate their children or to promote their financial independence and stability, will be reciprocated by providing personal care for the elderly. This problem more often involves women
from whom the responsibility for dependents is usually expected in traditional family gender arrangements. “If not, [the woman] runs the risk of being severely criticized as 'self-interested' (egoistria) and 'ungrateful' (aharisti) towards her parents or in-laws, and consequently developing feelings of guilt which are reinforced by the [society's] intolerance towards such behaviour” (Lazaridis 2000:57 after Lazaridis 1992:349). As the examples from my research show, the motto of the Greek solidarity within the family is also perfectly applicable in the Polish traditional family gender arrangement.

There are both benefits and disadvantages for parents as a result of the migration of adult children. While their departure reduces the availability to provide routine personal care or household help, rural parents may benefit from remittances. Material support from migrant children varied considerably in amount and frequency and came mainly in the form of money and gifts. Only one respondent, Roma (28) declared that she and her brother regularly help their father financially who is sick and has a very low pension. However, most informants confessed that they do not help their parents financially or their financial support had just a symbolic value. It was usually explained by migrants’ lack of extra money for such help or/and the decent financial situation of their parents in Poland. Among the respondents who mentioned that they helped their parents, most commonly there were occasional gifts or money while visiting relatives in Poland or when there was an urgent need. For example, Daria's mother felt touched that Daria supported her from time to time with money, especially if there were urgent and costly things to be done in the family farm or house.

“*They are great kids, great. Daria helped me with the roof. The roof was leaking. It was old. And I am alone, a widow. So what could I do. I had no money to repair it. Importantly- Daria’s mother said that it was a shame for her that she had to take material help from the daughter. (“And it is a shame maybe, but my daughter helped me.”*) According to her as long as she is able to work and earn some money, it is a shame to take help from her children, who work hard and have financial responsibilities associated with their own families. In her opinion parents should help their children as long and as much as they can.

The relationship of adult migrants and their parents in Poland is also supported by other forms of transnational communication. The frequency, intensity and forms of transnational communication between migrants and their parents in Poland differ from the transnational communication between members of the nuclear family (wife-husband, child-parent). Usually adult migrants visit their elderly family members who remain in the home country on an occasional basis. Among those factors that prompt adult migrants to visit their parents is the emotional need and- however not common to all respondents - a sense of obligation to provide social and financial support to them. These motivations are often mixed with other reasons for visiting Poland, such as for instance returning to supervise the construction work on the house the migrant is earning money in Ireland.
for, or to oversee the sale of the flat. One of my male respondents admitted:

“Actually now when I have to go regularly to Poland to oversee of construction works and builders who are working on our house in Poland, I visit my parents and parents in law quite often.”

(Milosz, 39)

Sometimes visits to the homeland are linked to the provision of material help to parents. Visits for this purpose are usually occasional and if any regular financial help is required, then it is sent to parents through the post office or other means (bank transfers). More frequent or even regular visits to parents take place when parents are caring for the migrant’s own child or had lived in the same household with a spouse and (if applicable) child/ren of migrants. I got the impression that for some of my respondents their visits to their parents’ home were sometimes just a way of visiting of their spouses and children in Poland. For example, this was an issue in the case of Albert.

“When they (a wife and a daughter of the informant) were still in Poland then I visited my parents more often because they lived together” (Albert).

Nevertheless, personal visits constitute an important means of transnational communication between elderly parents and their adult children abroad. Although visits can occur in both directions, in all of the cases in my study migrant children make visits to their parents much more often than they are visited by their parents in Ireland. Most of my respondents have not enjoyed a visit from their parents living in Poland even once. Those migrants who hosted their relatives in Ireland admitted that their visits were often associated with some special purposes. For example, in Daria’s and Marek’s case, their mothers went to Ireland for the first time (and so far the only time) to see their new born grandchild Kuba, and to help to take care of him for two weeks just after he was born. So, although less often, transnational help also comes from parents to migrant children. In some cases, such as the two-week visit of Daria’s and Marek’s mothers, it is also non-monetary help, like as childcare. The Daria's mother explained to me that it was mainly for financial reasons that she had only visited her daughter once in three years. Other deterrents were related to the potential inconveniences for the hosts resulting from the cramped space in the child’s house, and concern about the tiring journey.

Well, you need some money to go there. First, it is a ticket, and second, you need to have some money while you are there already. How would it be...? Would I ask Daria to buy me anything? Besides it is tiring and I am old. It is enough for me that I went there once and I saw how is their life there. They do not have apartments or something to receive guests all the time (Daria’s mother).

The fact of the infrequent visits of elderly family members, or even a lack of visits, is usually accepted with understanding by migrants. My respondents mentioned several reasons why their parents’ visits in Ireland are not common. The most popular deterrent noted by migrants was the lack of money for the journey. Some family members were also afraid of the experience of being
abroad, in an unfamiliar area, and some, especially those from the villages usually argued with their children that they did not want to leave their farms, animals and houses unattended. There were also those for whom travelling long distances would be physically problematic. So, the main interaction between Poles and families left behind in Poland, namely; discussion on remittance spending and distribution, emotional support, exchange of information etc. is carried out through conversations by phone or by Internet communications (mainly skype). Some migrants do so daily while others contact their families several times a week. Despite efforts contact may be irregular and sometimes fall short of a meaningful exchange between interlocutors. More often it is a migrant child who initiates the call. The frequency of the calls of adult migrants to their parents in Poland usually increases in two ways; firstly, when the migrant’s child or children live in the same household with their grandparents or/ and in the case of serious problems with the parents’ health. In the first case, respondents admitted that they called their parents’ household to check up on and speak to their children (if the children were old enough) and at the same time they also took the chance to talk to their own parents. In the second case, migrants called their parents more often than normal as they are worried about their health and, if it is necessary, they are ready to offer material assistance. Although the knowledge of the Internet communication is not common among the older generation of Poles\textsuperscript{107}, it limits their ability to communicate online only to a certain extent. This extent depends on the will and the time of the younger generation of family members whom older people ask for assistance with handing with a computer and the online connection. Daria's mother admitted that she talked to her daughter abroad thanks to her younger daughter who lived with her in Poland.

“\textit{Well, yes, we talk, I see my grandchild, on the computer (laugh). I had never expected before that such miracles would be possible. (…) I ask my younger daughter and she turned on the computer and I can talk how long I want. This is so comfortable, and I don't have to pay for it}” (Daria's mother)

The interviews with my respondents also revealed the gender differences in transnational communication intensity. Usually migrant women visit their relatives in Poland slightly more often than migrant men. Women also keep more frequent contact with their family members and friends in Poland through different kinds of communicators such as by phone or the Internet, than male migrants. For example, one of my male respondents confessed:

\textsuperscript{107} Over half of adult Poles (56\%) use the Internet. Usage of the Internet is more common among youngest adults. The older the respondents, the less they use the Internet. Nearly all respondents with higher education and the majority of people with secondary education use the Internet. Among the most important functions of the Internet is providing a means of communication between people. Over half of adult Internet users (51\% which is 28\% of all users) contacted friends through messengers such as Gadu-Gadu or tlen. More than a third made a phone calls using, for instance Skype. There are less Internet users in villages (41\%) than in towns with no more than 20,000 inhabitants (59\%) or cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants (66\%) (CBOS BS/99/2011), N=1189.
My wife is definitely more often on the phone than me. She has a lot of free minutes so she chat for hours with her sisters or friends in Poland.

Informants also suggested that these differences are caused by different levels of sensitivity between women and men, and by the fact that the task of the cultivation of close family relationships is traditionally more a part of the female role within the family, than a male one. In two cases the more frequent visits of women were also explained by the fact that women did not work professionally, so they did not have to ask for holiday.

However, despite the relatively frequent and regular phone contacts with the relatives left behind, some migrants confessed that they had the impression that the emotional distance between them and their relatives in Poland increases over the separation time. For example, Daria explained that the feeling of emotional distance is probably due to the experience of the different realities and different problems felt by her in Ireland, and by her parents in Poland. The life she and her husband live in Ireland is unfamiliar to their parents’ life, which sometimes causes misunderstandings.

This is like that, we know how it is there, about Poland, how our parents' life looks there, but they don't know much about our life, only what we tell them. So sometimes there are some understatements or misunderstandings because somebody thinks that in Ireland is this or that, and so on. And I don't know how these misunderstandings are possible...maybe because we have nothing to talk about any more...because my life is here and their life is there...(...) Sometimes we talk a little bit, say what we need to say and then there is a silence because we don't know what to talk about. In those moments I say that we will talk next time or we start talking for example about what we watched on the TV, or something like that.(...) When I lived in Poland we talked about everything, about details and so on. Now when we talk, we just share some basic information and that's it.

Although Daria felt sorry about the growing emotional distance between her and her loved ones in Poland, she also admitted that she was conscious that this process is inevitable, if people live in two different worlds and only have sporadic contact with each other. The transnational relationships of adult migrants and their parents show some similarities to the relationships of adult migrants and their children. In the situation where potential migrants decided to migrate and left children behind, those children were usually left in the care of their grandparents or sometimes other relatives. Caring grandparents, similarly to the grandchildren who they were taking care of, may experience a feeling of double separation and loss. First they had to say good bye to their migrating children, and then the sense of loss is often re-experienced when they had to bid farewell to their grandchildren that had been left under their care and for whom they became the symbolic parents of and whom they had raised as their own children (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2010). Paraphrasing the concept of euroorphans describing the children of transmigrants left behind, in a certain sense elderly parents left...
behind can be called, adult euro-orphans. Some of them need, or at least expect, some care from their children and feel abandoned as they have nobody else to take care of them.

It seems that the reciprocity expectations of elderly parents left behind, which are directed towards their adult children living in Ireland resemble the expectations of migrants themselves towards their own children. Both elderly parents left behind and transnational parents expect from their children a kind of gratitude for what they have done for them, or just simply due to the fact of being a parent and submission to a parents' wishes. Both groups also feel disappointed when their expectations towards children are not realized, or they are only partially fulfilled.

So, this kind of parents’ attitude, independent of generation, seems to come from the taken for granted inter-generational family solidarity. However, Janet Finch (1989) concludes, that family solidarity is not unconditional, particularly in relation to secondary family members who do not live in the same household, such as grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law and other relatives. As the examples in my study indicate, family solidarity is also often conditional in relation to the closest family members, to the parents or to the children.

As the example of Milosz shows, not all migrant children are willing to provide help to secondary family members, regardless of their circumstances or conditions. While parents, in return for their care and concern in the past, and also sometimes for the possible material benefits in the form of inherited family properties in the future, expect gratitude. The gratitude is often expected in the form of care in old age. Personal presence and care is valued higher by elderly Polish parents than money which their children could pay for care in a nursing home. So sometimes, the intergenerational solidarity takes the form of obligatory help. Hilary Land and Hilary Rose (1985:74) called it “compulsory altruism”. They concluded that family help is often not a matter of free will alone, but it is also based on duty and obligations, and often it is imposed on women. The literature and examples presented in my study clearly indicate that intergenerational family solidarity is gendered. “In the context of family relationships, some categories of family members, in particular women, are still supposed to sacrifice their own interests to the common good. Women invest much more than men in family life by caring for relatives and kip keeping. This attitude is taken for granted by women and men alike to the extent that family solidarity is often at the expense of women’s individual well-being and role in society” (Knijn 2004:30). In other words, family solidarity may contribute to strengthening traditional family gender roles and inequality between male and female family members resulting from these roles.
IX.IV. Conclusion

Transnational family separation is a traumatic experience both for parents and for children who are often deprived of the presence and care of one or both parents. Gifts and money given by migrant parents to their children during the transnational migration time and shortly after the reunification are intended to not only improve children’s living conditions, but are often the way in which migrant parents would like to remove remorse caused by the separation. Usually parents who migrated without their children want their children to join them as soon as possible. While reunified in the host country children are often situated between two cultural and social realities which they separate depending on where and with whom they are at the moment. These two realities; the Polish one and the Irish one, rarely complement each other in the life of the children of Polish migrants in Ireland. Many generational tensions within migrant families are caused by the contrary relations between parents’ traditions and the children’s new approaches.

Children are often not transmigrants by choice but rather by the transnational practices of their parents which are implemented on the life of the whole family. Children are involved in such practices sometimes even against their will.

However, when the family reunification in the host country occurred when juvenile offspring had already formed strong social ties in the home country, children often have problems with socialization to the new life circumstances.

Although migrant parents feel guilty about their children’s’ experience of double separation; the first linked to the migration of their parents, and the second linked to their own migration, migrant parents perceive the migration of their children as the right decision. Moreover, they often expect gratitude from their children for the sacrifices they make and the hard work they do to make, in their opinion, their children’ future life easier.

The transnational parent-child relationships also contains the relationship between adult migrant and their elderly parents in the home country. So, as the examples and discussion above show, the transnational relationship between parents and children have some common and recurrent patterns observable both in the transnational relations of adult migrants and their children, and between adult migrants and their parents. The growing emotional distance between family members living transnationally is inevitable. Parent(s) who was/were absent for considerable period of time become a stranger to the child. As the example of Daria and her mother shows a similar process takes place in the relationship between adult family members. Although new technologies and cheap international transport possibilities make some forms of “care at a distance” easier and more feasible than they used to be, it is always important to be conscious and remember that transnational communication has its limitations. Adult migrants, despite their willingness or parent’s...
expectations, cannot provide many important aspects for the care for their parents in Poland if they are not physically present.

There are also intergenerational expectations of gratitude based on conditional family solidarity. It is also supplemented with, what Martin Kohli calls “accounts of intergenerational dynamics and conflicts” (Kohli 1999:100). Family is a gendered system. As we see from the literature (Knijn 2004) and the chapter presented above transnational intergenerational family solidarity is not only conditional but also gendered. Migrant women are more caring toward the old loved ones in Poland than migrant men. In this way they also fulfil the traditional expectations often directed towards Polish women. The old generation of Poles often perceive their children, especially daughters, as their future care-givers in old age, in gratitude for the parent’s sacrifice during their upbringing.
In the current time of intensive transnational migration processes that occur around the world, a better understanding of religion in terms of its relevance and applicability gains greater importance, and requires deeper and multidimensional studies. Religion crosses borders together with migrating people. It becomes part of the means through which migrants cope with various migration processes and new social, cultural, economical and other circumstances in which they have been placed through migration. By historian Timothy Smith (1978), who was interested in the relationship between religion and ethnicity among immigrants in the US, migration was even called a “theologizing experience” (Smith 1978:1181).

Usually when believers migrate abroad they try to find or build in the host society some kind of religious community where they could practice their faith. Migrants often give meaning to their alienation due to migration in religious terms and respond to the challenges of migration by turning to religion (Smith 1978). However, religion can also become an important part of the life to those migrants who had less of an interest in religious matters prior to migration. Religion may become a way of finding a sense of belonging and defending an identity in the new migration situation when family and all familiar aspects of life have been left behind in the home country. Religious organization may provide the migrant with the initial phase of integration, a feeling of home and belonging which will give him or her a sense of security and mutual support. Alain Goussot singled out several social functions of religion for migrants (Goussot 2006;83 after Małek 2011:209). First of all, religion facilitate migrants’ identification and orientation within the bigger community. Religion has also defensive function for migrant’s identity. When she/he feels insecure in the new environment, religion can give a sense of confidence and decrease a culture shock. Religion can also help in redefinition of life goals. It is a link between migrant’s life before migration and migrant’s life during migration.

There are also many practical functions of the Church in the migration reality- it is one of the first places where migrants go to get some practical informations about the host country, to exchange information about flats to rent or even job offers, where they can find help…

There is also a danger that religion may become an isolating force and to favour the formation of the closed or marginalized migration community. On the other hand, if such a community is open to host society members and there is the binding link of a common faith between them, then religion
may become a bridge and facilitates mutual understanding and integration of migrants (Mol 1971, Foner and Alba 2008, Peschke 2009). Moreover, religion has an important role in directing migration movements and it may even become a pull factor for migration. Migrants may choose the migration destination due to the dominant religion being common with their religious beliefs or because of having religious links in that place. They might believe that migrating to the community which professes the same creed as they do allows them to get over initial migration problems faster and feel more easily at home (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003). Various social and cultural transnational ties and the behaviour of migrants also provides access for familiar religious practices. Hence, religion may also be an instrument and opportunity for migrants to maintain transnational ties with their home country (Ebaugh 2004).

The religiosity of migrants needs to be understood and studied within the context of various migration realities. Studies on religion and migration have gained ground in the nineties of the XXth century (van der Veer and Vertovec 1991, Myers 2000, Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000) and continue to explore various approaches and topics (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003, Alba et al. 2009). There is also a small group of social scientists who are interested in the intersection of religion, migration and gender. The volume edited by Glenda Tibe Bonifacio and Vivienne SM. Angeles (2010) is the first multidisciplinary collection of research on how religion intersects with gender and shapes religion. The papers included in the book explore the different ways in which male and female immigrants find meaning in their religious traditions and beliefs in the new migration reality.

The big migration flow after the accession of Poland to the European Union of mostly catholic Poles has provoked very little sociological or anthropological research on the role of the Catholic Church in the migration processes and the character of the religiosity of Polish migrants in new destination countries. Moreover, in the limited number of research that has so far been published (Burrell 2009, Trzebiatowska 2010, Lisak 2010), the topic of intersection of transnational migration, gender and religion has been omitted by the authors.

The aim of this chapter is, firstly, to present the phenomenon of the religiosity of Polish migrants in Ireland and, secondly, to analyse this religiosity in the context of the transnational migration and transnational family gender relations. The guiding question of this chapter, which has a complements the main question of this research, is as follows: What aspects of transnational religiosity of Poles in Ireland shape migration behaviour and gender relations of migrants, and how?

The religious aspects seem to be especially important when studying migrants from Poland, the country where nearly 95% of the population are declared as Catholic (CBOS/BS 34/2009)\(^{108}\). The role of religion at each stage of the individual and transnational family migration process,
starting from the decision-making processes and ending with the reunification stage, has been
generally overlooked and still requires the particular attention of social scientists.

X.I. Character of Polish religiousness

“Catholicism coincides entirely with Polishness. Religion and national identity go hand in hand”
(Kowalska 2005:303). This situation has a historical background. Over centuries the Church was
the defender of Polish identity and the promoter of the spiritual strength of the nation. Over 123
years of partitions of Poland, when the processes of Germanization and Russification were intensive
and the Polish language was banned in offices and in public life, the only places where Polish was
spoken was in churches. The notion of ethnic identity was tied with membership of the Catholic
Church. It resulted in the formation of the cluster of the ”Pole-Catholic” (Błeszyńska and Szopski
2010:183). A kind of consecration of events related to the history of the Polish nation, such as the
celebration of the Constitution of 3 May, or prayers for the Dead - especially those who died
fighting for the freedom of the homeland - produced a religious stream described as a folk-patriotic
religiosity, and a specific ‘theology of nation’, where the term of the Polish nation and its values
are indeed seen as divine. This specific attitude of Poles towards their nation also played a key role
in the strong ideological protection against the Sovietisation of the communist period, and it is still
recognizable in many different spheres of religious activity in Poland: the phenomenal attendance
of mass, in pilgrimages, in official religious ceremonies, and in the numerous vocations in the
priesthood and in religious life (Kowalska 2005:303-304). Despite the intensive political and social
transformations that have taken place in Poland since 1989, a characteristic feature of Polish
religiosity is its durability. Basic indicators for religiosity such as the intensity of faith and practice,
remain stable. Such a high level of religiosity among Poles shows that the Catholic religion is one
of the most important components of Polish culture. It effectively overthrew the assumption that the
high religiosity of Poles before 1989 was only due to the patriotic function of the Catholic Church
in Poland which during the communist period strongly supported the independence movements.
The concept of the “Polish-Catholic” also remains an important element of the self-image of Poles
and still constitutes a part of their national identity. Based on the CBOS (Public Opinion Research
Centre) survey report (2008), about 89 % of respondents considered the Catholic faith as a
characteristic typical of Poles.

109 (II Polski Synod Plenarny (1991-1999), Konferencja Episkopatu Polski i Pallottinum 2001, downloaded from
110 The Poles about their ties with the local parish, September 2008. Survey executed in August 2008. A
representative random sample of adult Poles.N=1076.
The CBOS (BS61/2006) survey also shows the strong attachment of Poles to religious rites that are associated with specific events in their lives such as birth, marriage or death. As many as 89% of all respondents considered the funeral as an important religious ceremony and for 72% of them this rite has particular value. The approach toward baptism is similar. For 87% of respondents this ceremony is an important element in life while for 70% it is very important. A total of 84% of respondents recognize a religious wedding ceremony as important and two-thirds of them (65%) attributed it with great importance (CBOS BS61/2006). For many Poles religious rituals and traditions seem to be even more important than religious faith itself. A strong concentration on ritual practice together with the agrarian way of life is often referred to as “folk religion” (Błeszyńska and Szopski 2010:184). In this kind of religiosity, which is characteristic of many Poles, knowledge of dogmas or consequences of the faith in everyday life are weak or even absent. Actual knowledge of the Church’s teachings and doctrine is superficial, even though religion education has since 1991 taken place in public schools, and formerly it was in Sunday schools (Błeszyńska and Szopski 2010). A specific feature of the Polish religiousness observed by sociologists is the "selectivity of faith" or lack of acceptance of certain parts of the Catholic Church guidelines.

The results of surveys show that in fact being a Catholic, self-opinion of being a believer or even regular participation in religious practices are not always tantamount to the acceptance of the doctrine of the religion. Although 96% of respondents of the CBOS survey (CBOS BS 61/2006) described themselves as Catholics, and 95% as believers (80% according to Eurobarometer Poll 2005), much fewer - 74% of respondents - believed in the existence of heaven. Those who believe in life after death is even less -70%. Just over half of all Poles (56%) believe in the existence of hell, and even fewer (54%) believe in the existence of the devil (CBOS 61/2006). Almost two thirds of the respondents of this survey declared that beside believing in God they also followed church teachings in their everyday life. Some 56% of the survey participants attend church at least once a week, and only 8% of them do not attend religious services at all (CBOS BS 61/2006).

However, the Catholic ideal of morality only functions to a large extent at the level of declarations. There is a common conviction among Poles about the relativity of moral principles and their subjective nature. In real life other aspects are decisive, such as pragmatism and conformity. This is often associated with a common social acceptance of certain behaviour, which from the Catholic doctrine point of view is considered to be immoral. Despite the great importance attributed to religion in everyday life (77% of respondents), in the broader context the Catholic faith as a life value is less important to Poles. What according to Poles gives meaning to life is primarily family

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111 N=1025.
happiness (81%). This is followed by satisfying professional work (44%), then trust of other people (39%), love (36%), and a quiet and calm life (36%). Only 29% of respondents indicated religious faith as a factor that gives sense to their lives (CBOS BS 34/2009). The relatively strong subjectification of the religious doctrine is also visible in terms of norms and values. The opinions of respondents are not differentiated significantly by factors such as gender, age, political views or even the frequency of participation in religious services. Almost half of the respondents (46%) believe that decisions about what is good and what is bad should be an individual choice. A consequence of this approach, is a considerable degree of tolerance for certain situations and behaviour which is reprehensible from the perspective of Catholic morality, namely: euthanasia, divorce, cohabitation, premarital sex and contraception (social acceptance of the last two behaviours is almost 50%) (CBOS BS 34/2009).

This indicates that Polish religiousness is to some extent a non-reflective one. “Most Poles seem to take for granted their adherence to the Catholic faith and do not try to investigate its deeper meanings or question the possible contradictions between beliefs and everyday practice” (Błeszyńska and Szopski 2010:184).

Similar religious patterns (contradiction between the high level of people who declared their affiliation with Catholicism and their everyday practice, norms and beliefs) have also been noted in Ireland. For centuries the high level of religious practices of Irish Roman Catholics was a form of defence for their Irish identity against British Imperialism (Martin 1978, Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 2009). According to the Eurobarometer Poll 2005, among other Western Europe countries Ireland was still one with the highest number of people who declared that “I believe there is a God” (73%). According to the recent Census in Ireland in 2011, 84.2% of the population identified themselves as Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, legislative changes in areas of family law, sexuality and human reproduction have made Ireland a more secular state. In a 1995 referendum Irish people decided to enable the introduction of divorce legislation. This both reflected and helped to change the cultural norms regarding marriage. The 2006 Census showed that the vast majority of married couples were cohabiting before they got married. It also indicated that cohabitation was the fastest growing family type in Ireland. Changes have also occurred in relation to sexual and reproductive norms. The majority of respondents, regardless of age, perceive premarital sex as acceptable behaviour (excluding adultery which is seen as “always wrong” by most respondents) (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 2009). On the basis of ISSP research (2008), Máire Nic Ghiolla Phádraig noticed that in Ireland “beliefs and behaviour are sometimes at variance, since eight per cent of those attending church at least once a week claim not to believe in God or in personal God, whilst over one third of the most

112 Respondents could pick more than one factor

DOI: 10.2870/49969
irregular attenders have no doubts about the existence of God” (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 2009:3).

Irish religiousness is one of the determinants of social change in Ireland over the last twenty years. There has also been a visible decline in religious practices in Ireland since the 1960s onward. This process is associated with the modernization of young, urban, better educated and employed Irish citizens (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 2009). In 2008 among those who declared at least a weekly attendance at a religious service; 79% of respondents were aged 65 years and only 19% aged 18-24 (Statistical Yearbook of Ireland 2008:85). In 2012 a survey of Irish Catholics undertaken by the Association of Catholic Priests 114 found the rate of weekly Mass attendance was 35%.

Although there are some common characteristics in the general approach to the main principles and dogmas of the Catholic faith of Poles and Irish, the strong attachment of Poles to religious traditions and religious rituals surrounding important events in life such as births, marriages or deaths, allows for the assumption that religiosity in its ritualistic sense will not lose its importance to Poles very soon, regardless of the country they live in.

X.II. Religion and family migration decision of Poles

Most theories, which seek to explain migration decisions, rely on some combination of economic variables operating at different levels of analysis. Although the economic factors are undeniably very important, there are also some other, cultural and social aspects that might be significant in making migratory decisions. Apart from the significance of gender beliefs in migration decisions, the importance of religion is worthy of special attention.

As some scientists noticed (Durand and Massey, 1995; Hagan and Ebaugh 2003: 1146) some migrating believers drew on religious resources to derive meaning for migration decisions and sought spiritual guidance and protection during the process of migration. Thus, I assumed that the Catholic religion may be one of the deciding factors for some Polish Catholic migrants when making a decision about the migration destination.

Nevertheless, it turned out that for the vast majority of my respondents the Catholic religion, dominant in Ireland, was not a deciding factor but rather an additional positive value, or was not taken into account at all when making the decision about migration.

“I am not a regular churchgoers. I have faith in my heart not to show it to people. I didn't think if it was a Catholic country or another one. I am a Catholic wherever I am, and wherever I will be, so it

114 Contemporary Catholic Perspectives, (February 2012), Association of Catholic Priests.
Retrieved 26 June 2012.
didn’t matter” (Gustaw).

“You know, if you need money for bread and you have a chance to earn it abroad, then you don’t think about the Church, you think that you will feed your family and finally you will have a chance to live like a human being. Religion is a secondary issue” (Mikołaj).

Or just simply:

“I didn’t think about it at all” (Aniela).

However, in my group of respondents there was one married couple, Marianna and her husband Aleksander, who admitted that the dominant Catholic religion in Ireland, was a very important factor for her and her husband in deciding where to migrate.

Interestingly, Marianna mentioned that although it was her husband who made the decision about migration in general, it was her who raised the religion issue when deciding about the particular destination country. As the primary carer to the children in the family she felt responsible for bringing up their children as Catholics, and in the Polish tradition. The Catholicism in Ireland makes Marianna and Aleksander feel comfortable and secure about the safety of their children and themselves. Prior to migration they were afraid that in non-Catholic country their children would have experienced direct religious intolerance.

“This is a Catholic country and we are Catholic. I didn’t want to be afraid that, like in England or protestant Ireland115, that we are Catholic, that somebody would beat our children. I want them [children] to take a first Holy Communion normally and not be afraid”.

Another religious aspect pointed out by Marianna, which strongly contributed to the couple’s choice of Ireland as a destination country, was the possibility of practicing their religion in Polish and in the way they were accustomed in Poland. In Marianna’s opinion, the large number of Polish migrants in Ireland, who managed to organize religious services in Polish, was a factor which encouraged them to chose Ireland as a destination country even more than the fact that Catholicism was the dominant religion in Ireland.

“When we were still in Poland, before the departure, a friend of Aleksander told us about Ireland. And he said that there were so many Poles that they even had organized our own church, where Holy Masses are in Polish. And we thought: ‘O thanks God! At least the church will be like ours’. And this somehow even more encouraged us to go to Ireland.”

In other words, as the example of Marianna and her husband shows, the migration of Poles to Ireland could be driven by two religious motives: the first one is linked to the fact that both Ireland and Poland are countries where the Catholic faith is dominant in society, and the second one is associated with the scale of Polish immigration in Ireland that permits the reproduction of a Polish-

115 The respondent ment Northen Ireland.
Catholic social environment. Importantly, emphasis was given not only to the predominance of the Catholic religion in Ireland but also, or even mostly, to the presence of a large number of compatriots who practice the same religion, in the same language, and in the same way.

**X.III. Polish Catholicism in Ireland: an outline of the religiosity of Polish migrants in Ireland**

X.III.a. Patriotic religiosity of Polish migrants- “because freedom is measured in crosses”\(^{116}\).

The Polish Catholic Church reproduces Polish culture and religious practices in Ireland. For instance, the number and type of religious activities organized by the Dominicans in Dublin closely resembles those held in the churches in the home communities of Polish migrants. Patriotic and folk religiosity which is characteristic for Polish Catholics in general, has also been practiced by a large number of contemporary Polish migrants in Ireland. The religiosity of Polish migrants and their religious practices are very much based on the religious folk customs organized around the liturgical year in the Catholic Church and popular in Poland, for instance; blessing food at Easter, procession at Corpus Christi Festival or the sharing of the blessed *opłatek*\(^{117}\) at Christmas (Lisaş 2010). These kinds of religiosity and religious practices give migrants a feeling of togetherness, as well as an opportunity to strike up friendships, exchange information and help, or just simply talk in Polish. Thus, it may provide a strong sense of belonging to the community.

The results of my interviews indicate that religious engagement in the Polish Church in Ireland is much more important for those Poles in Ireland who do not want to integrate or have difficulties with integration to the host society and prefer to stay or make contacts with other Poles, than for those Polish migrants who are more integrated in the Irish social environment and culture.

Ethnic and patriotic aspects of Polish Catholicism are not restricted only to the private sphere but they are also emphasized both by Polish churchgoers and the Polish clergy. Patriotic religiousness collects Polish migrants in churches on occasions of the commemoration of national anniversaries. The Catholic Church tends to emphasize the important role of the Catholic Church in the historical Polish struggle for independence and freedom. The patriotic character of Polish religiousness promoted by the Church is emphasized in a motto “because freedom is measured in crosses”, on the Dominican poster of invitation to mass for the Fatherland. The attendance at the Mass in the Polish Church on these kinds of occasions is treated by Poles as a kind of patriotic duty.

\(^{116}\) a motto on the Dominican poster in Dublin inviting Poles to the mass for the Fatherland.

\(^{117}\) Consecrated bread wafer which is similar to that used during Holy Communion in the Roman Catholic Church.
Another example of this kind of patriotic religiosity among Polish migrants all over the world was the mass participation in church services after the presidential plane crash in Smolensk in 2010. The day after the crash there was a solemn requiem mass held at the Polish Chaplaincy (St. Catherine) in Dublin, in St. Audeon’s Church. Thousands of Poles attended the funeral mass. The Gothic church\(^{118}\) was full of people who came to honour the dead; President Kaczynski, his wife and the highest Polish authorities. Hundreds of Poles attended the ceremony on the sidewalk and on

\(^{118}\) Dublin’s oldest medieval church.
the square before the temple. The funeral mass in the Church of St. Audoen was also scheduled to be on Friday the 16th of April. On that day there were over five thousand people, mainly Poles, who came onto the main street of the city’s O’Connel Street to mourn.119

One year later, religious organizations were also very much involved in the organization of the first anniversary of the tragic presidential plane crash in Smoleńsk. On this occasion there were several patriotic holy masses celebrated in different Irish cities.

Eventually, only several hundred people celebrated the memory of the victims of the plane crash in Smoleńsk and the memory of the thousands of Polish officers murdered in Katyń and in the other NKWD camps in 1940. Masses were celebrated in St Audeon Church and in St Saviour's Church120. Thus, the Polish Catholic Church in Ireland, tries to reinforce Polishness in its traditional sense (Pole-Catholic) through the cultivation of ethnic religious rituals, native language and emphasizing religious nationalism. And even if the voice of Gazeta Polska it is not a common voice of all fractions functioning in the Polish Church, it is for sure the most amplified one in the public sphere.


X.III.b. Individual religious practices in the migration context

When people migrate to another country and settle they bring with them not only a new culture, habits and language, but also their religion and religious rituals and traditions. It is specific to Polish migrants over the centuries that in the new settlement countries they organize their religious life very much according to the old tradition that comes from their homeland (Lisak 2010).

No relevant data exists on how many Polish migrants in Ireland, who were going regularly to religious services in the home country, continue to do so in the new place of settlement.

The literature suggests that the frequency of migrants attendance at church of decreases significantly after their settlement in the new country. While analysing the effect of immigration on religious belief and practice by religion and nationality in the USA, Douglas Massey and Monica Espinoza Higgins (2011)\textsuperscript{121} presented data which recorded 67,2 % of Polish migrants attended a mass at least once a week before migration. After the settlement in the new country the number of regular churchgoers among Poles decreased to 30,2% (Massey and Higgins 2011).

It is also very likely that this trend is relevant to the recent Polish migrants in Ireland, however some patterns of this characteristic migration flow, namely the young age of the migrants, and relatively short distance from the home country, and, what seems to be the most important, the often transnational and temporary character of the migration, cannot be ignored. These aspects may make the religiosity of Polish migrants in Ireland and the frequency of attendance at church different from the patterns presented in the Massey and Higgins article.

Important information on the religiosity of Polish migrants in Dublin can be drawn from the sociological research and observation of a group of Polish churchgoers in Dublin made by Dublin-based Polish Dominican friar and sociologist Marcin Lisak in 2008-2010 (Lisak 2010). Although his research is not representative of the entire population of Polish migrants in Ireland, it shows some trends in the religiosity and moral approaches of those migrants, who perceive themselves as religious and who attend masses celebrated in the Polish language in St Saviour's Church in Dublin regularly every Sunday.

According to Lisak's research the pattern of religious practice established by immigrants in their home countries prior to departure tends to be replicated in Ireland, albeit to a lesser extent. A relatively small number of Poles in Ireland attend Church regularly. According to Marcin Lisak’s estimate no more than 10 % of the whole population of Poles in Ireland are regular churchgoers. Despite the church is full during most Polish masses, this still comprises just a fraction of the Polish

\textsuperscript{121} The conclusions concerning this issue were drawn on the basis of NIS 2003-1
community in Dublin (Lisak 2010). In comparison, to Poland where 52 % (CBOS BS 148 2008)\textsuperscript{122} of Poles declare their weekly attendance in the Holy Mass. Why do Poles who were practicing Catholics at home, stop going to church when they find themselves abroad? Migrants are exposed to multiple stresses which occupy their everyday life, therefore many do not have time for religious practices. On the one hand, separation from the family usually causes a longing for home and concern over the fate of those who remained and, on the other hand, migrants often have to struggle with many problems in the host country, such as an unstable economic situation or unemployment, problems with socialization to the new environment or lack of knowledge of the local language (Lisak 2010). According to Marcin Lisak\textsuperscript{123}, in migration circumstances people also better recognize their needs in terms of faith and religiousness. Some of them strengthen their faith while others no longer feel family or community pressure and simply stop going to church. Abroad, they feel relieved from the duty. There are also those who completely break their ties with the institutional church, as their way of life changes (Lisak 2008).

One of my respondents highlighted the high level of inconsistency between the public practice of religion among Poles in Poland with the practice of 'Christian values', by which she meant life according to the Ten Commandments and caring for and helping other people. The implication was that those who were regular attendants at Church' services only concentrated on the public aspects of religion to the exclusion of the more important moral aspects of it. She contrasted it with the religious practice of Polish migrants “Christianity is about the Ten Commandments and a code of life. Very often people in Poland go to church just to be seen. You might be in church on Sunday and . . . beat your wife. Here, I think, most of them go to church because they feel like it, not to show off, like in villages in Poland. So, if they don't feel like going, then they don't go.”

Migrants also resign from institutional religious practices for other reasons, such as: lack of time due to involvement in the new migration reality, job, new environment, distance to the church. Samuel Hill (1985) suggests that migrants adapt to the levels of religious commitment of the destination area. Nevertheless, a characteristic feature of Polish migrants in Ireland is still their more frequent participation in religious services than other Europeans. Additionally, almost all Poles who declare their regular or occasional presence in the holy Masses only attend religious services in Polish.

Polish Catholics in Ireland prefer to have their own churches, which allows them to follow their faith as they did at home. They use their mother tongue and reproduce their religious traditions. This is characteristic of first-generation migrant Christians (Peschke 2009:8). It certainly provides

\textsuperscript{122} Ties with the local parish,
\textsuperscript{123} In Gazeta Wyborcza 2008-05-27, Poles Have Filled Empty Irish Churches? “That's a Myth”.

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members with a sense of belonging and a feeling of home, but it may not be helpful for the integration process. Research (Lisak 2010) has demonstrated a low level of participation by Polish migrants in the religious activities in Irish Catholic parishes. Although two thirds of respondents declared that they have attended the Holy Mass celebrated in English at least once during their migratory life in Dublin, at the same time 98.5% of them admitted that they have never confessed their sins in English in Ireland. Most of the respondents (46%-2008, 61.2%-2009, 55.8%-2010) in the research confirmed that they considered the Polish form of the Mass and its contents as more valuable than the Irish one. A total of 36.5% of the participants in 2008, and one fourth of all respondents in 2009 and 2010 held no opinion. Most of them were people who had never attended the Holy Mass in English. These results show, as Lisak (2010) suggests, that in terms of religion the integration of Polish immigrants in Irish society is not high. This may also give an initial impression that either Polish migrants do not want to integrate, or that they do not wish to participate in the Irish masses due to the lack of knowledge of the language. But how then can we explain the fact that even Poles who know English prefer to pray in Polish? One of the explanations is that Polish migrants prefer to participate in Polish religious services because Polish religious rituals are part of their life experience beginning in their early childhood. This is something they are used to and what they know very well. In Irish religiosity they do not find the traditions, rituals and religious festivals which exist only in the Polish liturgical calendar (for instance, the Festival of Our Lady Queen of Poland) (Lisak 2010).

Among my interviewees, only two women mentioned that they attended mass celebrated in English. Both of them were highly educated women with very good knowledge of English. One of them comes from a big city. Less well-educated respondents from villages and of both sexes admitted that if they did not have a chance to go to the Polish church for some reason, then they would not go to church at all. One of my respondents suggested that if the Polish mass was taken away: “then people would rebel. Everywhere in the world immigrants gather in churches. For us, Polishness equals Catholicism” (Beata, 42).

Similarly, several other interviewees indicated that Poles would stop practicing altogether if the Polish mass was cancelled. Thus, Izabela’s response was typical of the Polish Catholic population when she declared that in the absence of Polish mass she “would stop going to church because church should not be a place where one feels like a stranger. Not understanding what is going on is stressful”. The importance of being an active participant, rather than a passive observer was resonated among other Polish informants.

Although Polish migrants in Dublin can attend religious services in Polish and in the way that they were used to in Poland, some of them, especially those from small villages, still value their churches in Poland more than the churches in Polish parishes in Ireland. They feel more
emotionally tied to their local Polish parishes, as the church itself is focused around the local community which they know very well. The church constitutes an important part of local social life. Religious Polish migrants from villages admit that they were much more involved in their local parish's life in Poland than in the life of the religious community in Dublin. They perceive the church in Poland as more “theirs” than the church in Dublin, which is “general, for everybody, for all Poles in Dublin” (Albert).

X.III.c. Importance of the utilitarian functions of the Polish Church in Ireland.

It is very important to stress that besides stricte religious functions fulfilled by the Polish Church in Ireland, and although no formal programs have been developed to ease the settlement of new migrants, the Polish Church in Ireland (Dominican Polish Chaplaincy) performs a series of important practical initiatives and utilitarian functions for Polish migrants, for instance activities in cooperation with Pease Corpi, counselling and psychotherapy center or an amateur theatre.\(^\text{124}\)

Because the churches provide regular weekly services, newcomers have a chance to experience something familiar. Thus, Poles go to the church in Ireland not only for religious reasons but also because they lack a means of communication. The Polish community is poorly integrated and the Polish church is virtually the only place where Poles can meet in large numbers (Lisak 2008).

So, for many migrants, the church is rather a place where they go to meet fellow countrymen, to exchange some important informations, ask for some help if necessary, not a place where they satisfy their religious needs. As the example of Agnieszka Malek’s observation among Polish migrants in Rome shows: “They gather around temples not so much due to their spiritual needs but due to the practical possibilities offered by these places: to purchase of newspapers, films, Polish products, to exchange some information. The church is treated by them primarily in geographic and social categories, not religious one. What matters is what’s going on around the church- the presence of other Poles, the opportunity to purchase products originating from the homecountry, reconnaissance in the labor market. Profanum dominates over sacram, and religio loci does not seem to matter (Malek 2011:204).

Also in Dublin, the Polish church in some cases plays an important role in the initial settlement processes of migrants. It provides social networks that can assist in finding housing, jobs, etc. Some Polish migrants in Ireland relied on the Catholic Church to also assist them in practical matters, such as finding a job and accommodation. A 42-year old man reminisced during the interview:

\(^{124}\) http://www.dominikanie-dlapolakow.ie/
"First days here I lived in a hostel and I was intensively looking for an apartment or something. I went even to the Polish church because I heard that people posted some ads about flats, apartments and other things there" (Janusz, 41).

According to Peggy Levitt (2004) it is not unusual that migrants from relatively religious cultural backgrounds all over the world, see religious institutions as the first port of call when they arrive in a new country. Religion also has as another non-religious function. It allows migrants to more easily identify with a community. The sense of belonging to the Polish community which is built by common religious practices is very important to the Polish immigrants in Ireland. The religious rituals maintain traditions and strengthen community identity.

“We have for instance our traditions during Easter or Christmas that Irish do not have. We meet together in the Church with eggs to bless, or we go to Pasterka. And Irish are surprised when they observe our traditions” (Janusz, 41).

Participation in religious rituals and traditions has an autonomous value for Polish migrants in Ireland, not always linked to faith. Similarly to the home society, Poles in Ireland treat the Church’s moral and religious guidelines very selectively, and only 60-30% of them agree with the fundamental principles of the Catholic faith (Lisak 2010). Nevertheless, the church gives migrants a feeling of safety and familiarity, as was expressed by one of the respondents in my study:

“Here (in the church-MM) we can feel like home. At least in the church everything is like in Poland (laugh)” (Aleksander).

Attending Polish religious services helps migrants to create a ‘home away from home’ (Ebaugh, 2003: 238)

Religious life of Polish migrants has also been interestingly analized by Agnieszka Małeck (2011) on the base of her research on Polish migrant women in Rome. Religion and religious institutions help migrants to satisfy their need of belonging and trust. The institutional organization of the Polish church in Rome helps migrants not only to increase their sense of security and mental comfort, but sismilarly to organizational structures of the Polish church in Ireland, it gives an opportunity to get or exchange some practical information and contacts. Additionly, Polish language and the well-known liturgy decrease migration stress among respondents. Some of women intervieweed by Małek became even more religious abroad than in the home country. This is consistent with the opinion of some sociologists of religion that individuals become more religiously active in the time of crisis ( Mariański 2004 after Malek 2011:206). However, in the case of migrants in Rome the increase of religiosiy can be also for other reason which is exclusively linked to the place of immigration. Agnieszka Malek noticed an important influence of religious atmosphere of Rome on

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125 The tradition of blessing food (eggs, bread, meat, salt and pepper) in the church on Great Saturday.
126 The traditional Holy Mass at the Christmas time, which starts at midnight 24-25 of December.
intensity of religious experiences of migrants. It is described by her as a “Rome effect” (Malek, 2011:207). Proximity of the Vatican, nearness of sacrum, and impression of relation with the past can increase a sense of spiritual and mystical experiences.

In the case of Polish migrants in Ireland the “Rome effect” obviously does not take place. Besides, more often than the increase of religiosity I had observed intensive cultivation of symbolic religiosity (Malek 2011:206). So, the type of religiosity which is purely cultural one and inherited in the process of socialization. Participation in the religious practices is motivated by cultural tradition rather than by individual emotional needs. Symbolic religiosity which is characteristic for many Polish migrants in Ireland whom I taked to is more rooted in the environment and the culture than in their individual personality. This kind of religiosity is very much expressed in the way in which Polish migrants and their families in Ireland celebrate the most important religious holidays and events.

X.III.d. Religious life of Polish families in Ireland

Most of my respondents declared that they go to church and participate in religious services, however at the same time they confessed that they do so less often than they used to in Poland. A majority of them admitted that they only sporadically go to the church, when they have time or “when they feel such a need” (Julia). Some confessed that they used to attend church services regularly ”for children”, before their children's First Holy Communion, as one of the mothers said :“just to avoid some problems with the priest”, and “to bring up a child in the Polish tradition” (Julia). This example indicates that for some migrants, as for Julia, religion is more a matter of tradition rather than faith, and it should be passed from generation to generation because it is a part of national culture. Only six of my respondents (two married couples and two married women) go to church regularly and take care over their children’s regular attendance in church. Nine of my interviewees admitted that although they are baptized they do not go to church, either because they are non-believers or that they believe but they do not want to practice their faith. Most of my Polish respondents in Ireland also agreed that they are less involved in religious activities in Ireland than they were in Poland. The causes that were most often indicated included: busy work schedules and,

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127 Agnieszka Malek (2011:206) singled out three stages of migration religiosity: 1. Intensive: intensive participation in religious rituals and compliance with the faith’s principles and dogmas in everyday life, 2. Moderate: less intensive participation in religious rituals, selectivity in the use of the faith’s principles and dogma in everyday life, 3. Symbolic: participation in religious rituals mostly during the most important religious festivities and because of cultural patterns and family expectations.
most of all, long distances from their homes to the nearest Polish church. Nevertheless, in the family life of almost all religion plays an important role, either because of its symbolism and metaphysical aspects or because of religious traditions and customs, or both.

Dennison Nash and Peter Berger when studying the high level of churchgoing among young families in suburban America, noticed that parents very often attend religious services for the sake of their children. Religion was perceived as a necessary adjunct to the family (in this case as an ethical institution) whose additional task was to socialize children (Nash and Berger 1972 after Mairi Levitt 1995:531-532).

Similar results are presented in the Min Zhou and Carl Bankston (1998) study. Based on their study of Vietnamese immigrants in New Orleans, they claim that young migrants’ ethnic religious engagement; church attendance and participation in church-sponsored activities protected them from the bad influences of American culture such as neighbourhood gangs. The strong religious affiliation of young people integrates them into their ethnic community more and teaches moral and social values through group supports.

Also some religious parents in my research sample hope that strong family ties together with religious affiliation and church attendance will protect their children from “immoral” influences of the Irish culture.

“If a child feels tied to the family, and receives a proper care from them, and a proper moral and religious example from them, then he won't be led astray, and won't be like these Irish kids” (Does the religion matters in this case?-MM). Of course it matters. If the kid is taught to follow the religious rules then he will not take a drug or he won't be doing other stupid things.”(Agata) She continues:

“In Poland, religion gives people moral guidelines but here people have no moral backbone because religion is so weak here”.

And:

“But you know, it is not easy here. It is more difficult here than in Poland, I think. Because in Poland religion is everywhere and you are sort of different if you do not go to the Church or so. But here is often other way around; you are different because you go to the Church. And our kids talk to other kids, to Irish ones.”

Agata also stressed that the Polish Church in Ireland is a symbol of Polishness for her. She perceived the weekly masses in the Polish church as very important for her two children, for their national identity, and national pride.

“They go to the Polish Church and they know that they are Polish. That there is nothing to be ashamed of. That there is a long tradition, a long history”.

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens : a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
“This intertwining is also valuable to immigrants because it can provide an ethnic socialization for their children, the second generation, who celebrate home-country holidays in religious congregations, for example, and develop networks of ethnic peers there” (Foner and Alba 2008: 362).

For Polish parishioners, as for Polish priests, Polish Catholicism is unique and at the centre of their national identity. For Poles the Catholic faith is not universal, it is Polish. The Polish Church in Ireland is perceived by Polish migrants as a “refuge of Polishness”. Besides family and the classes in the Polish school, the Church is assumed to be important for building national identity, helpful in upraising and the “correct” Polish socialization of the second generation of Polish migrants in Ireland.

Importantly, even those children who do not attend Polish classes, are raised in the tradition of the Polish Church. For Milosz, a father of two, attendance of the Polish church is more important than attendance of Polish school.

(Why do you send you children to the Polish church but you do not send them to the Polish school?-MM) “What they need to learn they will learn at the Irish school as well. And without such stress as in the Polish one. And with the church it is a different matter...I don't know...it is more important“ (Why the polish church is more important than the Polish school?-MM), “Well, I don't know ...it's difficult to explain...I think ...because it is a part of the Polish tradition”.

Another respondent also stresses the importance of the Polish Church in his and his family’s migratory life:

“The Polish Church is important.” (Why?-MM) “ If you are a Pole then the Catholic Church is naturally important for you. You can pray there, go to the mass.” (You can also go to the mass to the Irish Church-MM) “eee, it is not the same. I was taught “Our Father” by my mother in Polish, and how can I tell it now in English? It won't be authentic to me. My religion is Polish and it is going to stay like that (Gustaw).”

(Is there something else what makes the Polish Church, the Polish mass in Dublin important to you?-MM) “I am happy that I can keep our Polish tradition even here in Ireland. You know...there would be something missing if I couldn't go to Pasterka at the Christmas. It is tradition. Irish do not have it. Our Christmas is more solemn and more homely, and very much a family holiday (Gustaw)”.

Most of the Polish Catholics in Ireland I talked to, believe in the superiority of their Catholicism and tradition. According to Polish migrants; their family life and religious engagement place them
above most Irish values which are often characterized by Poles as “slack.\(^{128}\)"

Undeniably, religion is one of the institutions that has been transformed by migration and at the same time has enough social power to shape the migration processes. “Religion plays a crucial role in the identity negotiation, particularly ethnic identity, of migrants and is so bound up with the reproduction and maintenance of ethnicity” (Cruz 2006:19). Thus, in the context of contemporary migration, religion is often called ‘ethnoreligion’.

Polish migrant families also feel very connected to a religious tradition for its support of the norms that encourage love and family solidarity. Religious rituals are traditionally a part of their family life even if couples are separated due to transnational migration.

“So, he visited us during Easter, and then, of course, he came to our older son’s First Holy Communion” (Marianna, 35).

Polish migrants in Ireland seem to give special importance to the family celebration of the most important religious holidays. For example, the celebration of Christmas with other family members, something that in Poland was obvious and natural, is even more symbolic in Ireland. It is a time to strengthen family ties and relationships with family members who might be separated through migration. This family-holiday atmosphere involves elements of religious tradition. Thus, these religious traditions and holiday customs are perceived by migrants as very important for family life and its functioning. The family-oriented character rather than religious nature of these celebrations are much more important for migrants. It is a kind of link for the family. Thus, absence of the family during the most important Christian holidays which are traditionally regarded as family holidays is particularly painful for migrants and their loved ones back home, and it happens to be a kind of turning point for the decision about family reunification or return.

This is very much reflected in the story of Pawel and Mariola:

“When I was alone in Ireland there was this one Christmas Holiday I couldn't be with my family because I had to stay at work. And that was the worst time for me. All Poles I knew here went to Poland for the holiday, some of them they had already their families living with them in Ireland, others just have them visiting here, but still...all of them had somebody from the family but me. That was very sad” (Pawel).

“I hoped that Pawel would come for Christmas. You know, Christmas is such a family time...But it turned out that he couldn't be with us. And that time I decided that it would be the first and the last Christmas like that. Either we would be together or not at all. I didn't want to experience something like that once again” (Mariola).

As mentioned above, the importance and value of Christian holidays such as Easter or Christmas in

\(^{128}\) In a sense that they are less strict and Christian than Polish ones.
Polish migrants’ lives comes more from the fact that these holidays are traditionally spent with the family and in a particular familiar way rather than from their religious sense. Neither Paweł nor Mariola claimed to be strong believers, however for both of them Christmas was a very important family event which they hardly enjoyed when separated from each other.

*I couldn't enjoy that Christmas. I felt that there was no Christmas at all for me without my family. I would have been much happier if that year Christmas time hadn't had come at all*” (Paweł).

In summary, the religious holidays are important in the family life of Polish migrants mainly because of the religious rituals and traditions. In the Polish tradition the most important Christian festivals are at the same time the most family-oriented ones. They are perceived as the best occasion for the generational transmission of Polish traditions, and for cultivating family ties and relations. Thus, in many cases it is the annual religious calendar or/and religious rites such as baptism, funerals or weddings that determine the behaviour of transnational migrants (for instance travelling back and forth between Ireland and Poland in order to visit relatives).

On the basis of evidence I collected I suggest that the strong attachment to traditions, which associates the most important religious holidays to celebrations within the family, rather than religiosity and religious beliefs per se, can encourage decisions to reunite the family either in Ireland or through a return to Poland.

**X.IV. “Doing gender” and “doing religion” in Polish families in Ireland**

Although religion and gender are two separate concepts they interact with each other. They are both constantly (re)constructed and (re)defined in social interaction, they both implicate some normative values and are at the core of socially hierarchical institutions, and eventually they are also part of subjective individual identity formations. In other words, the intersections between religion and gender raise a broad range of questions while at the same time stressing its social and scientific importance.

In reference to the well known concept of “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman 1987), Orit Avishai (2008) introduces the term “doing religion”. Under the assumption that people interact, perform and become subjects within particular power relations and social expectations, Avishai argues ”that doing religion is a mode of conduct and being, a performance of identity—not only a purposeful or strategic action. I further suggest that even when viewed as a strategic undertaking, religion may be done in the pursuit of religious goals—in this case, the goal of becoming an
authentic religious subject against an image of a secular Other” (Avishai, 2008:413). Thus, by analogy with “doing gender” Avishai claims that, firstly, the nature of religiosity is constructed, and secondly, that its construction takes place within the context of social norms and regulatory discourses. Although, the social context is crucial for gender studies, in the sociology of religion this aspect causes little interest. Yet, “doing religion” is according to Avishai (2008), a semi-conscious and self-authoring performance, in contrast to “doing gender”, which is an unconscious outcome of coercive and oppressive social norms that discipline femininity and masculinity, and produce gender inequality (Avishai, 2008:413).

When studying the intersection of “doing gender” and “doing religion” in the individual lives of migrants the question arises: to what extent is “doing religion” a gendered process, and to what extent is it determined by gender socialization and the new social circumstances such as transnational migration?

Despite the fact that religious institutions are hierarchically male-dominated, the religious spheres, similarly to the family one, are feminized. The literature on the sociology of religion generally does not question a strong link between being female and being religious.“By now it is so taken for granted that women are more religious than men that every competent quantitative study of religiousness routinely includes sex as a control variable” (Stark (2002; 496).

There are several theories which explain this gender difference in religion affiliation. Edward Thomson (Thomson 1991, gender orientation theory ) proposes that religiosity in varying degrees does not depend purely on an individual’s biological sex but rather on the level of being feminine or masculine. This approach does not presuppose unquestionably that women are always more religious than men, but he makes it dependent upon feminine or masculine gender socialization.

From the beginning of the 1960s, greater religious commitment and participation in church activities were perceived as corresponding with female gender roles, particularly with the role of mother and housewife, and incompatible with full-time participation in the job market and the provider role of men (Luckmann 1967; de Vaus and McAllister 1987). Luckmann (1967) stated that men’s activity in the job market makes religion less necessary to them as a job provides an alternative source of values. Thus, in light of this approach, higher female religious devotion reflects the different structural locations of women and men in a gendered social division of labour.

The other interpretation proposes that men are less religious than women because of their

differential socialization. The greater religiousness of women is consistent with their socialization and internalization of the "proper" female role (McCready and McCready 1973, Levitt 1995). Thus, women are socialized in a way to fulfil the “proper” female role and one of the outcomes of this socialization is their greater religiousness than that of men.

However, there is also the possibility that the causal direction is reversed; religious affiliation might influence a man's gender socialization and explain the particular gender roles and expectations. Thus, for example, if in Catholicism the mother of Jesus is regarded as a symbol of the ideal mother, then it is plausible that religious Catholics would follow this gender model in their family life, as they believe it is the best one.

A completely different explanation of the various levels of religiousness between men and women is presented in the risk-aversion theory (Miller and Stark 2002). Alan Miller and Rodney Stark assume that men generally manifest their natural propensity to engage in risky behaviour. Thus, because men are more likely to take the risk of loss of reward in "another world", they are more likely to be irreligious than women. Miller and Stark conclude that general factors of differential gender socialization are unrelated to religiosity so that the genesis of gender difference in risk taking must be physiological. Miller and Stark (2002) failed to take seriously that gender differences in preferences for risk might also be due to differential socialization. In my opinion, a total rejection of the potential social aspects that may shape religiousness, makes the risk-aversion theory superficial, incomplete and only a little helpful in the observation and study of the religious behaviour of migrant families.

Constant correlation between gender, family and religion within human life opens an interesting research widow into tensions between individual experience, religious guidelines, gender beliefs and family life. These very much interrelated and interdependent aspects gain even more special character when they occur in the migration reality.

The results of my research and observations among Polish migrants leads me to the argument that religion remains a strong agent for gender and national socialization among Polish migrants in Ireland. The Catholic Church's activities in Dublin aim to maintain or even strengthen the distinctive, national and folk type of religiosity for Poles. By supporting this kind of religiosity which has a traditionally patriarchal character, the Polish clergy in Ireland tend to support traditional gender roles within the family. Thus, it is one of the elements that shapes family life and family gender roles among those Poles in Ireland who claim a strong attachment to Polish religious traditions (the great majority of my respondents) and/or a deep Catholic faith.

In general, Polish women in Ireland are more active in terms of religious practices, such as attendance at masses, confession, personal prayer, than men (Lisak 2010). My research results also suggest that they are more religiously active than men in keeping various religious traditions within
their families. Traditionally, Polish women are stereotyped as the family “keepers” of religion and religious tradition and practices. This is evident among migrant's families in Ireland.

Admittedly, scientists working on the sociology of religion within the family context (Myers 1996, Stolzenberg et al., 1995) noticed the general trend that church participation is higher among parents than single individuals or married couples without children, and that the more children in the household, the more often adult immigrants attend religious services (Alenezi and Sherkat, 2008; Connor, 2008; van Tubergen, 2006, Massey and Higgins 2011). However, in the case of Polish parents in Ireland, it is more appropriate to discuss a parent-mother who is more religiously active, rather than both parents.

The greater engagement of women in the religious life of the family is taken for granted as a part of their gender role as a mother and a main care giver to the children. Polish women in Ireland who are mothers of small children are more engaged in religious activities than women without children, or mothers of teenagers. This trend is also observed by Mairi Levitt: "The greater level of attendance among the mothers was linked to their changing roles through their life cycle. When they were independent adults attendance was at its lowest point but when they had young children their attendance rose, falling again as their children grew up" (Levitt 1995:534).

This is linked to the Christian rituals such as baptism and the First Holy Communion which take place in early childhood. Similar to other religious holidays, such as the annual celebration of Christmas and Easter, or also on the occasions of baptism and the First Holy Communion it is traditionally a largely female duty to organize the family celebration and, as is the case with the First Holy Communion, to assist the child with the religious preparation for the rite.

These religious duties also shape transnational migrants' processes and transnational family life, as in the case of Marianna (35) who joined her husband in Ireland a few months later because she felt obligated to prepare and take care of their older son's First Holy Communion.

"So I stayed longer in Poland because our older son was supposed to have First Holy Communion and we wanted it to be in Poland. So I stayed and took care of everything. So after the First Holy Communion and the end of the academic year I took the kids and joined my husband here.”

Thus, mostly Polish women are engaged in and feel responsible for the religious engagement of their children, as they are more responsible for raising children in general. As it is commonly agreed among Polish migrants that religion is desirable for young children it is also per se the domain of women as mothers/carers rather than men.

According to some scientists (Ellison and Bartkowski 2002) religious beliefs may also shape gender ideologies and regulate household tasks among religious couples. Moreover, recent studies find that religion is more predictive of gender traditionalism among men than among women (Bartkowski and Hempel 2009; Hoffman and Bartkowski 2008). The results of my research and observations...
only partially support Ellison’s and Bartkowski’s conclusions about the correlation between the degree of religiosity and the egalitarian or conservative gender division of housework within families. When I asked my respondents how they divide their household labour and why they do it this way, almost none of my respondents, either the very religious or the not religious at all, both male and female, indicated religion as the primary reason for the choices in the division of household duties which they made. Religion is very rarely taken as a reason for the gender roles and gender division of labour among Polish immigrants. Only Marianna (35) admitted that the gender arrangement in her family is ”po Bożemu” (in God's way), which suggests that in her family the traditional family gender arrangement of housework might be influenced by religious beliefs. The lack of a religious explanation for their actions among Polish migrants does not necessarily mean that religion is irrelevant for their gender ideology and the division of household labour (see Bartkowski and Hempel 2009; Hoffman and Bartkowski 2008). It might rather mean that the correlation between religiousness and gender roles were taken for granted by my respondents (Legerski and Cornwall 2010:447), and at least partially, as Marianna's response might suggest, an unconscious process of “doing gender” according to religious guidelines.

X.V. Conclusion

Migration disrupts the religious practices of Polish migrants, at least in the short term. Although Poles in Ireland do not seem to change their religious beliefs after migration, they do change the frequency of their religious practices. There is a significant decrease in this compared to the religious activities of Poles prior to their migration to the Green Island. Settling into a destination country includes activities that necessarily compete with religious practice for the limited time at the immigrants’ disposal, namely: learning a new language, coping with a strange culture, and working hard to earn money and get ahead economically. Although there are also other problems, such as distances to the nearest Polish parish, many recent Polish migrants to Ireland cannot imagine their existence abroad without religion, or more adequately-without religious traditions. So it seems that the Church - especially based on the heritage of Polish culture and Polish values will remain for immigrants an institution that gathers and unites.

Besides, a highly gendered social institution such as the Polish Catholic Church and its tradition of defining male and female roles shapes the migratory behaviour of Polish migrants in Ireland and their gender relations within the family. Additionally, the support for the folk-and nationalistic kind of religiousness practiced by the Polish clergy in Ireland seems to strengthen the nationalistic, traditional religious and gender approaches of migrants.
So in essence, it’s not faith itself that shapes the gender attitude of migrants but it is rather the context of Polish national and religious traditions that place Polish women in the position of sacrificing mothers and obedient wives. This national and religious tradition seems to be a key element of national identity for many Polish families in Ireland, and thus, it is commonly cultivated including family gender roles.
XI. Conclusion.

This thesis has discussed migration from Poland since the EU accession in 2004, with a particular focus on transnational family migration to Ireland. It has explored factors which shape transnational family migration patterns with particular focus on cultural factors such as family gender roles and the gender beliefs of migrants and their family members.

The first part of the thesis has considered the theoretical discussion and presentation of the literary background for this thesis, namely; the definitions and the main scientific directions in the study of transnationalism, transnational family migration and gender in migration studies, as well as the presentation of the Polish context of family gender beliefs and gender roles and migration processes. The second part of the thesis has presented the empirical findings collected during my research fieldwork among Poles in Ireland. In addition, the thesis has contributed to discussions on various aspects of transnational family migration theory, particularly theories why families migrate, which cultural and social factors shape decisions about migration and migratory behaviour, and transnational family communication.

I began my research with questions: How do gender role beliefs and gender relations affect transnational family migration? And how are gender role beliefs and gender relations affected by transnational family migration? By answering these questions I also wanted to shed the light on possible gender transitions, its direction, the circumstances in which it takes place, and the possible social and familial consequences of it.

Therefore, as mentioned in the introduction there was a threefold aim to this study. The first aim was to state the impact of transnational family migration on family gender roles and gender relations within the family either entrenching traditional arrangements and beliefs or challenging and changing them. So, my intention was to focus on transnational family migration as neither a degradation nor an improvement to women's or men's social roles, but rather as a process of shaping transnational family life and restructuring gender relations. The second aim of this study was to examine the other side of the coin and to determine how beliefs about family gender roles and family gender relations shape transnational migration patterns, and eventually the third aim was to follow the individual family-related and social consequences of transnational family migration processes. The research has been realized by using typically qualitative methods (in-depth interviews and observations) within the framework of an anthropological approach.

My main expectations towards the result of my empirical research assumed transnational family migration processes (migration decisions, transnational family separation as well as reunification)

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would be shaped by gender roles and family gender relations due to specific Polish cultural and religious traditions in which these gender roles and family relations have been formulated. At the same time, inspired by the literature on the topic (for example Morokvasic 2007) and the specific cultural and religious Polish context, I expected that family gender roles and family gender relations within the family, especially parenting roles, would hardly be challenged permanently by transnational family migration.

In order to achieve the main goals of my study I decided to follow transnational family migration processes from the very first step, which means from migration decisions, through transnational family separation until family reunification in the host country. In order to do so in an organized way I decided to differentiate three stages of transnational family migration: pre-transnational family stage, transnational family stage and post-transnational family stage. The research results presented above allow me to prove that the suitability of these three stages for my study has been empirically confirmed. Each of the stages is characterized by the specific processes and family relations which are determined to a large extent by the gender roles and gender beliefs of people who were engaged in the transnational family migration.

Overall, the most important argument of this thesis is that specific Polish cultural and religious traditions related to family gender roles and family gender relations underlie migration decisions and migration behaviour, at every stage in the transnational family migration process.

XI.I. Migration motivations

The research results clearly indicate that the main motivation which makes the majority of Poles willing to migrate to Ireland to work is their requirement for a “normal life”. The “normal life” migration strategy to the great majority of Polish families is associated simply with their desire to earn enough money to make ends meet without struggling everyday for money, and their willingness to provide better a future for their children. For young couples who do not have such opportunities in Poland, the economic motivation for migration is followed by their desire for a household independent of their parents.

The image of Ireland as a country where the dreams about a better future have a chance to come true has its foundation mostly in the common perception of the receptive Irish job market. The decision to choose Ireland as a destination country is often facilitated by migratory social networks as well as the similarities between Ireland and Poland in terms of the dominance of the Catholic faith in society. However, the latter factor was less significant than had been expected. The
encouraging aspect of co-religiosity of Ireland and Poland is additionally strengthened by a large number of Polish believers living in Ireland. However, the fact of a familiar ethnoreligious environment already being established in Ireland seemed to be to Polish migrants even more important than the dominance of Catholicism in Ireland.

Although the desire of having a “normal life”, the idea based on economic stability, was predominant among respondents, the family migration decision about who would migrate and when they would migrate was a process in which economic calculation intertwined with non-economic factors, not necessarily with the predominance of economic arguments.

The predominance of the former or latter arguments during the family migration decision was dependent largely upon family gender arrangements and the personal gender beliefs of couples. In other words, the family gender roles and the gender beliefs of women and men determine to a large extent the female and male degree of choice, availability, desire and motivation to migrate.

XI.II. Gender models and migration decisions

It turned out that the majority of my respondents support a rather traditional gender arrangement, if not completely then at least partially. Taking into account traditional gender role beliefs and the traditional division of household duties it is not something marginal in Polish society, but rather common social practice which, with differing intensity, concern all social groups in Poland (see chapter 1), this result is hardly surprising. The traditional perception of family roles, especially the role of the mother, is noticeably more popular among couples with children than among single Poles or couples without children. The traditional gender arrangement understood as female devotion to family and home and male breadwinning and activity in a public sphere, was often described as a “normal” family arrangement and mentioned as the most common one (“like all mothers there, like all wives in Poland” (Ela, 39).

Nevertheless, my research indicates that despite traditional gender beliefs some structural conditions lead some couples to negotiate a more equal division of paid and unpaid work. Specifically, couples with lower levels of education in order to make ends meet or save as much money as possible in a short amount of time adopt different gender beliefs to the traditional division of housework. So, these kinds of traditional gender beliefs do not exclude the professional work of women in a situation of financial need but at the same time do not exempt them from taking care of family and home. So, mainly due to family financial needs, and despite of their rather traditional gender beliefs, most of my respondents practice the mixed model of gender arrangements, where both the man and the woman engage in paid work (part-time or full-time) and care is developed as a
specific task and allocated mostly to women. The “discourse that defines migration” is embedded in how migrants define and understand gender roles (Malkin, 2004:77). Also the research results clearly indicate that the gender beliefs of migrants and their family gender roles are factors which shape the family migration decision making process to a large extent. Families with more egalitarian beliefs are likely to make migration decisions based on more economic calculations than couples with traditional gender beliefs. Since families with children tend to have more traditional gender beliefs than childless couples, the migration decisions of the former are less based on an economical calculation and more on gender beliefs than the migration decisions of the latter. This is probably due to the fact that for obvious reasons the migration decision of childless couples, unlike those of couples with children, is not shaped in any way by their parental roles. Often gender based and at the same time economically irrational the family migration decisions are made on the basis of the common assumption that men will be more resourceful, even if they do not have any previous migration experience, or they do not speak the language. Many female respondents who followed their husbands prioritized their husband's endeavours over their other family members' endeavours, including their own, when making decision about migration. Even when women do not entirely accept their husband’s idea of migration, they support the male’s sense of his breadwinning responsibilities and despite anxieties associated with transnational family separation, they eventually do not protest against a husband’s migration. This pattern reflected the legitimacy of husbands' authority to act autonomously derived from traditional gender role beliefs. The migration of men is driven by a sense of responsibility for the financial well-being of their families, and it is often seen as a chance to fulfil their traditionally perceived male duties. While migrating women are usually driven by the dramatic family financial need and their desire to improve the family situation. The migration of women, particularly of mothers, is at the cost of their sense of female duties towards family, so is only when spouses do not see any other option that it is possible. Women are less likely to initiate migration when they have small children, and often delay movement until children are older. Also in the case of older children the eventuality of distant mothering was often a dilemma for my female respondents. At the same time being a parent increases the migration intentions of men because of increased financial family needs. This pattern is actually independent of the respondents' age, education and place of living. While men migrate for the sake of the family, women stay behind for the sake of the children. Similarly to Rebecca Rajjman et al., (2003) and Anne White (2011), I noticed that in order to gain a at least a partial social legitimacy, decrease their sense of guilt and to feel justified in their own eyes, transnational mothers need to satisfy two conditions; they have to act in the best interests of
the family (justified economical needs) and they have to ensure the best possible care for their children during their absence, usually female relatives; mothers or sisters of the respondents or female relatives of the husband.

However, importantly, gender beliefs dominate in the migration decision within the families with traditional gender arrangements unless economic pressure (family financial problems) causes migration to not be perceived as one of the options any more but as the only option to survive for the family, and the migration decision has to be couples with the risk of possible failure. Then the rational calculation of human resources of each of the spouses matters more than personal gender beliefs.

XI.III. Family gender roles during transnational separation

Differences in the experiences of individual family members during transnational family separation are rooted in the gender of a migrant and his/her partner/spouses who remained in the home country.

Social demands directed toward migrant women are often mutually contradictory; on the one hand they are expected to be fully engaged in earning money and sending remittances to the family left behind, and on the other hand there are strict social expectations derived from their family roles, especially from the role of the mother. They are often criticized for having left their children to migrate. As a result of separation as well as social pressure, migrant mothers feel guilty and responsible for possible negative consequences which the separation may have on their children. Although they realise that the fulfilment of the social expectations and requirements of the migrant mother is impossible, at the same time they consider these social expectations to be equitable. This contradiction between their beliefs and their situation makes Polish female migrants feel even more frustrated and guilty for leaving their children. Consequently, they try to justify their migration, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. So, firstly, they tend to emphasize the financial coercion behind their migration. They imply that their migration was not entirely their choice but sort of an economic compulsion. Secondly, migration is seen as dedication to their children, in order to support a better future for them.

Unlike migrant women, whose greatest concern was related to the family left behind and its emotional well-being, male attention and concern were directed more towards their own migrant situation and their migration aim. Their perception of their role within the family in the context of migration, including the role of the father, was mostly associated with insurance of material comfort for the family.

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So, they elevated their bread-winning role above the emotional needs of their children which was justified by the gender belief that a father’s absence is less damaging to their children than a mother’s absence, since mother are traditionally seen as the primary care-givers.

Challenges associated with transnational family separation also apply to those family members who remained in the home country. The life of a single mother or a single father, a grass widower or a grass widow, even if it is only a temporary situation due to transnational family migration, requires from them new skills and new ways of coping with everyday problems.

A woman, who remained in the home country during the transnational family stage, often suffered from the added work load and responsibilities resulting from their husband’s emigration. Sometimes additional responsibilities meant dealing alone with duties which were usually performed by their husbands prior to their migration or shared by the couple, such as tasks associated with bringing up children. Additional tasks were sometimes perceived to small extent as a source of new-found self-confidence. Unlike transnational migrant women, the wives who stayed in Poland were at least partially dependent on money earned by their migrant husbands. In this sense, the migration of their husbands strengthened their traditional family gender arrangement.

Although migrant women often see their migration situation as a kind of mission and dedication to the family- what also allowed them think of themselves as modern martyrs they usually gain financial independence and an increase in their self-esteem. While women who stayed in Poland often perceived the transnational family stage as a time of stagnation, time of waiting, and eventually a time of preparation for the move and reunification in Ireland.

The transnational life of men whose wives migrated first, as well as the life of migrant men was also associated with new challenges and responsibilities linked to housework which had previously been performed by their wives. Nevertheless, this experience was perceived by most of them as only temporary and exceptional. It was necessitated by the situation in which they found themselves and their families and it hardly changed their approach toward the gender-based arrangement of housework duties. Mika Toyota et al. (2007:160) noted that the reversed gender roles caused by the migration of one of the spouses related to daily responsibilities, are very often regarded both by women and men as “shaky”, ad hoc and only temporary. The assumption about the inconstancy of the gender change in an exceptional situation consolidates a traditionally established gender arrangement.

The different experiences of the transnational family migration of women and men is also associated with a gendered perception of adultery. The potential infidelity of migrant wives or wives who remained in Poland, is less socially acceptable than the infidelity of their husbands. This arises from the family gender role traditionally ascribed to women as an idealized image of the devoted wife and mother fully dedicated to the children. So, while the adultery of men is seen as a potential...
danger for the marriage, the adultery of a woman poses a threat to the entire family and a violation of the female role within the family. Usually one year of separation was seen by my respondents as maximum period of time which was still “safe” for the quality of family and marriage relations.

XI.IV. Transnational family communication

Communication between Polish migrants in Ireland and their non-migrant family members left behind in the home country is created by phone calls and Internet communicators, mostly Skype or social forums such as Nasza Klasa or Facebook, personal visits and remittances.

Access to the online communication tools of migrants was not differentiated significantly according to education level, age or place of living in Poland. However, only transnational separation within the family provided the impetus to some migrants to become more familiar with high-tech communication tools such as the Internet. The frequency of transnational communication depended mostly upon: financial resources (lack of money was mentioned more often by those respondents who remained in Poland) and free time (lack of free time was more often mentioned by pioneering than their family members left behind). These dependencies exposed important asymmetries of power within the family in the context of transnational family relations and deepened gender inequalities within the family.

Most phone or online contacts between family members took place from several times a week to no more than once a week. Although transnational communication through phone or Internet or remittances was a very important element in transnational family life, it was not always enough to replace face-to-face daily contact. However, due to migrant’s savings plans and lack of time, face-to-face visits were usually limited to two or three visits a year, usually during summer holidays and religious holidays such as Christmas and Easter.

Although transnational communication was seen by women and men as necessary to maintain emotional intimacy within the family, the weight attached to the different types of communication differed depending upon female and male perception of their family roles and their sense of duty towards their families. Men were more likely to view their duties towards family in economic terms, reinforcing their familial obligations through the sending of remittances to their family in Poland. Whereas for Polish migrant women, especially mothers, frequent contact by phone or by the Internet was at least as important an expression of care as sending remittances and gifts.

Remittances and gifts from migrants had a double family function; firstly, they provided direct financial help to the family, and secondly, they were also a sign for those who stayed in Poland that their family relationships were doing well despite transnational family separation. As Bryceson and
Vuorela (2002:14) noted, the exchange of remittances let people ‘relativize’ their relations with family members.

Another important factor shaping transnational family relations was the transnational communication of adult migrants with their elderly parents who remained in the home country. The frequency, intensity and forms of transnational communication between migrants and their parents in Poland differed slightly from the transnational communication between members of the nuclear family (wife-husband, child-parent), however, phone calls and online conversations were still the most popular form of communication. For the same reasons transnational communication between spouses (financial and time issues) was more often initiated by the migrant. Besides, although knowledge of the Internet communication tools is not common among the older generation of Poles, the ability of migrants’ parents to communicate online communication is often limited to the will and the time of younger of family members whom older people ask for assistance with handing a computer and online connection. The frequency of phone or online contact of adult migrants with their parents in Poland was usually less intensive than their transnational contacts with their spouses or/ and children. It increases in two cases; firstly, when the migrant’s child or children live in the same household with grandparents or/ and in the case of serious problems with the parents’ health. Limited time and financial resources also determined the frequency of mutual personal visits between adult migrants and their parents in their home country. Some elderly family members were also afraid of the experience of being abroad, in an unfamiliar area, and some, especially those from the villages did not want to leave their farms, animals and houses unattended. There were also those for whom travelling long distances would be physically problematic. The infrequent visits of elderly parents to their children’s new country were often associated with a special purpose, for example a visit following the birth of a child and help with childcare.

Transnational family communications between adult generations also includes different forms of material and financial help. So, while migration reduced children’s availability to provide routine personal care or household help, material support from migrant children to their parents in Poland varied considerably in amount and frequency, and came mainly in the form of money and gifts. Nevertheless, despite intensive communication, the common family experience was a sense of growing emotional distance between family members, which tends to intensify along with prolonged transnational separation.

XI.V. Transnational intergenerational relations

Although elderly parents understood the economic motivation for the migration of their children,
they still expressed concerns about their children' decision. They often put direct or indirect pressure on their migrant children intimating a symbolic debt to be paid back. They referred to their children’s “family responsibilities” such as; taking care of elderly and sick parents in Poland or inheritance and taking care of family properties in Poland.

This is very much connected to “the mobility of care” (Baldassar 2007:280), so the “negotiated commitments” which developed between migrants and their parents over time. The fulfilment of these commitments often depends on subtle family conditions, such as the number of children and their gender or the age of parents and their health as well as sense of obligation, access to financial resources, time constraints and quality of relationship between children and parents. So, parents’ expectations differ depending on the gender of the child, the number of children in the family and their own health condition and age. Younger parents usually do not expect immediate help and they postpone the required fulfilment of these obligation for foreseeable future, while the very elderly and those who have health problems do not want to or cannot wait for long. Parental expectations tend to fall more heavily on a migrant who is an only child, than on those who have siblings, as being an only child is associated with being the sole caretaker of elderly parents. The expectation of care for the elderly is more often directed to female migrants than male ones, so the lack of this care is more onerous for older parents when women migrate. Also for this reason migrant women more often than migrant men are engaged in personal helping elderly parents. Also migrant men tend to see the role of care-giver for elderly parents more as the role of women, their wives or sisters rather than theirs (however, this approach does not exclude their financial contribution).

Importantly, as previously mentioned, most interviewees from my sample come from villages or small cities. Respondents from rural areas often expressed stronger commitments and senses of duty towards their parents than migrants from big cities. Nevertheless, this sense of duty seems to be a burden for some migrants, something that limits their life choices. Paraphrasing the concept of euro-orphans\textsuperscript{130}, some migrants’ elderly parents in Poland can be called adult euro-orphans, as they often feel abandoned and at least some of them expect some level of care from their children.

\textbf{XI.VI. Sense of temporariness}

Transnational family separation was often associated with a sense of the temporariness of the migration which was often associated with a self-alienation of migrants and acceptance of a quality of life in order to save as much money as possible in a short period of time. This sense of the

\textsuperscript{130} The concept created by the Polish media describes children in Poland where one or both parents migrated abroad after 2004 for economic reasons.
temporariness of the migration situation together with other factors such as feelings of loneliness, the experience of migration uncertainty related to the new environment as well as greater financial resources than in Poland, sometimes causes problems with alcohol or drugs. The sense of temporariness as well as a sense of a suspension of physical and emotional participation in family life was more often experienced by migrants than their family members who remained in Poland, and more often by migrant men than by migrant women. This is probably due to traditionally there being the greater emotional involvement of women than men in family life which clearly comes from the female caring role in the family.

X.VII. Re-established family roles and family relations after reunification

Transnational family reunification is both a joyful and stressful family event. It is preceded by fears and hopes as well as the careful preparation of both migrants in Ireland and their family members in Poland. “Inspection visits” are a common practice for migrant’s wives in order to check before their move whether the place which has been chosen by their husbands would be appropriate for the whole family. For many male migrants, the desire of a “normal life” was not only associated with the lack of financial problems but also with the presence of the whole family and the re-establishment of family gender roles and household duties as it was prior to migration. Although all transnational family members usually missed each other and looked forward to family reunification, once they eventually reunified their family they faced problems with the re-establishment of family relations and assimilation into new family life, not to mention the new social and cultural environment and a new language.

Dependent tied-movers

My analysis suggests that at least in the beginning of their migration experience, just after reunification in the host country, most Polish females who followed their husbands to Ireland are likely to be tied-movers and stay unemployed, financially dependent on their husbands and separated from their family and friends in Poland. So they are deprived of the support they used to have in Poland. Many of them hardly speak English or their English knowledge is not sufficient to find a job that would satisfy their aspirations and qualifications. Despite their job experience in Poland or/ and graduate-level of education, they face a significant degree of deskilling and disqualification in the job market in Ireland. Polish women who migrate as tied-movers, and without skills and resources that would facilitate their life and integration in Ireland, are far more

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dependent on their husbands in the host country than they were before migration. Migration has deprived them of contacts with people; family and friends, who composed their everyday social life. It has thrown them into an unfamiliar social environment where they have neither friends nor know the language. In this situation, Polish female tied-movers tend to focus all their interests on their families and find the main source of self-fulfilment, self-esteem and aspirations in performing their traditional family roles, at least until they find a job. This is a way in which these women protect their gender-based identity.

Migration brings conscious preservation of traditional roles

Another pattern which comes out of the analysis of my research is consistent with what has been noticed by Anna Triandafyllidou (2006:237): “Clearly the migration experience contributes in both material and emotional ways in changing the role of women in their families and their own understanding of who they are and what they want to achieve in their lives”.

Polish migrant women who were dependent on their partners and the family in Poland, became financially independent and managed their households once they migrated.

The change in power relationships is often seen as a direct result of migration, which was often a first step for the change of a migrant's psychophysical well-being and, for some women, also life's priorities. Regardless of job status, the financial independence and the perception of the Irish job market as a relatively predictable and receptive one, was a source of increased self-confidence among Polish migrant women and often encouraged them to change their approaches to life to more self-interested attitudes than before migration.

However, despite this my female interviewees often declared that their self-confidence and self-esteem increased after they had arrived in Ireland and found a job there, at the same time the significant change in the division of household duties between them and their male partners did not happen. I also found little indication that couples re-negotiated their responsibilities. They gain more self-confidence, however at the same time they remain faithful to the traditional family values, especially the role of a mother.

So, the greater financial independence of women does not necessarily mean more egalitarian or equal division of housework. A husbands’ housework contributions do not follow “logical” rules of economic exchange. It turned out that for some women the lack of change in their daily housework life duties was a result of their own conscious choice. In other words, the newly gained sense of independence and increased sense of freedom of life choices meant that they had chosen not to change their traditional gender arrangement of housework duties within their families.

They also re-create a sort of domestic matriarchy abroad which gives them a sense of power within
the family. All migrant mothers with whom I talked highly valued the traditional role of the mother but at the same time they were highly organized, up-to-date and decisive household managers. Paradoxically, the necessity of handing activities linked to their traditional family gender roles is favourable to the faster integration of Polish women than Polish men. For example child care makes migrant women more connected with local authorities such as kindergartens, schools, and social services, than their partners. As a result women become more familiar with the host country’s culture, customs and language than men. Additionally, female networks help women to overcome daily challenges resulting from their everyday duties as wives and mothers, for example the exchange information about the school system in Ireland.

Migration brings conflicts

However, the significant change in family gender roles, for example the reversal of a family breadwinner role, causes in some families considerable instability. When the husband maintains a patriarchal ideology, a significant improvement in the wife’s financial efficiency leads to increased conflicts between the couple. Women who attempted to alter the way in which the gender arrangement was constructed in their marriages prior migration, usually met with passivity or opposition from their husbands. Additionally, female professional development and her higher financial contribution to the family budget is perceived by men as a source of humiliation and degradation of his traditional position in the family. While this counter-traditional gender situation between the spouses also results in women doing even more housework and being more supportive to her husband than before migration, men react with aggression and even lower engagement in housework in order to keep their deceptive sense of being in a dominant position within the family. This pattern is consistent with the “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman, 1987) theory; the more a husband is dependent on his wife economically, the less housework he does. Most likely this is his way to reassert his masculinity.

So, the situation of a man losing his previous position as main breadwinner in favour of his wife, causes some challenges to men’s sense of identity and self-esteem. The maladjustment of men’s gender beliefs to the changing gender arrangement in their families caused even higher levels of male frustration.

So, the inability to reconcile a new family gender situation; on the one hand women's newly gained independence, and on the other hand the loss of the traditional male dominance, leads to conflict between spouses. The woman felt undervalued and overburdened by responsibilities, while the man felt lost in the new reality and frustrated by the decrease in his individual sense of masculinity. As the example of Nadia and her husband presented in my study shows, eventually this kind of gender
conflict is a main factor or one of the most important ones which even leads to marriage dissolution.

**XI.VIII. Changes as migration effects**

In light of the research presented above one can raise the question as to whether the changes and the processes that have occurred in the families of my respondents are the result of the migration or maybe the same experiences are also shared by the wider population of Poles in Poland.

The examples in my study show that possible alterations in gender power and family gender relations within migrant families occurred following migration and are determined by factors which are closely linked to the migration process, such as better social and job opportunities in the host country, new social and cultural environment and lack of social and family pressure to preserve unsatisfactory relations.

Firstly, as one of my respondents indicated, the limited job market in Poland and low salaries “let people survive but not live at the decent level” (Beata, 42) which meant that Polish women often felt dependent on their husbands. In Ireland, even low-paid job gave my female respondents financial independence. These economic re-arrangements within the migrant family- relative increase in women's and the decrease in men's economic contributions to the family- signify a vast change in the female sense of independence within the family. Women became more autonomous and assertive. This change is followed by a change in power relations between spouses (however, as mentioned above, not necessarily resulted in a change in the arrangement of household duties), especially in those cases where prior to migration, women did not have an income, or earned only a supplementary income.

Secondly, the literature indicates (for example Darvishpour 1999, 2002) that usually migration to more liberal areas or countries than the sending country encourages the liberalization process, especially among women. Although the liberalization trend in Europe is noticeable in some aspects also in Poland (see chapter 1), the statistics (also see chapter 1) suggest also that the gender beliefs of Poles are still more traditional than citizens of other European countries, including Ireland.

Therefore, migration of Poles to Ireland can also be associated with the process of the liberalization of the gender beliefs of Polish women. Even though none of my respondents indicated the cultural and social environment of the host country as having any impact on their attitude to their marriage or gender, I have observed that migrants who plan to settle permanently in the host country, and more often women than men, tend to strive for faster assimilation with the social environment of the host country and get rid of the stigma attached to being a stranger. This leads to, even if often unconsciously, a change in migrants’ life attitudes and behaviour.
And thirdly, as the example of Nadia shows, in Poland the social pressure of the patriarchal majority, family members and friends make people sustain family relationships, including marriage relations, in which they are not entirely satisfied. Migration brings the freedom to be rid of this social pressure and to assess family relationships independently and according to individual subjective criteria and beliefs.

XI.IX. The “Polish Migrant Mother” model

The research analyses allowed me derive the conclusion that the gender archetype of the “Polish Mother” shapes the migration experiences of Polish mothers at all stages of the transnational family migration process. The "Polish Mother" gender model is not only the image which had been created in the past but it is also a tradition inextricably linked with the identity of Polish women even today. So, defined culturally as morally superior to fathers, Polish mothers are expected to be especially selfless and altruistic for the benefit of the entire family, and particularly their children. Among Polish migrant’s mothers, analogically to the rest of the Polish society, the ideal model of a “Polish mother” is vivid and also functions in the transnational family migration context. The female sense of their primary responsibility for childcare is crucial for the family migration decision making process. The presence of children reduces the female intention for migration or even makes it impossible for some women.

The transnational migration of mothers is most often undertaken out of their sense of financial desperation and it is associated with their constant feelings of guilt and social stigmatization. During the transnational separation of mothers and their children “the pain of mothering from a distance” (Parreñas 2001:370), experienced by migrating mothers, is commonly seen as an expected and proper feeling by both transnational mothers and by those who stayed in Poland. In agreement with this is Derby’s observation of Derby, where Polish migrant mothers “who do not suffer without their children are accused of abandoning them” (Derby 2006:52).

This approach clearly suggests that migrant women’s beliefs as well as their behaviour correlates with the national, self-sacrificing image of the Polish Mother. In light of the research results presented above, the archetypal Polish Mother, the mother who sacrifices for her family and children, for whom the well-being of her children is of the utmost importance in her life, remains unchanged regardless of the migration situation, lifestyle and changes in other social roles. Additionally, it seems that motherhood for Polish women in Ireland is usually more time consuming and energy absorbing than it could have been in Poland. Migration deprives mothers of the traditional support from extended family which they could have relied on while living in Poland.
Therefore, taking into account the common Polish gender beliefs associated with the traditional gender image of the Polish Mother within the context of transnational family migration, it can be argued that, at least in the common perception of migrants and their family members, the model of ideal “Polish Migrant Mother” has emerged.

XI.X. Transnationalism of children

Although transnational family separation was a traumatic experience for both, parents and children, family reunification in Ireland also turned out to be a source of frustration for both sides. Children often had difficulties with adapting to the new situation, the social environment and the language. Rejection of the new life often manifested itself in aggression or nervous behaviour, fear of contact with the external world, reluctance to go out, to go to school, even bed-wetting and insomnia for first several months.

Gifts and money given by migrant parents to their children during transnational migration time and after reunification was intended not only to improve children’s living conditions, but it was often the way in which migrant parents tried to compensate their children for the transnational separation and double separation which they had experienced; the first one was caused by the migration of a parent or parents, and the second one resulted from the child's separation from his/her environment in Poland (school, family, friends etc.) due to reunification in Ireland.

The results of my empirical research indicate that the process of adaptation and assimilation to the new social and family environment in the host country is associated with the age of children at the time of family reunification and the strength of the social ties they had established in the home country. As the example of teenager Krystyna shows, the older the child at the time of family reunification, the stronger are his/her social ties with the homeland, so the more difficult is the process of adaptation in the host country.

The initial problems of adaptation for younger children (pre-school age or early years in school), as the examples of Mila and Arek show, are followed by a relatively quick acceptance of the new life and cultural assimilation into the host country.

The transnationalism of migrant children often consists of experiencing both cultures with a similar intensity, living simultaneously “here and there” (for example the perception of having two homes by Mila) so as a result experiencing emotional and cultural contradictions and ambiguities.

Migrant children often become a link for their parents between two worlds: Poland and Ireland. However, it seems plausible that the children's attachments to Poland are, at least partially, the...
outcome of intentional or unintentional parental’ pressure. Parents who are afraid of losing their children to the new culture or they want to protect their children against the bad influence coming-in their opinion-from the culture of the host country, may induct children “into a cultural revival” (Falicov, 2005:402). In this way transnationalism can be “inherited”, so it can become a family experience that is passed down from generation to generation. Children of transnational migrants who joined their parents in Ireland when small or those who were born in Ireland, for example Daria and Marek’s son, inherit transnationalism directly from their parents. So, unlike older children or adult migrants, the transnational experience is imposed on them by their parents rather than being their own choice.

XI.XI. The character of Polish transnationalism in Ireland

Some eight years after the Polish accession to the European Union, Polish migrants in Ireland often argue that their life abroad is better and easier than it was in Poland. This positive perception of the migration situation equally comprises of; the job satisfaction and financial condition of migrants in the host country as well as their creation a Poland substitute of in their homes, which actively reduces homesickness for the motherland.

The transnationalism of the many Poles I talked to during my research is not just about transnational communication with extended family members left behind and watching Polish television. The transnationalism of many Polish migrants in Ireland lies in the fact that due to their symbolic life and ideological approach, religious practice and social belief and practice remained the same as they were in Poland, while their material life and plans are entirely in Ireland and have altered greatly. They create what they call “small Poland in the Irish sea”. The experience of an Irish reality is associated with earning money, a thing needed to build their comfortable “small Poland” in the privacy of their own apartments. Together with the reconstruction of the Polish spirit at their homes, gender relations are also often scrupulously reconstructed.

XI.XII. Dilemmas of return migration

Although different in relation to motives, decisions about the return to the home country are at least as much gender-based as the decision to emigrate. Additionally, while the initial impulse for emigration was economically motivated, when considering return migration, non-economic factors play a primary role.
My findings show that migration has given many of my female respondents a chance to become more financially independent, develop their social life and professional skills, and eventually, to re-think their life choices. So, it is no wonder that most of them were more willing to settle down in the host country for longer or even forever. They often struggle to maintain the benefits that migration and employment have brought them, so they are likely to avoid or postpone a return to the home country. They are afraid that it would mean the loss of their newly-found independence. So, a migrant’s desire to return correlates with their level of social integration into the new society and the individual sense of success. The male idea of success and profits gained abroad is often much lower than that of their wives. This trend has been particularly noticeable among those male informants who remained faithful to traditional gender beliefs during the transnational family stage and after family reunification in Ireland. These men are usually eager to return to Poland. They hope to use the savings earned in Ireland to improve their well-being in Poland and, those who feel that they have lost their superior position and authority as breadwinner, believe that in the home country they can reclaim it.

Another important dilemma related to the potential return migration is associated with transmigrants’ sense of living “neither here nor there”. This is less related to the physical sense of their transnational experiences (transnational communication, having properties in both countries etc.) and more to the sociological and psychological consequences of living “in between” Poland and Ireland. Some migrants do not feel comfortable in either Poland or in Ireland. In Ireland they still feel like guests while Poland is no longer home (“neither in Ireland nor in Poland I feel like at home anymore” (Albert).

And eventually another crucial factor which shapes the decisions about return migration is the interests of the children of migrants. A child starting school is often perceived as the point of no return and only really important reasons would encourage parents with school-age children to uproot them and return to Poland.

However, the problem increases together with the time children spend abroad and the intensity of children’s socialization into the society and culture of the host country.

Although, as mentioned above, Polish children often “inherit” transnational experiences, so they are raised in families where values, goods, claims and traditions from Poland are present on a daily basis, when older they do not participate in these activities with the same intensity, affection and frequency as their parents do. Therefore, while parents often plan to return to Poland, their children who are highly socialized into the culture of the host country, such as Klaudia for example, have mixed or negative feelings in relation to their parent’s plans.

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XI.XIII. Future research questions

This thesis only discusses selected aspects of family gender roles and gender relations within the context of transnational family migration. There are many nuances to the generalisation presented above as well as larger implications of the transnational family and gender research that deserves further investigation. However, due to the multidimensional character of the topic was well as the limited spacial and time resources many further research questions were omitted in this thesis.

The relatively small research sample made it difficult if not impossible to follow all of the nuances linked to family gender roles and gender relations in the context of the transnational family migration process. There is further work to carried out, listening to the voices of immigrant wives and husbands, immigrant mothers and fathers as well as their offspring and those other relatives who in one way or another share the transnational experience.

Another limitation of this study is associated with the changing economic situation of Polish migrants in Ireland which as a result only shows a piece of the migrants’ life.
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### Appendix 1.

1. **Opinion on working mothers and children.**

   Do you agree or disagree: a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work (A. Strongly agree, B. Agree, C. Neither agree nor disagree, D. Disagree, E. Strongly Disagree).

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Sum=101% which means that in the ISSP 2002 data is a mistake.

2. **Opinion on working women and their families.**

   Do you agree or disagree: all in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job (A. Strongly agree, B. Agree, C. Neither agree nor disagree, D. Disagree, E. Strongly Disagree).

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\(^{131}\) Sum=101% which means that in the ISSP 2002 data is a mistake.
3. Opinion on life preferences of women

Do you agree or disagree: a job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children ( A. Strongly agree, B. Agree, C. Neither agree nor disagree, D. Disagree, E. Strongly Disagree).

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4. Opinion on traditional family gender arrangement of work.
Do you agree or disagree: a husband's job is to earn money; a wife's job is to look after the home and family. ( A. Strongly agree, B. Agree, C. Neither agree nor disagree, D. Disagree, E. Strongly Disagree).

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<tr>
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<td>5.2%</td>
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<td>IRL</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
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<td>NL</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-W</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-E</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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Source: [http://prod.library.utoronto.ca/datalib/codebooks/utm/za/3880/za3880.pdf](http://prod.library.utoronto.ca/datalib/codebooks/utm/za/3880/za3880.pdf)
Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
Appendix 2.

Global Gender Gap (Europe)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>0.8496</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>0.8404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>0.8260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>0.8024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>0.7773</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>0.7562</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
<td>0.7554</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.7530</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>0.7509</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>Luxemburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>0.7160</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.7037</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.7025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>0.6996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>0.6983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>0.6939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>0.6908</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>0.6869</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>0.6850</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>0.6778</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>0.6765</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>0.6726</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>0.6720</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>0.6695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>0.6642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>0.5876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 3.

**Summary of my cases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym used in the text and the real name (in brackets)</th>
<th>age</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>education</th>
<th>Occupation in Ireland</th>
<th>Stage of migration</th>
<th>Short history</th>
<th>data of the interview and contact (if possible) to the respondent</th>
<th>Page where presented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daria (Dorota)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Married to Marek (Mariusz) First interview- without children, second interview- 1 child</td>
<td>university</td>
<td>In Poland she worked as a pedagogue at school/ in Ireland- a cleaner (until she got pregnant)</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>In Poland she was living with her husband at his parents’ house (in the countryside close to Częstochowa- south-western Poland). She followed her husband after almost a year of transnational separation. 3 years in Ireland.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/mariusz.d.szewczyk">https://www.facebook.com/mariusz.d.szewczyk</a></td>
<td>7, 150,151, 155-157, 165, 179,180,189, 191,192, 195, 204-208, 246,247, 249-252, 254,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marek (Mariusz)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Married to Daria (Dorota). First interview- without children,</td>
<td>vocational</td>
<td>In Poland and in Ireland he worked as a printer.</td>
<td>Post-transnational stage</td>
<td>Together with his wife Dorota lived at his parents’ house in Poland. 4 years in Ireland</td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/mariusz.d.szewczyk">https://www.facebook.com/mariusz.d.szewczyk</a></td>
<td>7, 150, 151, 155,156, 162, 166, 167, 179, 180, 201, 204-208,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Married to/Spouse</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Occupation in Ireland</td>
<td>Occupation in Poland</td>
<td>Home in Poland</td>
<td>Length of Transnational Separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Patrycja (Paulina)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Bartosz (Bogdan)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>waitress and cosmetology course</td>
<td>Followed his husband</td>
<td>Szczeglacin, village in east Poland</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bartosz (Bogdan)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Patrycja (Paulina)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>unemployed at the moment of the interview but working illegally as a carpenter.</td>
<td>4,5 years</td>
<td>Siedlce</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mirka (Monika)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Gustaw (Grzeg.)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>housewife</td>
<td>She comes from small village close to Siedlce Monika and two 6-years old twin sons joined her husband after nearly one year of transnational separation. While his wife stays at home and takes care of the children. In Poland Monika had worked as a shop-assistant until she</td>
<td>Contact through Patrycja (Paulina). Mirka (Monika) is a sister of Patrycja (Paulina).</td>
<td>116 St. Brendans Avenue, Dublin 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Educational Background</td>
<td>Post-transnational Family Stage</td>
<td>Contact Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gustaw</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>Construction worker</td>
<td>Vocational education</td>
<td>Married to Mirka (Monika), 2 children</td>
<td>Contact through Mirka (Monika)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jola</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>University education</td>
<td>Physiotherapist</td>
<td>A partner of Jędrzej (Jarek), childless</td>
<td>Contact through Artur Banaszkiewicz - a colleague from the Polish Embassy in Dublin, <a href="mailto:gawlik.joann@gmail.com">gawlik.joann@gmail.com</a>, interview: January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jędrzej</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>University education</td>
<td>Physiotherapist</td>
<td>A partner of Jola (Joanna), childless</td>
<td>Contact through Artur Banaszkiewicz - a colleague from the Polish Embassy in Dublin and after 7 months of transnational separation (he had to finish his studies in Poland first)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland
European University Institute
DOI: 10.2870/49969
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Post-transnational family stage</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Marianna (Marzena)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married to Aleksander (Andrzej)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Dressmaker but she does not work professionally</td>
<td>Come from a small town in Poland. She worked for a short time as a professional dressmaker until she got pregnant. She is religious and support traditional gender arrangement. She followed her husband after several months of transnational separation, (after the academic year for their children was finished and after the Holy Communion of the couple’s older son which Marianna and Aleksander wanted to take place in Poland.</td>
<td>Met at the Polish school in Dublin. 0879299008, 13 Barnell Place, Hansfield, Dublin 15.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Aleksander (Andrzej)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Married to Marianna (Marzena)</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>A plumber</td>
<td>In Poland he run a small business for a several years but he bankrupted eventually. Migrated first as it corresponded with his gender beliefs.</td>
<td>Met at the Polish school in Dublin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Beata (Basia)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Married, 3 children</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Cleaner</td>
<td>From a small town near Szczecin. Migrated first because she knew somebody in Ireland who could help her at the beginning, and because she did not have a job in</td>
<td>Friend of Daria (Dorota)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ela (Edyta) | 39 | Married, 1 child | university | Social worker in Poland/ in Ireland-cleaner | Post-transnational family stage | Her husband migrated first because of his profession (a computer graphic designer) and because he already had a migration social network – a friend – living in Ireland. Ela's job in Poland was a kind of precaution against her husband's failure in Ireland. She declared a partnership-like marriage arrangement.

Nadia (Natalia) | 29 | Divorced, 1 child | university | She worked in Poland as a clerk. In Ireland-a manager in the international company | Post-transnational family stage | She was married for 5 years. After two years since she and her husband migrated to Ireland they got divorced. The idea of migration appeared in Nadia’s head in order to help the husband to increase his self-confidence and get some useful experience and English language skills. The husband migrated as a first one (after he lost his job in Poland) and Nadia joined him after several months (she had to stay in Poland longer because of her job.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation in Poland</th>
<th>Occupation in Ireland</th>
<th>Post-transnational Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Julia (Justyna)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Married, 1 child</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>In Poland she worked as a clerk. In Ireland she works as an orderly in the hospital</td>
<td>Post-transnational</td>
<td>1.5 year of transnational separation with her husband, in Ireland already 3 years but only after 1.5 year she found a job as an orderly in the hospital</td>
<td>Friend of Patrycja (Paulina)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Iza (Iwona)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married to Mikołaj, 1 child</td>
<td>university</td>
<td>In Poland she worked as a secretary/in Ireland she works as a cleaner</td>
<td>Post-transnational stage</td>
<td>From small town. Iza lived transnational family life with his husband and a daughter left behind in Poland almost for two years. When she agreed to talk with me she was already determined to return to Poland</td>
<td>Friend of Krzysztof (Sebastian) and Iwona (Joanna), Interview: February 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mikołaj (Mirek)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Married to Iza (Iwona), 1 child</td>
<td>University (?)</td>
<td>Post-transnational stage</td>
<td>Mikolaj (42) arrived in Dublin just to help his wife Iza to move back to Poland.</td>
<td>Through his wife Iwona, Friend of Krzysztof (Sebastian) and Iwona (Joanna), Interview: February 2010</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Jarosław (Jakub)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Married to Roma (Renata), childless</td>
<td>university</td>
<td>In Poland he worked as a school teacher/in Ireland he worked illegally helping his</td>
<td>Post-transnational</td>
<td>He and his wife came to Dublin from a big city in north-west Poland (Szczecin). He followed his wife (a nurse) after about 6 months of transnational separation. Jakub’s cousin helped them at the</td>
<td>Through his wife</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland. European University Institute. DOI: 10.2870/49969
<table>
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<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name (Surname)</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Family Stage</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Albert (Adrian)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>When he decided to migrate to Ireland he was in separation with his wife and wanted to think over their relationship abroad. In Dublin since 2004. The family lives in Sword (Co.Dublin)</td>
<td>Cousin</td>
<td>Friend of Patrycja (Paulina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Kristian (Krzysztof)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Father of 3 year old</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Transnational family stage</td>
<td>Come from a village in Eastern Poland. He had a cousin in Dublin who convinced him to come to Dublin and helped him to find a job.</td>
<td>Cousin</td>
<td>Friend of Iwona (Joanna), and Krzysztof (Sebastian) Milton Hall 21, Sword, Co Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Miłosz (Marcin)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Married, 2 children</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>He has been living in Ireland already for 10 years. As soon as he finish a house which he is building in Poland, he is planning to return with his whole family to the home country. He does not take into account his teenage daughter’s negative opinion on that matter.</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>Friend of Iwona (Joanna), and Krzysztof (Sebastian) Milton Hall 21, Sword, Co Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Mila (Maja)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Daughter of Paulina and Bogdan</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>She come to Dublin together with her mother Paulina after 1 year of transnational separation with her father. After initial problems with adaptation she considers to have two homes; in Ireland and in</td>
<td></td>
<td>Through her parents Patrycja (Paulina) and Bartosz (Bogdan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Family Stage</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----</td>
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<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Krystyna (Konstancja)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>Poland (at her grandparents’ place)</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>3 years of transnational separation with her mother. In Poland she lived with her aunt and her family. Through her mother Karolina (Kasia Koecka)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Agata (Agnieszka)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Shop assistant</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>In Ireland since 2005. She followed her husband Albert (Adrian) after he thought over his approach to their relationship and decided to ask Agata (Agnieszka) for another chance to save their marriage. The second child of the couple was already born in Ireland. Friend of Patrycja (Paulina), 0857043553</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Matylda (Magda)</td>
<td>Late 39</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
<td>In Poland and in Ireland she worked as an accountant. She and Klaudia (a daughter of the couple) followed her husband Miłosz (Marcin) after one year of separation. The younger child (a son) was born in Ireland and at the moment of the interview he was three. Although she is afraid of the return to Poland, she is also looking forward to live in their newly-built house Through her husband Miłosz (Marcin)</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Career Stage</td>
<td>Transnational Family Stage</td>
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<td>-----</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Karolina Koczena</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>3 children</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Transnational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>family stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Klaudia</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>A daughter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Transnational family stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a real name left due to its context in the text)</td>
<td></td>
<td>of Miłosz (Marcin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Arleta Aneta</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Post-Transnational</td>
<td>family stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Bożena Beata</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>20-ties</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Works as a cleaner and baby sitter</td>
<td>Post-Transnational family stage</td>
<td>In Poland she works as a cleaner and baby sitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Karina</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Transnational</td>
<td>family stage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Karolina Koczena (Kasia Koczena) Mid 30s Divorced, 3 children
- Klaudia (a daughter of Miłosz (Marcin)) 14
- Arleta Aneta (Aneta) 29 Married, childless
- Bożena Beata (Beata) 29 Late with a partner, childless
- Karina 29 Late Divorced

**References:**
Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland. European University Institute. DOI: 10.2870/49969
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Katarzyna)</th>
<th>20-ties</th>
<th>childless</th>
<th>works as a hairdresser.</th>
<th>transnational family stage</th>
<th>separation with her husband who migrated first in 2006. She did not want to talk about reasons of divorce with her husband.</th>
<th>Polish hairdresser in Dublin.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Adrianna (Ania)</td>
<td>Early 30-ties</td>
<td>Married, 2 child</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>She did not work in Poland and she does not work in Ireland at the permanent position.</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>She has been living in Ireland for 1.5 year already. She followed her husband after 3 months of transnational separation. She takes care of 1 year old son and 3 years old daughter.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friend of Monika (a sister of Paulina)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Ewa (Edyta A.)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Married to Arkadiusz (Adam), 3 children</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>In Poland and in Ireland she worked as a nurse.</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ewa and Arkadiusz migrated together to Ireland and left their three children in the care of their grandmother. The children joined them after 1 year of separation.</td>
<td>Contact through a nurse Renata. Beaumont, 162 Ivy Court, Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Through his wife Ewa (Edyta) Beaumont, 162 Ivy Court, Dublin</td>
<td>228-231.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Arkadiusz (Adam)</td>
<td>Mid 40-ties</td>
<td>Married to Ewa (Edyta A.), 3 children</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>In Ireland he worked as an electrician.</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ewa and Arkadiusz migrated together to Ireland and left their three children in the care of their grandmother. The children joined them after 1 year of separation.</td>
<td>Through his wife Ewa (Edyta) Beaumont, 162 Ivy Court, Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Through his wife</td>
<td>228, 229,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Janusz (Jacek)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Married to Monika (Mariola) 2 children</td>
<td>vocational</td>
<td>Dustman in a trash collection company in Dublin</td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He migrated as a first one. As soon as he found a job for his wife in the same company Irena and their son joined him in Dublin. It was a summer time so there</td>
<td>Through his wife</td>
</tr>
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<td>233, 269,</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
was no problem with the child’s school. The second child was born already in Ireland. There was 4 months of transnational family separation. They plan to return to Poland as soon as they earn “enough” money.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Monika (Mariola)</td>
<td>Late 30-ties</td>
<td>Married to Janusz (Jacek), 2 children</td>
<td>vocational</td>
<td>In Poland she took care of children and worked at various temporary positions earning additional money to the family budget. Dustman in a trash collection company in Dublin</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irena joined her husband after 4 months of transnational family separation. Although they have been living in Ireland for already 4 year they still do not speak English and they rely on this matter on their older son.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Met at the Polish school. 4 Melrose Road. Clondalkin, Dublin 22.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Iwona (Joanna J.)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Married, 1 child</td>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>She did not work in Poland. In Ireland she works as a receptionist in Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Post-transnational family stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The family has been living in Ireland for 5 years. Iwona followed her Husband after 8 months of transnational separation when he got a permanent job position and rent a</td>
<td></td>
<td>A colleague from a bowling club: Leisure Plex (Dublin Coolock), <a href="https://www.facebook.com/jo">https://www.facebook.com/jo</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Roma (Renata)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Married to Jarosław (Jakub) childless</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>A nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Aniela (Anna)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Married, two children</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>In Poland she worked as a shop assistant, in Ireland she worked as a cleaner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Ada (Agata)</td>
<td>Early 30s</td>
<td>Married, 1 child</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>Together with her husband they run a small Polish shop in Dublin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Danka (Dominika)</td>
<td>Early 30s</td>
<td>In separation with her husband</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>A nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Mariola (Maria)</td>
<td>Early 30-ties</td>
<td>Married to Paweł (Piotr), 2 children</td>
<td>university</td>
<td>A receptionist in a hotel in Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Paweł (Piotr)</td>
<td>Early 30-ties</td>
<td>Married to Mariola (Maria), 2 children</td>
<td>university</td>
<td>In Ireland he runs his own small business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Ola Hydro-Kiwała</td>
<td>Early 30-ties</td>
<td></td>
<td>psychologist, in Ireland about 5 years</td>
<td>CENTRUM POMOCY PSYCHOLOGICZNEJ PARASOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Anna Paś</td>
<td>Journalist and activist</td>
<td>In Ireland about 6 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Katarzyna Piwońska</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Marek</td>
<td>the Dominican Friar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>348</td>
<td>Emilia Marchlewiska</td>
<td>an activist and a psychologist</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Emilia Marchlewiska (an activist and a psychologist). Short talk during the Forum Polonia (6 March 2010), p. 139.

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland. European University Institute. DOI: 10.2870/49969
2) Arek (6), a son of Julia (Justyna). 15 minutes talk in the presence of his mother, p. 226, 234, 295.
3) Daria’s’s mother: met at the Daria and Marek’s wedding party (June 2011, in Poland), p. 246, 247, 249, 250.
4) Marek’s mother: met at the Daria and Marek’s wedding party (June 2011, in Poland), p. 245-247, 250.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire scheme for in-depth interviews used in the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal data</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family data</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Migration data</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-transnational family stage (decision making process)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transnational family stage</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Muszel, Magdalena (2013), Families in migration through the gender lens: a study of Polish transmigrants in Ireland European University Institute DOI: 10.2870/49969
and separation with the family? What did you think about a role of wife/husband, mother/father at that time? Did your perception of these role change at that time and if yes - in which direction? Did separation change your relations with your family members, if yes - how and in which direction? What do you think about these changes? Did you have contact with other Poles at that time? What kind of contact? What did you find the most difficult about the family separation? Was religion and the Polish Church in Ireland important to you at that time? If yes then which aspects of religion and religious life were the most important to you?

| **Post-transational family stage** | When did you make family reunification decision? Was it a joined decision of you and your wife/husband/partner? What were your feelings about the future family reunification? What preparations did you make for the family reunification? What did you feel when preparing for your family reunification? How did it happened? Memorize your first meeting with your wife/husband/partner, and your children in Dublin, please. What was your reaction? What was the reaction of your wife/husband/partner? What was the reaction of the child (ren)? How was your first days, weeks and months with the whole family already in Ireland? How your family life has change in comparison to your life in Poland? Has migration changed you and your family and how? Has migration changed your relations with family members and if yes, how, in what direction? How was/is your wife/husband/partner’s life in Ireland? Is she/he happy? Does she/he have a job? How was/is your children’s life in Ireland? Are they happy here? What is your contact with other family members who left in Poland? What is your children’s contact with family members left in Poland, np; grandparents?

Do you have a contact with other Poles in Ireland, if yes, what kind of contact. Do you have Polish friends, collegues at work etc.? Do you have Irish friends, collegues at work? How important are religious practices for you? Do you go to the Polish church? If yes - how often and when and why? Have you even been at the Irish mass? If yes - how often and why? Is the Polish Church in Dublin important for you? Why yes? Why not? Is the Polish tradition important for you? Why yes? Why not? What aspects? Is the Polish religious tradition important for you and your family? What aspects? Why yes? Why not? Is there anything you like in the Irish culture? If yes - what? If not - what? What do you think of your migration and your family migration to Ireland? Would you have done it again? What are your plans for the future? Are you considering going back to Poland? If yes then why and when? If not - why? What are your family members’ plans for the future? |