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The Lives of Young Polish Migrants Residing in Northamptonshire

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Matthew Callender

Abstract

This thesis investigates the lives of young Polish migrants living in Northamptonshire, who migrated to the UK following Poland's accession to the European Union in May 2004. Over 1.1 million Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) applications were made in the UK between May 2004 and December 2010, of which around two-thirds were made by Polish nationals. It is noted that high numbers of young people in Poland migrated to the UK, and a little under half of all WRS applications in the UK have been migrants aged between 18 and 24 years. Research exploring the lives of young migrants details strong connections between migration and life course progression. Given the relatively young ages of those migrating, this thesis is concerned with the impacts of migratory experiences upon migrants' senses of 'self-identity', and transitions through the life course.

Explanations for these movements have often treated migration as an 'empirical event' by focusing upon economic rationales, and much less attention has been given to motivations for migration, everyday experiences and future intentions of A8 migrants. To address this gap, this research explores the biographies of 40 young Polish migrants, revealing individual factors that influenced their migratory decision-making, and considering distinguishing features that set groups of Polish migrants apart. To achieve this, participants were asked to prepare a narrative of their experiences, based upon four biographical periods: *life in Poland*, the *decision to migrate*, *life in the UK* and perceived *future pathways*. Following this, 10 case studies were conducted with participants different 'types' of Polish migrant. Semi-structured interviews were organised and participants led 'photo tours' of their everyday locales.

The findings show that while economic triggers were important to decision-making, it was also the case that social factors were critical, and migration to the UK for some was viewed as a means of leaving the parental home. Traditional social markers of difference, such as gender or age, were found to be of less importance: rather, participants emphasised a range of shared migratory experiences: 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language'. The themes of 'temporariness' and

'trust' were found to be central to everyday experiences, and participants indicated they were vulnerable to exploitation from other Polish migrants, as well as from known contacts pre-dating migration. Connections were identified between participants' migratory experiences and their transitions though the life course. Four factors were found to have influenced participants' transitions through the life course - spaces, times, self identity and support - which combine to form the relative pace(s), 'smoothness' and risks of such changes. The term 'turbulent transitions' is used to encapsulate major changes within participants' biographies as a result of migration, which many experienced as being made quickly with limited access to support structures and in environments that contain high degrees of risk. The research calls for a more sensitive account of post-accession migration, which can only be achieved by exploring the experiences, encounters and biographies of migrants.

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1.1: Introduction

This thesis explores the lives of young Polish migrants residing in Northamptonshire, who migrated to the UK following Poland's accession to the European Union (EU) in May 2004. Fihel and Kaczmarczyk's (2009) overview of socio-demographic profiles of post-accession Polish migrants show that migratory flows from Poland to the UK consist of high numbers of young people. While this research explores participants' experiences of migration, it is also concerned with the impacts of these upon young Polish migrants' transitions through the life course and senses of 'self-identity'. Although the exact number of people emigrating to the UK from A8[1] countries is not known, between May 2004 and December 2010, over 1.1 million approved Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) applications by A8 nationals were made, of which about 700,000 were made by Polish nationals (Home Office, 2009a, 2011). Explanations for these movements typically focus on migration as an 'empirical event', highlighting the importance of economic and other triggers; "a largely preordained 'response' to the 'stimulus' of the potential for a higher 'income' at some other residential location" (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993:334). Much less attention has been given to the motivations, experiences and intentions of Polish migrants (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008, House of Commons, 2008). This study begins to address this gap by exploring the lives of young Polish migrants in Northamptonshire, using methods that locate migratory experiences within the biographies of participants. This chapter has three key aims. First, it will outline the context in which the research is located (Section 1.2). Second, the aims and objectives of the research are discussed (Section 1.3). Third, the structure of the thesis is provided to guide the reader (Section 1.4).

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[1] The A8 - 'Accession 8' - refers to the following countries; Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

1.2: Context for Research

On 1st May 2004 the 'Accession 8' (A8) joined the European Union (EU). At the time of accession, the UK, Ireland and Sweden allowed unrestricted access to their labour markets for A8 nationals. It was anticipated that many of these migrants would replace unskilled migrants from outside Europe (Home Office, 2005). Prior to accession, a number of forecasts predicted how many individuals from A8 countries would migrate to the UK. For example, the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) estimated that A8 migration would peak in 2005 with 17,226 migrants (see Table 2.1). Dustmann *et al.* (2003) suggested a flow of between 5,000 and 13,000 per annum. Data from the WRS, however, suggest much higher numbers, with 234,730 WRS applications in 2006 alone (see Table 1.1). Indeed, the number of arrivals was so large that Pollard *et al.* (2008:7) were able to surmise that such migration was "the most important social and economic phenomena shaping the UK today".

Table 1.1: Number of Worker Registration Scheme Applications

Date	Number
2004	134,555
2005	212,325
2006	234,730
2007	217,970
2008	166,485
2009*	115,760
2010*	122,625

Source: Home Office (2009, 2011*)

Northamptonshire has been a key destination for inward post-accession migrants. Pollard *et al.* (2008:62) identify the local authority area (LAA) of Northampton as having the 4th highest number (47) of A8 workers per 1,000 residents of all LAAs in the UK based on their estimates of A8 stock. Additionally, Corby and Wellingborough are 13th and 41st of all LAAs in the UK, with 28 and 16 A8

migrants per 1,000 residents respectively. According to data provided by the Home Office (2009b), between May 2004 and September 2008 the county received 22,685 approved WRS applications, with 57% (n = 13,010) registering to work in Northampton. Northamptonshire data show that 65% (n = 15,700) of approved WRS applications were from Polish nationals, with 43% (n = 9,740) aged 18 to 24 years old. This research is concerned with the lives of some of these young Polish migrants, living in places of intense A8 migratory activity (see Section 5.2.2).

Little information exists detailing the motivations for migration, experiences and intentions of A8 migrants (Anderson *et al.*, 2006, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008, Pollard *et al.*, 2008, Sumption, 2009). In response to this knowledge gap, Burrell (2010:297) observes four key themes emanating from the "considerable amount of academic attention" focused upon these mobilities: i) migration motivations and strategies; ii) work; iii) social networks; and iv) local settlement. These studies have revealed socio-demographic profiles of post-accession Polish migrants as being different to those of post-war Polish migrants (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009), with White (2010) noting that it was younger people, often well educated, who were the keenest post-accession migrants. This research contributes to this context by exploring the experiences of young Polish migrants, situating migration within their wider biographies (Boyle *et al.*, 1998), to reveal motivations for migration, everyday experiences and perceived future trajectories. By investigating participants' everyday encounters, it is anticipated that unforeseen social markers of difference will be uncovered, revealing much diversity within post-accession Polish communities (see Section 1.3).

Many studies have documented high levels of 'youth' unemployment in the Polish labour market as a stimulus, and explanation, for high numbers of emigrating young Poles (Elrick and Brinkmeier, 2009, Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009, Svašek, 2009). Leaman and Wörsching (2010) point out that high levels of unemployment as a result of the economic recession in 2008 – 2009 have disproportionately affected young people. Rather than interpret migration as a preordained response to macro-economic factors, this project explores the narratives of 40 young Polish migrants, locating migration within each individual's biography. In so doing, the research attempts to

reflect Halfacree and Boyle's (1993) view that adopting a 'biographical approach' within migratory studies is likely to provide a more accurate understanding. Fewer studies have explored non-economic rationales underpinning young Polish migrants' movements (Burrell, 2009b). Galasińska and Kozłowska (2009:91) indicate, however, that young Polish migrants' decisions are often related to their future aspirations, justifying "their decision to migrate by talking about heading for a 'better world'".

This study builds upon these findings by exploring how young Polish migrants interpret migratory experiences as influencing their 'transitions' through the life course (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, Brannen and Nielsen, 2002, Jones, 2009, Molgat, 2007, Worth, 2009). Research with young migrants illustrates how experiences of migration may inform migrants' 'envisionings' of their futures, as 'pathways' available to them open and close (Aitken *et al.*, 2006, Punch, 2007). The experiences of 'older' young people is an area of academic research that Valentine (2003) suggests is poorly documented. Furthermore, it is noted that the experiences of *young* migrants are additionally neglected within academic research (Bushin, 2009, Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011, Punch, 2007). Bey's (2003) research of conditions surrounding Mexican children's work and schooling illustrates the interconnectedness of migration and life course progression, as participants were found to "proceed through the apprenticeship of life" while engaging in paid employment through seasonal migration. The chapter now moves forward to define the scope of the research.

1.3: Research Aims and Objectives

Studies of A8 migration have paid limited attention to the biographies of young Polish migrants when attempting to understand their motivations for migration and future trajectories. Furthermore, heterogeneity within post-accession Polish communities has been defined from 'outsider', rather than 'insider', vantage points (see Eade *et al*., 2007). Indeed, given the relatively young ages of the majority of post-accession migrants, scant attention has been given to the impacts of migration upon senses of 'self-identity' in 'late-modern' contexts. It is in these areas that this

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research makes an important contribution to the literature, and three key research aims and objectives were identified:

1. to explore experiences of migration in relation to young Polish migrants' biographies
   - to investigate young Polish migrants' motivations for migration, everyday encounters and future trajectories
2. to examine difference and diversity amongst young Polish migrants in Northamptonshire
   - to identify and critically reflect upon social markers of difference between Polish migrants
3. to investigate the impacts of migration on participants' everyday lives and experiences of transitions through the life course
   - explore intersections between migration and transitions through the life course

This thesis aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of post-accession Polish migration. To achieve this, the research investigates young Polish migrants' biographies, exposing "structural constraints and enablements moulding migration" (Boyle *et al.*, 1998:80) (Aim 1). By locating 'migration' within the wider biographies of participants, a number of reasons and explanations for these movements can be uncovered.

This project also explores notions of difference within Northamptonshire's post-accession Polish communities, offering a more sensitive account of young Polish migrants' motivations and aspirations. While Eade *et al.*'s (2007) research offers a typology of Polish migrants, distinguishing between Polish migrants based upon their migration strategies (see Table 2.3), it is contended here that such a typology is based upon 'outsider' interpretations. This research is concerned with 'insider' views, using the voices and first-hand experiences of Polish migrants, to reveal a terrain of neglected diversity (Aim 2).

Experiences of migration are situated in the everyday lives of young Polish migrants, to reveal the significance of migration to their senses of 'self-identity' (Giddens, 1991). Punch (2007:95)

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describes connections between experiences of migration and transitions through the life course, as a "young migrant identity [which] offers young people alternative youth transitions as well as enhances their social and economic autonomy", demonstrating the value of exploring such links. This project considers how young Polish migrants account for such connections, and differentiate such

'pathways' from those of their peers (Aim 3).

1.4: Structure of Thesis

The structure of the thesis is illustrated in Figure 1.1. Chapter 2 explores a range of concepts that have been mobilised in migration studies to assist an understanding of the experiences of contemporary migrants. It considers three themes identified by Blunt (2007) as being central within migration studies: mobility, transnationalism and diaspora. Chapter 2 extends the context of the research provided above, presenting a brief overview of late-twentieth and early-twenty first century migrations to the UK. Available data in relation to the movements of Polish nationals is summarised, concentrating on WRS data and National Insurance Registration data.

Chapter 3 highlights the importance of being a *young* Polish migrant (aged between 18 and 24 years). The chapter explores the meaning of 'youth' to outline changes to the understanding of 'age geographies'. The shifting nature of youth transitions through the life course in the context of late modernity is considered. Following these discussions, the impacts of migratory experiences to these processes are debated, drawing on Giddens' (1991) conceptualisation of 'fateful' moments and Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) notion of 'critical' moments.

Chapter 1 - Exploring the Lives of Young Polish Migrants in

Chapter 2 - **Migration(s)**	⟹	**Chapter 3 -** **Being a *Young* Polish Migrant**	⟹	**Chapter 4 -** **Understanding the Impacts of Migration(s)**

Chapter 5 - Method

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Chapter 7 - 'Everyday' Life in the Polish Community

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7.3 - Everydayness

7.4 - Experiences of Belonging and Home

Chapter 8 - Young Polish Migrants' Experiences of Transitions through the

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8.3 - Reflecting on Young Polish Migrants' Accounts of Transitions

Chapter 9 - Conclusion

Chapter 4 provides an overview of key concepts used to understand the impacts of migratory experiences, considering notions of 'identity' and 'home'. Conceptualisations of 'identity' are explored and the homophone of 'roots/routes' is used to weave together notions of identity and of place and migrations (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Migrants' attachments to people and place are explored using the notions of 'social networks', 'race'/ethnicity', 'language' and 'home'. The chapter draws to a close by showing migration to be a transformative experience, and ideas of 'hybridity' are used to describe shifts within migrants' senses of self.

Chapter 5 overviews the research methods used in this project. The research design is detailed, justifying decisions made in relation to sampling parameters, such as study areas and socio-demographic profiles of participants. The research methods are discussed and methodological

considerations of translating between two languages are highlighted. The process of analysis adopted is outlined as are dissemination strategies used. The power relations between the researcher and participants are considered, reflecting on the influences of the researcher's 'positionality'. The chapter concludes by reviewing the ethical issues associated with the research project.

Chapter 6 details participants' 'routes' to Northamptonshire. Set in the context of social, economic and political transformations following the collapse of state-socialism after 1989, a number of studies understand many Central and East European young people as being confronted with a 'paradox of choice' (Abbott *et al.*, 2010, Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010, Walker and Stephenson, 2010). Inspired by these studies, the chapter considers participants' 'freedom to move' and the discussion is organised using the individual 'push' and 'pull' factors evident in their accounts. Changes to participants' 'social networks' are discussed, illustrating connections created in Northamptonshire and changes to connections with Poland, contributing to a gap in existing academic literature (Gill and Bialski, 2011, Ryan *et al.*, 2008, White and Ryan, 2008). Participants' narratives of migration were found to consist of many small 'events' and 'experiences' (Kraftl, 2010), and the chapter proposes a framework that assists in making sense of such accounts.

Chapter 7 explores differences and diversity in the Polish community in Northamptonshire. Eade *et al.*'s (2007) typology of Polish migrants is shown to provide a useful starting point when considering differences between Polish migrants (see Table 2.3). A series of 'insider' social markers of difference used by participants to distinguish between Polish migrants are outlined. These social markers of difference are considered in relation to participants' biographies to reveal five different 'types' of Polish migrant in the sample. The chapter establishes the importance of 'temporariness', 'trust' and 'language' to participants' daily experiences and encounters. The chapter concludes by illustrating participants' experiences of 'home', detailing how for participants who had created, or were in the process of creating, a new home in the UK, ownership and privacy are essential features.

Chapter 8 explores connections between the migratory experiences of participants and their understandings of 'youth' transitions, illustrating the importance of the relative 'pace' and 'smoothness' of transitions through the life course. 'Pathway' selections (Wyn and White, 1997) are argued to have been influenced by participants' 'circumstances', 'biographies' and 'envisioned future(s)'. The experiences of many participants can be understood as informing their understandings of their transitions as being 'accelerated' (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008) and 'unsupported' (Jones, 2009). The chapter reflects on these findings, anchoring discussion with Arnett's (2000, 2001, 2004, 2006) notion of 'emerging adulthood', and current debates surrounding the life course, detailing the importance of spaces, timings, 'self-identity' (Giddens, 1991) and support to participants' transitions through the life course.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by summarising the key research findings in relation to the research aims and objectives outlined above. The limitations of the research are reflected upon, some of which link with areas for future research.

Chapter 2: Migration(s)

2.1: Introduction

The term 'migration' encompasses a messy, complex and multifaceted range of processes (Boyle *et al.*, 1998) and movements between/across space(s) over time(s). This complexity is increasingly acknowledged within contemporary approaches to geography(ies) that see space and place as ongoing social processes (Cresswell, 1996, Massey, 2005), invested with a range of values and meanings (see Relph, 1976, Tuan, 1977), and existing within differing power relationships (Massey, 1992). This chapter opens by exploring contemporary approaches to migration studies (Section 2.2), focussing upon themes of mobility, transnationalism and diaspora (Blunt, 2007). The context for contemporary Polish migrations is then established through an overview of immigration to the UK, concentrating on the late-twentieth and early-twenty first centuries (Section 2.3). The chapter concludes by examining available data pertaining to contemporary flows of Polish migration to the UK (Section 2.4).

2.2: Understanding Migration(s)

Past studies of migrations, particularly those of a positivist nature, relied heavily upon quantitative models to understand migration, where 'push' and 'pull' factors were deemed to determine the likelihood and frequency of migrations (see Lee, 1966, Peach, 1968). Cresswell (2006) points out that these calculations focussed on the point of 'origin' and 'destination', without considering the 'paths' that lie between. Furthermore, Halfacree and Boyle (1993) argue that such studies were based upon a limited conceptualisation of 'migration', which focussed upon the environment and economic context, rather than the individual. As such, while conventional migration studies provide valuable overviews of migratory trends, they do not account for the whole picture (Garapich, 2008:740).

A8 migration studies have focussed on 'macro approaches', and the quantification of A8 migratory flows (see Section 1.2). This study, however, seeks to understand the lives of young Polish

migrants in Northamptonshire, to reveal their motivations for migration, everyday encounters and future intentions. To achieve this, Halfacree and Boyle (1993:343) suggest "we need to undertake in-depth investigation[s] of the biographies of migrants", to avoid limiting the focus of research upon "fine-tuning" or "short-term considerations". Indeed, it is suggested that many factors unevenly intersect to produce residential choices, and may relate to long-term aspirations (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993). Blunt (2007) observes that many contemporary studies have documented the importance of stories, personal memories and experiences of migrants, and van Blerk and Ansell (2006a:257) indicate that "[m]igrants' experiences are increasingly understood as socially-constructed and politically, economically and culturally situated". Blunt (2007) argues that recent migration studies raise important questions about the nature of 'mobility' (Section 2.2.1), 'transnationalism' (Section 2.2.2) and 'diaspora' (Section 2.2.3), and this section explores these concepts to provide some context for this study.

2.2.1: Mobility

The theme of mobility(ies) has recently gained prominence in the literature; with the announcement of a 'new mobilities paradigm' (Adey and Bissell, 2010, Cresswell, 2010, Sheller and Urry, 2006) and the launch of the journal *Mobilities* (Hannam *et al.*, 2006). Cresswell (2010:18) notes that in migration theory and research, particularly studies that reasoned movement as one place 'pushing' and another 'pulling' people, "despite being about movement, [they were] really about places". In an era of increased mobility, migration provokes interesting questions about how places are constructed and experienced, particularly in a globalising, transnational world (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Massey and Jess, 1995). The importance of geography becomes ever more central to this as people move across several space(s) forging new relationships, maintaining connections to emotive places and challenging boundaries (real and imagined) which separate 'us' from 'them'. Spaces are understood to exist on all geographical scales, from the 'intimacy' of one's own household to wide spaces of transglobal connections (Massey, 1994). This research explores the importance of both

'place' and 'movement' in shaping young Polish migrants' senses of 'self', and Section 4.3 explores these issues further by considering migrants' connections with people and home(s).

'Migration', conceptually, has come to be understood as a social process (Boyle and Halfacree, 1998, Dwyer, 1999), and John Urry argues that "it is necessary to investigate systems of time, time reckoning, time measurement, and the experience of time" (cited in Adey and Bissell, 2010:6-7). For Tuan (1977), important places are portrayed as 'pauses' in time whilst travelling through spaces. He views the transformation of abstract space to place in the meanings that individuals embed specific locations with. In this sense, emotional attachment to place can only be made through the investment of time. This research reveals participants' places of meaning, providing new insights into their everyday encounters (Section 7.3) and experiences of 'home' (Section 7.4). Also, the influences of investing time in such places will be revealed, and Section 8.2.1 details how participants' perceptions of 'lived-time' (Worth, 2011a) have resulted, for some, in a sense of 'turbulence' within their transitions through the life course.

While research on migrations and mobilities "cannot be collapsed onto each other" (Blunt, 2007:685), many fruitful connections are evident in terms of materiality, politics and methodology. Blunt (2007:685) explains that research which explores the embodied materialities of migrant mobilities considers the politics of mobility and migration, "both in terms of the legal frameworks that regulate migration, and in terms of the embodied politics of identity and difference". With regard to methodology, studies of mobility and migration are increasingly employing a diverse set of qualitative methods to better understand such movements. This research explores the biographical accounts of young Polish migrants residing in Northamptonshire, and illustrates the self-understood effects of movement(s) from/between Poland and the UK to their social networks (see Section 6.3), everyday experiences (see Section 7.3) and perceptions of home(s) (see Section 7.4). The research also demonstrates how some participants' migratory experiences link with their perceptions of life course progression in which their sense of 'self-identity' (Giddens, 1991) is different to that of their peers who remained in Poland (see Chapter 8).

2.2.2: Transnationalism

Moving away from the scientific dominance throughout the social sciences (Johnston, 1986), humanistic and cultural studies of migrations have focussed not only on the physical (real) crossing on space, but have also revealed these movements to traverse *imagined* boundaries of space(s) and place(s) (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001, Sibley, 1995). Dwyer (1999) recognises this change and argues that rather than focussing on models that suggest migration is a permanent move from one place to another, more attention is given to transnational connections and links. The term transnationalism refers to the unique and complex belongings of peoples who are dispersed across a variety of geographic boundaries and may have connections to several places they identify as home (Clifford, 1994). Presenting a range of transnational studies, Al-Ali and Koser (2002) assert that transnational migrants' multiple allegiances to places are multi-dimensional and complex, necessitating research that exposes migrants' subjectivities between cultures, but also movements and border crossings within cultures (Armbuster, 2002).

There have been many studies which focus on the transnational connections preserved across national borders, specifically upon how these are created, shaped and maintained (Al-Ali, 2002, Armbuster, 2002, Burrell, 2003, Fog Olwig, 2002, Hopkins and Hill, 2008, McHugh, 2000, Salih, 2002, Vertovec, 2001). The connections which bind some people across space are arguably now expressed "at greater speed and intensity than ever before" (Massey and Jess, 1995:31), and utilise a wider array of media to maintain relationships (de Block and Buckingham, 2007, Rantanen, 2005). The 'transnationalist' view of migration recognises that it does not consist of a fixed arrival or departure (de Block and Buckingham, 2007), but is "shaped by present-day movements between two nation states and the resulting cross-border relations" (Fog Olwig, 2002:216). Burrell's (2003) research into Polish communities in Leicester, demonstrates that while maintaining contact with Poland was ingrained into participants' everyday lives, transnational connections were not deemed as important to discuss as the migration experience itself. With this in mind, Burrell's (2003) study

revealed the strongest emotional links to the homeland are those rarely expressed in rituals, but those that are simply felt.

Studies of transnationalism "seek to analyse the social organisation and consequences of the complex interconnectivity of cross-border networks in multiple fields of practice" (Smith, 2005:235). Many studies of the lived experiences of engaging in transnational networks discuss ideas of feeling 'in-between' (Al-Ali, 2002, Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Nowicka, 2006, Salih, 2002, Valentine *et al.*, 2008) and Nowicka (2006) details how some 'transmigrants' may belong neither 'here' nor 'there'. This research explores these issues through the use of a narrative exercise (see Chapter 5), where participants were encouraged to reflect upon important migratory experiences articulated in relation to their biographies. In so doing, the data reveal the impacts of migration to the participants' sense of self-identity (Chapter 8), experiences of social networks (Section 6.3) and understandings of home (Section 7.4).

2.2.3: Diaspora

The term diaspora "derives from the Greek – *dia*, 'through', and *speirein*, 'to scatter'" (Brah, 1996:181), and involves both the scattering of people over space and the transnational connections between people and places (Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Blunt (2007:6) notes that while drawing strong links with notions of transnationalism, "both refer[ing] to the mobility of people, capital, ideas and objects, and through the production of space, networks and politics by and through such mobility", important distinctions remain. One key difference is that while diasporic connections are often based on transnational ties, such connections are not, in themselves, a sufficient condition for diaspora (Dahlman, 2004). Cohen (2008:2) identifies several common features of diaspora, and argues that understandings of home, "and often the stronger inflection of homeland remain powerful discourses" evident in contemporary studies. This research explores the biographies of young Polish migrants and reveals the impacts of their migratory experiences upon their perceptions of home (see Section 7.4).

In terms of shifting the focus of geographic enquiry to people, contemporary research into migrations examine how individuals assume and construct different identities, being influenced in several ways, when moving through dissimilar spaces (Findlay *et al.*, 2004, Holloway, 2000, Jackson, 1998a, Panelli *et al.*, 2008). Many cultural theorists use the metaphors of 'roots/routes' to think about different conceptions of home, homeland and diaspora (Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Clifford, 1992, 1997, Gilroy, 1993, Hall, 1995), and Section 4.3 is anchored by this homophone. Armbuster (2002:25) differentiates that "whereas 'roots' refers to visions of common origin, homogeneous tradition and bounded culture, 'routes' implies forms of diffusion, intercultural movement and migration". A concept used to articulate the impacts of mixture to notions of identity by engaging in routes is *hybridity* (Hutnyk, 2005) (see Chapter 4.4). Hybridity is a process whereby an individual's identity(ies) becomes increasingly infused with cultural elements (Bhabha, 1993, Fitzgerald, 2007, Rutherford, 1990b), influenced by two (or more) inscribed identities of alternative spaces (places). Critiques of hybridity, however, have revealed its reliance upon the proposition that a non-hybrid identity exists (Hutnyk, 2005) and Gilroy (1994:54-55) expresses frustration at the presupposition of two anterior purities: "cultural production is not like mixing cocktails". Persevering conceptually, Hutnyk (2005) suggests that it is important to explore and evaluate the uses and usefulness of hybridity as a descriptive term, and here, hybridity will be assessed in relation to articulating perceptions of changing mobile identities and identifications with home as migrants move across space (Section 4.4).

The notion of home has been conceptualised in a variety of ways, but in many cases is related to a sense of belonging, in a national, cultural or social sense. It can be equally understood, however, as exclusionary, encompassed in feelings of fear, alienation and violence (Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Blunt and Varley, 2004, Holloway and Hubbard, 2001, Massey, 1992). Through their 'mobile geographies of dwelling', increased spatial mobility over time has had a large effect on how the concept of home is understood in the context of migration studies (Blunt and Varley, 2004).

Datta's (2008) research with Polish home-builders shows how *dom*[2] is understood in multiple spaces (places), with identity(ies) being inscribed into new homes 'along the way' (Tolia-Kelly, 2004a). Polish migrants, by undertaking in "situational shuttling" (Marawska, 1999:368), challenge the established milieux of individuals belonging to host communities testing the boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. This research exposes how young Polish migrants interpret the impacts of their migratory experiences upon their connections with people(s) and place(s), assessing such changes within the context of their biographies encompassing past, present and future 'pathways'.

Overall, the themes of mobility, transnationalism, and diaspora represent core ideas at the heart of contemporary understandings of migration. Within these themes, specific concepts such as 'identity', 'home' and 'social networks' can be harnessed to explore the experiences of migration and Chapter 4 revisits these concepts to assess their applicability to this research project. The discussion in this section indicates how many of the concepts used to explore migrations are now understood as being in motion, and Garapich (2008:736) identifies what quintessentially is one of the greatest difficulties of researching migrations today: the "race against a fast-moving reality". The chapter now moves forward to consider British immigration in the late-twentieth and early-twenty first centuries to contextualise the contemporary movements of Polish migrants.

2.3: Post-War Immigration to the UK

In a review of British immigration in the late-twentieth century, Coleman (1994:37) comments that "Britain does not, and never has considered itself to be a 'country of immigration'". This is because much of British history was dominated with emigration to former colonies and territories, such as the United States, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia, especially during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (Coleman, 1994). Contemporary flows of migration, particularly in reaction to the changed political environment within the EU following enlargement in 2004, have recast recent immigration as "the most important social and economic

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[2] The Polish word 'dom' refers to house, home, family, residence and residency simultaneously (Shallcross, 2002, Datta, 2008).

phenomena shaping the UK today" (Pollard *et al.*, 2008:7). Rather than viewing immigration as insignificant, there are now contemporary calls within modern politics to introduce a cap on net migration, a 'headline policy' of the Conservative Party in the 2010 UK General Election (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2010). The Institute for Public Policy Research (2010) summarises this notion to be unworkable, illogical and insensible, and as challenging the economic performance of the UK and the rights of people, both British and non-British nationals, who want to live with their families. This section attempts to provide a concise overview of immigration into the UK, focussing predominantly on migrations in the late-twentieth and early-twenty first centuries to establish the context in which contemporary Polish migrations to the UK take place.

Before considering flows or statistics illustrating immigration to the UK, it is important to note that due to the difficulties in creating an agreeable migration definition, clarity was/is lacked over who was/is regarded as a migrant (Fassmann and Münz, 1994). Fassmann and Münz (1994) indicate that official statistics are created within political 'arenas' which result in errors within data, ranging from inconsistencies to active concealment of specific groups of migrants. As a result of this, it is argued that "no precise data are available on the chronological course and the geography of all relevant migration streams" (Fassmann and Münz, 1994:4). Indeed, Kupiszewski (2002) argues that the diversity of the contemporary international mobility of populations highlights the necessity of a uniform definition of international migration. Until such a time, international statistical comparisons (and estimations), and precise records of flows of migrants, cannot be achieved accurately as each country's definition of migration is unique (Kupiszewski, 2002).

Immigration in post-war Britain was dominated and shaped by Commonwealth migration (Hansen, 2000). Hansen (2000:3) observes that "the United Kingdom began the post-war years with a non-white population of some 30,000 people; it approaches the end of the century with over 3 million", whose origins are located in Africa, the Pacific Rim, the Caribbean and the Indian Subcontinent. Schuman (1999) notes that, with reference to Labour Force Survey data in 1997, 6.4% of the UK's population were classified as belonging to an 'ethnic minority group'. Peach's (1968)

study attempted to capture one such Commonwealth flow and explain the movements of West

Indian migrants to the UK in the 1950's and 1960's. Peach's (1968) study provides a detailed account

of economic circumstances in the West Indies and the UK; the two situations are then compared to

identify 'push' and 'pull' factors that would 'explain' the flows of migrants. Cresswell (2006) argues

that these types of calculations focussed on the point of origin and destination, neglected the

'pathways' between such places, and failed to understand the process of migration. Indeed,

Garapich (2008) suggests that old economic models depicting flows of migration do not account for

the 'whole picture'. Through the development of newer ways of understanding the world, Massey

and Jess (1995) assert that statistical interpretations of migration often diminish the value of places

as individuals move across space. This research, while aware of circumstantial differences between

Poland and the UK economically, adopts a 'bottom-up' research approach in exploring the reasons

underpinning the movements of Polish migrants to reveal a range of 'push' and 'pull' factors unique

to their biographies (see Section 6.2).

Coleman (1994) contends that there were predominantly four types of 'migration systems'

evident within immigration into Britain in the twentieth century. First, a 'settlement system' that

reflected former colonial and territorial ties is evident. Coleman (1994) documents that while these

flows were historically dominated by Commonwealth countries, by the mid-1980s nationals from

countries with no historic ties to Britain represented half of these movements. The types of migrants

that participated in this 'settlement system' were characterised as low-skilled, with distinctly

different languages and cultural backgrounds to those found within the host society. Second, a

'labour system' which is selective of the skills of those involved was identified. The migrants that

participated in this system were dominated by highly-skilled workers from Western Europe, the

United States and Japan. Although data are not available on EU migrants who participated in this

system, Coleman (1994) argues that these flows of non-EU people reached approximately 34,000 in

1990. Massey and Jess (1995) suggest that post-war labour migrations were male-dominated, but

toward the end of the twentieth century, such flows were consisting of a greater number of females.

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Third, a 'refugee system', which historically was of a smaller scale to that of the present day, was evident. For instance, in 1979 there were 1,563 applications for asylum (Coleman, 1994), whereas by 2007 there were 28,300 applications (Home Office, 2008b). Fourth, a combination of a 'settlement' and 'refugee' system is suggested to be evident, characterised as 'illegal migrations'. In the 'illegal system', individuals gain entry to the UK illegally with the hope that, if discovered, they would be granted 'leave to remain'. The study by Coleman (1994) is useful in providing impressions of immigrations in the twentieth century into Britain, and importantly serves as a referent to explore the ways in which the migrations in the dawn of the twenty first century are fundamentally different, both in migratory type and migrant profile, to flows of the past. Available insights on post-accession migrants illustrate some demographic and employment data (see Section 2.4), however, it is widely acknowledged that little information exists on the motivations, experiences and intentions of contemporary Polish migrants (Anderson *et al.*, 2006, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008, Pollard *et al.*, 2008, Sumption, 2009). Chapters 6 and 7 will illustrate the participants' migratory decision-making as well as provide an insight into the experiences of being a young Polish migrant living in Northamptonshire.

Massey and Jess (1995) argue that the 'worker' migrations of the 1950's, 1960's and early-1970's were a 'mass phenomena' with more or less homogeneous workers from rural areas of poor countries moving to jobs within industries in richer countries. It is additionally argued that the migrations that succeeded these were markedly different from international migratory flows in the post-war period. Massey and Jess (1995) identify five key differences. First, more countries are involved in the global migration system, diversifying the economic, cultural and social backgrounds of migrants. Second, greater differences in the nature of migration type exist than that traditionally. Third, it is suggested that there is an increased speed and volume of migrations globally than ever before. Fourth, a closer gender balance exists within international migration, and migration is no longer dominated by male migrants. Fifth, the notion of 'push and pull' factors has changed through increased knowledge and greater restrictions in avenues of 'legal migrations'. Section 2.4 shows how

the contemporary flows of Polish migrants in the UK support Massey and Jess's (1995) observations, illustrating a high volume of those migrating and relatively balanced male to female ratio of 56:44 of post-accession migrants between May 2004 and March 2009[3] (Home Office, 2009a).

Since Massey and Jess's (1995) observations of changes to migration globally, there are additional modifications that could be noted at the dawn of the twenty first century having implications for the UK's immigration flows. For instance, it is suggested that there have been a series of structural shifts, in the light of 'late modernity' (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991), that have changed the environments in which contemporary migrations take place. For example, the enlargement of the EU in 2004, extending to Central and Eastern Europe, has changed the 'boundaries' within the EU that previously restricted people's movements (Home Office, 2005). Also, the current financial crisis is suggested to have altered the UK climate in which contemporary labour migrants seek work (Clifton *et al.*, 2009). These changes can be characterised as increased flexibility and decreased permanence shaping the context of migrations. Thus, in contemporary conditions, macro-economic 'push' and 'pull' factors become increasingly destabilised and *un*reliable in explaining movements as conditions fluctuate and change. This research explores the lives of young Polish migrants, in particular times and places, to reveal the factors that shape their motivations for migrating to the UK (see Chapter 6) and influence their everyday experiences in Northamptonshire (see Chapter 7) to illuminate the diversity and uniqueness of decisions and circumstances that inspired these movements.

In explaining patterns of Western European migration flows, Fassmann and Münz (1994) identify a range of explanatory factors suggested to be missing in 'classic migration theory' including: geographic proximity, economic disparities, standards of living and diffusion of information relating to opportunities/problems. They contend that cultural, political and historical links between the country of origin and host society may yield a better understanding of migratory flows than focussing solely on 'wage differentials'. With reference to contemporary Polish migrations, Garapich

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[3] Accession Monitoring Reports were discontinued in March 2009 and a brief summary of data is now provided within annual Control of Immigration Reports.

(2008:736) argues that "the recent influx of Poles into the UK should be regarded as a continuation of a process that began more than a decade ago". Burrell (2009b) provides a historical overview of Polish emigration and notes that a 'sizeable' number of Polish nationals migrated to Britain as a consequence of World War Two, an increase from 44,462 Polish-born residents in Britain in 1931 to 162,339 in 1951 (Burrell, 2006:5). Layton-Henry (1992) notes that 120,000 Polish nationals resettled in Britain following the end of war. Despite speculation that post-war Polish communities in Britain support post-accession Poles in their settlement (Garapich, 2008), Brown (2011:230) observes that there has been "little investigation into the socio-cultural relations within this newly enlarged diaspora". Brown (2011:232) argues that while post-war Polish migrants' experiences are infused with feelings of exile, post-accession migrants, in her study, defined themselves as "being driven to leave Poland by the prospect of higher wages in Britain". The evidence of this study demonstrates that while economic differentials were important factors influencing the decision to migrate, additional biographical features were also critical; in particular participants' perceptions of their 'envisioned futures' (see Section 6.2 and 8.2.1). Also, Section 6.3 reveals that while broad ethnic-specific social networks can be established in Northamptonshire, due to a high number of Polish residents, such networks are mitigated by issues of 'trust' (see also Section 7.3) and perceived 'temporariness' of encountered peers (see Section 7.2).

Contemporary immigration to the UK is suggested to originate from all areas of the world taking many forms (for instance, economic, asylum, refugee etc). Based on the figures presented in 1997, the number of European Economic Area (EEA) nationals arriving in the UK has risen by 49%, constituting the largest growth in comparison to British citizens (40%) and non-EEA citizens (23%) (Home Office, 2008b). A complementary source of statistical information on immigration to the UK is the issue or refusal of residence documentation to people entering the UK (Home Office, 2008b). Available figures show that 56,640 residence documentation decisions were made about European citizens, of these, 27,355 were decisions about Polish Nationals (Home Office, 2008b). Decisions made about Polish nationals represent 48% and 33% of European and worldwide residence

documentation decisions respectively, suggesting that Polish nationals' migrations to the UK are the most prominent migration flow into the UK at present.

When examining how contemporary Polish migrations have been understood, many explanations have focussed on differences between macro-economic prosperity and opportunities within the UK and Poland (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008, House of Commons, 2008), and such understandings can be argued to be flawed as they are derived from older and traditional methods of viewing migration. It can be argued that, as a direct consequence of the simplistic view that Polish migrants are primarily economically driven, the UK's data-collection apparatus to document immigration flows is inappropriate in two vital ways. First, the forecast numbers prior to EU enlargement (see Sriskandarajah, 2004) indicated that estimated flows of inward migration from new member states would peak at 17,000 people in 2005 (Table 2.1). The volume of people, however, in response to relatively free access to the UK's labour market revealed these estimates to have grossly underestimated these migratory flows[4] (Table 2.2). Second, the apparatus available to capture numbers of migratory flows from new member states were designed solely to assess the impact on the UK's labour market, and as such were only in a position to provide a partial insight into these newer migratory flows. Moreover, the apparatus to capture the flows of contemporary migrants to Britain wrongly assumes an economic rationale underpinning the movements, simplifying the plethora of motivations and intentions that could be evident within these migrant groups (see Section 6.2).

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[4] Based on Worker Registration Scheme applications (see Section 2.4).

Table 2.1: Estimates of A8 Migration to the UK

Date	Number
2004	13,807
2005	17,226
2006	16,989
2007	15,237
2008	12,959
2009	10,670
2010	8,607

Source: Sriskandarajah (2004)

Table 2.2: Number of Worker Registration Scheme Applications

Date	Number
2004	134,555
2005	212,325
2006	234,730
2007	217,970
2008	166,485
2009*	115,760
2010*	122,625

Source: Home Office (2009a, 2011*)

A useful starting point in considering differences between Polish migrants is Eade *et al.'s* (2007) typology, illustrated in Table 2.3. The distinctions outlined by Eade *et al.* (2007) were based on the migration strategies exhibited during research interviews and participant observations. They point out, however, that such behaviour is fluid and subject to change over time. Eade *et al.* (2007:10) stress the importance of understanding respondents' biographies in shaping their positioning within their typology, where "respondents overwhelmingly constructed their class

position in terms of their perceived life chances and plans… in terms of the opportunities that lay

ahead rather than an occupational or economic position held at present" (emphasis in original).

Table 2.3: Eade *et al.*'s (2007) Typology of Polish Migrants

Migrant Type	Description
Storks	"Circular migrants who are mostly in low paid occupations" "*Storks* usually stay between 2 and 6 months" "Tend to be clustered in dense Polish social networks" "Their commuting behaviour often becomes a long-term strategy and the means of survival"
Hamsters	"Migrants who treat their move as a one-off act to acquire enough capital to invest in Poland" "Compared with Storks their stays in the UK are longer and uninterrupted" "Embedded in Polish networks and see their migration as a source of social mobility back home"
Searchers	"Those who keep their options deliberately open… [consisting] predominantly of young, individualistic and ambitious migrants" "They occupy a range of occupational positions from low-earning to highly skilled and professional jobs" "Searchers focus on increasing social and economic capital"
Stayers	"Those who have been in the UK for some time and intend to remain for good" "This group also represents respondents with strong social mobility ambitions"

Source: Eade *et al.* (2007:10-12)

Overall, it is suggested that assumptions made in relation to *who* would migrate to the UK

and *why* they would migrate are incorrect. These assumptions have left a void in knowledge of the

current migrant population in the UK (Pollard *et al.*, 2008, Sumption, 2009), and the motivations,

experiences and intentions of contemporary migrants (Department for Communities and Local

Government, 2008). While Eade *et al.*'s (2007) typology is useful in exposing differences between

Polish migrants, it can be argued that such determinations were made from 'outsider' vantage

points. This thesis is concerned with 'insider' views, and Section 7.2 illustrates how diversity

between young Polish migrants was understood. The chapter will now move on to explore data available in relation to contemporary flows of Polish migrants.

2.4: Contemporary Flows of Polish Migration(s)

On May 1st 2004, the Accession 8 (A8) joined the EU. At the time of enlargement, the UK, Ireland and Sweden allowed relatively free access to employment markets and movement rights to nationals of the A8. Also at this time, for migrants already residing within the UK, an 'amnesty' was granted to legalise their status (Anderson *et al.*, 2006). The Government's plan, as detailed in the *Five-Year Strategy for Asylum and Immigration*, anticipated that workers from the A8 would replace unskilled migrants from outside Europe (Home Office, 2005).

At the time of enlargement, most of the other EU-15, including Germany, France, Italy and Spain, placed restrictions to access of their labour markets by A8 nationals and delayed the implementation of full free movement of workers (FMOW) as guaranteed under EU legislation (Gilpin *et al.*, 2006). Initial estimates of A8 migration to the UK before accession forecast the number of people migrating to be from 5,000 to 13,000 per annum (Dustmann *et al.*, 2003). Dustmann *et al*. (2003:58) acknowledge that "no administrative figures on net migration to the UK [were] available mean[ing] that survey data has to be used, which introduces a large potential error in the analysis". Table 2.1 illustrates Sriskandarajah's (2004) forecasted estimates of flows of A8 migrants to the UK while Table 2.2 shows the number of Worker Registration Scheme registrations over the same time period to demonstrate the extent to which the flows were underestimated. There were a number of flaws evident in the survey data used to determine the estimates, including not taking account of Poland's historical large-scale but short-term pendular migrations (see Wallace, 2002). By focussing on the 'statistical fiction' of migration, as "official migration statistics provide only an incomplete and distorted picture of spatial mobility" (Cyrus, 2006:28), predictions grossly underestimated numbers of people from A8 countries migrating to the UK.

The UK currently does not count people in and out of the country, and, as such, definitive figures that record the actual number of A8 migrants are not available. There are, however, a number of sources available that give indications of the flows of contemporary A8 migrants into the UK. The subsequent discussion focuses on sources that provide a partial indication of migration flows; data from the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and National Insurance Number (NINos) applications (Section 2.4.1), before extracting information indicating the prominence of Polish nationals within these data (Section 2.4.2). The geography of contemporary flows of A8 migrants will then be considered (Section 2.4.3).

2.4.1: Measuring Contemporary Migration(s)

The UK Government introduced the WRS in 2004 as a means of regulating A8 nationals' access to the UK labour market and UK benefits. Its stated aims also include the encouragement to engage in the formal economy and to allow the monitoring of inflows to facilitate evidence-based policy formation (Ruhs, 2006). In accordance with the WRS, an individual must register if they intend to work for a UK employer for a period longer than one month (UK Border Agency, 2008). Accession Monitoring Reports were compiled by the Home Office each quarter between May 2004 and March 2009 to assess and present statistics derived from these registrations (Home Office, 2008a). Each application to the WRS represents one job as opposed to one applicant; the reason for this is because of the requirement to register more than once if employed by more than one employer (Home Office, 2008a). To avoid double-counting, data disclosed in the reports are based on the information provided by A8 nationals and relates to the first registered job. The report provides a partial view of these flows of migration, as a number of people (e.g. dependants, self-employed) are not included, and, as such, the statistics presented in these reports are neither definitive nor complete.

Between May 2004 and September 2008[5], there were 932,000 applications to register on the WRS (Home Office, 2008a). Figure 2.1 illustrates the number of applicants to the WRS by quarter of application, from January 2005 to September 2008. The largest number of applications to the WRS was in the fourth quarter of 2006, where 65,340 applications were considered. This quarter was preceded by the second highest quarter with 64,790 applications processed. The last six months of 2006 can therefore be described as the period in which WRS applications were at their peak, suggesting A8 migration was at its height. Figure 2.2 illustrates the most recent available data of WRS applications[6] and shows that while these have declined, they have stabilised at approximately 30,000 applications per quarter. This trend in WRS applications suggests that the number of A8 nationals seeking work in the UK labour market is declining. Caution is needed here, however, as the amount of people (stock) residing in the UK may not have changed.

Figure 2.1: WRS Applications, January 2005 to September 2008, by Quarter (Q)
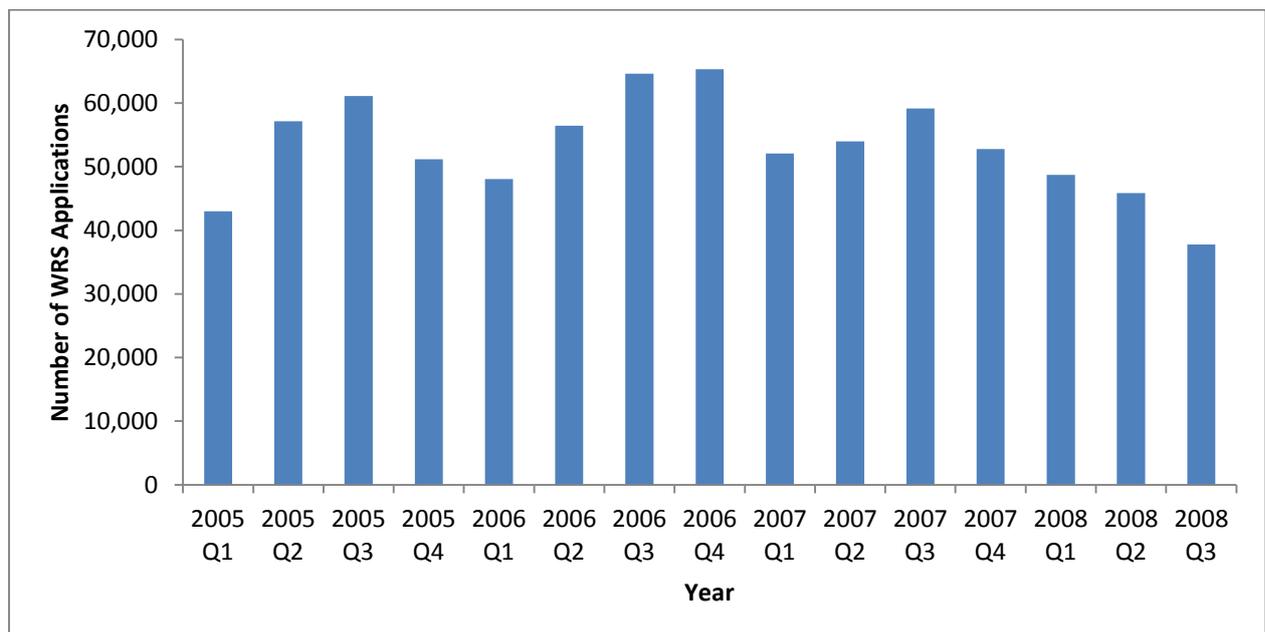
Source: Home Office (2008a)

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[5] The reason for the time period of WRS applications illustrated in this section (May 2004 – September 2008) is due to this period being analysed in the construction of the research prior to data collection. However, Figure 2.2 illustrates the most recent data available from the Control of Immigration Report (Home Office, 2011).
[6] Differences between Figure 2.1 and 2.2 can be explained in the main through the process of 'rounding' to the nearest 5. The reason for the difference of 3,510 between the numbers of WRS applications illustrated in 2008 Quarter 3 in both Figures is unknown.

Figure 2.2: WRS Applications, January 2007 to December 2010, by Quarter (Q)
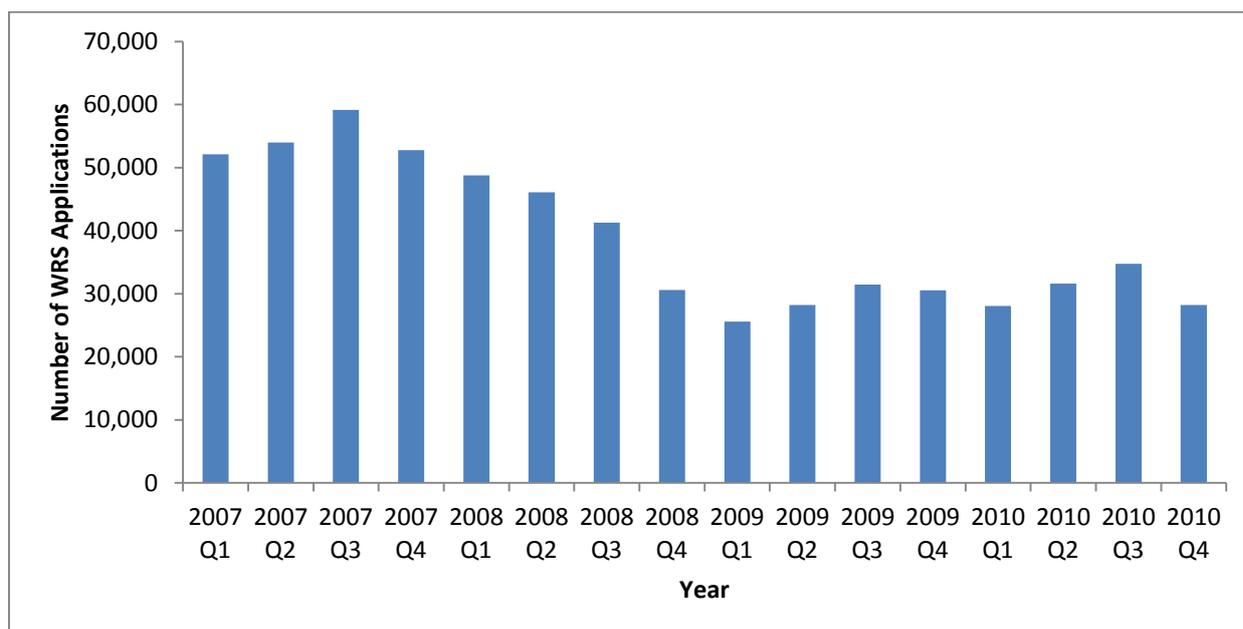
Accession Monitoring Reports also provide details of the demographics and labour circumstances of individuals applying to the WRS. Figure 2.3 outlines the number of applications to the WRS based on applicant nationality between May 2004 and September 2008 (Home Office, 2008a). Figure 2.3 shows that approximately two-thirds of WRS applications have been made by Polish nationals (66%), with Slovakia (11%) and Lithuania (9%) having the second and third highest proportion of applicants to the WRS respectively. Figure 2.4 illustrates information on the age of applicants to the WRS between May 2004 and September 2008. Figure 2.4 reveals that the largest proportion of applicants to the WRS is aged between 18 and 24 years (44%), with 38% of applicants being aged between 25 and 34 years. These figures suggest that a large number of young Polish nationals have been migrating to the UK after EU expansion.

Figure 2.3: Number and Nationality of Approved WRS Applications, May 2004 to September 2008
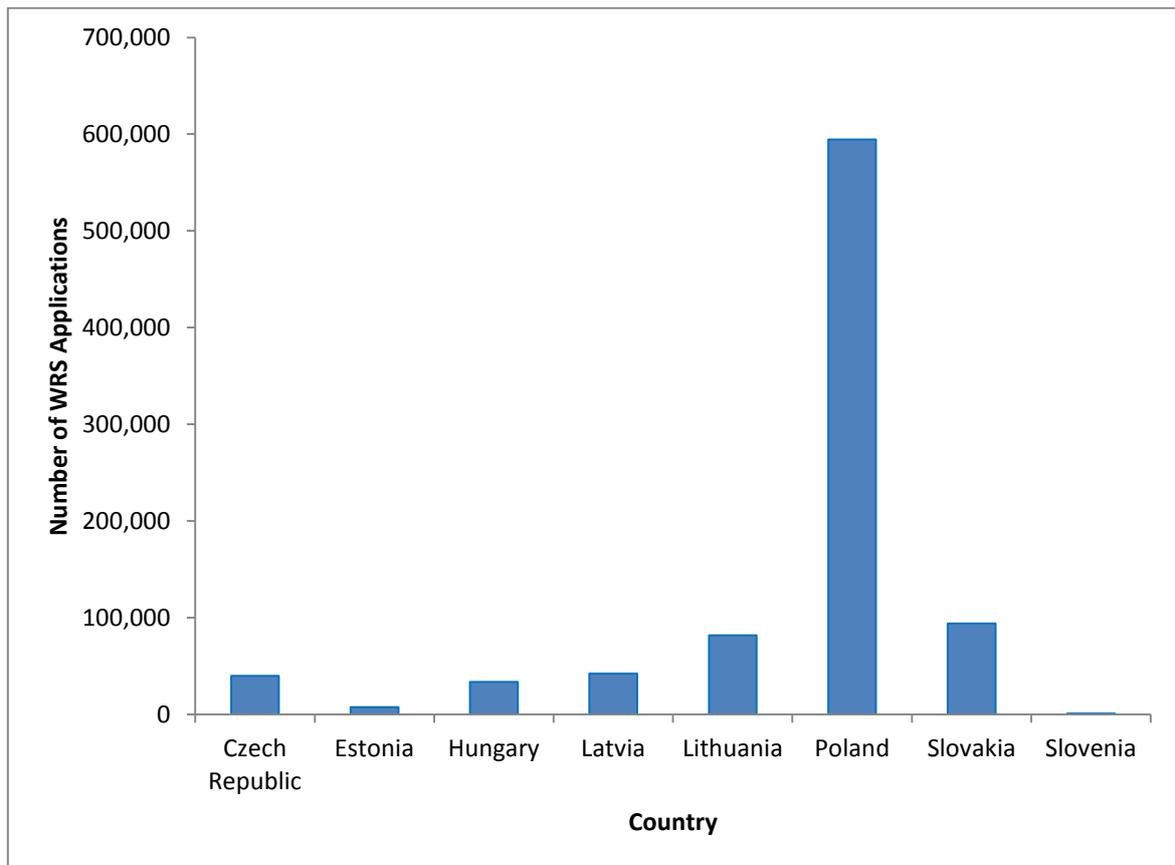
Figure 2.4: Age of WRS Applicants, May 2004 to September 2008
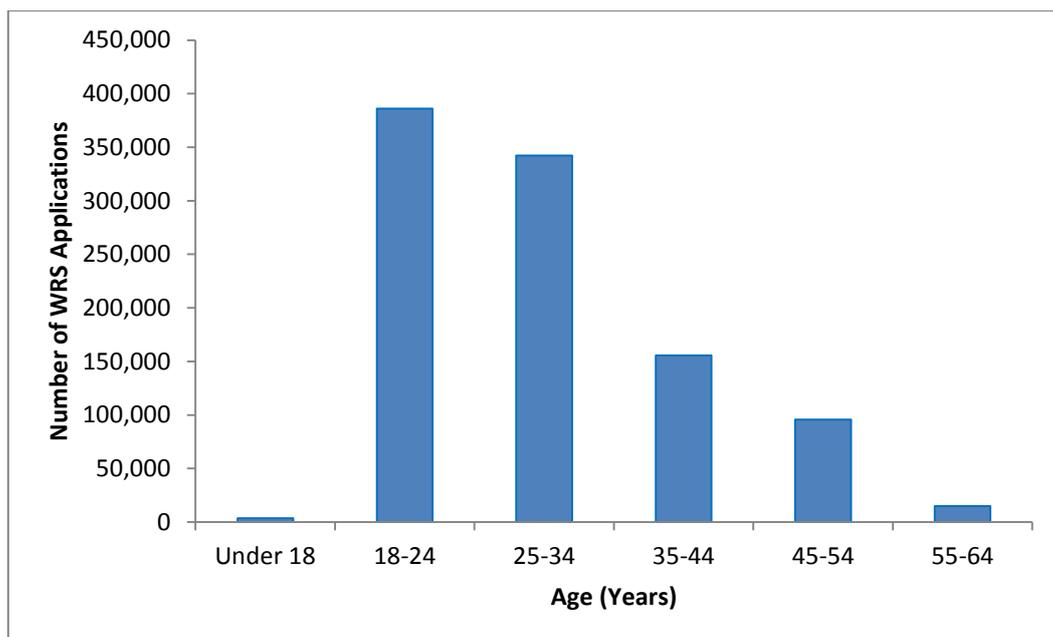
With registration with the WRS being a legal requirement for A8 migrants, to monitor which areas of the labour market are most affected by open access (Ruhs, 2006), the WRS provides a detailed overview of the type of employment applicants are working. Figure 2.5 illustrates the top 10 occupations declared on WRS applications between July 2004 and September 2008 (Home Office, 2008a). The highest proportion of applicants are employed in factories as a 'Process Operative' (28%), with 'Warehouse Operative' (8%) and 'Packer' (6%) being the second and third most abundant occupations of newly-arriving A8 nationals. The majority of post-enlargement migrants from the A8 are employed in low-paid jobs, having in some cases a low rate of return for their human capital based on their educational achievements (Drinkwater et al., 2006). Between October 2007 and September 2008, it was stated by workers upon application to the WRS, that 68% of applicants had an hourly wage of £4.50 to £5.99, whilst 24% earned £6.00 to £7.99 per hour (Home Office, 2008a). HM Revenues and Customs (2008b) states that the three levels of minimum wage (from 1st October 2008) are £5.73 per hour for workers over 22 years of age, a development rate of £4.77 per hour for workers aged 18 to 21 years and £3.53 for workers under the age of 18 years who are no longer of compulsory school age.

An alternative method in tracking A8 migration to the UK is through National Insurance Number (NINo) applications. Figure 2.6 shows the number of NINo applications made by A8 nationals from 2002 to 2008[7]. Any individual who intends to work in the UK is required to obtain a NINo, including self-employed workers (Department for Work and Pensions, 2008, Department for Work and Pensions, 2010), currently unaccounted for in WRS data. Figure 2.6 illustrates that there has been growth each year in terms of NINos, however if the suggestions made from WRS data (Figure 2.2) are correct, then the number of registrations is likely to decrease when figures for the tax-year 2010/11 are published.

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[7] The dates are shown as financial years (1st April to 31st March)

Figure 2.5: Top 10 Occupations of WRS Applicants, July 2004 to September 2008
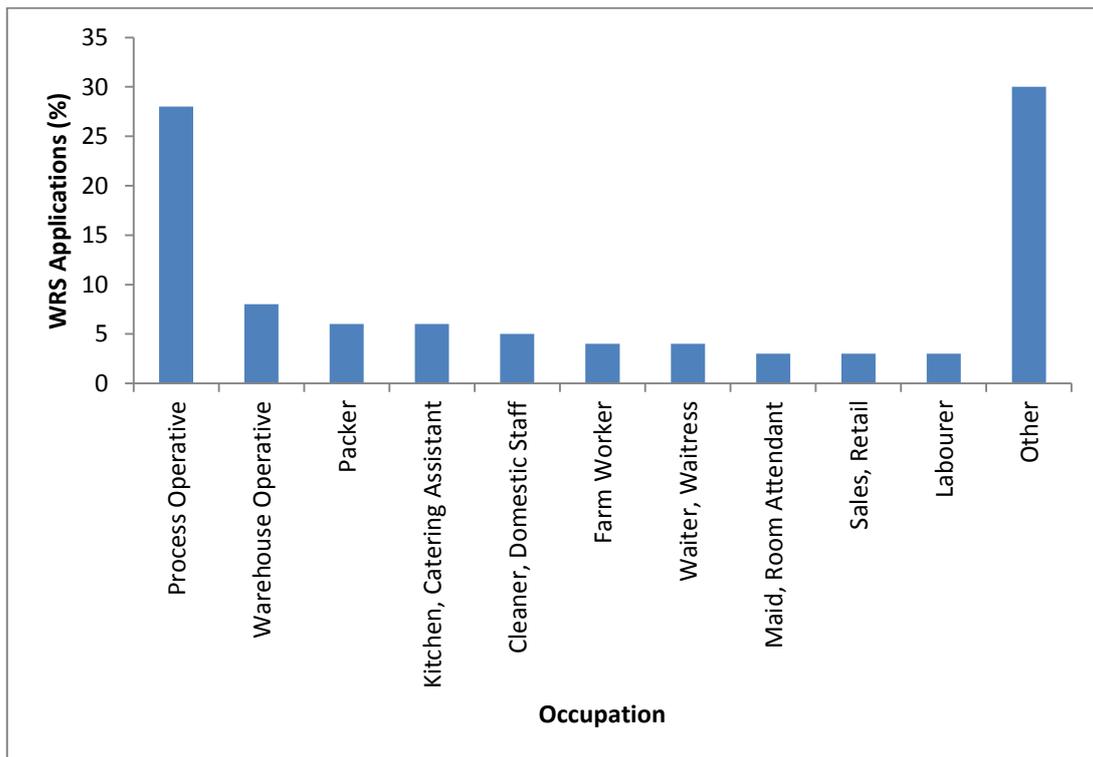
Figure 2.6: Number of National Insurance Registrations to EU Accession Nationals, April 2002 to March 2010
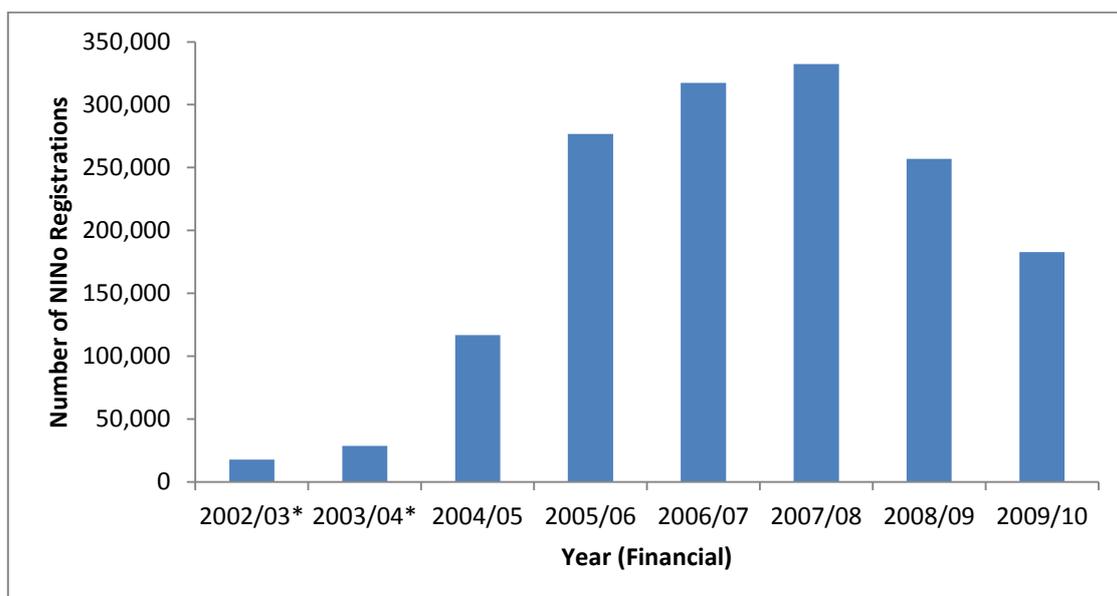
Research of Polish migrations historically indicate the temporary nature of many movements (Wallace and Stola, 2001, Wallace, 2002), highlighting the characterisation of historical Polish migrants as 'suitcase traders' who engaged in complex patterns of pendular migrations. Crucially, when considering this impression, both WRS applications and NINos do not require de-registration and as such are not suitable in providing an accurate view of A8 population stocks in the UK or migrations between Poland and the UK. Using data from the WRS or NINos independently to assess migration arguably would not reflect the reality of these modern movements.

When examining NINo registrations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK, it is clear that Polish registrations represent a significant proportion of all registrations over the past five years. Table 2.4 illustrates NINo registrations by the top 10 countries by year of registration[8]. This reinforces suggestions made from WRS data that Polish migratory flows appear to be the largest migratory flow into the UK. The data in Figure 2.7 also shows a peak in the financial year 2006/07, indicating the link between WRS data and NINo information.

Table 2.4: Number of NINo Registrations to Adult Overseas Nationals Entering the UK, Top 10 Countries by Year of Registration

2006/07		2007/08		2008/09		2009/10	
Country	**Number**	**Country**	**Number**	**Country**	**Number**	**Country**	**Number**
Poland	220,430	Poland	210,660	Poland	134,360	India	75,380
India	48,820	India	49,760	India	59,390	Poland	69,940
Slovak Rep	28,600	Slovak Rep	29,990	Slovak Rep	24,090	Lithuania	23,420
Pakistan	25,010	Pakistan	24,830	France	24,010	Latvia	23,200
Australia	24,210	Australia	24,100	Romania	23,950	Pakistan	22,960
Lithuania	23,920	Romania	22,950	Pakistan	23,460	Bangladesh	21,180
France	20,010	France	21,770	Australia	21,390	Romania	17,680
South Africa	16,800	Lithuania	19,030	Italy	18,630	France	16,450
Germany	15,070	Germany	15,530	Lithuania	17,620	Nigeria	16,230
China	13,000	Italy	15,400	Nigeria	17,460	Nepal	14,590

Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2010)

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[8] The dates are shown as financial years (1st April to 31st March)

There are a variety of alternative measures available to estimate numbers of A8 nationals[9] migrating to the UK, but each of these is flawed in providing a complete picture. For example, in the Slough Migrant Survey, it was found that 40% of A8 migrants had not registered with the WRS and that 40% had not registered with a G.P. (Slough Borough Council, 2006). The survey data in the Slough Migrant Survey were created through a limited sample of participants (50 A8 participants), and, as such, any conclusions drawn from this survey are partial. In a study by Leaman *et al*. (2008), it was found that 43% of Polish migrant workers attending the emergency department in a hospital had not registered with a G.P. The Slough Migrant Survey and the study by Leaman *et al*. (2008) both suggest that G.P. registrations are inaccurate in calculating the number of A8 migrants arriving in the UK. As a result of unrestricted access to the UK for people from the A8, the apparatus providing some insights of immigration have been found to be inadequate in providing accurate data. The examples of WRS registrations and NINos support the indication by The Department for Communities and Local Government (2008) that accurate data on recent trends of migration are not available.

Overall, the WRS and NINos provide useful indications, despite their limitations, of the importance of flows of contemporary migrants into Britain from Central and Eastern Europe. The WRS and NINo data indicate that immigration to the UK is at its highest in the past century. The data from the WRS suggest these migrants are generally 'young', with nearly half being aged between 18 and 24 years old. The WRS also suggests that A8 migrants work predominant in warehouse settings as 'process operatives', 'warehouse operatives' or 'packers' and for doing so are paid the minimum wage. The section will now move on to consider data relating particularly to Polish migrations.

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[9] For instance, National Insurance Applications (NINos), Annual Population Surveys, School Roll Data, G.P. Registrations, International Passenger Survey, Electoral Registers, Higher Education Statistics Agency etc (Northamptonshire Observatory, 2008).

2.4.2: Data Relating to Polish Nationals

When considering the number of Polish nationals migrating to the UK, Figures 2.7 and 2.8 show Polish nationals' WRS and NINo registrations demonstrating the significance of Polish migrations within flows of A8 nationals. As proportions of A8 WRS applications between May 2004 to September 2008 and NINos issued between April 2004 to March 2010, Polish nationals make up 66% and 58% respectively. Figure 2.8 illustrates that WRS applications by Polish nationals peaked in 2006, and Polish nationals' NINo registrations were at their highest in the tax year of 2006/07. Thus, the WRS application peak (demonstrated in Figure 2.1) in the third and fourth quarters of 2006 was heavily influenced through Polish migrations, highlighting their importance to UK immigration.

Figure 2.7: Polish and A8 Applications to WRS, May 2004 to September 2008
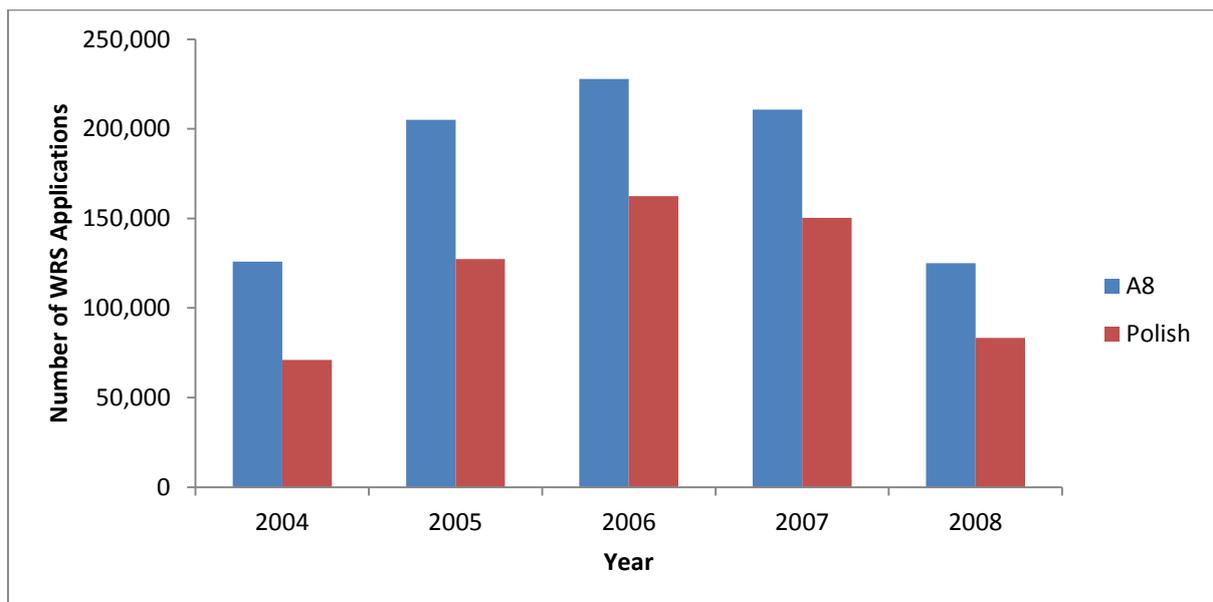
Source: Home Office (2008a)

Figure 2.8: Polish and A8 NINo Registrations, April 2004 to March 2010
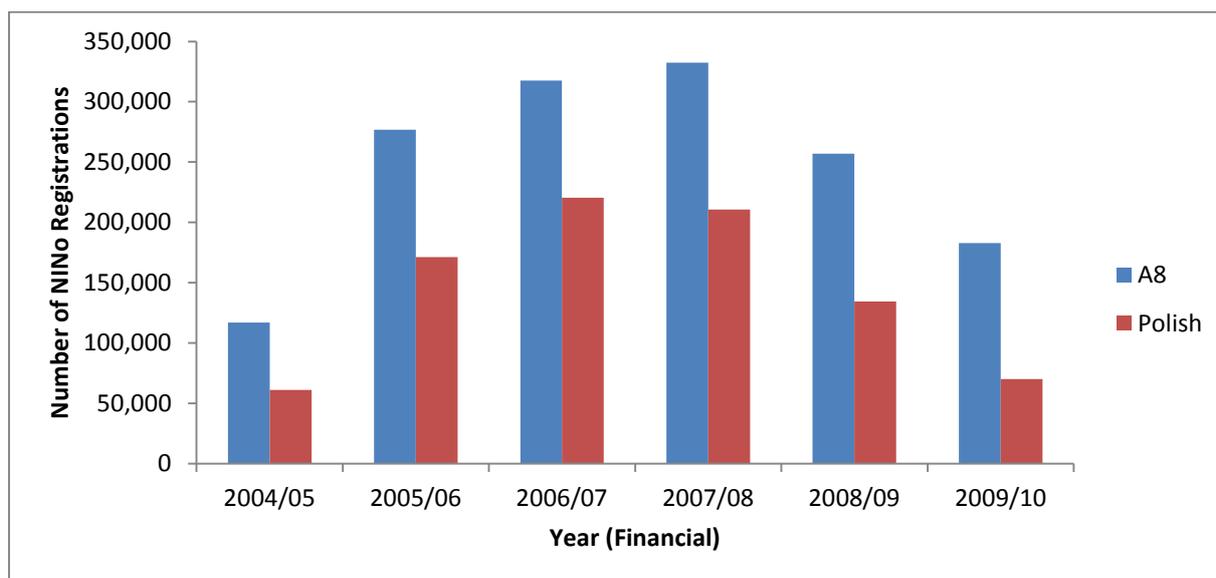
Accession to the EU for Polish citizens provided the opportunity of legal mobility. In what Trianafyllidou (2006b:11) terms 'shuttle migration', many Polish nationals engage in complex patterns of mobility. Given this, some have called for a uniform definition of migration to be used by EU states (see Kupiszewski, 2002), as at present each country uses their own definition resulting in a lack of comparable data. It is argued that there is extreme difficulty in establishing reliable data, particularly with problems associated with the registration process. Kupiszewski (2002) acknowledges this and explains that many migrants will, where possible, register in the host country to get access to benefits, healthcare and other services whilst at the same time avoid registration of their emigration to maintain access to benefits in their home country. This dilemma for migration statisticians is testing because there is no incentive or benefit to the migrant in providing continual information to the state whilst engaging in shuttle migration.

Some evidence from the WRS supports Garapich's (2008) argument that recent Polish immigration should be viewed as part of a historic migratory flow, as it was documented that 30% of migrants were already living in the UK at the time of enlargement. In a study by Drinkwater *et al*. (2006:7), however, it is argued that "the majority of applications up to June 2005 came from

individuals who had entered the country post-enlargement (around 82% of those who gave a date), whilst around 10% came before 2004 and the remaining 8% said they arrived in early 2004". Thus, the extent to which recent flows of Polish migration should be seen as an extension of historical movements is speculative. In addition to this, Brown (2011) points out that little research has been conducted to explore connections between post and pre-accession Polish migrants. This research focuses on the experiences and everyday lives of young, post-accession, Polish migrants to explore their 'stories' of migration, and Section 6.3 illustrates changes to Polish migrants' social networks as a result of migrating to the UK.

2.4.3: Geography of WRS and NINo Registrations

Section 2.3, and thus far in Section 2.4, indicate that contemporary immigration into the UK is heavily influenced by the movements of Central and East European migrants. Indeed, Table 2.4 demonstrates that Polish labour migrants now represent the highest proportion of new migrants applying for a NINo. Thus, it can be seen that Polish nationals' immigrations represent the largest migratory flow into the UK today. With this in mind, this section provides an overview of the geography of WRS and NINo data to indicate which areas are the main 'hubs' for inward migration.

A key feature of the WRS is the disclosure of employment that a registered worker is contracted. Table 2.5 shows the geographical distribution of employers of registered workers[10] between May 2004 and September 2008. These show that the area in which the most WRS applications have been made is in Anglia, with 125,620 applications representing 14% of all applications. The Midlands and London have received the second and third highest amount of applications to the WRS with 118,920 (13%) and 105,580 (12%) respectively. Table 2.5 reveals that all areas within the UK, to an extent, have been affected by A8 migrations. When scrutinising the data in Table 2.5, significant changes to the geography of WRS applications are revealed. For

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[10] "Regions are based on the applicant's employer's postcode, where supplied. Regions are defined according to the Post Office's Postal Address Book regions, and based on the first two letters of the postcode" (Home Office, 2008:17).

instance, in 2004 London had the highest proportion of WRS applications with 20% but in 2007 this had shrunk to 10%. In the Midlands, in 2004 it received 9% of applications which grew to 14% in 2007.

Table 2.5: Geographical Distribution of WRS Registrations, May 2004 to September 2008

Region	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*		Total
Anglia	21,920	29,930	31,690	29,925	12,155		**125,620**
Midlands	11,710	26,755	33,155	29,795	17,505		**118,920**
London	25,270	23,460	21,495	21,135	14,020		**105,380**
North East	9,060	21,405	25,460	21,995	12,100		**90,020**
Central	13,855	20,640	21,315	19,595	12,240		**87,645**
North West	7,675	19,135	23,875	21,080	10,675		**82,440**
South West	9,700	18,150	21,360	19,375	11,735		**80,320**
South East	11,200	13,670	13,325	12,980	8,310		**59,485**
Wales	2,430	5,490	6,875	6,010	2,815		**23,620**
Scotland	8,150	15,895	19,055	19,560	12,095		**74,755**
Northern Ireland	3,660	8,845	8,970	8,500	4,630		**34,605**
Total	**124,630**	**203,375**	**226,575**	**209,950**	**118,280**		

*Jan 2008 to Sept 2008

Source: Home Office (2008a)

Table 2.4 illustrates the NINo registrations to overseas nationals outlining the top 10 and shows that Polish nationals receive the highest proportion. With A8 countries' nationals featuring consistently in Table 2.4, it would be expected that the geography of NINo registrations reflect the geography of WRS applications. Table 2.6 is an overview of NINo registrations in the financial years from April 2003 to March 2010 (HM Revenues and Customs, 2008a, Department for Work and Pensions, 2010) and shows that despite the dominance of Polish nationals' registrations, London is a dominant location where individuals obtain a NINo. The high proportion of WRS applications in the Midlands (see Table 2.5) is not reflected in NINo registrations, as the Midlands[11] had 13% of the total NINo registrations in 2007/08, whereas the proportion of WRS applications was 20%.

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[11] Combination of East and West Midlands.

Table 2.6: NINo Registrations to Adult Overseas Nationals Entering the UK, By Year of Registration and Government Office Region

Region	2003/04*	2004/05*	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Total
North East	5,880	7,360	10,930	13,330	12,230	11,480	9,310	**70,520**
North West	23,670	31,220	48,810	51,120	51,180	42,940	34,140	**283,080**
Yorkshire & Humber	18,920	19,980	36,500	41,330	42,160	37,770	29,940	**226,600**
East Midlands	16,550	23,560	38,720	40,720	38,450	32,990	28,270	**219,260**
West Midlands	23,500	28,010	42,040	47,230	46,630	43,900	36,250	**267,560**
East of England	26,480	34,620	52,780	52,730	51,790	52,210	42,340	**312,950**
London	157,420	169,710	235,440	240,930	272,710	275,610	249,230	**1,601,050**
South East	43,490	51,000	80,240	79,330	82,830	77,870	61,970	**476,730**
South West	16,070	22,570	34,060	41,230	38,900	33,110	23,670	**209,610**
Wales	7,090	10,040	16,640	16,720	16,350	14,480	10,760	**92,080**
Scotland	15,960	23,440	41,400	51,890	52,410	46,260	36,330	**267,690**
Northern Ireland	13,890	8,110	16,060	19,680	17,640	12,630	7,530	**95,540**
Overseas Residents	4,580	5,740	9,430	9,580	9,800	4,850	3,020	**47,000**
Total	**373,500**	**435,350**	**663,060**	**705,840**	**733,090**	**686,110**	**572,740**	

Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2008a, 2010)

Overall, the data presented in this section provide two important impressions. First, the total number of NINo registrations peaked in 2006/07 and 2007/08, which has links with the height of WRS registrations in 2006 and 2007. Second, while it can be argued connections exist between the pinnacles of WRS and NINo registrations due to A8 nationals, the geographies of these registrations are different, with the highest number of NINo registrations since April 2003 being in London and the South East and the highest number of WRS registrations between April 2004 to September 2008 being in Anglia and the Midlands. The geography of contemporary Central and East European migrations are demonstrated to be uneven, with certain places experiencing more concentrated inward migrations than others. Based on WRS applications, this research is located in a key area of intense immigration; Northamptonshire (see Section 5.2). When commenting on the significance of A8 migrations into Northamptonshire, the Northamptonshire Observatory (2008:3) states that of LAAs, "Northampton is 4th in the UK for percentage of Worker Registration Scheme applications 2004-2007 at 5.7%, Corby 11th at 3.6% and Wellingborough 31st at 1.8%". By conducting the research

within Northamptonshire, the project will explore the migrations of young Poles, and Section 6.2 illustrates the 'push' and 'pull' factors important within their migration decision.

2.5: Summary

In summary, a key argument presented in this chapter is that at the time of EU enlargement, the UK was ill-equipped and underprepared to monitor the large-scale movements of many Central and East European migrants to the UK. The evidence presented illustrates the extent to which estimations of contemporary immigration flows were incorrect, and it is argued that a reliance of 'patchy' survey data exacerbated this misjudgement. The inability to establish a consistent definition of migration internationally is additionally asserted to have been influential in the inaccuracy of data. The consequences of these errors has now resulted in the position that the number of people who reside within the UK is not known, increasing anxiety associated with immigration amongst the general public and raising the profile of immigration within the political realms. It can be argued that limited knowledge exists in relation to A8 migrants' experiences, and this research addresses this gap by exploring the everyday lives of young Polish migrants.

Contemporary research on migrations has re-set the agenda of academic enquiry through new ways of understanding and exploring contemporary migrations. Blunt (2007) identifies three key themes in migratory research; mobility, transnationalism and diaspora, which position migration as an evolving social process, moving away from static representations of migration that view it as the movement from one place to another (Cresswell, 2010). To fully appreciate the motivations, experiences and implications of migration, Halfacree and Boyle (1993) suggest that must be considered in relation to migrants' biographies, a conceptual argument at the heart of many contemporary studies across the social sciences (Blunt, 2007). This research embracing such arguments (see Chapter 5) explores the migratory experiences of young Poles where participants were encouraged to discuss the important 'events' of their pathways framed within their biography. In so doing, the research provides an insight into the rationales underpinning their movements (see

Chapter 6), the important factors shaping their everyday experiences (see Chapter 7) and the importance of these experiences in shaping or influencing their sense of 'self' (see Chapter 8).

This chapter provided an overview of available data, allowing partial insights of A8 migration trends. Available data show that Northamptonshire, the location of the research, has been a site of intense A8 migration activity. It is noted in Section 2.3 that explanations of A8 migration focus upon macro-economic differentials between Poland and the UK. With high numbers of A8 migrants working (and living) in Northamptonshire, the research site allows exploration into different groupings of Polish migrants, to explore notions of difference and diversity and investigate important factors shaping Polish communities. WRS data also detail that 44% of those registering with the WRS are aged between 18 and 24 years, and this project focuses upon this age range. The subsequent chapter explores notions of 'youth', considering intersections between ideas of 'youth' and migration, and considers the uses and usefulness of such literature in relation to enquiry here.

Chapter 3: Being a *Young* Polish Migrant

3.1: Introduction

Chapter 2 provided an overview of flows of migrants into the UK from Poland over the last decade, and indicated that young people aged between 18 and 24 years represent the largest proportion of these migrants. With this in mind, this chapter considers the meanings and influences that migratory experiences have within young people's everyday lives. Valentine (2003:39) notes that "while the age range 7-14 has received considerable attention from geographers, [geographers have] been slower to consider young people on the cusp of childhood and adulthood: those aged 16-25". Moreover, Hopkins (2006) argues that while research on the geographies of children and young people is burgeoning (see also Aitken, 2001, Holloway and Valentine, 2000, Matthews and Limb, 1999, Skelton and Valentine, 1998, Wyn and White, 1997), there are certain groups, such as young migrants that have, as yet, received limited academic attention (see also Bushin, 2009, Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011, Punch, 2007). Furthermore, there are a number of contemporary debates surrounding the ways in which young people's transitions are differentiated from the past. Jones (2009) asserts that when discussing these changes, it is important to locate them in the broader context of societal change (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991). This chapter locates the research on these lines of argument. First, the chapter explores the meaning of 'youth' and discusses how the academic understanding of 'age' geographies is changing (Section 3.2). Second, the impacts of living in the 'liquid' modern to transitions through life course are considered (Section 3.3). Finally, the influence of migratory processes and experiences to notions of youth transitions is examined (Section 3.4).

3.2: (Re)Thinking about Youth

It is increasingly recognised that there are multiple/diverse notions and experiences of 'youth'; and that 'youth' is culturally and historically constructed (Jones, 2009, Matthews *et al.*, 1999, Skelton and Valentine, 1998, Wyn and White, 1997). Henderson *et al.* (2007) argue that attention should be directed toward the influences of unequal material, social, cultural and symbolic

resources that shape understandings of 'youth' in different places and contexts. While the project focused on the 18 to 24 year old age group, the research sought to explore the extent to which 'age' mattered to individuals, and multiple aged groups and identities within this age group. It is important to note, nonetheless, that the research methods (see Chapter 5) encouraged participants to discuss what was important to them and care was taken not to impose 'age' upon their experiences (Callender, 2011a).

Following the 'cultural turn', geographers have sought to reveal 'marginal' and 'other' perspectives that had long been ignored (James, 1990). More recently, however, Hopkins and Pain (2007:287) argue that, as a direct consequence, geographers "have still to break out of the tradition of fetishising the margins and ignoring the centre". There has been much academic attention focused on the worlds of children and young people (Aitken, 1994, Holloway and Valentine, 2000, Matthews, 2003), but it can be argued that geographers have struggled to capture the worlds of 'older youth'; young people aged 16-25 years (Valentine, 2003). Many studies draw on notions of 'intersectionality', exploring the ways in which markers of social difference (e.g. gender, class, race, (dis)ability, sexuality, age etc) intersect and interact (Hopkins and Pain, 2007). Hopkins and Pain (2007:290) note that "much work has still to be done with regard to the intersection of particular age, generational and other identities and their spatial specificity". Chapter 5 illustrates how the research sample was organised using various markers of difference. This project explores young Polish migrants' understandings of their own sense of 'self'-development, and the influences migratory experiences have to ideas of transitions through the life course. Chapter 8 illustrates how notions of transitions through life course(s) were raised during the research and highlights the implications of these accounts for ideas of transitions (see Section 8.3.1) and life course (see Section 8.3.2).

Explanations of youth are many and varied. It is argued that within contemporary Western societies, youth can be defined by one's 'age' and 'actions' (Valentine *et al.*, 1998). For others, the 'liminal' positioning of youth, in defining young people by what they are not (James, 1986), can be

interpreted "as unjust by those who suffer the consequences of the division" (Sibley, 1995:34). Jones (2009) argues that while the terms 'childlike' and 'childish' can distinguish between positive and negative qualities respectively, the term 'youthful' is used confusingly for both. Thus, the term youth can be used to convey inferiority (such as naivety, hot-headedness and inexperience) as well as positive qualities (such as beauty, energy and optimism) (Jones, 2009). Jones (2009) additionally notes that youth refers to both a person (similar to a 'child') and a phase within life course (similar to 'childhood') adding further complexity to the term. To clarify terms here: 'youth' will refer to a phase within life course exclusively, while the term 'young people' will be used to refer to individuals. More broadly, research allows young people to develop their own accounts of how youth mattered (or not) to them, revealing universal and particular experiences.

Table 3.1 illustrates how young people are suggested to share a common status and are subject to structuring factors, resulting in 'universal' experiences, while simultaneously responding to and negotiating such tensions individually, producing 'particular' experiences. Wyn and White (1997) distinguish between a shared or common social status of youth; a condition which is different from adulthood, and the social significance of other social divisions; factors that differentiate young people from one another. Wyn and White (1997) provide a useful framework to distinguish between universal and particular aspects of youth, however, geographers have sought to distinguish the influences that space(s) and time(s) have to a range of social processes. Holloway and Hubbard (2001:1) argue that while geographical perspectives are often related to issues of global importance, "it might equally be shown that geography is concerned with the everyday, the local and (sometimes) the seemingly banal". Relating such an argument to Table 3.1, it can be suggested geographical concepts such as 'space', 'place' and 'time' destabilise what is considered 'universal' or 'particular'. For instance, research has revealed that some young people in the global south, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, assume independence and responsibilities from 13 or 14 years old (Punch, 2007, van Blerk and Ansell, 2006b, van Blerk, 2008). Jeffrey and Dyson (2008a) offer a series of individual vignettes, ranging from the global north to the global south, to illustrate the fluidity of

understandings of childhood, youth and adulthood, being defined largely through space and time. They argue that for these young people, their identities may not be determined as 'deficient' or 'in development', rather they are knowledgeable and autonomous because of circumstances. Such studies indicate that culturally-specific markers and meanings of youth are likely to be shaped within the contexts in which people live, defining what is meant by childhood, youth or adulthood.

Table 3.1: 'Youth': Tension between Universality and Particularity

Universal	Particular
Age status	Social status (e.g. class, gender, ethnicity, 'race', geographical location)
Global 'youth' culture	Cultural formation (e.g. youth subcultures)
Compulsory schooling	Unequal provision, opportunities and outcomes
Legal prescriptions based on age (e.g. Offences)	State regulations according to social status
Adolescent development	Diverse life experiences and cultural norms for growing up
Youth as deficient	Youth as having multiple dimensions

Source: Wyn and White (1997:16)

Meanings of youth are also historically-contingent, being invested and understood differently, reflecting contemporary moral, political and social concerns (Bourdieu, 1978). Jones (2009) emphasises that the task at hand for social scientists is to understand how and why different constructions and meanings of youth have developed. Such a point suggests that the task for *geographers* is to recognise the influences of space(s) and place(s) to how youth is experienced. Recognising that 'age' is a social construction has been critical to research on children's and young people's experiences (Hopkins, 2006). Wyn and White (1997:9-10) explain that the concept of 'age' is often "assumed to refer to a biological reality... but the meaning and experience of age, and the process of aging is subject to historical and cultural processes". These types of biological and

developmental understandings of age have been challenged throughout the field of youth studies (Worth, 2009, 2011a), and Valentine (2003) advocates a shift to a view that embraces the multiplicity and circuitous nature of transitions through the life course.

The notion that 'age' and 'life course' are social processes has a range of consequences for academic research. Advocating change in how research on age is implemented, Vanderbeck (2007) and Hopkins and Pain (2007) offer a relational approach drawing on three concepts; 'intergenerationality', 'intersectionality' and 'life course'. In so doing, Hopkins and Pain (2007) identify the importance of space(s) and place(s) when viewing age and life course as socially constructed categories. Although questions remain over how such geographies are to be explored (see Horton and Kraftl, 2008), they argue that not only do different individuals have varied access to space(s) and place(s), but that people actively construct 'aged' identities through their *uses* of space(s) and place(s).

Jones (2009) argues that youth must be viewed as an evolving concept. Ideas of traditional 'life events', or 'rites of passage' (van Gennep, 1960), indicative of 'life cycle' approaches, are suggested to be outdated and increasingly inappropriate in documenting the meaning(s) of lived experiences of young people in 'late modernity' (Bauman, 2007). Bauman (2007:3) explains that "past successes do not necessarily increase the probability of future victories...". In this sense, Bauman (2007) describes a fluidity to individuals' life course 'projects', a point which Jones (2009:108) suggests draws attention to earlier, arguably problematic models of growing-up: "static typologies ... fail however to take into account the dynamic nature of young adulthood". Accepting that models and measurements of 'life events' offer practitioners and researchers 'tools of the trade' for convenience, Jones (2009) believes structural and spatial influences shaping everyday experiences are missing. Revisiting both Vanderbeck's (2007) and Hopkins and Pain's (2007) assertions, the wider societal shift to 'late modernity' has arguably instigated radical change to traditional youth theory, bringing into question the assumed destination of adulthood for young people (Wyn and White, 1997), destabilising the 'solid' foundations upon which society is built

(Bauman, 2007) and 'raising the stakes' of contemporary existence (Beck, 1992). Furthermore, in what is termed a 'do-it-yourself biography', Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:3) argue people, though not necessarily by choice, are compelled to identify and negotiate 'pathways' (Wyn and White, 1997), whereby:

> "the façade of prosperity, consumption, glitter can often mask the nearby precipice. The wrong choice of career or just the wrong field, compounded by the downward spiral of private misfortune, divorce, illness, the repossessed home – all this is merely called bad luck."

Indeed, recently researchers have begun to consider differing understandings of adulthood. For example, Worth (2011b) maps out the geographies of 'young adulthood'; distinguishing between 'autonomous' (feeling independent and being responsible for oneself) and 'settled' (stable job and family life) adulthoods. An interesting aside is the view that one's youth is not only pushing the adulthood domain in the life course further back, but also that this expansion has also had a significant impact on childhood (Bynner, 2005). Bynner (2005) argues that childhood, as a phase in the life course is being 'squeezed' and 'shortened', as children undergo biological maturation earlier and initiate sexual experimentation at younger ages; both of which are supposedly distinctive markers of youth (Griffin, 1993, Jones, 2009, Wyn and White, 1997). Bynner's (2005) comments indicate that, as a period in the life course, youth is becoming ever more central to biographical research, as the expansion of 'youthhood' (Jones, 2009) signals the contraction of both childhood and adulthood. This research will explore young people's understanding(s) of their own metaphorical 'journey' through the life course, and in this case, their literal 'journey' of migration(s).

By positioning studies of 'aged identities' as being produced in the interactions between people (relationality) (Hopkins and Pain, 2007), the processes through which age geographies are created can be explored to reveal reciprocal relations and social ties (Skelton, 2007). One way this attentiveness to age has been employed is in research that focuses on families, generations and

interactions (intergenerationality) (Hopkins and Pain, 2007). Tucker (2003:111), encouraging an alternative way of understanding of age, draws on the work by James *et al.* (1998) to highlight an easily forgotten dimension of childhood: "that a child is a child only in relation to its adult counterpart...". Extending this argument, a young person is not only a young person in relation to its child *and* adult counterparts, but also in relation to other (groups of) young people. This research explores the meanings of age(s) to this cohort of young people to reveal how 'aged' identities are produced in relation to other (groups of) children, young people and adults. A key aim of the project was to reveal the extent to which difference and diversity exists within Polish communities in Northamptonshire, to demonstrate the extent to which young people's connections to particular people(s) and place(s) change through the process of migration(s).

3.3: Youth Transitions through the Life Course

Responding to Valentine's (2003) call to focus on the different ways in which young people understand 'boundary crossing(s)' between 'childhood' and 'adulthood', this project will contribute to a growing body of geographic literature on youth transitions (Bottrell and Armstrong, 2007, Hopkins, 2006). In the past, Jones (2002:45) argues that it may have been possible to understand the transitions from childhood to adulthood as being a single-ordered sequence of events (i.e. "leave school, start work, save up some money, then leave home to get married and start a family"). Bauman (2007) contends that concepts that imply a preordained sequence of events (e.g. development, maturation, career, progress etc) cannot be meaningfully applied to the series of short-term projects or episodes that comprise a contemporary existence. Giddens (1991) argues that in 'late modernity' there is an opening for infinite possibilities as people are freed as traditional or established institutions breakdown. Beck (1992) asserts that this fragmentation has resulted in a lack of clarity over social roles, whereby living is more individualised and poses greater risks. Bauman (2007) suggests that society has moved from a 'solid' to 'liquid' form of modernity, a condition that implies a sense of temporariness and instability which has significant ramifications for ideas of

transitions through life course and notions of stable adult identities (Evans, 2002, Giddens, 1991, Worth, 2009).

Recent research suggests that the transitions through life course for many in the 'West' have slowed and become more complex (Brannen and Nielsen, 2002, Jones, 2002). Some have suggested that transitions are becoming increasingly de-standardised to replicate the reversible, fragmented and uncertain 'yo-yo' pathways of many contemporary life courses (Jones, 2002, Molgat, 2007). Leccardi and Ruspini (2006:177) understand 'yo-yo transitions' as reversible, fragmented and uncertain, "switch[ing] back and forth within study courses and, or between education and work extremely often, not building up any 'steady' route". The notion of the liquid state of modernity provides the backdrop to contemporary discussions of youth, and subsequently young people's transitions (Section 3.3). This research, by exploring the lives of young Polish migrants, provides a contemporary insight into what youth means to this specific group of people and how they make sense of their own 'life stories'. In so doing, the research will contribute to current academic discussion on what it means to be a young person today, how this is differentiated from previous studies, and, more broadly, how societal change is influential in processes of growing up.

Ansell and van Blerk (2007) note that much recent research with young people has been concerned with the concept of 'identity', with identity construction seen to be young people's chief developmental task (Bagnoli, 2003). Geographical studies of identity have focused upon categories of gender, race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age and disability (Vanderbeck and Dunkley, 2003), and young people have been shown to define themselves in complex ways (Skelton and Valentine, 2003). Young people's constructions of aged identities are likely to be influenced by class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and locality (Hopkins, 2006, Jones, 2002): what Hopkins and Pain (2007) term 'intersectionality'. The relations people have between identity(ies) and place(s) are suggested to be unique, intricate and multi-scalar; justifying its prominence within migration literature (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a). The ways in which people make sense of their identity(ies) are intimated to be influenced/destabilised by time and space, indicating the significance of space and

place to the process of identity construction. The concept of identity will be explored in the following chapter by considering links between identity(ies) and place(s), the influence of migration on identity formation processes (see Section 4.2) and the multiplicity of migrant identity(ies) (see Section 4.4).

It is important, when introducing ideas of transition and development, to acknowledge the inherent implications of using such metaphors. For instance, te Riele (2005) indicates that the 'pathways' metaphor suggests implicitly that young people who get 'lost' on their way to adulthood only have themselves to blame. Wyn and White (1997) concur, musing that if only young people had read the map accurately and chosen the correct pathway, they would have 'arrived' at adulthood without any difficulty. Teather's (1999) understanding and use of 'passage' is interlinked and aligned with notions of transitions. Teather (1999:1) views these 'life crises' as being personal and unique, "influenced by the institutional fabric of social life: home, work, school, family, religion, nation, for example". Te Riele (2005) goes on to explain that transitional metaphors also assume each individual's freedom of choice in making specific decisions 'along the way', shifting the responsibility of completing 'successful' transitions to adulthood to young people. Dwyer and Wyn (2001) argue that, as a consequence of this shift, young people are likely to question themselves and their decisions when confronted, or upon realisation of 'unsuccessful' transitions, rather than take stock of structural or situational limitations. By exploring young Polish migrants' accounts of migratory experiences, young people's own accounts of transitions through life course(s) can be examined (see Chapter 8).

Jones (2002) suggests that notions of transitions can be broken down into a range of interconnected layers, as illustrated in Table 3.2. The movement away from linear and traditional understandings to more nuanced understandings of transitions is demonstrated as young people may become independent in one layer whilst remaining dependent in another. An example suggested to be typical in British society for young people is the dependence on the use of the 'parental home' as continuing resource whilst earning a 'full adult income', as the range of

opportunities to join the 'property-ladder' intensifies (see Stafford *et al.*, 1999). The notion of

'progress' within transitions from youth to adulthood may involve, what Jones (2002:2) terms

"backtracking", for instance dropping out from education and/or returning to the parental home.

Jones (2002:4) also suggests that "there is increasing polarisation among young people between

those who experience extended transitions and those who make 'accelerated' transitions, between

the rich and poor, between those with educational qualifications and those without".

Table 3.2: Traditional Western Transitions to Adulthood

Childhood	Youth	Adult
School	College or training scheme	Labour market
Parental home	Intermediate household, living with peers or alone	Independent home
Child in family	Intermediate statuses, inc. single parenthood, cohabiting partner	Partner-parent
More secure housing	Transitional housing in youth housing market (e.g. furnished flats and bedsits)	More secure housing
'Pocket money' income	'Component' or partial income (e.g. transitional NMW)	Full adult income
Economic 'dependence'	Economic semi-dependence	Economic 'independence'

Source: Jones (2002:2)

Jones' (2002) ideas, while serving as a useful starting point, fail to account for the spatial or

cultural differences that produce a variety of youth transitions. For instance, specific markers of

adulthood, such as a stable presence in the 'labour market', 'economic independence' and 'secure

housing', can be argued to be variable dependent on individual circumstances. Additionally, when

considering the range of cultures throughout the world, Jones' (2002) arguments could be

interpreted as being ethnocentric and representative of European, particularly Western, transitions

to adulthood. Shedding light into the experiences of a *Vusi*, a young man living in Durban, South

Africa, Meth's (2008) account is illustrative of the unique trajectories young people take in their transitions through the life course. Scarred both emotionally and physically through spatially-specific experiences, *Vusi*'s vignette illustrates the contradictory, multifarious and overlapping layers evident within transitions through the life course. Wyn and White (1997) expose differences between the metaphor of transitions and the lived experiences of young people (Table 3.3). Chapter 8 shows how many of the participants' migratory experiences were entangled with life course transitions and Figure 8.2 reflects on the accounts of young Polish migrants in relation to Table 3.3 to exemplify the experience of growing up through migration.

Table 3.3: Transitions as a Metaphor Compared with Experiences of Young People

Metaphor of transition	Experience of growing up
Linear process, e.g. school to work	**Cyclical process**, e.g. school to work to school to work
Uni-dimensional, e.g. establishing work skills	**Multidimensional**, e.g. establishing livelihood, sexuality, identity
Points of arrival, e.g. first job	**Always becoming**, e.g. changing jobs, changing relationships
Circumscribed by biological age	**Social meaning of age**
Horizontal dimension, with emphasis on contemporaries	**Vertical and horizontal dimensions**, whereby age intersects with generation

Based on Wyn and White (1997:99)

The experiences of contemporary transitions through the life course for many young people are argued to be distinctly different to traditional understandings, especially in light of structural and economic changes. Notably, Côté and Bynner (2008) argue that whilst wages in the UK have risen incrementally over time, increases in tax, employment insecurity and housing costs have subjected many younger people to greater financial pressures. Young people today are suggested to experience less permanence and greater uncertainty in labour markets, conditions whereby 'floundering' may be a natural response (Clark, 2007, Furlong *et al.*, 2003). Côté and Bynner

(2008:259) describe this as the process "whereby one job after another is tried [and] can be seen as a natural response to the risks associated with the declining prospects in an increasingly uncertain labour market". Leaman and Wörsching (2010:3) argue that "the severe Europe-wide recession of 2008-2009 has affected young people particularly badly", with the unemployment rate of young people in the EU27 rising from 14.6% to 18.3% between the first quarters of 2008 and 2009. The limited employment prospects for many young people, resulting from the 'economic climate', may position this cohort of young Polish migrants with 'mixed-feelings' over their self-defined positions on the childhood-youth-adulthood continuum. White (2010:569) argues that "unemployment is a particular spur to emigration" in Poland. Illustrating socio-demographic profile differences of post-accession Polish migrants, Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009) record that the UK attracts the youngest of those leaving Poland, with the median age of migrants to the UK being 25 years in the UK, compared with 30 years in Ireland and 37 years in Sweden. For those who migrate alone without support, the experiences of migration may initiate a rapid transition from 'dependence' to 'independence' (Jones, 2002). Furthermore, while many young people who experience a rapid transition could be identified as having many of the trappings of traditional facets of adulthood, Jeffrey and Dyson (2008b) contend that young people may actively resist, or are prevented from, what they themselves consider to be adulthood.

Contemporary understandings of youth have revealed new perspectives and understandings (Hopkins and Pain, 2007, Jones, 2009). For instance, the field of youth studies has been divided by reactions to the proposed new developmental stage of 'emerging adulthood' (Arnett, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2006). Arnett (2006), a developmental psychologist, argues that there have been a number of dramatic societal, economic and demographic changes in the past half-century, one consequence of which has been the fundamental shift of transitions from child to adult. A focal point for Arnett's (2000, 2001, 2004, 2006) theorisations is the necessity to (re)define and understand the period within the life course between the beginning of puberty and full attainment of adulthood. Arnett (2004) views youth as consisting of two key stages: 'adolescence' (roughly aged between 10 and 17

years) and 'emerging adulthood' (roughly aged between 18 and 25 years). Arnett (2004) characterises emerging adulthood as having five key features. First, it is viewed as an *age of identity explorations* where a range of possible futures exist as 'emergent adults'. Second, it is an *age of instabilities* as educational paths, jobs, partners and living situations frequently change. Third, it is understood as an *age of feeling in-between*; as being neither 'adolescent' nor 'adult'. Fourth, it is a *self-focused age* as young people are subject to less social control and have more environmental freedoms. Fifth, it is an *age of possibilities* where young people are highly optimistic about their future. Although the concept has not been universally accepted, Arnett's theorisations do signal that the nature of youth transitions are in flux, with contemporary understanding interpreting one's youth as extending for a longer period into the life course.

Arnett (2006) asserts that as individuals enter the period of emerging adulthood, their identity(ies) become clearer and they may seek to change their educational and occupational career paths to match the needs of their identity(ies). Hendry and Kloep (2010) argue, however, that emerging adulthood may only be experienced by specific groups of young people, particularly those in higher education and regarded as 'middle class'. Hendry and Kloep (2010) outline a range of factors not accounted for within Arnett's concept of emerging adulthood: self-agency, relationships, spatial environments, structural forces, life experiences and cultures. In contrast to the idea of emerging adults, they suggest that many young people may be both prevented from entering, or indeed thrust into, adulthood. Furthermore, Côté and Bynner (2008) argue that reactions to the value and validity of emerging adulthood have been ambivalent, as many social scientists prefer to adopt more established terms of youth and 'young adulthood', but do accept that the concept of emerging adulthood draws attention to the changing nature and experience of youth.

Bynner's (2005) critique of emerging adulthood stresses the lack of attention paid to how young people differently experience these transitions. A key point in Bynner's (2005) argument is the failure to account for individual circumstances, abilities, and structural influences in the ways these pathways are negotiated. Bynner (2005) argues that emerging adulthood may hinder understandings

of transitions, "as it standardizes an experience of great variability" (Worth, 2009:1051). Emerging adulthood also appears to offer an aspatial interpretation of youth transitions, rather than offer a framework that delves into the geographies young people experience. Despite an acknowledgment that there have been fundamental changes to young people's transitions to adulthood, Côté and Bynner (2008) assert that emerging adulthood has generally been endorsed by those seeking a useful metaphor with which to reset the agenda in youth studies. Section 8.3.1 outlines how the biographical accounts of young Polish migrants relate to Arnett's theorisations.

In light of debates surrounding the extension of 'youth' transitions, it is important not to group all young people as equally experiencing the movement towards adulthood (Jeffrey and Dyson, 2008, Jones, 2002). Bynner *et al.* (2002) argue that while some young people experience a 'slow-track' to adulthood - extending their time in education and delaying entry into full-time employment and family formation (Jones, 2002) - others may encounter specific events or circumstances which propel and 'fast-track' them into adulthood (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008, Jones, 2009). Migratory experiences may condense 'timings' of transitions through the life course (see Section 8.3.2), raising questions for revisiting age geographies, specifically those of 'older youth' (Valentine, 2003). Jones (2009) notes the associated risks with both delayed and speedy pathways, linking with Beck's (1992) theorisations of 'risk society' and Bauman's (2007) views of the liquid modern.

A distinctive feature of research, both by geographers and in the wider social sciences, is the view that society is made up of different social groups each with their own viewpoint - 'bounded entities' (Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Massey, 1992) - a view that became prominent following the 'cultural turn' (James, 1990). Musing on Arnett's (2000:469) explanation that "emerging adulthood only exists in cultures that allow young people a prolonged period of independent role exploration during the late teens and twenties", Côté and Bynner (2008) argue that the importance of emerging adulthood is ambiguous as individuals who miss emerging adulthood as a development stage continue to operate at the same level as those who have encountered it.

There has been much discussion of what the changing nature of transitions means, particularly now that linear stances have been suggested to be inadequate (Hopkins, 2006, Henderson *et al.*, 2007, Jones, 2002, 2009). Yet despite a revitalisation of academic enquiry, Worth (2009) comments that deficits remain with a suitable academic alternative that is distinctly different to traditional stances (Valentine and Skelton, 2007) and encapsulates the shift from a solid to a liquid phase of modernity (Bauman, 2007) yet to be put forward. Horton and Kraftl's (2006) discussion of 'ongoingness' perhaps offers a more complex understanding of temporality that displaces linear or chronological understandings of time. Rather than viewing transitions as a process where one 'grows up', Horton and Kraftl (2006) argue that more should be said of one 'going on'. In this sense, many young people may not consider their transitions to adulthood as being definitive to their everyday lives, but rather enjoy freedoms that youth affords. Moreover, young people may not actively define their 'rites of passage' (van Gennup, 1960) as having the same meaning in a 'developmental' sense, changing the 'goal posts' within transitions. Thus, adulthood, in a traditional sense, may not be the implied or assumed destination for many young people, as the stability and security adulthood assures is no longer guaranteed. For researchers, the challenges of understanding the ways in which young people, on the 'front-line' (Jones, 2009), understand *their transitions* is a daunting task (see also Section 8.3).

The concept of youth transitions has evolved over time and been interpreted in many ways. Traditional models of youth transitions have been seen to be inadequate in encapsulating the experiences of young people living in the liquid modern (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991). The displacement of traditional models has resulted in calls for a new phase in the life course, 'emerging adulthood', to reflect the extension of youth and the contraction of both childhood and adulthood (Arnett, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2006). Whilst the arguments underpinning these ideas are tentative (Bynner, 2005, Côté and Bynner, 2008, Jones, 2009), they signal the influence of contemporary societal shifts. This research considers the experiences of young Polish migrants, arguably at the forefront of the late modern as "ideal-typical subjects of late modernity" (Walker

and Stephenson, 2010:525). The chapter will now explore the ramifications of migratory experiences to youth transitions.

3.4: Introducing Migration into the Youth Transitions 'Melting Pot'

In the previous discussion of the changing dynamics and understandings of youth transitions in the liquid modern, it was argued that there is a multiplicity of 'pathways' influenced by unequal material, social, cultural and symbolic resources (Henderson *et al.*, 2007). In this sense, Henderson *et al*. (2007) stress the importance of 'locality', the intimate environments in which young people grow-up, in shaping what it means to be a young person and adult. Informed by the work of Bourdieu (1977), Henderson *et al*. (2007) adopt a biographical approach and argue that locality provides more than a backdrop to young people's lives; rather, it should be understood as the collective context that shapes values, meanings and identities. This section considers the implications for youth transitions for individuals who may move from a position (and place) of 'insideness' to 'outsideness': namely migrants.

Section 3.3 documented a growing consensus in the academic literature that for many young people, the length of time in the life course spent in the period of youth is extending as young people delay, or are prevented from, decisions that (supposedly) move them closer to adulthood. Whilst this may be the case for many young people, others are thrust into 'adulthood independence' through experiencing rapid transitory pathways related to particular circumstances or events. For instance, Abel and Fitzgerald's (2008) study with young street-based sex workers in New Zealand presents case studies where young people's adolescence or youth is short-lived. It can be suggested that some young people's transitions through the life course are characterised by a high degree of risk, with a limited (or non-existent) 'safety net' of social support or financial resources. Abel and Fitzgerald's (2008) study also demonstrates the importance of 'spatialities' in shaping identity(ies) and behaviour, highlighting a number of participants whose social networks were bound with notions of 'the street'. By not operating within specific places, a range of social networks were suggested to disintegrate over time (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008). One of the key contributing factors

to young people's motives for engaging in street-based sex work is the desire to escape circumstances where there are limited employment opportunities and adverse economic conditions (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008), motives that could resonate with some of the participants for this research.

Henderson *et al.* (2007) use the term 'critical moments' to describe events in young people's lives that they themselves, or the researchers, understood to be highly significant. Henderson *et al.* (2007) see this as distinctly different from the concept of 'fateful' moments, which Giddens (1991) uses to explain the assessment of risk or consequences of particular actions. The notion of 'critical moments' refers to events interpreted as not significant at the time, but seen in hindsight to be instrumental. There are also a range of other theorisations and interpretations of these 'types' of situations or experiences that exist; for instance 'epiphanies' (Denzin, 1989), 'turning points' (Mandlebaum, 1973) or 'breaks' (Humphrey, 1993). It is argued here, in the light of discussion surrounding late modernity (Bauman, 2007), that care must be taken when adopting one particular conceptualisation, as the events and circumstances surrounding each individual's perceptions and interpretations of migrations are unique, with the capacity to be contradictory.

In an attempt to incorporate such conceptions, and provide a framework through which to interpret the experiences of young Polish migrants, Figure 3.1 illustrates a range of ways migratory/transitional experiences may be understood. Informed by Giddens' (1991) notion of 'fateful' moments, a key factor of the framework refers to the act of assessing the risks of particular actions. Indeed, France (2007:60-61) argues that late-modern processes of 'individualisation' mean that life "becomes more uncertain". In many ways, notions of risk can be argued to circumscribe 'living in late modernity' as:

> "the normal biography... becomes... the 'reflexive biography' [which] is always a 'risk biography', indeed a 'tightrope biography', a state of permanent (partly overt, partly concealed) endangerment" (Beck and Beck-Gernshein, 2002:3, quoted in France, 2007:61).

Calculating the particular risks of one's actions can be argued to be *informed risk*, in that the odds of one's actions resulting in positive or negative experiences are calculated to the best of one's ability. Based on *informed risk*, if the resultant experience is positive, then the experience could be interpreted as a *good outcome,* having a foreseen benefit to one's position. If the resultant experience is negative, the experience could be interpreted as a *bad outcome*, in that the probability of a negative outcome versus a positive outcome was 'worth the risk'. However, migration involves a number of incalculable 'risks' that are beyond the apprehension of those intending to migrate (Chan, 1999). As Chambers (1994:5) suggests, migration "involves a movement in which neither the points of departure nor those of arrival are immutable or certain". As such, in opposition to *informed risk*, *uninformed risk* refers to unforeseeable risks. This can be linked with Henderson *et al.'s* (2007) notions of 'critical moments', in that the ramifications of specific actions may only be understood with hindsight. Based on *uninformed risk*, positive experiences could be interpreted as *good luck*, as the individual had no measurable method of assessing or predicting the outcomes. Whereas an 'informed positive' experience could be understood as a *good outcome*, an 'uninformed negative' experience could be interpreted as *bad luck*, in the sense that the individual was unable to foresee the outcomes of their decisions.

Vital to any such model to interpret migratory experiences, the multi-dimensionality of the framework is conveyed through an axis of *time* illustrated in Figure 3.1. As events move further into one's history, specific experiences may be interpreted in a different 'time' and 'space', and situated in a different position within the framework. The importance of such dimensionality is indicated within Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) concept of 'critical moments', as one's reflections will change over time. Also, Whiting's (2000) research with foster children's stories also identifies the importance of time to how individuals evaluate experiences. Figure 3.1 will be revisited in Section 6.4, detailing the experiences of young Polish migrants to demonstrate its applicability and usefulness in organising migrants' accounts.

Figure 3.1: Framework of Individuals' Accounts of Late-Modern Experiences
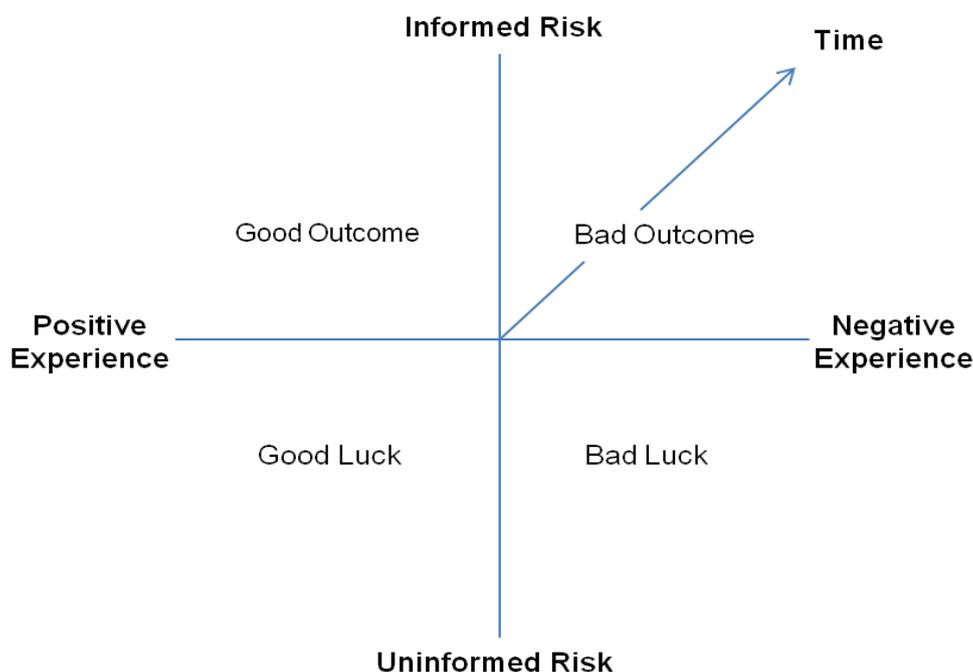
Pollard *et al.* (2008) suggest that the vast majority of Polish migrants are motivated by economic opportunities and migrate to the UK in search of work. 44% of Worker Registration Scheme applications were made by individuals aged 18-24 years (Home Office, 2008a), but little attention has been given to the transitions through the life course that many of these migrants are arguably experiencing; not only on a migratory basis, but also in relation to youth transitions. Punch (2007), in her research with young Bolivian migrants, illustrates connections between migration and identity formation. On the one hand, young people in Bolivia faced limited economic opportunities in their everyday lives and were, to an extent, forced to assume migrant identities before leaving home. On the other hand, many willingly sought the benefits of migration, viewing the experience as beneficial to their local community whilst also "facilitating their transition to adulthood" (Punch, 2007:96). This demonstrates possible connections between migratory experiences and youth transitions.

Much research surrounding Polish migrants' reasons for migrating to the UK has catalogued the apparent dominance of economic motivations in determining these movements:

"[O]verall, they are likely to be coming to the UK to work" (Department for
Communities and Local Government, 2008:12).

"[M]any of the recent arrivals from Eastern Europe are principally coming for work
and may not stay" (House of Commons, 2008:5).

At the same time (and in arguably in contradiction), such research provides little information on migrants' experiences, intentions and motivations. The apparently simplest explanation that Polish migrants' motivations for migrating to the UK are fundamentally economic has sufficed in popular, political and media discourses. With reference to Punch's (2007) research, however, there may be other motivational factors (especially in relation to youth transitions) that may be influential in determining these movements, suggesting that the motivations and intentions may be more complex than is presented in 'official' data sources. The necessity of establishing a fuller picture to more accurately reflect the nature of the movements (both physically in space and metaphorically in youth transitions) forms the basis for this research project.

Adding further complexity to notions of transitions, Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) research demonstrates tensions that exist for young people when imagining adulthood. They argue that these imaginations are constrained by the traditional and resilient model of adulthood affixed with notions of 'settling down'. For the participants of this project, their sense of and identification with a 'Polish' identity has been invested with traditional understandings of what it means to 'grow-up' in Poland (Datta, 2008). For instance, Zavborowska (2002) argues that women in Poland historically have been marginalised and have inherited an expectation of supporting 'their men' whilst nurturing 'their family'. The importance of specific (gender-based) expectations is argued to be crucial for young Polish individuals' imaginings of their pending adulthood (Shallcross, 2002). The traditional understanding of *dom*[12] (see Section 4.3) could also influence how young Polish migrants interpret and understand their own sense of transitions, which will consequently shape how they view their

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[12] "As translated, *dom* simultaneously means house, home, family, residence, and residency - a word that does not make the semantic distinctions between the social, cultural, geographic and material aspects of dwelling" (Datta, 2008:520).

own sense of self and evaluate 'progress' (Datta, 2008). Transitions through the life course are suggested to be understood as a social process and as such will have different meanings for each person. For many of the participants, the ways in which their friends and family in Poland react to and interpret their 'migrant' identity could have unforeseen effects on their 'status' or 'social position', influencing how they will perceive their own identity(ies). The notion of self-identity is asserted to be highly influential to both how young people make sense of their transitions to adulthood (Ansell and van Blerk, 2007, Giddens, 1991) and interpret their migratory experiences (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002).

The conditions associated with late modernity suggest that young people live in a mediated state of tension with ideas of 'home', 'tradition' and 'permanence' on the one hand, and 'mobility', 'transformation' and 'independence' on the other (Henderson *et al.*, 2007). In working through these tensions, Henderson *et al.* (2007) argue that the concepts of 'localism' and 'cosmopolitanism' should be understood as a single, interdependent term. Hannerz's (1996) distinctions of 'cosmopolitan', 'local' and 'exile' are useful in drawing attention to the cultural dimensions of mobility and provide a framework to understand differing access, consumption and relationships to 'place' and 'space'. The adoption of a 'global' or 'cosmopolitan' outlook is suggested to yield more opportunities and choices than strong connections to a local community (Henderson *et al.*, 2007). Henderson *et al.* (2007) contend, however, that factors that limit these opportunities are not only derived from 'the locale', they also include domestic responsibility, limited family resources, physical impairment and the physical threat associated with certain social spaces. By embracing a holistic view, and encouraging the participants of this research to frame their accounts on their own terms, this project reveals how some young Polish migrants made sense of their transitions through the life course in the context of their migration(s) to the UK. In so doing, the research provides an alternative, and more nuanced, explanation to the assumed economic rationale driving these movements, while reflecting on what it means to these young Polish migrants to 'grow-up' (see Chapter 8).

The concept of youth transitions is argued to be influenced, and in certain cases determined, by migratory experiences. The impacts of migratory events are suggested to be on the one hand, *foreseen* and planned for (Giddens' (1991) concept of 'fateful' moments), while on the other hand, *unforeseen* and spontaneously reacted to (Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) notion of 'critical' moments). Figure 3.1 presents a framework that combines foreseen and unforeseen aspects of migratory experiences, and this will be revisited in Section 6.4. Explanations of Polish migrations have been dominated by economic motivations. This research seeks to reveal a more nuanced understanding of migrants' motivation by considering the influence of young Polish migrants' self-interpreted transitions through the life course.

3.5: Summary

Framed in the context of wider contemporary societal shifts, this chapter has shown youth to be a contested concept. Young people arguably interpret their youth as having both homogeneous and heterogeneous aspects (Wyn and White, 1997) and studies have stressed the importance of 'locality' in shaping what it means to be a child, young person or adult (Jones, 2009). Recent advances within the field of youth studies have called for new ways of understanding the concept of age, by exploring relationality and intergenerationality (Hopkins and Pain, 2007), to expose somewhat neglected diversity. It is in this sense that this research delves into an apparent "zone of sameness" (Tucker, 2003:114) to explore differences in the experiences of a group of migrants. In so doing, important *hidden* geographies could be revealed in the process of bringing to light the experiences of *young* Polish migrants.

Contemporary studies suggest that notions of youth transitions are undergoing a variety of changes, elongating a period in the life course by shortening one's childhood and slowing one's 'entrance' to adulthood. It is additionally asserted that adulthood may not be the assumed destination for many young people, given its now identified 'insecurity' and the many different meanings of adulthood (Worth, 2011). The chapter considered the value of Arnett's (2000) theory of emerging adulthood as a tool to explain these changes, but determined that while these

conceptualisations may be illustrative of change, they lack important structural and spatial dimensions which may be significant in shaping transitions. Section 8.3.1 revisits the concept of emerging adulthood in relation to the accounts of young Polish migrants.

While transitions through the life course are suggested to be changing, the impacts of migration may add further complexity to these processes. By moving from a position of 'insideness' to one of 'outsideness', young Polish migrants could negotiate their transitions 'rapidly' as they are propelled from youth to adulthood gaining a number of factors: 'full adult income', 'economic independence', 'independent home' etc (see Jones, 2002). The processes of migration are asserted to have *foreseen* and *unforeseen* impacts, indicating that lived experiences are likely to be highly individual as each migrant has different measures defining their 'journey'. Thus, the process of 'growing-up' through migration for some will be foreseen, planned for and expected, whereas for others it will be unforeseen and spontaneously reacted to. Young Polish migrants are therefore suggested to have myriad perceptions and experiences based on their individualised pathways, creating a realm of diversity to explore.

Chapter 2 argued that migration has come to be understood as a social process, no longer thought of as beginning and ending with the movement from 'a to b'. Advocating a more complex research approach to exploring migration, Halfacree and Boyle (1993) suggest that to comprehend the implications of migration, research must be framed in relation to migrants' biographies. This chapter has outlined how many young people experience important 'events' within their biographies as they create, develop and solidify their self-understood position in adulthood. In exploring how these social processes may be entwined, two important transformations for young migrants are argued to occur: how they connect and relate with people(s) and place(s). The next chapter expands on these points by considering concepts of 'identity(ies)' and 'home(s)' to understand the experiences of young Polish migrants.

Chapter 4: Understanding the Impacts of Migration(s): Identity(ies), Belonging and Home(s)

4.1: Introduction

This chapter explores migrants' connections with people(s) and places, considering notions of 'identity' and 'home'. Young people in contemporary society are argued to have unique comprehensions of their own identity(ies)[13] and Chapter 3 revealed young people's complex understandings of life course developments (Bauman, 2007, Jones, 2009). Allport (1955:19, quoted in Worth, 2009:1054) points out that identity is constantly evolving, "...of becoming". With reference to newer ways of comprehending migration(s) (see Chapter 2), Nowicka (2006:173) argues that "identity has recently become one of the key concepts in an attempt to understand the complexities of the existence of contemporary men and women in the globalising world". Increasingly, migration(s) are understood as a social process, and transnational activity is likely to re-define meaning(s) of home as migrants develop identities that are more globally-orientated (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a). First, this chapter considers how identity has been theorised in academic enquiry, drawing out links to notions of home, specifically within the field of migration studies (Section 4.2). Secondly, the connections migrants have to *people* (through social networks of support) and *places* (through notions of home) will be contemplated (Section 4.3). Third, the chapter will consider perceived changes to a migrant's identity(ies), specifically the emergence of the 'hybrid' character and multiple relationships to place (Section 4.4).

4.2: Components of Identity and Identifications

This section will examine different interpretations of, and relationships between, identity(ies) and home(s), and review connections to studies of migration. The notion of identity receives widespread attention throughout the field of migration studies (Haritaworn, 2009,

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[13] The notion of identity is suggested to exist in a state 'becoming' (Worth, 2009). In this sense, a person's identity, or indeed identities are arguably multi-dimensional, both singular and plural (Jenkins, 2008), as individuals' identities are constructed differently across space and time (Goffman, 1959).

Kyriakides *et al.*, 2009, Mandaville, 2009, Strobanek, 2009, White, 2009a) but is profoundly difficult

to define and explain. Identity as a concept has been invested with many connotations, resulting in

many alternative understandings (Mercer, 1990). Jenkins (2008:5) explains that identity:

> "...involves knowing who we are, knowing who others are, them knowing who we
> are, us knowing who they think they are, and so on: a multi-dimensional
> classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and
> as members of collectivities".

Contemporary notions of identity increasingly draw on the concept of 'becoming', which

"seems to 'fit' the new kind of transitions present in late modernity" (Worth, 2009:1051). Exploring

the work of Gordon Allport (1955), Worth (2009) points out that his arguments draw connections

with post-structuralist understandings of identity: "while identity has some stable features, it is at

the same time continually undergoing change" (Allport, 1955:19, quoted in Worth, 2009:1053). This

point links with underpinning tensions between essentialist and non-essentialist positions. As

Woodward (1997) explains: an essentialist viewpoint asserts that there is one authentic set of

characteristics which one must have which remains over time, whereas non-essentialist perspectives

focus on the similarities and differences which shift through time between oneself and others[14].

Relph's (1976:1) assertion that "to be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places:

to be human is to have and to know your place" is particularly relevant here, as the identifications

people have with others are created within specific spatial contexts and at specific points in time. A

distinct characteristic of contemporary migrants is the possible range of allegiances they could have

to different places, at times across major boundaries, suggesting that 'home' for them is likely to be

multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-located (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002b). Section 7.4 considers

how home is understood by the young Polish migrants in this study and shows how their

experiences are influenced by a lack of everyday permanence.

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[14] The use of 'others' here refers to both individuals who have a shared 'identity' within a collectivity and those who do not.

Section 3.4 discusses how the process of migration has *foreseen* (Giddens, 1991) and *unforeseen* (Henderson *et al.*, 2007) impacts. The same point applies here with respect to one's sense of self and identifications with home. Linking with ideas of becoming (Worth, 2009), identity is suggested to no longer be understood as stable or fixed (Mercer, 1990) but rather as socially-produced and fluid (Hall, 1990). Hall (1996:4) asserts that "actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being...", the crucial point being that identity is not 'who we are' but how we are represented and what we could be. The process of migration may locate individuals in 'foreign' and sometimes hostile places, subjecting migrants to new and challenging influences shaping notions of 'self' and 'other' (Bagnoli, 2007). Giddens' (1991:53) understands 'self-identity' in relation to an individual's biography and suggests that while this continues to presume continuity across space(s) and time(s), "self-identity is such continuity as interpreted reflexively by the agent". This research explores young Polish migrants' experiences of migration and the ways in which they articulate relationships between these experiences and their sense of self (see Chapter 8) and 'place in the world' (see Section 7.4).

As an individual moves through spaces, their identity(ies) is/are influenced through migratory experiences (Hall, 1996). The changing state of an individual's identity(ies) may link with the entities an individual will, or equally will not, identify (Hall and du Gay, 1996). Each individual's heritage, nonetheless, is of great importance here. As Chambers (1994:24) notes, "our previous sense of knowledge, language and identity, our particular inheritance, cannot simply be rubbed out of the story, cancelled". When moving through space(s), an individual's identities are not destroyed but "taken apart, opened up to questioning, rewriting and re-routing" (Chambers, 1994:24). To clarify the distinctions between migrants' past and present identity(ies), a range of cultural theorists (Clifford, 1992, 1997, Gilroy, 1993, Hall, 1995) use the metaphors of 'roots/routes' to describe complex negotiations of identity.

Chapter 2 discusses how the homophones of root/routes have been used to weave together notions of identity with place and migrations (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Blunt and Dowling, 2006),

indicating their relevance to this project. Blunt and Dowling (2006:199) suggest that, at an individual level, 'roots' refers to an established sense of belonging, a person who has a place, while 'routes' does not have a fixed-place sense of belonging but rather is mobile and evolving, forming "often deterritorialized, geographies of home". Hall (1995) contends that the notion of routes offers an 'open' way to describe culture, a conceptual framework that imagines belonging**s** as fluid and not necessarily spatially fixed. The notion of roots is presented as an 'umbilical cord' connecting people to their culture of origin, a link to guide people back to where they belong, but is ultimately identified as a linear conceptualisation of culture (Hall, 1995). Gilroy (1993) argues that attention should be paid to overlapping routes to explain contemporary heterogeneous culture, as the idea of closed roots defines culture in a unified and homogeneous way. The notions of roots/routes, and their meanings, are paralleled within youth studies literature in the interplay between singular and plural representations and understandings of youth (Wyn and White, 1997) (see Section 3.2). Section 7.2 exposes the barometers of difference between participants and 'other' Polish migrants encountered, highlighting a realm of hidden diversity. The participants' accounts of migration, or engaging in routes, detail changes to their self-identities which they indicate distinguish them from peers in Poland (see Chapter 8).

One prominent approach to migration studies which utilises the roots/routes homophone extensively is research exploring how people exist in 'transnational communities' (Vertovec, 1999, 2001). Rather than viewing migration as a definite one-way movement of people, Salih (2002) explains that engagement with transnational networks in the contemporary world affords migrants opportunities to construct their lives across national borders (at times over large geographic scales) to maintain membership of their countries of origin and immigration. Colombo *et al*. (2009) insist, however, that the experience of transnationalism does not presuppose residence in two places; it is based on deep and lasting relationships of exchange, reciprocity and solidarity between multiple different places. Portes (1997:812) portrays 'transmigrants' as having "dense networks across political borders created by immigrants in their quest for economic advancement and social

recognition". Crucial in Portes' (1997) descriptions is transmigrants' ability to lead 'dual lives'. By this, Portes (1997) refers to transmigrants' often bilingual ability, the ease of shifting between differing dominant cultural spaces, and pursuit of economic, political and cultural interests that require their presence in both spaces. This indicates the importance of connections between language and notions of identity (see Section 4.3).

'Transnationalism' has been defined in different ways. Here, transnationalism is closely associated to Al-Ali and Koser's (2002b:2) idea of 'transnationalism from below', defined as "examining relationships that emanate from yet span two or more nation-states, and crucially where 'everyday' people are the principal agents". In this sense, Al-Ali and Koser (2002b) argue that motivations for engaging with transnational networks are not limited to reasons such as 'globalised capital' or 'international labour migration', but also include other purposes such as political engagement, nationalist sentimentality or the search for prestige. Rather than focus on macroeconomic processes fuelled by ideas of globalisation (i.e. 'transnationalism from above', see Guarnizo and Smith, 1998), the focus of this research, and the use of transnationalism, will centre on the everyday lives, practices and relationships of young Polish migrants.

Vertovec and Cohen (1999) define four main features of transnational populations: the opportunity to have multiple identities and multiple localities (see Section 4.4), the globalisation of kinship ties, the growth of remittances, and the disintegration of boundaries between host and home societies. These descriptions link closely with Bauman's (2007) observations of contemporary society, namely the movement from a 'solid' to 'liquid' phase of modernity. Bauman (2007) contends that the modern state's power to act is now moving to the politically uncontrolled 'global', while politics - the ability to determine direction and purpose of action - is unable to be effective on the 'global' as it remains 'local'. These insights are illustrative of the tensions that exist between ideas of roots and routes, in that the plurality that engaging with routes offers may be at the demise of national borders and boundaries (Hall, 1995). The importance and relevance of these ideas to this research project lie in influences that inform transmigrants' responses to different sets of

opportunities and shifting odds, calling for new ways of arranging their assets (Bauman, 2007).

Chapter 3 reveals the impacts of living in contemporary society on youth transitions. Here it is

argued that less security and permanence may be driving Polish migrants' movements as they weigh

up the possibilities of being either 'here' or 'there'. More efficient and practical methods of

communicating and travelling give potential for migrants to behave transnationally, maintaining the

connections that each individual deems necessary (Vertovec, 1999). With this in mind, key features

of this research project include insights into: the motivations compelling the movements of Polish

migrants (Section 6.2); the changing state of 'home' (Section 7.4), and the dynamism of Polish

migrants' connections within their social networks (Section 6.3).

When viewing identity and home as processes and as subject to change, experiences of

migration(s) may act as a catalyst in destabilising and bringing into question an individual's

identity(ies), following the crossing of a distinct boundary marking one space from another.

Moreover, mobilities that traverse frontiers of spaces may simultaneously unsettle and fracture

one's sense of self and spark new beginnings and transformations, having important implications for

how individuals make sense of home (de Block and Buckingham, 2007). Drawing upon survey results

from the *Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej* (CBOS[15]) polls, White (2010:569) asserts that attitudes

within Polish society are changing, rendering migration as the "obvious livelihood strategy" for

young people. While it can be argued migration (or mobility) is central to the contemporary world

(Hannam *et al.*, 2006), politically-charged subjects such as multiculturalism, integration and cohesion

have received notable attention within academic enquiry and the formation of policy. de Block and

Buckingham (2007) warn not to homogenise the assembly of migrant experiences into a single

'migrant identity'. Massey's (1992) contributions on the development and negotiation of power

relationships in a globalising world are significant to understanding the connections between

identity formation and migrations, and also the diversity of cultural structures of power to which

people are subject. The view that migrations involve the meeting of difference (de Block and

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[15] The CBOS is an independent public opinion research centre in Poland (see www.cbos.pl).

Buckingham, 2007), influencing processes of identity construction within specific contexts, highlights the importance of critical consideration of identity and home within migration studies.

In summary, identity and home have been suggested to be best understood as processes in which one's sense of self, and connections to place are negotiable and subject to change. The experience of migration, perhaps moving from a space of familiarity and comfort to a foreign place characterised by 'strangeness', arguably instigates a transformation in which an individual's identity(ies) is/are reconstituted in light of a new social position, and consequently one's relationships with home(s) are subject to modification. The homophones roots/routes are suggested to be particularly useful in describing a range of negotiations migrants experience. The discussion thus far has revealed a number of points to be considered; the following discussion considers firstly how an individual's connections to people, and secondly to place(s), may change through migratory experiences.

4.3: Migrants' Connections with People and Home(s)

This section examines the variety of connections migrants have to other people and their home(s), which are suggested to transform through engaging with routes while simultaneously influenced through roots. To illustrate the potential changes to relationships with *people,* the section will consider the concept of social networks. Stemming from this discussion, the importance of one's 'racial'/'ethnic' identity and 'language' proficiency will be demonstrated. The section will then move on to explore relationships with *place(s)*, examining 'home'.

4.3.1: Connections with People

Social Networks

Tensions between roots and routes may contribute to the formation of each migrant's social networks. Ryan *et al.* (2008:673) recognise that newly-arriving migrants "have differing abilities to access existing networks or establish new ties in the 'host' society". A useful aid in understanding

this process is Putnam's (2007:143-4) suggestion that social 'bonds' are "ties to people who are like me in some important way" and social 'bridges' are "ties to people who are unlike me in some important way". Social networks are crucial in facilitating the formation of community and the experience of belonging (Portes, 1997). Schaefer *et al.* (1981:385-386, quoted in Oakley, 1992:29), discern between three types of support structure to be found within social networks; emotional, informational and instrumental. Emotional support requires a high degree of trust, intimacy and attachment. Informational support involves the sharing of information and advice to assist in problem-solving. Instrumental, or tangible, support is providing direct resources, aid or services. Ryan *et al.* (2008, 2009a, 2009b) add to these 'companionship' and 'socializing'. They state that "companionship and socializing may involve varying combinations of casual, transient and long-established relationships" (Ryan *et al.*, 2009a:152). Section 6.3 reveals participants' accounts of social networks, describing changes in relation to their movements and detailing the importance of 'trust' and 'language'. Section 7.2 provides an overview of differences between Polish migrants which participants suggested influence the nature and strength UK-based social networks.

Laclau (1990:33) affirms that identity is constituted through excluding or repressing something it is not and "establishing a violent hierarchy between the resultant poles", having important implications for the construction of social networks. For instance, the man-woman or white-black binaries illustrate that constitution is based on difference, and Laclau (1990:33) argues that "what is peculiar to the second term is thus reduced to the function of an accident as opposed to the essentiality of the first". Laclau's (1990) assertions indicate that the terms 'woman' and 'black' are 'marks': terms that are invested with wider meanings dissimilar to the unmarked labels of 'man' and 'white'. The importance of 'markers' to the constitution of identities, reinforced through Hall's (1996) and Bhabha's (1994b) accounts, signals the influence that power and exclusion have to a person's identities. With an understanding that certain 'markers' will shape people's connections in everyday life, this research aims to assess what it means to be Polish in Northamptonshire and how migrants' 'Polishness' affects their social networks (see Section 7.2).

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Nowicka (2006) distinguishes between individual and social forms of identity. 'Individual' identity here refers to self-definition and the way one thinks about oneself (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001), and the facets of identity linked to feelings of stability and inimitability (Tajfel, 1982). Whereas 'individual' identity refers to features of one's self that could be described as idiosyncratic, the features of 'social' identity foster a sense of 'we' as opposed to 'I' (Gilroy, 1997), what Hall (1996) sees as 'identifications' and links with social networking practices. This distinction is important when exploring the connections between migration and identities, as migrants are subject to a number of pressures shaping their individual and social identities as they move from the social position of existing on the 'inside' (characterised by normality, familiarity and security) to existing on the 'outside' (embodied by strangeness, negotiation and fear). Grove and Zwi (2006) argue, adopting an 'othering' framework, that migrants experience marginalisation, disempowerment and social exclusion by living outside of their 'proper' place. The suggestion that one can lose 'their place' is reiterated in Chan's (1999) reflections on her own experiences of migration. For example, a sense of metaphorical distance was created between herself and those who remain 'at home', but also with new connections with those in her immigration country, being designated as 'on the outside' (Relph, 1976). She found that she "*could no longer engage in meaningful conversation with the few friends who were still living in Hong Kong… and did not share my worldview on many things*" (Chan, 1999:177). While the impacts of migration can be argued to be multifarious, shifting through time and space, such effects are critical to *established* and in *establishing* ties within migrants' social networks (Callender, 2011b).

In Watt and Stenson's (1998) study, participants explained how they sought refuge and comfort in particular urban spaces when in the company of specific groups of people: "*Where I feel at home is the Streetville area 'cos there's a lot of Asians in Streetville… I feel safe when there's more Asians and when I know them*". This suggests they experienced a feeling of belonging within their ethnic group, with social networks building from these founding identifications. Ryan *et al.'s* (2008) study indicates, however, that newly-arriving Poles' social networks are vulnerable not only to

people existing outside of their own ethnic group (bridges), but also those from within (bonds). Although many migrants worked within ethnic-specific networks with strong bonds, these relationships were found to be limited and limiting as other people were also seen as competition to scarce resources (Ryan *et al.*, 2008). Ryan *et al.* (2009a:161) identify a tension between circles of Polish friends who provide support and the wider Polish community(ies) which is identified as unhelpful or dangerous. Ryan *et al.* (2008) signify that newly-arriving Polish migrants are placed in the precarious position of dependency on these ties to survive, making them vulnerable to exploitation by others within Polish communities, a point revisited in Section 6.3. Some sections of the British media have revealed cases of migrants being exploited. For example, the *Guardian* reported on a 'gangmaster' who threatened and abused Polish and Slovakian migrants in the agricultural sector (Lewis, 2008). The position of newly-arriving migrants, especially those without existing ties to social networks, could be characterised as transforming, uncertain and isolating. The discussion will now move on to consider how one's racial or ethnic identity influences how migrants connect with other people.

Race/Ethnicity

This section explores ways in which an individual's perceived racial/ethnic identity signifies them as being something 'other' and not existing in their 'proper place' (Grove and Zwi, 2006) while living in routes culture through migration. Valentine (2001:342) defines ethnicity as "the social categorisation of people on the basis of learnt cultural differences/lifestyle". In defining ethnicity, Valentine (2001) indicates an overlap with notions of 'race', the key distinction being that the social categorisation of race is based on perceived physical characteristics. Brah (1992:126) affirms that "no matter how often the concept is exposed as vacuous, 'race' still acts as an apparently ineradicable marker of social difference". Jackson (1998a) argues that it is now recognised that race and ethnicity are social constructions rather than being 'essentialised' biological elements. Contemporary approaches, incorporating these 'newer' ways of understanding race and ethnicity,

have moved away from mapping distributions of racial groups towards examining meanings, definitions and constructions of racial groups and the processes through which groups are racialised (Holloway, 2005). Indeed, Holloway (2000) documents that the movement towards constructionist philosophies has revealed racial identity to be no longer accepted as pre-determined through biology, nor fixed over time and space.

Much previous migration research in the UK has been concerned with migrants having distinctive features - such as 'skin colour' - that set 'them' apart from host communities (Brah, 1992). Brah (1992) argues that the term 'black' was used extensively to define the experiences of African-Caribbean and South Asian groups in post-war Britain, acting as a marker of difference whereby their 'non-whiteness' was a regular referent in the racism confronting them. Such experiences demonstrate racial harassment derived from 'white territorialism', where some 'white' people have used various forms of discrimination to defend boundaries (whether real or imagined) between 'us' and 'them' (Watt and Stenson, 1998). With a strong affinity to their roots, and a simultaneous disregard for their own routes, some 'white' people have attempted to repel and weaken the power of those they perceive do not belong, those who represent intercultural mixture and movement, with their active connections to routes: namely migrants. When considering the use of race throughout academic enquiry, Valentine (2001:346) suggests that "race is often thought of in terms of a black-white binary in which black is constructed as inferior to white". Such assumptions, however, have been shown to marginalise and discriminate against ethnic minorities.

Whilst the use of terms such as 'black' has been shown to be inappropriate and inadequate (Brah, 1992), these mobilisations serve to locate 'whiteness' at the centre. Dyer (1988) argues that the normative and socially transparent nature of whiteness makes it particularly difficult to research, as studies of 'race' were in effect studies of 'non-white' groups. Bonnett (1997) discusses how the racial group of 'white' has been arguably viewed as hierarchically superior to 'other' colours, in terms of symbolic value. Further, he asserts that many academic scholars have failed to scrutinise 'whiteness' as a subject, and have implicitly associated terms such as 'race' or 'ethnicity' with groups

defined as 'non-white'. Dyer (1992:46) comments that "it is the way black people are marked as

black..." and 'white' people are nonexistent. 'White' is not a homogeneous social group; there are a

series of 'white' marginal groups, some of which may have been invisible in previous research.

Saynor (1995, quoted in Bonnett, 1997:198) illustrates the centrality and normality of 'whiteness'

declaring that:

> "it would be hard to imagine someone writing a book about what it means to be
> white. Most white people don't consider themselves to be part of a race that needs
> examining. They are the natural order of things".

Holloway (2005) maintains that current geographical debates reflect an immense shift in

how race and ethnicity are theorised, and have emphasised the need to explore the concept of

'whiteness' (Bonnett, 1997, 2000, Holloway, 2000, 2005, 2007, Jackson, 1998a, Kobayashi and

Peake, 2000, Panelli *et al.*, 2008). This research contributes to this growing body of literature by

identifying the markers that locate young Polish migrants as a minority group who are "imagined as

'not quite' white" (Hubbard, 2005:12).

Examining attitudes towards rural Gypsy-Travellers, Holloway (2007) suggests that some

'white' people find it extremely hard to distinguish between a 'white' ethnic minority and

themselves, leading to situations where racist remarks or attacks have occurred without an

acknowledgement or awareness of racist intent. Using the media coverage of an annual bonfire

celebration in Firle, Sussex as her example, Holloway (2007) illustrates an explicit refusal by those

participating in an event inciting racial hatred to acknowledge a racial difference between the

residents of Firle and Gypsy-Travellers. Hubbard (2004:52), in his research with asylum seekers in

Nottinghamshire, argues that protests against proposed accommodation centres constituted an

"attempt to defend the privileges of an 'unmarked' whiteness against the imagined threat of a

racialised other", whereby local campaigners failed to recognise their own 'whiteness'. Chapter 5

details the project design showing that, rather than defining an ethnic/racial basis on which

difference(s) are understood, participants were encouraged to frame their experiences and diversity on their own terms, identifying factors important to them in relation to their biographies.

Language

The association between language and social networks is another important topic to explore. Colombo *et al.* (2009:44) argue that "in particular, language appears to be the main symbolic factor marking the boundaries between... different groups". In relation to Poles residing in the UK, language may at times be the only 'obvious' difference locating individuals as being from an 'other' white group[16]. The transnational character is often understood to have a bilingual ability (Portes, 1997). By capitalising upon these skills, a transmigrant is able to pursue new cultural, social and economic opportunities. The abilities of migrants residing in the UK to speak English has received widespread media coverage, with particular focus on employment (Barrow and Sims, 2009). These types of articles highlight the importance of examining language as a marker of an individual's identity, with a particular focus on inclusionary or exclusionary ramifications.

Verkuten (1997) defines identity as what people conceive themselves to be in a specific context, or into which category they belong. This distinction reveals how the notion of identity is entwined with the concept of space(s). Valentine *et al.* (2008:385) argue that "the relationship between language and space is not a one-way process; rather they are mutually constituted". In their study of Somali young people (aged 11-18 years old) living in the UK, the intricacies between languages and spaces were revealed to be of great importance to how individuals made sense of their identities in specific places. It was found "for many of the children interviewed you are what you speak, and what you speak is where you are" (Valentine *et al.*, 2008:385). As individuals move through space, their identities shift to encompass the norms of the particular places, highlighting the fluidity of identity. Valentine *et al.* (2008:384) conclude that language practices have received little

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[16] In the 2002 Polish census (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2010), 96.7% described themselves as Polish. The lack of diversity within Poland and sense of 'whiteness' was raised in Harker's (2009) article in the *Guardian*, describing how a 'black face' was altered to 'white' in a Microsoft® promotional campaign.

attention by geographers despite the "pivotal" position language has in relation to everyday life. Section 7.2 reveals how English-speaking abilities are assessed by young Poles and act as a key marker of difference between peers.

Chambers (1994:22) suggests that "language is not primarily a means of communication... [it is] a means of cultural construction in which our very selves and sense are constituted", and indicates that for 'transmigrants' (Portes, 1997, Vertovec, 1999, 2001), moving between languages is a difficult task to accomplish. Findlay *et al.'s* (2004) research with English migrants now residing in Scotland reveals language use to be intricate and complex. The participants of their research were, on the whole, individuals whose biological (visual) identities were the same as the dominant host population. Nonetheless, a distinct 'otherness' existed defined by accent. In essence, different accents marked out certain people as having different roots. Findlay *et al.* (2004:74) comment that "'accent' as a marker, both positive and negative, of invisible identities therefore exposed the 'otherness' of many English migrants to Scotland". Despite many research participants sharing a frustrated desire to 'belong', many described an idiosyncratic 'distance' between the host population and themselves. Here, the use of language and connections to routes culture are shown to be central markers, transforming an individual's social position from somebody on the inside (based on visual appearance) to someone on the outside (based on their use of language). The complexity of connections between language and belonging indicate that the abilities of Polish migrants to speak English may not necessarily be enough to transcend the 'divide' between migrant and host communities, something which some sections of the media define as key to integration (Whitehead, 2008).

Simmel's (1971) notion of the 'stranger', the constitution of a group of people who are at the same time geographically close and culturally or socially distant is particularly relevant not only to the English participants of Findlay *et al.'s* (2004) study, but also to newly-arriving Poles residing in the UK. Accents mark some individuals as being different, perhaps influencing the width and depth of social networks accessible. Nowicka (2006:1082) acknowledges that "language is an extremely

important element of culture and ethnic identification", raising difficulties for migrants in acquiring or preserving a 'proper' place in society. Findlay *et al.'s* (2004) research also illustrated that some felt it a necessity to be assimilated with wider society, but simultaneously viewed it is important to maintain aspects of their former identity. This is, in essence, the contradictory dilemma for migrants: the extent to which one's self-identity transforms at the detriment of deep-rooted norms and value-sets. This dilemma also has important consequences for an individual's experience of home, particularly pertinent when considering the experiences of return-migrants.

This section has underlined the importance of the relationship between migrants' relationships with people and identity(ies) by considering social networks, racial/ethnic identities and the use of language. When attempting to gain access to particular social networks, the decision to include or exclude, relate or repel, is arguably based upon an individual's identity(ies). Ryan *et al.'s* (2008) research suggests that many newly-arriving Polish migrants find themselves located within ethnic-specific networks to survive, yet the issue of trust is particularly challenging especially in environments where the availability of resources is scarce. The proficiency of English language skills is suggested to be imperative when attempting to transcend ethnic-specific ties (Ryan *et al.*, 2008). This project seeks to explore young Polish migrants' experiences through revealing factors they consider to be important in shaping their encounters with other people in their social bonds and bridges. The above discussion points to a number of ways in which the experiences of migrants are influenced by their encounters with other people. Migrants' relationships to place will now be considered, focussing on notions of home.

4.3.2: Connections with Home(s)

Before discussing migrants' potential relationships with home, it is important to ponder what is actually meant by 'home'. In their seminal book, '*Home*', Blunt and Dowling (2006:1) raise questions about the multiple meanings of home: "What does home mean to you? Where, when and why do you feel at home?". Holloway and Hubbard (2001) understand home as being linked to

complex sets of meanings, simultaneously being places of rest and resistance, and places of 'privacy', 'security' and 'escape'. The range of meanings attributed to home, and the tensions that exist between physical and emotional dimensions, can be further debated in relation to migration.

Home has been conceptualised in a variety of ways, but can in many cases be related to a sense of belonging, in a national, cultural or social sense. It can equally be, however, a place where one does not belong, encompassing feelings of fear, alienation and violence (Blunt and Varley, 2004, Massey, 1992). These feelings, both of exclusion and belonging, are asserted to be intrinsically spatial (Blunt and Dowling, 2006), as people connect their myriad feelings to particular contexts, thus creating a personal constellation of 'places' which extend across scales and spaces (Tuan, 1977). Tolia-Kelly (2004a) asserts that, rather than disconnect from one's 'rooted' home, by situating identity(ies) within mobile geographies (routes), the experiences of past homes remain as one moves closer to one's next home. It is in this sense that the multi-scalar nature of home is reinforced, as individuals come to terms with their routes (Gilroy, 1993), especially in the case of migrants. This research seeks to reveal how young Polish migrants define home, and in so doing, explore how these feelings shape and influence everyday life. For the participants in this research, moving to the UK could be their first experience of leaving the 'parental home' and creating an independent home, a traditional marker of 'adulthood' (Jones, 2002, van Gennep, 1960). Thus, by examining notions of home, this research explores changes in connections with space(s) and place(s), but also transitions through the life course (see Chapter 3).

Home is a complex geographical concept with multiple meanings, existing on a range of scales (Blunt, 2005, Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Blunt and Varley, 2004). While there are valuable contributions utilising terms such as 'house' and 'household' (see Miller (2001), Tolia-Kelly (2004a, 2004b, 2010), on material cultures, Klaufus (2006), Llewellyn (2004) on architecture), the focus of enquiry here is on how socio-spatial relations and emotions define home rather than 'the home'. Drawing on the metaphors of roots and routes, the movements of young Polish migrants may unsettle traditional understandings of their rooted home, as they negotiate new cultural influences

within their own identity(ies) (see Section 4.4) while creating a home of routes. Thus, a key concern of this research is the spatial imagery of home. The Polish word *dom* means house, home, family, residence and residency simultaneously (Datta, 2008, Datta and Bricknell, 2009, Shallcross, 2002). Rabikowska and Burrell (2009:219) observe that while Polish customers' interactions in Polish shops tend to be minimal, "more than any social function, it is the atmosphere of home which is valued most highly, alongside the authenticity of the food imported from Poland". Section 7.4 reveals how some participants described a sense of comfort and homeliness provided by Polish shops and places in Northamptonshire.

When considering the centrality of home to migrants' experiences, Al-Ali and Koser (2002b:1) argue that "the changing relationship between migrants and their 'homes' is ... an almost quintessential characteristic of transnational migration". Chan (1999) argues that, regardless of social position or status, the impacts of migration force individuals to re-assess priorities and expectations. Chan (1999) demonstrates how migrants must confront a shift in cultural habitat both physically (the urban environment) and culturally (different interpretations of 'the everyday'). Using empirical data, Chan (1999:77) illustrates the turbulent effects on a migrant's sense of 'self' in negotiating these changes: "*I felt like a mentally handicapped person in the first year, and I had to relearn everything from taking the bus to cooking with a stove*". The 'disorder' and 'amendments' of a migrant's identity(ies) raise a series of questions over how home is understood.

Concentrating on the interplay between roots and routes, there are a number of important implications for how transmigrants experience home. Blunt and Dowling (2006) suggest that whilst roots might imply the scattering of people from an 'original homeland', the idea of routes complicates these notions, focussing on the multiple, mobile and transcultural geographies of home. hooks' (1991:148) understanding of home as a fluid and mobile place enabling new and varied perspectives, "a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference", is particularly relevant here in highlighting the connections between interpretations of identity and home, and the potential influences migratory experiences may have in shaping these concepts.

Indeed, Armbuster (2002) with reference to fieldwork with Syrian Christians in Turkey and Germany, understands home as being directly linked to notions of identity and belonging. The distinctions between roots and routes can be identified in part in how migrants have been or are understood. Some migrants are interpreted as 'long-distance nationalists' (roots) (Glick Schiller *et al.*, 1995) - individuals who engage politically in cultural essentialism and nationalism (Armbuster, 2002) - and others are understood as 'transmigrants' (routes) - those with 'dual', 'multiple' or 'hybrid' identities (Rouse, 1991, Portes, 1997). Contemporary Polish migrants are suggested to move between Poland and the UK with relative ease, some staying in the UK for short-term contracts of employment (Gilpin *et al.*, 2006), in essence maintaining and forging links across national borders. It is argued that contemporary geographical mobility has resulted in people's lives overlapping (socially, culturally and politically) multiple spaces (Spicer, 2008). The roots/routes metaphor will be used to make sense of transmigrants' changing connections with home, linking with Armbuster's (2002:18) arguments against the idealised rhetoric used by some "as a 'fractured' subject who operates easily in different cultural worlds".

Salih (2002:52) considers the impacts of transnational relations, suggesting that romanticised and celebratory language of transmigrant 'duality' "may paradoxically reinforce feelings of living in more than one country but belonging to 'neither' place". 'Living in limbo' is argued to be an important aspect of being a transmigrant and issues relating to a state of indeterminacy are evident in the literature (Bagnoli, 2007). For instance, Al-Ali's (2002) reflections on research with Bosnian refugees in the UK and the Netherlands demonstrate tensions surrounding participants' sense of belonging to Bosnia on the one hand, and new beginnings and survival strategies in their country of refuge on the other. Furthermore, Nowicka (2006) explores how young Poles can be identified as having a 'dual identity'. This was expressed as a sense of marginality and incompleteness, showing that the notion of duality is not as simple as being 'half and half'. For some of Nowicka's (2006:1078) participants, the concepts of belonging and inclusion are negotiated through struggle in their daily lives: *"I'm here and something pulls me there right now. But when I'm*

there, something pulls me here". The arguments made here indicate that many transmigrants'

perceptions of everyday life can be can be expressed as existing 'in-between' two cultures; as not

belonging either 'here' nor 'there'.

Discussions of the implications for migrants arising from leading a transnational life have

focused on how a transmigrant interprets their own place, or lack thereof, in the world. Although

'local people's[17]' interpretations of migrants are not being directly examined in this research project,

transmigrants' interpretations of how they are perceived by 'local people' in place(s) are considered

to highlight how these perceptions may exacerbate feelings of exclusion. In Valentine *et al.*'s

(2008:381) research with Somali young people, participants spoke of the difference that was

ascribed to their identities having real effects on their feelings of security and safety: "*they used to*

turn around and stare at us and they knew that we were not from here... there's a lot of people now

these days that are scared to go to Somalia". The spaces that one travels through and between have

varying cultural norms and values within them, influencing how an individual will be perceived and

understood (Valentine *et al.*, 2008). The impacts of having what would be considered a 'dual

identity', or an identity infused with 'foreign' markers, are profound and meaningful, influencing

how an individual will make sense of their identity(ies) and construct a social identity that will be

read. For individuals engaging in transnational networks and 'elastic' migration (Van Houtum and

Gielis, 2006), the mixing of cultural elements may alter the perceptions other individuals have of

them, exemplifying Hall's (1987:44) comment that "migration is a one way trip. There is no 'home' to

go back to". Building upon the work of Hall (1987), Armbuster (2002) argues that it is important to

consider not only migrant subjectivities *between* cultures, but also movements and border crossings

within cultures. This project will consider how Polish migrants interpret their connections with and

experiences of home *without* (between English and Polish) and also *within* Polish communities (both

based in England and Poland) (see Section 6.3).

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[17] 'Local people' will be defined here as those who transmigrants define as 'being in-place', those seen to
'belong'.

Aspects of transnational networks are travels to, from and between an immigration country and country of origin. It is important to consider how transmigrants experience home in these contexts. Chan's (1999) research with return migrants illustrates how many participants viewed the changes in their identity(ies), through migratory experiences, as being positive, with many perceiving themselves as being a 'better' person. The differences Chan's (1999:178) participants described between themselves (return migrants) and '*Xianggangren*' (people of Hong Kong) were related to materialistic goals, status anxiety, ambition, avoidance of responsibility, lack of openness and courtesy. The process of migration has both foreseen and unforeseen effects (see Section 6.4) on an individual's identity(ies), consequently influencing understandings of home. Chan (1999) concludes that return migrants' migratory experiences had sharpened their perception of home culture and deepened their understanding of it.

Psychological impacts on self-esteem are important to consider in relation to how migrants present themselves and share experiences when returning to their place of origin. Reyneri (2001) indicates that migrants are more likely to portray themselves as being content to those at home, because to do otherwise would render their time away from home as wasted and label their journey as failed. In this sense, a return migrant's accounts of 'accelerated self-growth' or attainments of 'wisdom' could be reflective of casting one's identity(ies) positively, providing a 'smokescreen' for the potential realities of being dubbed an 'other' and of losing one's place. Linking with these ideas, Section 7.2 shows that some participants in this study described being 'trapped' in the UK, feeling unable to return to Poland.

Overall, it is suggested that the ways in which individuals connect and relate to people and place(s) through experiences associated with migration are likely to be multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-located (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a). This section has demonstrated that the experiences of migration can potentially limit the scope of social networks, as migrants' identity(ies) may encompass 'otherness'. When relating these ideas to a migrant's connections with their place of

origin, engagement with transnational networks has the potential to foster a sense of losing one's 'place', of belonging neither 'here' nor 'there'.

4.4: Migration as a Transformative Experience

This section explores notions of 'hybridity' to further illustrate ways in which migratory influences to identity(ies) and home(s) have been theorised. Identity(ies) is/are argued to be constructed through representation (see Section 4.2) and to evolve throughout an individual's 'journey' through life (Hall, 1996). Migration is presented as a catalyst for change in identity(ies), because of a movement from the familiar to the strange, from one's roots to routes (de Block and Buckingham, 2007, Nowicka, 2006). Chambers (1994) asserts that when moving through space(s) an individual's identity(ies) are brought into question, modifying through time (re-routing). Changes to an individual's identity(ies) influence which identifications an individual will and will not have (Hall, 1996). This section considers the applicability of hybridity as a means of describing and accounting for shifts within migrants' identity(ies).

In post-modern accounts that favour constructionist stances, migrants are seen as challenging traditional notions of home and identity through their multiple allegiances to people and place(s) (see Section 4.3). Hutnyk (2005) points out that although the origins of the concept of 'hybridity' lie in biology and botany, it has received notable attention from a wide range of cultural theorists including Homi Bhabha, Iain Chambers, James Clifford, Paul Gilroy and Stuart Hall. Perhaps the most interesting element of hybridity in relation to this research project is its connection to the concepts of transnationalism and diaspora[18] (see Section 2.1). As Chambers and Curtis (1996) have argued, hybridity is a process of mixing through which migrants adopt specific elements from the host culture which modify their identity(ies) to produce hybrid cultures and identities. Dwyer (1999) recognises how the concepts of transnationalism and diaspora challenge the view that identities are located in fixed places and instead explores how diasporic cultures are created through the mixing of

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[18] The term 'diaspora' refers to the unique and complex belongings of peoples who are dispersed across geographic boundaries (Cohen, 2008).

cultural elements. The effects of a fusion of cultural elements may instil a sense of 'placelessness' for contemporary migrants, calling into question more romantic interpretations of mixture (see Section 4.3).

Combining theoretical lenses, Bhabha (1990) views hybridity as a 'thirdspace' in which other positions emerge, rather than identifying two original moments or cultures from which the 'third' arises. Within this thirdspace, histories that constitute the origin are displaced to allow new ways to exist which cannot be understood through conventionally received wisdom (Bhabha, 1990). Smith (1999:21) believes that thirdspace:

> "turns our attention away from the givens of social categories and towards the strategic process of identification. It forces us to accept the complexity, ambiguity and multi-dimensionality of identity and captures the way that class, gender and 'race' cross-cut and intersect in different ways at different times and places".

Rose's (1993:140) descriptions of 'paradoxical spaces' suggest that individuals can occupy "spaces that would be mutually exclusive if charted on a two-dimensional map - centre and margin, inside and outside spaces". Whether 'hybrid' (Bhabha, 1994a, Hutnyk, 2005), 'paradoxical' (Rose, 1993) or 'third' (Bhabha, 1990, Soja, 1996), these conceptualisations of space have opened up new ways of viewing and interpreting the spaces that people encounter, interact with and experience within their everyday lives. Smith (1999:21) argues that "thirdspaces may provide an opportunity to move beyond our historic preoccupation with social divisions - with what holds people apart - and think about what is gained from a discourse of belonging". Section 7.2 reveals a 'Framework of Difference' (Figure 7.1) which is shown to inform participants' social networks with peers while in the UK. While the framework is constructed around four overlapping categories that distinguish between Polish migrants, the framework is simultaneously (and equally) about the factors that bring individuals together in communities of belonging through space and time.

Integral to the notion of a hybrid migrant identity is the proposition that a non-hybrid migrant identity exists (Hutnyk, 2005). The concept of a 'pure' and complete identity poses a considerable problem for theorising 'the hybrid'. The reason for this is that identity is conceived of as a process or as 'becoming' (Worth, 2009), but the notion of a pure identity implicitly implies a sense of completeness, contradicting the fragility of identity and its susceptibility to change (Chambers and Curtis, 1996). This predicament for hybridity theorists has led some to frustration:

> "the idea of hybridity, of intermixture, presupposes two anterior purities... I think there isn't any purity... that's why I try not to use the word hybrid... cultural production is not like mixing cocktails" (Gilroy, 1994:54-5).

Hutnyk (2005:98) examines the concept of hybridity arguing that contemporary ways of seeing the world, especially in viewing identity(ies) as being constructed through representation, result in a "truism that everything is hybrid, but surely leads to the torturous reasoning of: 'if so, so what?' Stasis". Despite the assertion that everyone's identity(ies) can be seen to be hybrid - in that the idea of a pure, un-negotiated identity existing is unattainable - the process of an individual's identity(ies) hybridising is arguably complex and profound. It has implications for how some individuals will be perceived by others and experience space(s), influencing the identifications individuals may or may not have. It is in this sense that the concept of hybridity may be of use in revealing how young Polish migrants acclimatise to the UK and the implications of this for their sense of 'self', 'other' and home.

Kosic (2006:254) argues that:

> "immigrants, staying abroad for several years (either sporadically or more permanently), acquire new habits and start also to find it hard to imagine themselves living in their home country. They are virtually *foreigners* in a world that seems increasingly foreign to them".

Kosic's (2006) point draws attention to the influences of culture, and cultural backgrounds, to modifications to a migrant's 'self-identity'. A migrant culture, hybridising through representation, "mediates, in a lived tension, the experiences of separation and entanglement, of living here and remembering/desiring another place" (Clifford, 1994:307). In relation to notions of transmigrant communities, Gabriel (2006:35) indicates that "the tensions migrants face in negotiating life between two distinct ethnic cultures" have implications for how individuals' identifications are understood. Gabriel's (2006) study reveals a number of migrant experiences in relation to the management of a 'cultural distance', ranging from the development of 'multiple selves', an affirmation of shared local values, the dissolving of ties to avoid difference and the reinvention of relationships (Gabriel, 2006). An aim of this project is to explore the ways in which young Polish migrants' identities change through migratory experiences. Conceptualisations of hybridity suggest that notions of belonging and exclusion are likely to be intricate and complex.

A previous point made in relation to a migrant's sense of self is the development of a dual identity (Portes, 1997). The effect of a hybridising identity can be argued to be of great magnitude, influencing how individuals make sense of their own identity(ies) and how one's social identity is read. Goffman's (1971) assertions that the self is no longer viewed as complete and stable, but is re-orchestrated in the particular places one inhabits bear much resemblance to the notion of a dual identity (Hall and du Gay, 1996). An ascribed 'otherness' is arguably cast onto many transnational migrants' identity(ies) with an consequential loss of spatial belonging; of existing neither 'here' nor 'there' (Valentine *et al.*, 2008).

It is suggested that one of the perceived benefits of engaging with networks that exist transnationally is the ability to shift between spaces whilst pursuing economic, political and cultural interests (Portes, 1997). Despite Colombo *et al.'s* (2009) assertions that residence in two places is necessary, the development of a hybrid identity arguably unsettles and disrupts the networks one has within particular places. For instance, Valentine *et al.'s* (2008:381) research shows that an 'otherness' is attributed to individuals' identity(ies) that results in the perception that "*they knew we*

were not from here" for migrants returning to Somalia. One marker of this is through the performance of language, where shared language reduced identifications of 'otherness' but accents marked the boundaries of 'insideness' and 'outsideness'.

More ambiguous markers of difference were articulated by participants in Valentine *et al.'s* (2008:380) study:

> "*when we used to go to Somalia a lot of people used to say 'oh you lot, people from England'. And I just said to my Mum 'how do they know?' And My Mum goes 'that's how they are because of your walk and the way you talk'*".

Here, the "experiential rift between the locations of residence and the locations of belonging" (Gilroy, 2000:124) is revealed not only through the use of language but also in other embodied performances of identity, indicating the possible effects as an individual moves further from their roots. Thus, a perceived 'distance' is established for migrants who return to their place of origin because of acquired skills and behaviours. The changes referred to here are subtle - not a major transformation of identity but rather a collection of minor alterations. This reinforces and highlights Hall's (1987:44) view that "migration is a one way trip". The implications for one's identity(ies) are important, complex and intricate, and can result in major changes to the ways in which individuals experience spaces of inclusion and exclusion, as their identities alter whilst moving through space.

The transforming effect to an individual's 'self' identity(ies) here is argued to be substantial, drawing implications for the level of satisfaction one has with their everyday environments. Crucially in the context of this research project, alterations to an individual's 'self' identity(ies) will also arguably affect the sense of belonging an individual has to 'places' or 'collectivities'. It is in this sense that the relevance of concepts of hybridity are made clear, as an individual's identifications have been argued to be an important element underpinning how they will make sense of, and experience self, other and home. While hybridity has been shown to be problematic conceptually (Gilroy, 1994),

it provides layers of consideration when exploring accounts of identity shifts and 'liminal' experiences. Stemming from this discussion, the remainder of the thesis will focus upon notions of 'belonging', 'exclusion' and 'otherness' in relation to participants' accounts.

4.5: Summary

This chapter has considered notions of identity(ies) and home in relation to studies of migratory experiences. The process of migration can be seen as a catalyst, destabilising notions of self and other, belonging and exclusion. The metaphors of roots/routes were shown to be useful in weaving together identity and home within migratory experiences. Nowicka (2006) positions identity as a key concept through which the complexities of people's lives can be explored, and changes to young Poles' senses of self form one of the key aims of this research. Reflecting on the movements across and between space(s) that migration involves, Al-Ali and Koser (2002a) illustrate how home is likely to be redefined. This is further explored in Section 7.4 in relation to young Polish migrants' biographical accounts.

It can be argued that migrants' connections to people and place(s) are reconstituted through the process of migration. Section 4.3 explored studies of migrants' connections to people by considering notions of social networks. The importance of racial/ethnic identities and language in informing the relative strengths of social ties were also explored, while notions of home were contemplated to examine how such identity shifts may be translated in spatial dimensions. The chapter evaluated the concept of hybridity as a means of expressing the mixing and fusion of different cultural elements within people's constructed and performed identities. Noting the complexity and intricateness of conceptualising notions of identity and home, in addition to ideas of 'ongoingness' (Horton and Kraftl, 2006) and becoming (Worth, 2009), this research explores young Polish migrants' experiences in relation to their biographies.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 have sought to provide a framework through which the experiences of young Polish migrants in Northamptonshire can be understood. Chapter 2 considered the themes of

mobility, transnationalism and diaspora, which are central to studies of migratory experiences. It can be suggested that concepts such as identity, home and social networks are increasingly used to uncover the effects of migratory experiences to an individual's sense of self. Young people have complicated interpretations of their own sense of self and progress, becoming defined and understood individually in reaction to societal shifts in late modernity (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991). Specifically, transitions for young people today are argued to be multi-layered and multi-dimensional resulting in the lengthening of youth for many young people. Building on discussion emanating from Chapters 2 and 3, Chapter 4 attempted to provide a framework through which to understand the experiences of migration for young Poles in Northamptonshire through a critical appraisal of the concepts of identity(ies) and home(s). The next chapter outlines the methods used to explore the migratory experiences of young Poles.

Chapter 5: Method

5.1: Introduction

Previous chapters have shown the importance of A8 migratory flows to the UK and that, at present, relatively little is known about migrants' motivations, experiences or intentions. This project seeks to address this gap through in-depth exploration of young Polish migrants' biographies. The chapter outlines the research design, explains why Northamptonshire was an appropriate site for the research, and provides socio-demographic information about the research sample (Section 5.2). The techniques adopted to achieve the research aims are discussed and appraised (Section 5.3). The processes of analysis and dissemination are considered (Section 5.4), and issues of working with participants 'cross-culturally' and the importance of 'positionality' discussed (Section 5.5). Ethical considerations are also outlined (Section 5.6).

5.2: Project Design

This section provides a detailed overview of the study site (Section 5.2.1) exposing the reasons underpinning the selection of Northamptonshire, followed by an overview of available population data that explain the decision to focus on young Polish migrants (5.2.2). The section then illustrates the profile of the sample in relation to the recruitment strategy (5.2.3).

5.2.1: Study Area

Section 2.4 provided a detailed overview of contemporary flows of Polish migration to the UK and demonstrated how Polish nationals form a dominant proportion of the A8 migrant population (Burrell, 2009a, Drinkwater *et al.*, 2006, Pollard *et al.*, 2008, Sumption, 2009). While precise data on the number of A8 nationals residing in the UK is not available, Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) data provide useful, though partial (see Section 2.4), insights into the nature of these movements. The centrality of Northamptonshire as a key space for A8 migratory activity is demonstrated when comparing WRS registrations with Local Authority Areas (LAAs). Table 5.1

illustrates the top five of 342 LAAs for approved WRS registrations between May 2004 to December 2007. Table 5.2 shows the top five LAAs with the highest proportion of A8 workers per 1,000 residents based on Pollard *et al.'s* (2008) estimates[19] of A8 population stock. Section 2.4.3 detailed the geography of inward A8 migrations to the UK, indicating that A8 migrations are distinctly different from previous immigration flows that favoured larger cities and the south east (BBC News, 2011). Indeed, it can be argued A8 migratory flows favour smaller town locations such as those found in Northamptonshire (Callender, 2011c). Tables 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate that the research site of Northamptonshire includes a top destination for newly-arriving A8 migrants.

Table 5.1: Top Five Local Authority Areas for Approved WRS Registrations, May 2004 to December 2007

       1. Westminster: 19,275

       2. Northampton: 14,250

       3. Peterborough: 9,995

       4. Camden: 9,415

       5. Luton: 8,225

                      Source: Pollard *et al.* (2008:62)

Table 5.2: Top Five Local Authority Areas for Number of A8 Workers per 1,000 Residents Based on Pollard *et al.'s* (2008) Estimate of Current A8 Stock

       1. City of London: 306

       2. Boston: 90

       3. Westminster: 55

       4. Northampton: 47

       5. South Holland: 42

                      Source: Pollard *et al.* (2008:62)

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[19] Pollard *et al.'s* (2008:71) estimates are based on their assumption "that the WRS underestimates the actual level of worker registration by 33 per cent; and that 50 per cent of A8 migrants who have arrived since May 2004 are no longer in the UK".

Figure 5.1 illustrates the geographic distribution of WRS registrations in the seven districts of Northamptonshire between May 2004 and September 2008. It shows that Northampton has received the highest proportion of WRS registrations with 67%, followed by Corby with 12% and Wellingborough with 8% (Home Office, 2009b). When commenting on the significance of A8 migrations into Northamptonshire, the Northamptonshire Observatory (2008:3) states that of all LAAs, "Northampton is 4th in the UK for percentage of Worker Registration Scheme applications 2004-2007 at 5.7%, Corby 11th at 3.6% and Wellingborough 31st at 1.8%". The data highlight the importance of undertaking a locally-based study that explores A8 migratory activity in these towns.

Figure 5.1: WRS Registrations by Local Authority Area in Northamptonshire, May 2004 to September 2008

Data From: Home Office (2009b)
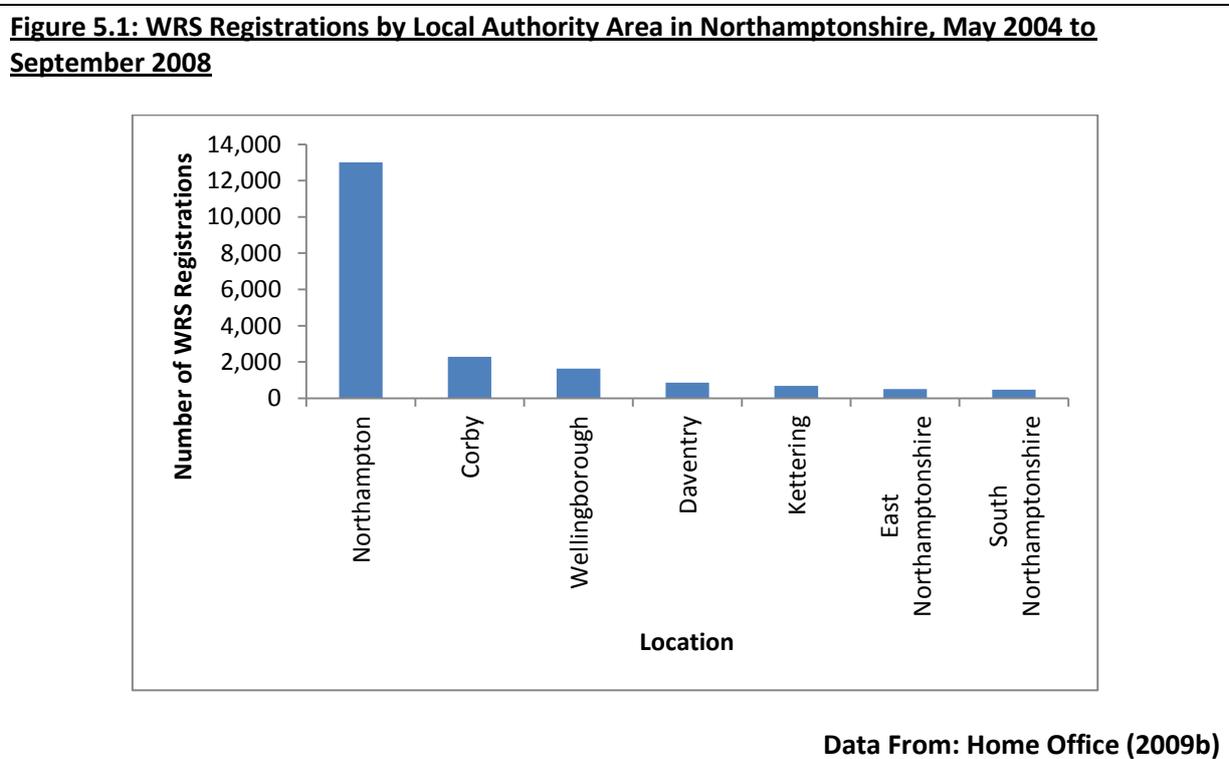
The Local Government Association (2008) argues that the migratory patterns of A8 migrants are significantly different to previous flows as these are less focused on London; rather it is town locations which have been favoured. As such, Northamptonshire is an appropriate venue for the research, providing insights into the Polish migrants' 'lifeworlds' different to those obtained in other studies (Cook *et al.*, 2008, Datta, 2008, Datta and Bricknell, 2009, Pollard *et al.*, 2008, Ryan *et al.*, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, Sumption, 2009).

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5.2.2: Population

The nature of A8 migrations to the UK has created new challenges for local service providers who receive limited support "because resource allocations are being made on the basis of flawed population data" (House of Commons, 2008:3). Despite the difficulties in establishing accurate data on A8 migrants' movements (Sumption, 2009), Pollard *et al.* (2008) estimate the stock population of A8 and A2 migrants to be 665,000. Between May 2004 and September 2008, 66% (594,500) of WRS registrations were made by Polish nationals in the UK (Home Office, 2008a). Figure 5.2 illustrates the nationalities of WRS applicants and demonstrates the prevalence of Polish nationals within A8 migrations. When focusing on Northamptonshire, Figure 5.3 shows that 65% of WRS registrations were made by Polish nationals.

Figure 5.2: Number and Country of Origin of Approved WRS Applications in the UK, May 2004 to September 2008
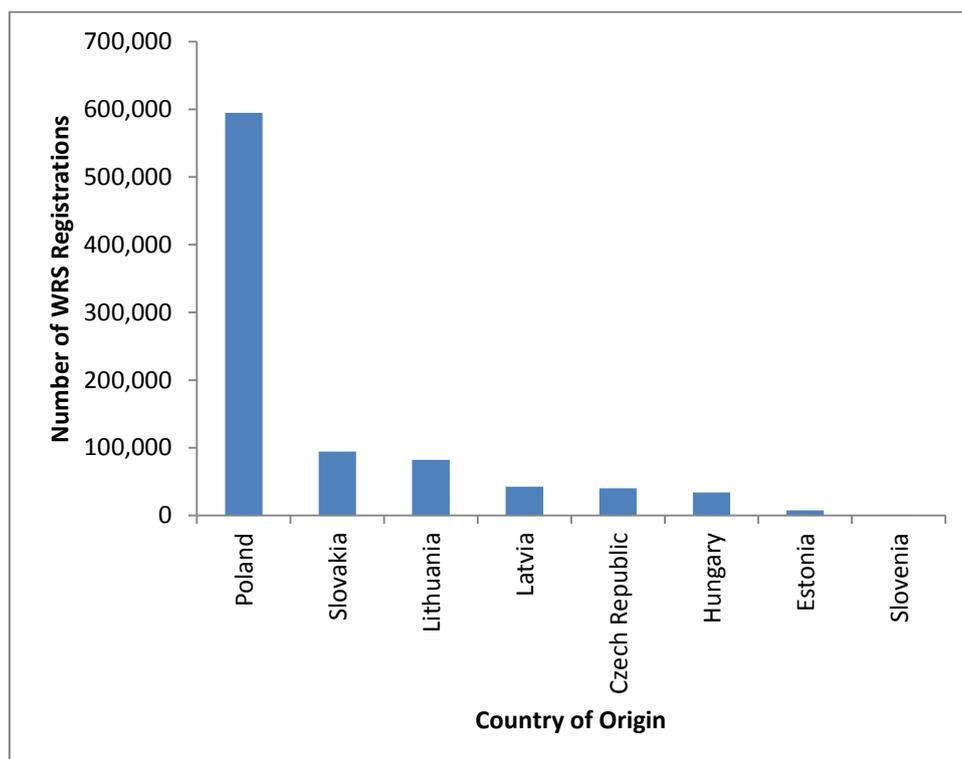
Data From: Home Office (2008a)

Figure 5.3: Number and Country of Origin of WRS Registrations in Northamptonshire, May 2004 to September 2008
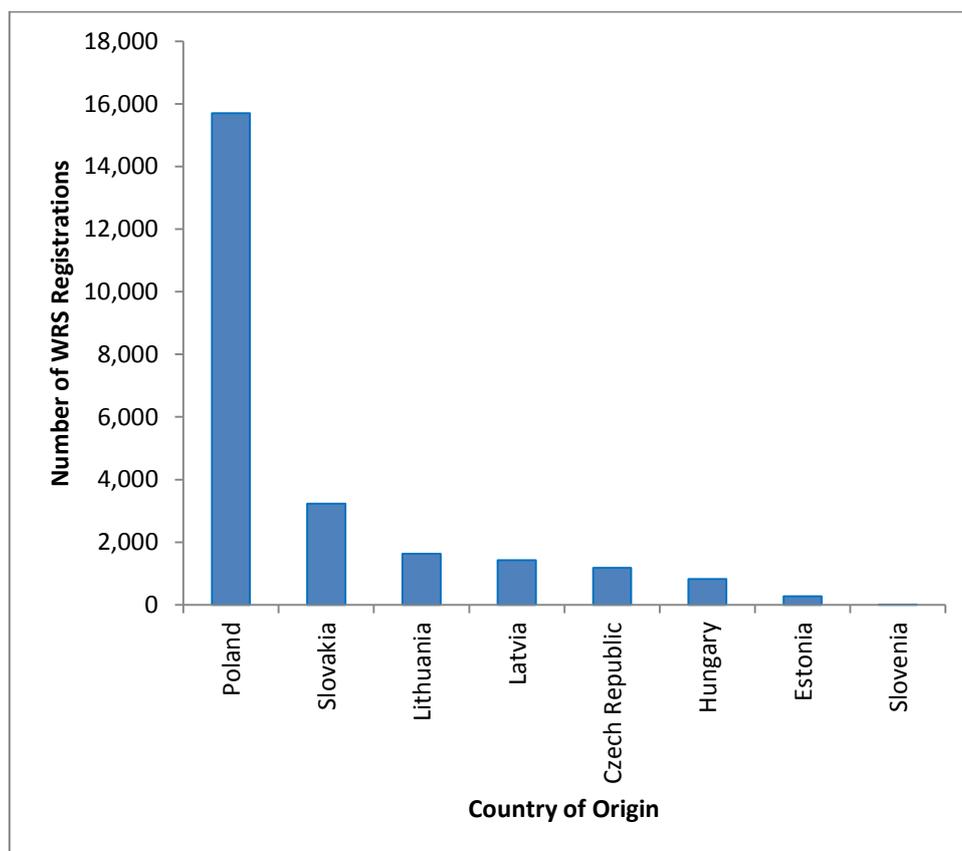
Data From: Home Office (2009b)

An alternative source indicating the scale of A8 migrations to the UK is National Insurance Number Registrations (NINos). Table 2.4 showed that the number of NINos issued to adult overseas nationals entering the UK and demonstrated the scale of Polish migrations to the UK. In the financial years[20] of 2006/07 and 2007/08, the number of NINos issued to Polish nationals was over four times greater than that of Indian nationals, who are the second largest foreign-born group (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010). Based on these data, it was decided to focus exclusively on Polish nationals, echoing decisions made by recent research conducted by the Institute for Public Policy Research (Sumption, 2009). Sumption (2009:6) justifies this, commenting that "the growth in the Polish community is large enough to allow the widespread emergence of Polish social groups

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[20] Financial years are April 1st to March 31st.

throughout the UK". Ryan *et al.'s* (2008) research with Polish migrants in London also demonstrates that newly-arriving Polish migrants have a multitude of experiences within communities, and concludes that networks that locate migrants into ethnic-specific networks exacerbate rivalry, competition and exploitation. With a high proportion of WRS registrations in Northamptonshire, a locally-based study is crucial to understand the dynamics within Northamptonshire's communities and reveal Polish migratory experiences specific to Northamptonshire.

The project focused on the lives of young Polish migrants, aged between 18 and 24 years. Drinkwater *et al.* (2006, 2009) document that of individuals registering with the WRS, 44% (403,290) are aged between 18 and 24 years. The second highest proportion in the same time period were those aged 25-34 years, amounting to 38% (342,145), suggesting that A8 migration flows are being driven by relatively young Polish nationals. Similar proportions were identified within Northamptonshire (i.e. the county is representative of national trends), with 43% being aged between 18 and 24 years (Home Office, 2009b). Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009:35) detail the socio-demographic profile of post-accession Polish migrants in the UK suggesting that young Polish migrants appear to favour the UK, with the median age of Polish post-accession migrants being 25 years in the UK, compared to 30 and 37 years in Ireland and Sweden respectively. Also, White (2010) notes that it was younger people, often well educated, who responded to the UK's 'pull' factors following Poland's accession to the EU. Overall, the decision to focus upon Polish migrants aged between 18 and 24 years was directly linked with exploring the experiences of those who constitute the bulk of A8 migrants moving to the UK and is justified in relation to available A8 migration data.

5.2.3: Recruitment and Sampling

At the outset of the research was an extensive period of networking within Polish communities in Northamptonshire. Kitchin and Tate (2000) discuss the importance of forward planning within access strategies, and a full research plan was constructed which provided a five month period to establish contacts before data collection began. Informal meetings were arranged

with contacts via e-mail or telephone to discuss the project. A process of 'snowballing' was established (Bryman, 2004, Valentine, 1997). The 'gatekeepers' contacted included a Polish priest, local Polish shopkeepers, Polish students at The University of Northampton, and members of the local council. It was important to access a number of networks to ensure the information shared in the research provided a fair insight into community relations.

Bushin's (2007) research identified access as one of the most difficult stages of a project. In this project, language barriers hindered the development of contacts. To overcome these and to develop more effective networks, Polish students within The University of Northampton assisted to build relationships with individuals within Northamptonshire's Polish communities who did not speak English. The notion of trust was paramount when meeting 'gatekeepers' and a successful strategy in conveying the authenticity of the researcher was displayed through an openness to listen and seek advice from Polish migrants. The researcher's experiences of cross-cultural access strategies stress the importance of effective communication, achieved in this case by working with translators (see also Section 5.3.3).

The main purpose of the research was to gain an understanding of Polish migrants' 'lifeworlds' and, in particular, to uncover the diversity within Polish communities in Northamptonshire (see Chapter 1). In order to achieve this, a purposive sampling framework was created to distinguish between individuals. The sample was organised in reference to four key variables; *gender*, *age*, *length of residence in the UK* and *occupation*. An overview of the sample is provided in Table 5.3. While recruiting participants for the project, the researcher was attentive to the participants' *location* of residence in Northamptonshire within each grouping to ensure this reflected available data (illustrated in Figure 5.1). It was decided that 40 participants would be recruited, with representatives across the four variables. The target number of the sample was based on other studies that have explored the accounts of post-accession A8 migrants using qualitative interviews: Ryan *et al.* (2008, 2009b) used 30 individual interviews[21], Pollard *et al.* (2008)

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[21] 46 individuals participated in total.

10 individual interviews and Cook *et al.* (2008) 34 individual interviews[22]. As such it can be argued that the target number of interviews exceeds the samples evident in other studies with post-accession migrants in the UK, to further explore differences that may be evident between young Polish migrants.

Table 5.3: Research Sample

Variable	Sub-Variable	Number of Participants
Gender	Male	**20**
	Female	**20**
Age **(Years)**	< 22	**12**
	> 22	**28**
Time Spent in the UK **(Years)**	< 2	**6**
	> 2, < 4	**21**
	> 4	**13**
Occupation in the UK	Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	**26**
	Education	**7**
	Administration and Secretarial Positions	**3**
	Sales and Customer Service	**2**
	Unemployed	**2**
Location in the UK	Northampton	**27**
	Corby	**5**
	Wellingborough	**4**
	Kettering	**2**
	Daventry	**2**
Poland Location **(Population 1,000s)**	<20	**14**
	>20, < 100	**13**
	>100	**13**

The first characteristic used to distinguish between participants was *gender*. Data from the WRS shows that the male to female ratio of applicants between May 2004 and September 2008 was 57:43 (Home Office, 2008). Table 5.3 shows an equal balance between male and female participants. Batnitzky *et al.* (2009:1276) argue that gender identities are actively constructed in the workplace but "how this identity construction might operate in the context of migrant workers" is less clear. Contemporary transnational migrants, who adapt to a new country whilst simultaneously

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[22] 89 participants were interviewed in total.

maintaining social and cultural aspects from their place of origin, have challenged traditional studies of migrants' gendered identity(ies) (Vertovec, 2001). Organising the sample by gender allowed important comparative analysis to be conducted. For instance, it allowed exploration of how Polish migrants' gender influences their experiences of migration, affects social networks and shapes their identity(ies).

Ryan *et al.* (2009) discuss the importance of gender to Polish nationals' constructions of identity(ies) when exploring family migration strategies. Ryan *et al.* (2009:68) argue that ideas of idealised Polish women ("*the nurturing wife and mother*") are constructed through influential discourses of tradition, religion and nationalism, having important implications for gender-specific roles within the 'family home', and influencing how participants will make sense of their own identity(ies) and interpret others. Marody (1993) stresses the importance of gender to identity formations with tradition being a key influence on social norms. Ryan *et al.* (2009) note that women have more complex motivations for migration, frequently linked to ideas of 'home'. The sampling framework used in this project responds to such arguments, viewing gender as a potentially significant marker of difference.

The second feature used to distinguish between participants was *age*. As previously discussed, 44% of A8 migrants registering on the WRS between May 2004 and September 2008 were aged between 18 and 24 years (Home Office, 2008a). Accession Monitoring Reports (Home Office, 2009a) were published each quarter between May 2004 and March 2010 (see Section 2.4). They did not, however, provide further information about the types of individuals within this age group. Rather than simplify and homogenise individuals of this age, this research sought to explore the diversity of experiences and motivations shaping migrants' lives. A growing body of Children's Geographies literature has been suggested to have 'come of age' (Matthews, 2003) and has considered 'silenced' voices. Valentine (2003:39) argues, nevertheless, that "while the age range 7-14 has received considerable attention from geographers, the discipline has been slower to consider young people on the cusp of childhood and adulthood: those aged between 16 and 25". By focusing

on young Polish migrants aged between 18 and 24 years, this research contributes to understandings of 'older' young people's lives.

To explore different migratory experiences, it was important to recruit participants of a range of ages. Wyn and White (1997) assert that the concept of age is often "assumed to refer to a biological reality... but the meaning and experience of age, and the process of ageing is subject to historical and cultural processes". Chapter 3 indicated that young people's constructions of youth depend on their social, cultural and political circumstances, resulting in a range of meanings (Hopkins, 2006). The characteristic of age was an important dimension to the sample and addresses a fundamental challenge for researchers of youth: to "pay more attention to the different ways young people themselves define and understand this boundary crossing" (Valentine, 2003:49). Figure 5.4 illustrates the sample stratified by age and shows that the sample favoured individuals aged 22 to 24 years. While it was intended an equal balance based on chronological age would be sought when recruiting participants, recruiting 'younger'[23] participants proved to be problematic. When discussing this with contacts within Northamptonshire's Polish communities, it was suggested that for many 'younger' Polish migrants, it was their first experience living outside of their 'parental' home and they may not yet have developed extensive social networks. This point was corroborated in many of the 'younger' participants' narratives, as those who were accessed often moved to the UK with their family and as such had greater resources to draw upon when creating social networks.

Figure 5.4: Sample Stratified by Age

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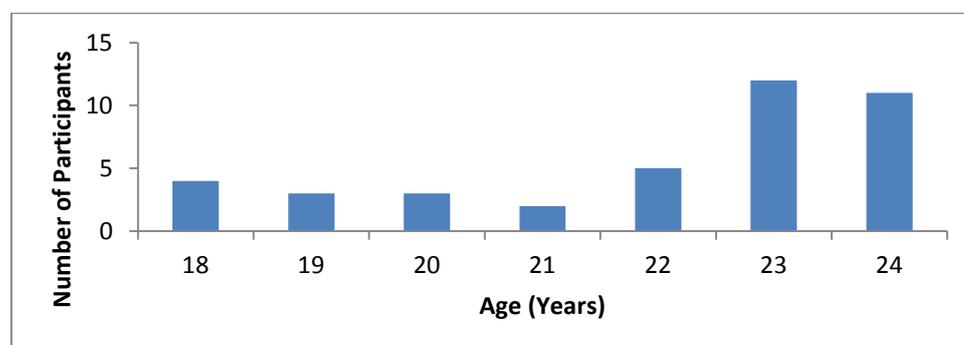
[23] 'Younger' here refers to participants aged 18 – 21 years.

The third factor used to distinguish between the participants was *length of residence in the UK.* The rationale underpinning this selection was to investigate the effects of time on the types of experiences and networks available to migrants (Liversage, 2009, Nette and Hayden, 2007, van der Klis and Karsten, 2009, Wiles, 2008). Sumption (2009:5) argues that, due to the high rates of return migrations amongst A8 migrants, "the most powerful driver of immigrant integration - the length of residence in the host country - can no longer be relied upon to produce results". Sumption (2009) points out that the fluidity of young Polish migrants' movements is forcing local policy-makers to re-think strategies of cohesion, integration, service provision etc. This reiterates the point that understanding the nature of experiences from a range of residence lengths is important in aiding evidence-based policies at the local level. Kosic (2006:254) also argues that by:

> "staying abroad for several years (either sporadically or more permanently),
> [migrants] acquire new habits and start also to find it hard to imagine themselves
> living in the home country. They are virtually *foreigners* in a world that seems
> increasingly foreign to them".

By focusing on length of residence in the UK, a wide range of experiences was uncovered of the ways in which participants experienced 'home' (see Section 7.4) and how they view the everyday world around them (see Section 7.3). Promoting diversity within the sample facilitated access to individuals above and below a 'language threshold' to reveal different viewpoints and levels of integration (Liversage, 2009) (see Section 6.3).

Figure 5.5 illustrates the length of residence of participants at the time of interview. It was difficult to recruit individuals who had resided in the UK for less than two years. A partial explanation for this may be that those newly-arriving had small and intimate social networks, usually influenced by family contacts, limiting access to these individuals (Ryan *et al.*, 2008, 2009b). Migrants' language proficiency and self-esteem may also influence this (Liversage, 2009). Relating the success of

recruiting different participants based on *length of residence in the UK* and by their chronological

age, the experience of recruiting participants for the research confirms observations from working

alongside contacts, that younger Poles who move to the UK by themselves are often located in small

social networks.

Figure 5.5: Sample Stratified by Participants' Length of Residence in the UK
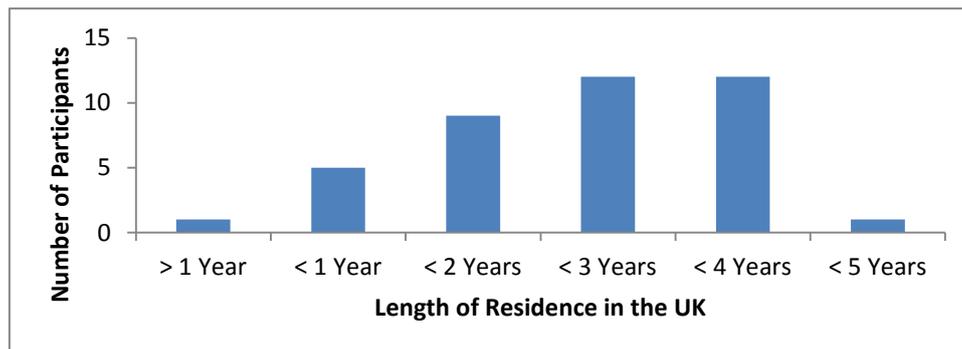
The fourth category used to diversify the sample was the *occupation,* of participants, with

classifications based on the SOC2000[24] (National Statistics, 2000). With an aim of the research being

to uncover difference and diversity within the Polish community, participants with a range of

occupations were included within the sample (Figure 5.6[25]). Gunter and Watt's (2009) study of youth

transitions and cultures reveals the importance of work environments and occupations to identity

formation. Figure 5.6 shows that the majority of participants were engaged in 'dirty work', employed

as 'Process, Plant and Machine Operatives' (65%) (Johnston *et al.*, 2000). The sample also included

seven participants (18%) who spent the majority of their time in education: individuals searching for

'clean work' requiring "paper qualifications" (Gunter and Watt, 2009:523).

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[24] Occupations are based on the Standard Occupational Classification 2000 (SOC2000) used by the Office of National Statistics (National Statistics, 2000). The SOC has the following major groups; 1: Managers and Senior Officials, 2: Professional Occupations, 3: Associate Professional and Technical Occupations, 4: Administrative and Secretarial Occupations, 5: Skilled Trades Occupation, 6: Personal Service Occupation, 7: Sales and Customer Service Occupations, 8: Process, Plant and Machine Operatives, and 9: Elementary Occupations. To these groups, the following categories were added; 'Individuals studying in Education' and 'Unemployed'.
[25] Participants were categorised based on their primary occupation. The realities of participants' lives were, however, more complex, and some were engaged in a range of occupations simultaneously.

Figure 5.6: Sample Stratified by Occupation
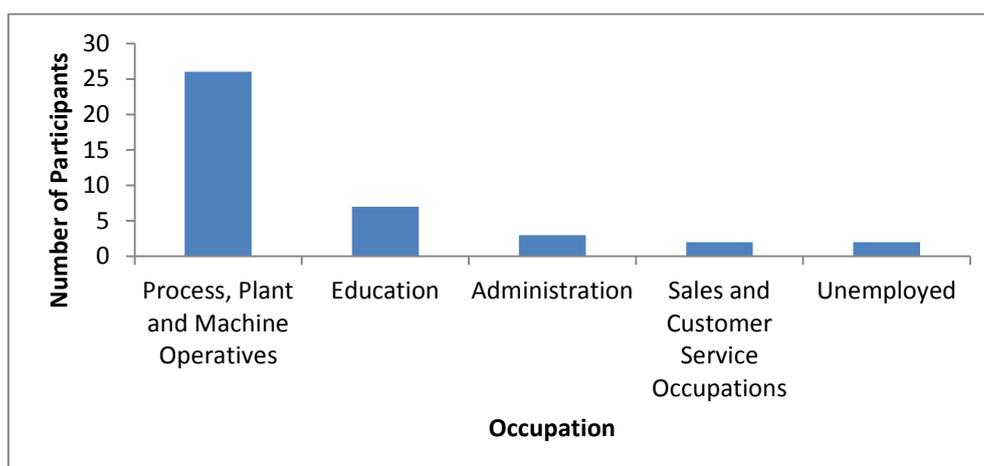
According to WRS registration data, the nature of employment opportunities in Northamptonshire favours work in warehouse settings (Table 5.4). The WRS is the most comprehensive source of data of A8 migrants' occupations, however, a number of individuals are not captured, including the self-employed, unemployed and those in education (see Chapter 2), making it a partial representation of current trends in Northamptonshire. The sample favoured warehouse occupations, but to fully explore difference and diversity within Polish communities, individuals from other occupations were also recruited.

Table 5.4: WRS Top Five Occupations in Northamptonshire, May 2004 to September 2008

Northamptonshire	WRS Registrations: Number (Percentage of Total)
Process Operative (other Factory Worker)	9,055 (38%)
Warehouse Operative	5,855 (24%)
Packer	1,865 (8%)
Food Processing Operative (Meat)	665 (3%)
Food Processing Operative (Fruit and Vegetables)	355 (1%)
Total	**23,955 (100%)**
	Source: Home Office (2009c)

In addition to these four factors, the sample was organised by participants' place of residence within Northamptonshire. Figure 5.1 shows that 67% of all WRS registrations were located

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in the county town of Northampton demonstrating its centrality as an A8 migratory space within Northamptonshire (Home Office, 2009c). Figure 5.7 shows that two-thirds of the sample was located in Northampton, reflecting the geography of WRS registrations in the county.

Figure 5.7: Participant Location of Residence in UK
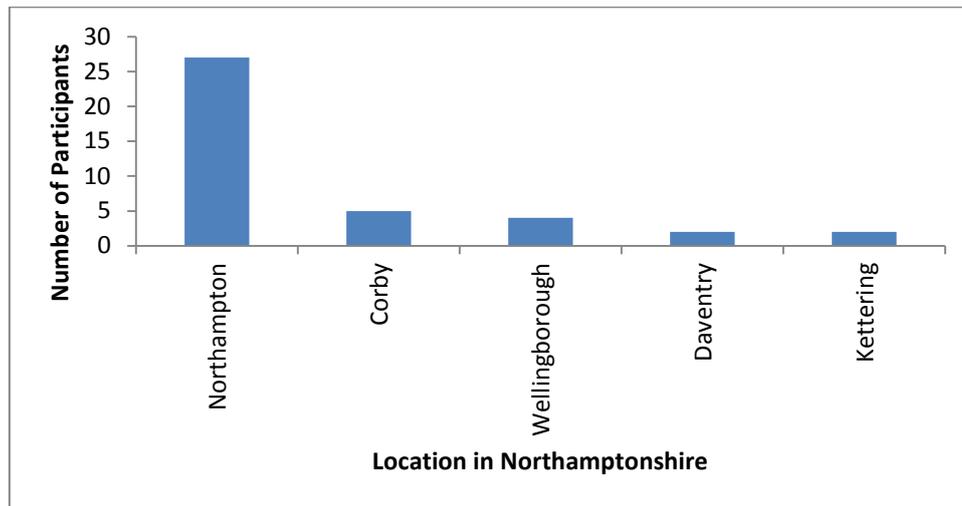
An additional factor that the researcher monitored was the places in Poland from which the participants originated, and these are illustrated in Figure 5.8. The purpose of reviewing the original residence locations in Poland was to allow for comparative analysis to be undertaken and ensure a range of participant backgrounds to enrich the sample. The population sizes[26] of the participants' original residence places were assessed, and Figure 5.9 illustrates that the sample favours participants whose previous location in Poland had a resident population under 20,000 (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2010).

Overall, the recruitment strategy adopted provided a rich sample from which to explore difference and diversity within Northamptonshire's communities. While favouring Polish migrants older than 22 years old and those who had been here for over two years at the point of interview, the sample strived to broadly reflect available socio-demographic profiles afforded by sources such

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[26] Figures taken from Główny Urząd Statystyczny 2008, available at www.stat.gov.pl.

as the WRS. The chapter now moves forward to provide an overview of the methods employed throughout the project.

Figure 5.8: Participants' Original Place of Residence in Poland
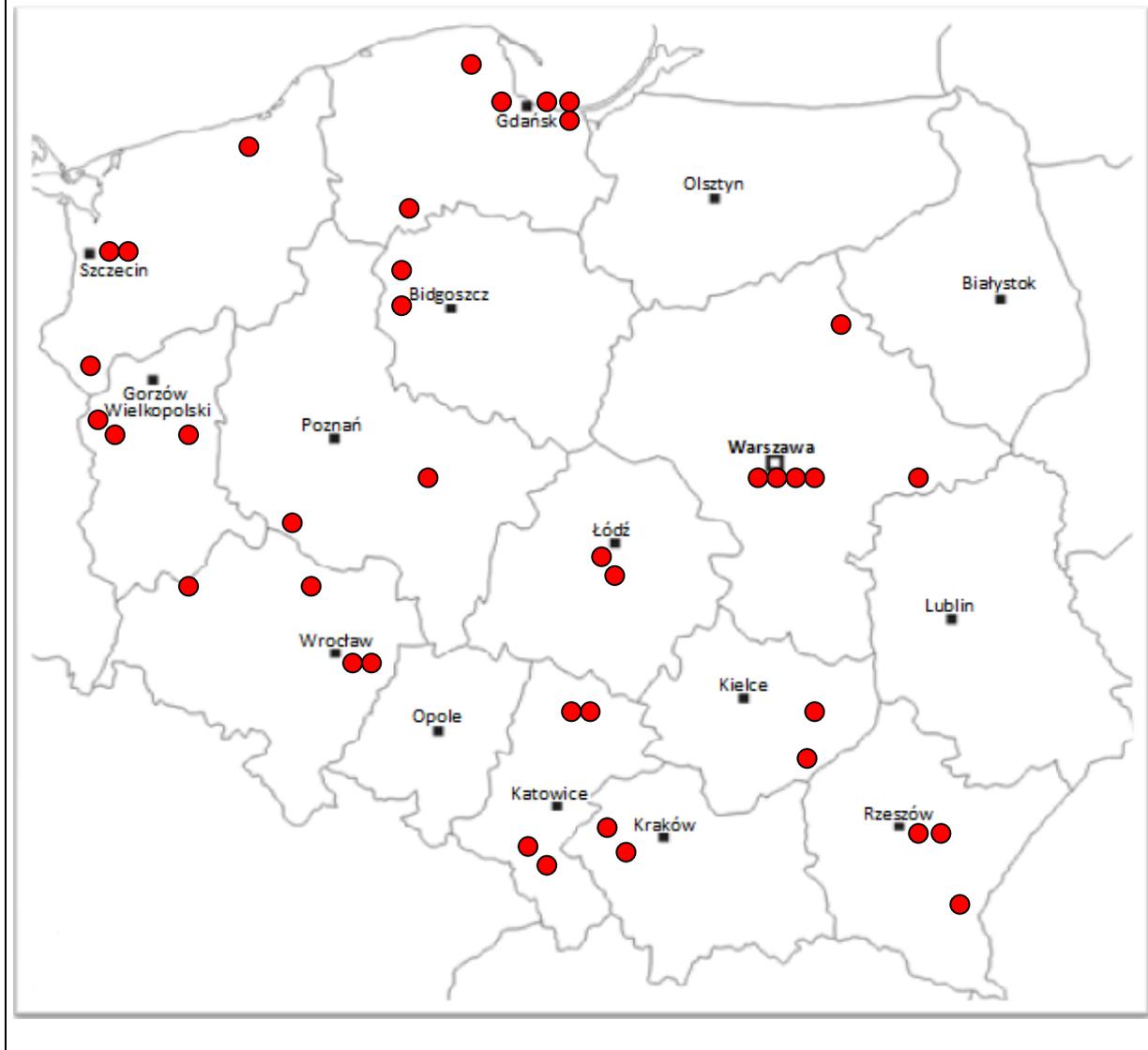
Figure 5.9: Sample Stratified by Populations of Participants' Original Place of Residence
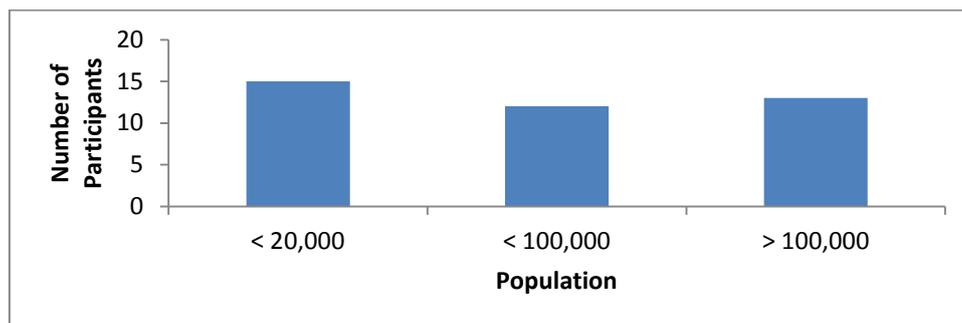
5.3: Research Methods

The research set out to explore the migratory experiences of young Poles residing in Northamptonshire and uncover diversity within Polish communities. Halfacree and Boyle (1993) asserted that to fully appreciate migrants' experiences, an in-depth exploration of their biographies is crucial. Importantly, the use of such an approach "should be tailored explicitly to the research objectives" (1993:345). The biographical approach outlined by Halfacree and Boyle (1993) was adopted and a range of qualitative methods employed, positioning participants' experiences in relation to their past, present and future 'pathways'. Semi-structured interviews using 'narrative', thematic semi-structured interviews and 'photo-tours' were used.

5.3.1: Semi-Structured Interview Using 'Narrative'

Following a period of networking to access individuals in the appropriate socio-demographic group (Section 5.2), interviews were conducted with 40 participants. Participants were asked to share a *narrative* of their experiences (Harold *et al.*, 1995, Hopkins and Hill, 2008, Reeves, 2007). In essence, the objective for participants was to construct a story; *their story*. The interviews took place in a mixture of public (coffee shop, restaurant etc) and private (research office, participant accommodation) venues decided by participants. The duration of sessions was usually an hour in length and each was recorded using a digital Dictaphone. During the course of accounting their experiences, semi-structured questions were asked at times when judged by the researcher to be appropriate. Harold *et al.* (1995) explain that a story consists of significant features (actors, themes, plots etc) and has the "capacity as metaphor to conjure up and illuminate less accessible aspects of experience" (Schnitzer, 1993). By sharing stories, Polish migrants were able to provide a glimpse into their 'lifeworlds', representing their experiences on their terms. With reference to the 'biographical approach' discussed by Halfacree and Boyle (1993), the narratives were organised into four biographical time periods illustrated in Figure 5.10.

Figure 5.10: Biographical interview Structure
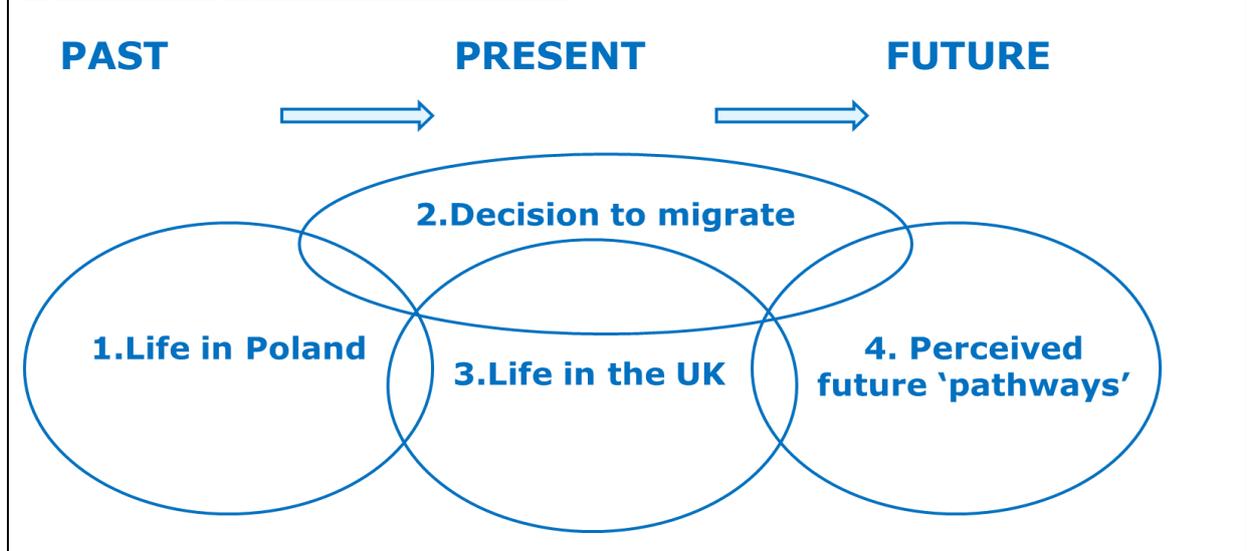
Hopkins and Hill (2008) argue that each individual's experience of migration is personal. Using narrative not only uncovers the significant events of migration, but also provides an insight into how individuals represent themselves to the world (Wiles *et al.*, 2005). From the position of being an 'outsider' (see Section 5.4.2), it was crucial to use a method that gave control to participants - allowing them to share the most important events - rather than impose an interview schedule that could potentially miss a vital piece of information. As such, rather than being too prescriptive over which topics to discuss or include, the participants were encouraged to share what was important to them and outline significant decisions along their chosen 'pathways' (Callender, 2011a, 2011c). To prepare for the exercise, participants were issued a research pack that outlined the nature of the interview (see Appendix A/B). This pack was discussed in preparatory meetings for the exercise. Figure 5.10 illustrates that the exercise was structured with four biographical periods in mind, concentrating on the following areas:

1. **'Life in Poland'**: The starting point was to examine each participant's life prior to migration and focus on events of significance to the individual.

2. **'Decision to Migrate'**: The exercise moved on to explore factors important when making the decision to migrate to the UK, encompassing each participant's biography in its entirety.

3. **'Life in the UK'**: Participants here shared their social encounters in Northamptonshire and described their 'everyday' lives.

4. **'The Future'**: The end point provided an insight into participants' future plans and considered how their experiences within the UK may have shaped specific strategies.

An important issue when using a narrative method is the unpredictability of emotion within accounts (Harold *et al.*, 1995, Reeves, 2007, Whiting, 2000). Narrative can be a powerful experience to the storyteller, helping them to re-interpret experiences. This can change how an individual views, feels and evaluates their life (Whiting, 2000). Reeves (2007) argues that the use of 'narrative' with vulnerable young people has a number of methodological challenges, as the nature of information shared can be extreme, emotional and unpredictable, stressing the necessity of transparency in ethical practice (see Section 5.6). The experience of researching with Polish migrants supports Reeves' (2007:264) conclusion that "young people can be unpredictable in how they respond and in the information they are being asked to talk about". The emotional risk of using narrative is as important for the researcher as the researched (Reeves, 2007) and clear avenues of support were established within the researcher's supervisory team to discuss particular accounts.

An important methodological observation was the role that 'emotions' played in relation to the 'atmosphere' within the research context when accounting emotional or difficult information. Reflecting on interviews with parents playing with children, Aitken (2001) argues that researchers should trust the interview process and engage in conversation, relinquishing control by not conducting a systematic search for information. It is additionally argued here that it is important to consider within interviews how researchers respond to emotion, at times with little warning. Moreover, how do we as researchers react and manage 'atmosphere' within research interview contexts to prioritise the wellbeing of both participant and researcher? Going into research interview contexts, a series of prompts were prepared to strategically manage 'hard-to-handle' information that may arise to maintain the ethical principles of the project (see Section 5.6). During

some interviews, it was interesting to note the participant's acute awareness of difficult and emotional information within their accounts and their subsequent use of humour to relieve tension. The examples below illustrate participants' management of the research context, when discussing changes within their social networks, by changing the topic from emotive accounts of fractures within friendships to something 'trivial'. In so doing, the participants highlight the 'power' they had in shaping and controlling the research interview, and the research 'atmosphere':

> Zarek: "… I expect them to be my friends because we have known each other since we were kids [gestures height of small child], but suddenly it turns out they are not my friends, it turns out that we don't really know each other and it can turn on me. Basically they don't give a damn about me, about my feelings. I was helping them and they basically don't care… [pause] and I can't buy any Polish CDs [laughing]."
>
> (Male, 24, translated)[27]

> Graźyna: "… everybody thinks that we come here, earn money and go back… it's not like this… OK <u>families</u>… they are splitting, half of the family is in Poland, the other half is here for two years… It's <u>terrible</u> and it's because of money. It's because of the situation they are in in Poland because they cannot afford to earn enough money… I don't know to buy food for the kids… [when you come here] you have to be strong in all aspects of life, right… [pause] <u>and</u> you drive on the wrong side of the road and for some reason you have <u>two taps</u> [laughing]!"
>
> (Female, 24)

Kitchin and Tate (2000) argue that using qualitative methods provides a fuller and richer data set than using a rigid set of structured, closed questions. Participants were able to express intimate biographical accounts in a comfortable and non-invasive way. Kitchin and Tate (2000:219) assert, however, that "genuine trust must... exist between the interviewer and interviewee" by embracing feminist views of empowerment. As such, it is important to recognise the limitations of the research accounts shared by participants based on the researcher-participant relationship. At

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[27] All names are pseudonyms, number is ages in years, and 'translated' means participant's account was spoken in Polish and translated to English during interview

each stage of the research process, however, the researcher has valued interaction and questions from interviewees, viewing these as opportunities to foster engagement.

5.3.2: Case Studies

To further explore difference and diversity between Polish migrants, 10 case studies based upon Polish migrants' narratives were conducted. Other studies that have considered notions of 'difference' within post-accession Polish migrant communities draw upon Eade *et al.'s* (2007) typology of Polish migrants grouping migrants, categorising people as *storks*, *hamsters*, *searchers* and *stayers* (see Table 2.3). Important to note with Eade *et al.'s* (2007) study is that groupings within the typology were based on 'migration strategies' discussed in their interviews. In an attempt to provide a more nuanced understanding of difference in this project, greater emphasis was given to how difference(s) manifest in participants' 'everyday' lives. As such, it can be argued what differentiates how notions of difference were written into this research, was that such ideas were defined by participants themselves through their narrative accounts.

Section 7.2.1 discusses notions of difference as revealed in participants' accounts and proposes a 'Framework of Difference from 'Within'' (see Figure 7.1). The framework consists of four factors suggested to form the basis of participants' assessments; 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language'. When analysing participants' narratives in conjunction with Figure 7.1, it can be argued that five 'types' of migrants were included in the research sample; "*You go there, save some money and go back*" (Type 1), "*I might not go back*" (Type 2), "*I live day by day*" (Type 3), "*If I have money, I spend money*" (Type 4) and "*I didn't have the choice to go home*" (Type 5) (see Figure 7.2 and Table 7.1 for Schematic Overview of Types of Polish Migrants and Types of Polish Migrants Stratified by Sample respectively). Table 5.5 provides details of those who participated in the case studies and shows that involvement in this phase of the research was most forthcoming from Type 2 participants.

Table 5.5: Case Study Sample by Migrant Type (Frequency)

		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
Gender	Male	1	1	1	0	1
	Female	2	3	1	0	0
Age (Years)	> 22	0	0	1	0	1
	< 22	3	4	1	0	0
Time Spent in the UK (Years)	> 2	0	1	1	0	0
	< 2, > 4	1	1	1	0	1
	< 4	2	2	0	0	0
Poland Location (Population 1,000s)	>20	0	4	2	0	0
	<20, > 100	0	0	0	0	0
	<100	3	0	0	0	1
Occupation in the UK	Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	2	3	2	0	1
	In Full Time Education	0	1	0	0	0
	Administration and Secretarial Positions	1	0	0	0	0
	Sales and Customer Service	0	0	0	0	0
	Unemployed	0	0	0	0	0
Location in the UK	Northampton	3	2	2	0	1
	Wellingborough	0	1	0	0	0
	Kettering	0	1	0	0	0
	Daventry	0	0	0	0	0
	Corby	0	0	0	0	0

The case studies comprised a photo tour of the participant's locale and a semi-structured interview. The use of visual methods in human geography is increasingly common (Aitken and Wingate, 1993, Burke, 2005, Datta, 2008, Kinsman, 1995, Newman *et al.*, 2006, Rose, 2003, Rose, 2007, Young and Barrett, 2001). A visual method was used in this research for five reasons. First, Newman *et al.* (2006:292) argue that photography allows individuals to represent their identity(ies), and by accompanying images with captions, participants can "'anchor' the meaning". Second, valuable information not attainable during an interview can be gathered whilst taking a 'metaphorical' step closer to the participants (Young and Barrett, 2001). Third, participants are empowered within the research process by selecting which and how spaces are captured (Gabhainn and Sixsmith, 2006, Newman *et al.*, 2006). Fourth, visual methods are argued to be a valuable and

appropriate method for working with young people (Matthews and Tucker, 2000). Fifth, the method

provided a balance of verbal and illustrative data to interpret participants' lifeworlds.

In planning and organising the photo tours, the research drew inspiration from Porivolaris's

(2008) project. Selected participants[28] led a tour of their 'locale' highlighting spaces where key

experiences[29] had occurred. Participants were asked to think about their choices and ensure they

were comfortable in sharing the personal significance underpinning each selection. Porivolaris

(2008) discovered the technique to be appropriate in moving closer to another person's viewpoint.

The images were captured using a digital camera where "the object was not to produce a 'good'

photographs, but produce an image with personal meaning...", thus the technical aspects of

photography are not discussed (Newman *et al.*, 2006:292). The tours usually lasted between 30 to

45 minutes and the number of images created was determined by participants. When documenting

specific spaces, participants were asked[30] about why they had decided to share each specific place,

with these accounts captured using a digital Dictaphone. The places selected by participants

provided valuable insights into their everyday worlds and created prompts for discussion (Matthews

and Tucker, 2000).

The photo tours were a rewarding experience for the researcher. Spending time in the

places of meaning for each participant provided an interesting perspective through which to analyse

their narrative accounts. The places selected provided an insight into each participant's everyday

lives and revealed spaces of inclusion (and exclusion). To minimise the risk that participants could be

identified through the images in the thesis, care was taken to 'airbrush' distinguishing features.

Following photo tours of the participants' local areas, semi-structured interviews were

conducted to explore in greater detail the major themes emanating from the participants'

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[28] Participants were selected based on the difference and diversity within the accounts shared using the narrative method.

[29] When asked by participants 'what constitutes an experience?' it was made clear that the experience could be something real (event or situation) or could be something 'felt' (sensory or reflexive); ultimately the understanding of 'an experience' was left open for the participants to define.

[30] To minimise communication barriers, translators accompanied the researcher when conducting the exercise and assisted during the tour when discussing specific experiences.

narratives. The interviews were conducted in a congenial space[31]. Appendix C contains the topic

guide used in each interview. Interviews usually lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. Interviews were

recorded using a digital Dictaphone and translators assisted with communication when required.

The narrative exercise (Section 5.3.1) provided an opportunity for participants to discuss their self-

defined important experiences of migration. The purpose of conducting an in-depth interview was to

allow accounts and themes to be explored further, providing a more comprehensive understanding.

The case studies provided an additional opportunity for the researcher to share some preliminary

analysis within each of the themes with participants, to ensure the views of participants and

meanings within their narratives had been conveyed accurately through the process of translation.

5.3.3: Methodological Considerations of Translating Between Languages

The researcher's inability to speak Polish had both practical (actual communication) and

symbolic (implicit communication) implications (Bradby, 2002, Simon, 1996, Temple, 2004).

Confronting the researcher in initial stages of the project was a decision about who would (or indeed

would not) be invited to participate. For many contacts met during the period of networking prior to

data collection, their English-speaking ability could be described as limited[32]. An insistence by the

researcher to communicate in English introduced the risk of behaving in a ethnocentric manner,

explicitly privileging individuals who can communicate in English (Smith, 2003). To minimise this risk,

McDowell (1992:409) argues that "we [researchers] must recognise and take into account our own

position, as well as that of our research participants, and write this into the research practice". To

address this, it was decided that the research would be supported by translators to work alongside

the researcher in the collection of data and when meeting with participants. It was made clear that

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[31] The place to conduct the in-depth interview was decided on at the end of photo tours, based on convenience and suitability.
[32] 'Limited' here refers to language used to communicate in the everyday environment, with limited vocabulary and variation in expression. The subject of 'language' is discussed in Chapter 7 and is positioned as a key marker of difference between Polish migrants.

the researcher was open to a 'mixture' of language during interviews, with translators on stand-by to assist in conveying participants' accounts.

When making initial contact with Polish nationals at the outset of the research, one valuable channel was to meet Polish undergraduate students at The University of Northampton. An advert was placed on the weekly news bulletin e-mailed to students. The advert introduced the project and sought assistance with translation services. In total, five Polish students assisted translation.

During the initial meeting with potential translators it was crucial to gauge the standard of English-speaking ability to ensure the capability to translate participants' accounts when conducting the research. When choosing the most appropriate method to make this assessment, it was decided that a research interview (based on the narrative method discussed in Section 5.3.1) would be conducted with potential translators for two reasons. First, the researcher was able to assess how descriptive the accounts shared were by considering the range of vocabulary and clarity in responses. Simon (1996) argues that the main difficulty for translators is not selecting the exact word, but selecting the words that have equal cultural value and meaning. Thus, it was important to reflect on how translators articulated the messages in their accounts. The participants were also able to experience the nature of the narrative method and measure their own standard of English to make a more informed decision as to whether they had the ability to translate effectively. Second, Temple and Edwards (2006) argue that to engage with individuals who speak a different language, researchers are obliged to work with translators by discussing the research. The subject of the research interviews were the translators' experiences, providing the researcher with an insight into their 'lifeworld(s)' (Seamon, 1979, Tuan, 1977, Holloway and Hubbard, 2001). Based on these interviews, it was decided that each student was capable of providing accurate translation.

Before the first session with a participant (see Section 5.3.1), a training session with the translators was arranged to discuss the research and expectations (Temple, 2004). The training sessions were of importance to the accuracy of the translation, especially when considering the differences between the English and Polish languages, and the influence translators have (Temple,

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1997). Temple (1997) argues that there is no one Polish language used and it is crucial to recognise the differences in the ways people construct *meanings*. Temple (1997) raises a number of questions to contemplate when designing cross-cultural research using translators, and suggests clearly outlining the roles of the researcher and translator. The key argument in Temple's (1997:616) paper is that it "is not whether any one translation is right and another wrong. It is that by looking at the way the interview has been translated and asking the translator why…" which stresses the importance of continued communication between the researcher, translator and participant following accounts. Section 5.5 considers researching 'cross-culturally' and highlights how such points were incorporated into the project.

Overall, the experience of working with translators has highlighted the importance of equal preparation and time with translators as with participants to avoid a form of 'cultural tourism' (Griffiths, (1995:43), cited in Temple, (1997:616)). Rather than work only with each translator for the period of each interview, the use of translators was written centrally into the research design by investing time to discuss the research in-depth, conduct standard briefing prior to interviews, and de-briefing following each session (Callender, 2011c). It should also be noted that while transcribing particular interviews in the immediate period following a participant session, the researcher maintained lines of communication with translators to discuss particular parts of the dialogue. During the actual interviews, most participants used both English and Polish languages to share their experiences, and when speaking in Polish, often the researcher witnessed visual cues (such as nodding their head) while the translation was being articulated as to confirm its accuracy. As such, the use of translators here is "more than a tokenistic involvement with people who speak different languages" (Temple and Young, 2004:174).

5.4: Analysis and Dissemination

The methods outlined above were selected to provide an opportunity for Polish migrants to share experiences on their terms, and aligns with foundations evident within *Children's Geographies*

literature (Holloway and Valentine, 2000, Matthews and Limb, 1999, Valentine, 1999). The strategies developed within the research were selected to engage with participants to disseminate the results while confirming the accuracy of translation. Upon completion of the preliminary analysis, 'impressions' and initial results were fed back to participants. To encourage a more 'active' dissemination process (van Blerk and Ansell, 2007), each of the participants was contacted to discuss the preliminary results and offered an opportunity to send their feedback to the researcher. They could also arrange a further meeting to discuss the research findings. Leyshon (2002:189) argues that providing feedback "in the form of discussing transcripts and findings, can be a very positive part of the research process", and is especially important when working cross-culturally (see Section 5.5) taking into account the process of translation. Engaging with participants to make sense of accounts and avoid misinterpretation strengthens the position of the researcher as 'authentic' (Temple, 2004).

Kitchin and Tate (2000) discuss a variety of approaches to analyse qualitative data and the approach adopted is illustrated in Figure 5.11. Based on this framework, the first stage of the analysis was to fully transcribe accounts and note ideas to ensure initial thoughts are documented (see Kitchin and Tate, 2000). Similarly to Crang's (2001) experiences, transcription was a time-consuming but rewarding exercise, enabling the researcher to become intimately acquainted with discussions. When interpreting, Wiles *et al.* (2005) highlight the necessity of considering *who* is speaking as well as *how* they are speaking to ensure accounts are contextualised. The second stage was to categorise the data using 'thematic coding', organising events into themes (identity, home, encounters, social networks etc), and focussing on 'analytic induction' rather than statistical techniques (Crang, 1997). Identified themes were described to participants when disseminating the data for their appraisal. A 'report outline' was produced that helped to reflect on what had been shared by participants in the research and gather thoughts on particular themes (Crang, 2001). Whiting (2000) stresses the importance of audience when considering specific accounts. The third

stage of analysis was to identify the common links between themes and these informed the in-depth interviews with participants following the photo tour.

Figure 5.11: Analysis Framework

Description
- Transcription
- Annotation

Classification
- Categorising
- Splitting and Splicing

Connection
- Linking and Connecting
- Corroborating Evidence

Based on Kitchin and Tate (2000:235)
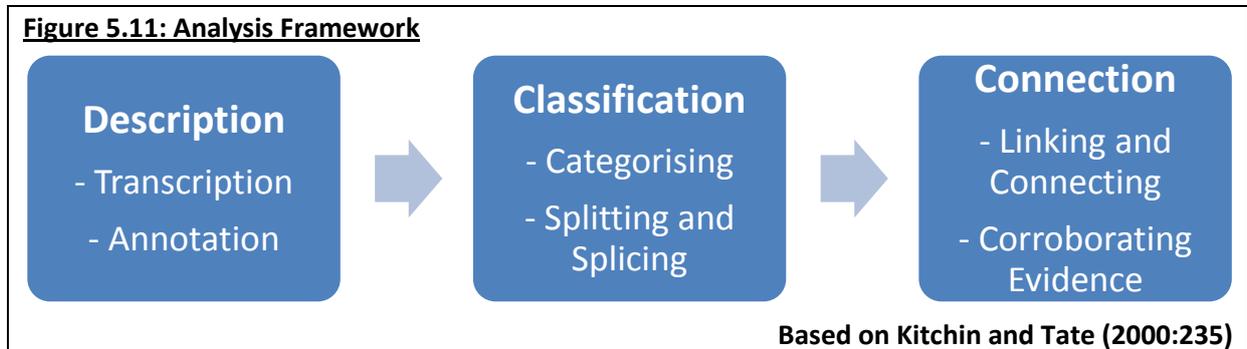
The analysis framework was critical to identifying significant differences between accounts. For instance, Section 7.2.1 provides an overview of how notions of difference between post-accession Polish migrants were understood by participants. The first stage in analysing such accounts was transcribing and annotating each individual transcript (Figure 5.11). The second stage of the analysis was to categorise specific passages within the transcripts where participants discussed their everyday encounters. All participants discussed encounters with other post-accession Polish migrants, and four factors of significance were revealed (see Figure 7.1). The final stage of analysis was to consider connections in the data, which revealed how participants' accounts of factors ranged between two dichotomous points. This example describes how the analysis framework was used practically, demonstrating its value in identifying important themes within the data.

5.5: Researching 'Cross-Culturally'

Inherent in all social relationships, a dynamic is negotiated between the researcher and the researched which is influenced through complex power relations (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001). This section first examines experiences of working between cultures and the challenges of power relations (Section 5.5.1) and then reflects on the influence of the researcher's 'positionality' on the project (Section 5.5.2).

5.5.1: Cross-Cultural Research

When working cross-culturally, Smith (2003) argues that the researcher's motivations are often an important topic of discussion, usually raised by participants. During the initial stages of this research project, the individuals met whilst networking asked questions about the research. When answering these questions, the researcher shared two personal motivating factors; first, having a genuine interest in the everyday realities of Polish migrants against the backdrop of intensive inward A8 migrations, and second, understanding the impacts of migration on participants' identity(ies) and connections with 'home'. As the research developed and preliminary feedback of the results was shared with participants, the nature of participants' questions changed to focus on the research itself rather than the researcher. This subtle shift of questioning reflected changes in the participant-researcher social relationships and understandings of trust created through rapport.

When considering the implications of conducting 'cross-cultural' research, Skelton (2001) argues that there are a number of complexities and contradictions to overcome. It is also asserted, however, that any such doubts or dilemmas are an important part of achieving an effective and sensitive cross-cultural project (Skelton, 2001). The interplay of power relations within cross-cultural research has strong links to debates within feminist discourses (Skelton, 2001, Smith, 2003, Staeheli and Lawson, 1994). Wolf (1996:1) explains that "feminist dilemmas in fieldwork are ethical, personal, academic and political... challenging our integrity, our work and at times, the *raison d'être* of our projects". Skelton (2001) muses that many researchers may pose the question of 'is it worth it'? In answer to this question, Skelton (2001) believes that by acknowledging, respecting and working with difference - whilst recognising the differential power relations that may exist between the researcher and those participating - can result in an extremely valuable piece of research. The ambitions driving feminist methodologies are to work with difference, recognise power relations, select methods that empower participants, and challenge unequal power relations (McDowell, 1992, Staeheli and Lawson, 1994). Section 5.3 outlined the methods selected in this project, with the aim of empowering participants to share their experiences on their terms. The examples of participants'

'humour' to alleviate tension in the interview context when sharing emotional accounts of changes in their personal relationships (Section 5.3.1) helps to demonstrate the relative success in creating research conditions that encouraged more equal power relations.

Kitchen and Tate (2000:219) assert that "when researching people from marginalised sections of the community, feminists would argue that traditional interview methods maintain and reinforce current social power relations". When constructing the research programme, it was crucial that the methods empowered the participants to share their accounts on terms that were comfortable for each individual. When analysing the data (see Section 5.4), the circumstances in which specific accounts were shared were considered to ensure that the experiences were not taken out of context. An important feature of the analysis was to open avenues of communication with participants to discuss the results and actively listen to feedback.

When researching 'cross-culturally', the position of the researcher is arguably as important as the data that are being uncovered. The researcher will influence the nature of the project, decide on the methods through which accounts and experiences are to be shared, affect the types of accounts that are shared, manipulate the ways accounts are framed and positioned, and control how the accounts are re-constructed in the final thesis. Encouraged by Skelton's (2001) reflections and arguments on cross-cultural work, the following is an insight into the position of the researcher and some reflections on some encounters.

5.5.2: Positionality

From the outset, it was crucial to acknowledge that the researcher's positionality has influenced how the research was constructed, the types of accounts shared (subject, presentation etc), and how these experiences were interpreted. In cross-cultural research, it is arguably a disservice or deficiency if the researcher's position is not taken into account in each stage of the project. When reflecting on highly emotive accounts shared by participants, the importance of having avenues of support have maintained good standards of ethical practice (see Section 5.6).

Skelton (2001:89) describes positionality as:

"things like our race and gender... but also our past experiences, our levels of education, our sexuality, our age, our ableness, whether we are a parent or not. All of these have bearing upon who we are, how identities are formed and how we do our research. We are not neutral, scientific observers, untouched by the emotional and political context of places where we do our research".

A key debate within academic research is the extent to which an 'outsider' can enter an 'other's' 'lifeworld'. This has been explored in the context of adults entering the world of children (Aitken and Wingate, 1993) and in the context of migration/ethnicity (Dwyer, 1999, Smith, 2003). In Dwyer's (1999) study of young Muslim women in Britain, the participants' argued that the information shared may have been different if a Muslim interviewer had been used. Laurie *et al.* (1999:49) agree, but assert that the participants may not have given "better truths". Crucial in such a discussion of the insider/outsider binary, Mullings (1999) notes that such notions are not fixed in time nor space, and it can be argued such identities are shaped through biographical experiences.

Feminist research is particularly mindful of standpoints and positionality, and Mullings (1999:337) argues that "a researcher's knowledge is therefore always partial because his/her positionality (perspective shaped by his/her unique... attributes), as well as location in time and space will influence how the world is viewed and interpreted". Drawing on Lughod (1988) and Hill-Collins (1990), Mullings (1999:340) weighs up the benefits of being an 'insider' or 'outsider' of the group a researcher wishes to study and asserts that 'insiders':

"...have an advantage because they are able to use their knowledge of the group to gain more intimate insights into their opinions. By contrast, 'outsiders' argue that by not belonging to a group of the study they are more likely to be perceived as neutral and therefore giving information that would not be given to an 'insider'".

Thus, the importance is not whether one is classified as an 'insider' or an 'outsider', but how such positions are acknowledged and understood throughout the research process. Similar to Dwyer's (1999) arguments, the position of being an 'outsider' to the Polish communities does not render the insights shared of little worth, but rather provides an alternative and unique lens through which Polish migrations to the UK can be viewed.

Taking into account Skelton's (2001) definition of positionality, there are many layers of identity which intersect to influence people's accounts, and the remainder of the discussion focuses upon two issues: 'language' and 'cultural background'. In terms of language, Section 5.3.3 discusses the practical implications of the researcher's Polish language ability and the use of translators in the research. The researcher's inability to speak Polish, however, also presented a symbolic distance influencing the research. By learning about Polish culture and acquiring some basic Polish language skills, a sign of real interest and commitment was demonstrated to participants (Smith, 2003). Rather than viewing the inability to speak and understand Polish as a source of shame, language was used an 'icebreaker'[33] and the researcher was able to empathise and compliment participants on their language abilities. By using the researcher's abilities as well as inabilities, the connections and relationships created within the Polish communities ensured that the legitimacy of the project was grounded, and encouraged the participation of people from a wide range of backgrounds. While the influence the researcher's inability to speak Polish had to the accounts shared is not calculable, many of the participants commented that the Polish language is particularly difficult to learn and the use of translators was transparent (A further issue is discussed in Section 5.6 where the ethical issues associated to conducting interviews in mixed-language contexts are considered). Language 'cues' (through expression or tone) may be missed. This issue was discussed during the training sessions with translators and a variety of prompts were developed to ensure participants were comfortable in sharing their accounts.

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[33] During initial encounters with Polish contacts, a regular question asked by participants was whether or not the researcher could speak Polish. In answering such questions, the researcher discussed attempts at learning Polish and recited specific phrases learned - which often were sources of humour!

The second aspect of positionality focused upon here is cultural background. Within this, two competing ideas intersect and interact in shaping the researcher-participant relationship: nationality and mobility. First, experiences of growing-up in different national spaces are important to note, and second, the researcher has no experiences of migrating to another country to reside. Mullings (1999:340) argues that "the process of self-representation is an important component of the search for a shared positional space" and points out that researchers are frequently advised to 'display' a sound knowledge of the topic under discussion. When first meeting participants and discussing the research, the researcher's motivations were a consistent and dominant theme. During these meetings, the researcher's positionality was scrutinised by participants. Such encounters allowed participants to ask questions about the researcher's own experiences, attempting to nurture 'shared positional space' - "areas where the situated knowledges of both parties in the interview encounter, engender a level of trust and co-operation" (Mullings, 1999:340). The researcher's identity performances of nationality and mobility may have helped participants to frame accounts by sharing experiences important to them, rather than defined by the researcher. By being explicit with participants about the researcher's positionality, specific experiences or knowledge that may have been assumed by participants were drawn out from their accounts in greater detail and depth.

5.6: Ethical Considerations

Ethical awareness formed an integral dimension to the project and it was crucial to adopt a reflexive approach. The perceived ethical considerations of this research project are intricate and complex, but reflections upon these have been informed through contemporary debates within the social sciences (Bell, 2008, Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, Leyshon, 2002, Matthews *et al.*, 1998, Matthews and Tucker, 2000, Reeves, 2007, van Blerk and Ansell, 2007). In mapping out ethical considerations, informed by the standards and procedures of The University of Northampton[34] (The

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[34] One of the first stages of the research project required the researcher to 'negotiate' the Ethics Code and Procedures of The University of Northampton (2009). The information presented to The University of

University of Northampton, 2009), the potential for 'unprescribable' and 'unpredictable' situations to arise remained (Horton, 2001), signaling the importance of ethical awareness at all stages of the project. To achieve a high standard of ethical practice, the researcher was supported by the supervisory team to discuss particular issues that challenged the position of the researcher or the suitability of methods, and appropriate strategies were agreed. The subsequent sections illustrate the necessity of adopting an active approach towards ethical practice.

5.6.1: Language

The obstacle that 'language' created was a factor that was addressed reflexively throughout the project, and the experience of conducting research with individuals who speak a different language has revealed important ethical factors that initially were not identified. Harold *et al.* (1995) recognise that methods of narrative can be an emotional experience (for both researcher and researched) and as such, care and respect for each participant was of paramount importance. During an interview with one participant, the process of translation disguised her emotional state during her account of family relations in the UK. The process of migration is suggested to open up one's identity(ies) to "questioning, rewriting and re-routing" (Chambers, 1994:24) and this participant's experiences were poignant. When communicating with other people using the same language, the 'way' language is spoken (e.g. tones, stresses, pauses etc) is emotionally revealing. The experience of having language translated resulted in the initial emotional 'cues' displayed by the participant being missed by the researcher. Consequently, the ethical practice of the researcher's responsiveness to the participants was brought into question. At times in the interview context when participants shared their experiences in Polish, the most significant markers of emotion, as interpreted by the researcher, were body language and tone. Temple (2004) stresses the importance of engaging with translators and the situation referred to in this example shows the significance of preparing translators for the interview situation. Suitable prompts (e.g. 'information shared is voluntary',

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Northampton's Research Ethics Committee formed a valuable stage of the project, as the assurance of approval instilled a confidence that permeated throughout the research when dealing with ethical issues.

'providing no response to a question is appropriate', 'would you like a short-break', 'withdrawal from the research is your choice' etc) for participants were created and delivered throughout interviews[35] (by researcher and translator) to ensure that ethically-sound practice was maintained. Overall, 'cross-cultural' research is significantly influenced and shaped by ethical practice. The experience of researching between languages in this research project has verified the importance of involving translators in ethical procedure before, during and after all research interviews.

5.6.2: Informed Consent

Before data collection took place, participants' consent was obtained in writing (see Appendix D/E). To do this, participants were issued with information sheets, in a choice of English or Polish language (see Appendix F/G) to allow for an informed and voluntary decision of whether they would like to take part (Alderson, 2000, Bryman, 2004). Included in the sheet was information on the purpose and rationale of the project, the methods employed, the time involved, and the potential for risk or discomfort (Hay, 2003). The information sheets distributed to participants were also readily available online via the associated research page for the project (Callender, 2009). The participants were also informed about the communication challenges (see Sections 5.3.3. and 5.5.2) and the use of translators was discussed. None of the participants objected to particular translators and in many cases met the translator before agreeing to take part in the research process. To achieve a high standard of ethical practice, the consent of participants was re-visited throughout to ensure a sense of control over the information shared. The participants were also reminded that they were free to withdraw from the project at any stage (Matthews and Tucker, 2000).

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[35] None of the participants refused to comment on particular topics or withdrew their participation, suggesting the ethical strategies adopted to minimise discomfort were successful. The research methods were established to enable participants to share experiences on their own terms. As such, the themes that developed during conversations were determined by participants to be comfortable to discuss.

5.6.3: Feedback and Dissemination

Feedback and dissemination are aspects of research receiving increased attention within social sciences literature (McDowell, 2001, Valentine, 1999, van Blerk and Ansell, 2007). The feedback and dissemination strategies selected for this research project involved a variety of methods to promote inclusion. First, the researcher sought to provide detailed feedback derived from the analysis, whilst providing an opportunity for participants to discuss and comment. To achieve this, the researcher contacted participants via email to share the results and respond to any enquiries (with the assistance of translators). For some participants, a follow-up meeting after such correspondence was arranged (usually in a public space such as a coffee shop) to discuss the analysis and gather feedback. A minority of participants actively responded to the initial results and often participants would only thank the researcher for any correspondence. While an active dialogue was not achieved with a majority of participants, those who did respond indicated that the analysis reflected what they had shared. It should also be noted that during the course of the research, the researcher was informed by 'gatekeepers' that particular participants had moved back to Poland or to another location in the UK, presenting difficulties in meeting face-to-face. Second, analysis of participants' narratives was used as the subject for interviews conducted in the case studies (see Section 5.3.2). The reactions to research findings during the case study interviews assisted in 'making sense' of what had been found.

5.6.4: Translators

Translators signed a confidentiality agreement, stating that they would not disclose information shared within the interviews. In some cases, however, the translator had a social relationship with a participant outside of the research context. In such instances, the translator was re-briefed on the confidentiality agreement made at the outset of their participation, and this was discussed with the interviewee prior to research interviews. Following research interviews, participants were contacted (via e-mail) to thank them for their participation and confirm they were

comfortable with the information they had shared. The extent to which particular accounts were influenced by translators is indeterminable. None of the contact, however, that occurred after interviews suggested that any of the participants were, at any stage, in a position of discomfort because of the presence of a translator.

5.7: Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the methods chosen. A mixed-methods approach was adopted comprising a semi-structured 'narrative' interview, structured in relation to each participant's biography, followed by a series of case studies based upon differences between young Polish migrants. Following data analysis, dominant themes have been identified and a discussion of these follows. Chapter 6 explores 'pathways' to Northamptonshire, deliberating upon participants' migratory decision-making and resultant changes to their social networks. Chapter 7 builds upon this discussion, revealing a framework of difference identifying key factors indicated by participants as being influential to their connections with peers in the UK. Chapter 7 considers notions of 'everydayness' within Northamptonshire and explores participants' accounts of 'home'. Chapter 8 details intersections between participants' migratory experiences and transitions through the life course. Chapter 9 reflects on the findings in relation to the aims of the project and identifies areas that would benefit from further research.

Chapter 6: 'Routes' to Northamptonshire

6.1: Introduction

It was argued in Chapter 2 that contemporary flows of young Polish migrants are fundamentally different to previous immigration flows to the UK (Burrell, 2009a). It was additionally suggested that much existing research has often provided a limited picture of recent Polish migrants' motivations, experiences and intentions (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008). As argued in Section 2.3, contemporary flows of A8 migrants have primarily been defined and understood in relation to economic factors and mapped using quantitative data (Burrell, 2009a, Drinkwater *et al.*, 2006, House of Commons, 2008, Pollard *et al.*, 2008). This study was designed to gather qualitative data reflecting on *why* and *how* young Poles have arrived in Northamptonshire. The findings of this research indicate that while economic factors are important, there are additional motivational factors that are also influential, many of which are highly individualised. This chapter will provide an overview of the 'pathways' young Polish migrants negotiate in migrating to Northamptonshire. The chapter begins by exploring some different 'pathways' to Northamptonshire, highlighting the underpinning motivations and rationales driving migratory movements (Section 6.2). The chapter then moves forward to examine participants' initial 'settling in' experiences upon arrival (Section 6.3). The chapter concludes by proposing a framework to understand how migrants make sense of their experiences in relation to the decisions made to migrate in the 'late modern' (Section 6.4).

6.2: The 'Paradox of Choice': A Freedom to Move?

When considering recent changes to the UK's migration profile (see Chapter 2), "it is almost impossible not to have noticed the profound impact that the 2004 enlargement of the European Union, with the ensuing movements of 'Accession 8' migrants, has had on migration patterns within Europe, and to the United Kingdom and Ireland in particular" (Burrell, 2009b:1). Indeed, given that young people constitute the bulk of A8 migrants (Burrell, 2009a, Home Office, 2008a, Galasińska and

Kozłowska, 2009, White, 2010), Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009:27) suggest that the scale of migration from Poland "is perhaps the most significant legacy of EU membership for Poland's population structure". Halfacree and Boyle (1993:334) argue that conventional approaches to migration were based upon a particular, limited conceptualisation whereby "'migration' was to be regarded solely as a empirical event; a largely preordained 'response' to the 'stimulus' of the potential for a higher 'income' at some other residential location". They assert that the focus of such conceptualisations was the environment and economic context, rather than the individual (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993). This section, embracing contemporary approaches within migration studies, considers the multitude of individual factors revealed to be influential in determining the movements of young Poles to Northamptonshire.

When discussing the influences that shaped participants' migratory decision-making, it is important to note Halfacree and Boyle's (1993:337) observation that "the migration decision is situated within the migrant's entire biography", thus it is crucial to take stock of the circumstances and histories that have influenced these decisions. Walker and Stephenson (2010) assert that many countries throughout Central and Eastern Europe have experienced a period of substantial social, economic and political transformation following the collapse of state socialism after 1989 (see Chapter 1) . Drawing on conceptualisations of 'high' or 'late' modernity (Bauman, 2001, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991), Walker and Stephenson (2010) suggest that in countries such as Poland transitions from socialism to post-socialism (as forms of 'authoritarian paternalism' are withdrawn) resulted in the rapid popularisation of 'individualisation'. While processes of 'individualisation' are argued to have been experienced as 'liberation' from conventional roles and constraints, the conditions of living in the 'late modern' are understood to confront individuals with a 'paradox of choice' (Walker and Stephenson, 2010), as "people become the agents of their own identity making, but this is not a choice" (Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010:534).

Young Polish migrants are arguably confronted with a wider range of potential mobilities and 'pathways' than previous Polish generations (Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010), and these potential

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'routes' contain heightened risks and insecurities (Abbott *et al.*, 2010), hence, a 'paradox of choice'. This section explores participants' 'migration decision' and is divided into two parts: 'push' factors (Section 6.2.1) and 'pull' factors (Section 6.2.2). In classic accounts of migration (see Lee, 1966, Peach, 1968) the stimuli (i.e. 'pushes' and 'pulls') for migration have overwhelmingly been mobilised on a macro scale via accounts which often failed to consider how individuals identify and experience such stimuli (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993). In contrast, this chapter explores highly individualised processes, actions and forms of decision-making. In so doing, the aspects that influenced participants' decisions are found to be complexly spatial and based on complex interactions within the structure/agency dichotomy (Evans, 2002, 2007, Roberts, 2010, Woodman, 2009).

6.2.1: 'Push' Factors

May 2004 marked a significant moment in the history of the European Union: the accession of eight new member states, including Poland. In that moment, the political conditions that shaped and restricted outward migration from Poland changed significantly, opening new 'pathways' and opportunities for Polish nationals. White (2010) argues that in Poland it was particularly younger people, often well-educated, who responded to these new opportunities. Polish migrants were presented as exercising a high degree of agency: as "ideal-typical subjects of late modernity, able to sever attachments to people and place that stand in the way of their own labour market flexibility" (Walker and Stephenson, 2010:525). White (2010) stresses, however, that the agency of young Polish migrants should not be overstated, as many young people's choices in Poland are, in practice, constrained by the structures of the Polish labour market, cultural norms and other geographical contingencies. In what Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009:44) describe as a 'brain overflow', young Poles are suggested to feel increasingly 'forced' to migrate abroad (White, 2009b). This section presents data illustrating 'push' factors which influenced the life trajectories of research participants and which suggest the importance of economic, but also familial and cultural, factors.

Within the context of the European Union, participants' accounts suggest that Poland was perceived to be a place of limited opportunity and this perception was often crucial within their migratory decisions. This was compounded by broad socio-economic factors. For example, Leaman and Wörsching (2010) suggest that the Europe-wide recession of 2008-2009 has disproportionately affected young people's ability to find a job in comparison to their adult counterparts. The total unemployment rate for young people aged between 15 and 24 years old in the EU27 between the first quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 rose from 14.6% to 18.3% (+3.7%), while adult (15 to 64 year old) unemployment rose from 7% to 8.5% (+1.5%) (Leaman and Wörsching, 2010:3). White's (2010) research supports these statistics, with interviewees in Poland observing that secondary school leavers were particularly vulnerable and at risk of unemployment in this context. Participants in Galasińska and Kozłowska's (2009) study justified their decision to migrate by stating that they were moving to a 'better world'. The literature suggests that intensified structural pressures related to changes within the global economy may be important 'push' factors.

At the beginning of the research interviews, participants were asked to describe their lives prior to migration. Around two-thirds of participants (*n* = 27) outlined a range of difficulties that posed significant constraints to the range of opportunities available to them in the (then) present and to their future prospects. Although the accounts varied according to each participant's own circumstances and biography, the data indicate that participants' perceptions of their future were a critical influence. For individuals such as Ania and Amedej, the difficulties of contracting employment within the Polish labour market were important in migratory decisions. Their accounts illustrate frustration with their attempts to gain employment in this context. The data suggest that some participants recognised the economic limitations of their situation in Poland which consequently compelled them to migrate: as Amedej says "... *there was really nothing I could do*...".

Ania: "When I was working in Poland, I lost my job so I was trying to find something which was a big problem for me at that time in my life. And because we joined the European Union, it was really popular at the time to go abroad and find a job."

(Female, 22, translated)[36]

Amedej: "I went to a school, like a five year college. Afterwards I had a break for three months. I went to army for nine months and after, I didn't really have any idea of what to do…I didn't have a job, there was nothing really I could do… the money was crap…"

(Male, 21, translated)

In addition to the difficulties that some young people reported in locating paid employment, the accounts of Wilhelm and Grażyna highlight further limitations within the Polish labour market in the relative 'spending power' achieved when finding work. These results were found to be the same when analysing the data in relation to participants' ages, locations, gender and levels of education. These data draw links with the study by Galasińska and Kozłowska (2009) in that when comparing the opportunities in Poland with those in the UK, livelihoods in Poland were constructed more negatively (see Grażyna quote below):

Wilhelm: "I was close to the end of university in 2004 when we joined the EU. There wasn't really any money when I was at university… the wages were low… it was a difficult time."

(Male, 24)

Grażyna: "If you come here to earn money, then you've got money to do other things than just paying bills. In Poland if you earn money, you don't have anything. When you come here, you can buy stuff for yourself and you can still save money monthly, every month, but in Poland it's impossible."

(Female, 24)

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[36] All names are pseudonyms. Numbers refer to ages in years. 'Translated' means participant's account was spoken in Polish and translated to English during the interview

Zarek: "I worked 18 hours per day when I was in Poland… and I didn't have enough money to survive."

(Male, 24, translated)

The above examples highlight how for some individuals living in Poland, like Zarek, most money earned would be spent on household 'overheads'. Many participants discussed the perceived economic benefits of working in the UK as providing an opportunity to use economic capital for their lifestyle in addition to what was termed 'survival' money (e.g. housing costs, food etc). The data indicate that the desire to acquire more disposable income was a key factor within the economic rationales underpinning migration shared by the participants and this motivation appears to have particular significance for this age range of migrants. For as Jones (2009:96) argues "it seems that most young people still chiefly associate adult independence with earning an income from work, which gives them greater control over their consumption and leisure lives". The option of migrating to the UK could, for some, facilitate an impression of 'independence' indicative of 'adulthood', a relationship explored in Chapter 8.

The data indicate that most of the research sample perceived the amount of money that could be earned in Poland to be relatively low in comparison to that which could be possible in the UK labour market. The notion of difficulties in finding work in Poland was evident across the sample regardless of gender, age, location in Poland or educational attainment. The universality of perceived limitations within the Polish labour market in the participants' accounts is supported by Fihel and Kaczmarczyk's (2009:30) observation that "every fifth post-accession migrant has a tertiary education, which, considering that just 14.3 per cent of the overall population of Poland are university graduates (in 2004) indicates a loss of human capital (the 'brain drain' phenomenon)".

Section 5.2 details the research sample illustrating that seven individuals were in full-time education, four of whom were in higher education. It should be noted that an additional three individuals had completed a degree, two individuals in the UK and one person in Poland, and all three at the time of the interview were employed in occupations that needed no professional

qualifications (two worked in warehouses and one in administration). When discussing these types

of employment trajectories, Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009:46) argue that "a far more damaging

situation could be developing then, than brain drain - that of brain waste, the employment of

migrants from Poland far below their professional skills". Participants in this study, however, did not

account these types of 'pathways' as 'wasteful'. For example, Janina, who completed a degree in the

UK and works in a warehouse, views herself as "doing well". Furthermore, rather than interpret

experiences of these types of 'pathways' as 'wasteful', it can be argued that participants viewed the

acquisition of qualifications as improving their skills, creating opportunities and improving their

ability to assess 'pathways' that lay ahead (see Section 8.2):

> Janina: "I used to be sure of what I wanted to do in Poland. Like I said I wanted to be
> a translator. I knew my place, everything was secure and I know exactly what I
> wanted to do, continue my studies of language here. But I got a little scared and I
> thought how can I learn English in a foreign country, so I made the biggest mistake
> by taking a different course in marketing... but I still think it will come back to the
> roots and I am planning to do language.
>
> MC: "When thinking about the future, where do you see yourself?"
>
> Janina: "At the moment, obviously the answer might change in a few years, at the
> moment I want to stay here and I want to finish all the courses I am planning. I think
> I can see myself here in England. I like it, but I do miss Poland. I think maybe I want
> to stay here for the next few years and then maybe go back to Poland with all of this
> experience. I'm happy I'm able to live in a foreign place and I am doing well to be
> honest. It's hard to think about any negative experiences. Maybe one thing is some
> people in England, especially at the moment with the recession, are against foreign
> people, especially in terms of work and so you can feel it a little bit. You can feel that
> negative attitude, there are different rules for you and there are different rules of an
> English person, you feel like you are not a part of us".
>
> (Female, 23)

In a study of young people's housing strategies, Jones (2001) argues that there are a number

of 'home comforts' for young people who live in the parental home, but these comforts may restrict

levels of privacy and are determined by individuals' relationships with parents. Additionally, it is indicated that young migrants who move out of the parental home are likely to value independence more highly than these 'home comforts'. This has important implications for how the participants of this study may understand their experiences of migration. For a fifth of participants (*n* = 7), difficulties within the Polish labour market were influential in their ability to leave the parental home, having an impact on their own perceived quality of life. The data echo Warzywoda-Kruszyńska *et al.*'s (2010) study which suggests that, as a result of difficult economic conditions, grandparents often live in the traditional family home, providing important financial support for 'poorer' families through pension income. This is indicated to result in a quarter of grandparent(s) within 'poorer' families sharing a household with their children and grandchildren. Some participants described their experiences of living in households with 'extended families' and indicated this was restrictive in terms of privacy, but also provided an environment in which strong family ties were evident (see Section 7.4). For example, Gracja discussed her views of living conditions in her parents' home in *Rokitno*[37] explaining how her parents' household accommodated three generations of her family. Few participants from larger cities reported living with extended family groups, but as demonstrated in the account by Graźyna, limited space available in the family home (in this case in *Szczecin*[38]) may still be an issue:

> Gracja: "I have got three younger than me brothers, mum, dad and my grandparents and so there were eight of us living at home in a two bedroom house. We had to share beds and my parents were sleeping in the kitchen because kitchens aren't the same as here… it was impossible! They are huge [the kitchens] and so we had two beds in there, living room where there were three beds in there and on the other side of the house there was a kitchen and bath for my grandparents."
>
> (Female, 23)

> Graźyna: "… so we live near the town centre, not near but not that far… well I have to take a bus [to go to the city centre]. I live near a forest [wooded area] in some

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[37] Small village located in the south of Poland within the *Śląskie* province.
[38] Large city located in the north west of Poland and capital city of the *Zachodniopomorskie* province.

flats and I lived on the eighth floor… erm we don't really have a big house, we have got like two bedrooms and one living room and that's it."

(Female, 24)

The data illustrated above highlight how participants perceived challenging conditions of living in Poland in comparison to the UK. The results of this study confirm the importance and influence that economic differences and opportunities have to the movements of young Polish migrants. It is important to note, however, that economic motivations for some were not a primary factor. In Pollard *et al.*'s (2008) report, it is argued that the vast majority of Polish migrants come to the UK for economic reasons but that post-enlargement migrations are not purely economic phenomena. In support of this argument, the evidence from this study suggests that there are additional motivational factors that underpin and shape the movements of this cohort of individuals, particularly in relation to processes of 'growing up' (see Chapter 8).

Further push factors evident in the data were the movements of immediate family. While discussing the degree of agency in the 'migration decision' it is important to note that, while the majority of the participants in this study made the decision to come to the UK independently or were actively involved in the decision-making process, there were a small number of participants (*n* = 4) for whom the decision to migrate to the UK was that of their parents[39]. For these participants, experiences of agency within the migratory decision were markedly different from the bulk of the sample. The parents' decisions to come to the UK, as explained by the participants, reflect the perceived economic and social opportunities migrating to the UK. The experiences of migration for these young people were indicated, due to their lack of agency in the process, to have been particularly turbulent. For instance, Juliet explains how on her initial arrival to the UK, she was not aware that the migration was long-term. In another example, Adalbert shares a similar experience of being in a position of no choice which has placed a strain on his personal relationship with his long-term girlfriend who stayed in Poland:

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[39] At the point of departure from Poland, these participants were aged 16 years old or younger and therefore were classed as dependents.

Juliet: "When I was leaving Poland, I didn't know I was staying here for long. My parents told me it would be some sort of vacations… holidays… but when we got here, my parents actually told me we were going to stop here… surprise… it was a big shock for me and I had to adapt."

(Female, 18, translated)

Adalbert: "...my girlfriend, she's in Poland. I was hoping that she would come here but she said no… if I had the choice I would have stayed. We see each other when we can and [when] I go back to Poland, it [the relationship] will be quite a lot stronger. It's quite hard to keep the relationship going but it's good... Because I was thirteen [years old] when my parents moved here I didn't really have a choice."

(Male, 18)

It is noted that little evidence exists detailing the roles that children play in migratory movements (Bushin, 2009, Hopkins and Hill, 2008) or their experiences of international migration (Aitken, 2001, Holloway and Valentine, 2000). The agency that children and young people are argued to possess in migratory experiences, to which there are calls for improved empirical research (see McKendrick, 2001), often receives limited attention because of a focus in migration research upon families or entire households (van Blerk and Ansell, 2006b). By contrast, in Bushin's (2009) revealing study of rural to urban migrations in southwest England, a range of strategies that families adopt in relation to migratory decision-making are exposed and it is argued a 'children-in-families'[40] approach would account for intergenerational differences, revealing a multitude of perspectives. The framework illustrated in Bushin's (2009) study provides a useful tool to gauge children's and young people's participation in migratory decisions, as well as exploring cross-cultural differences and norms. Ní Laoire *et al.*'s (2011:155) research also provides an in-depth exploration of childhood and migration in Ireland, exploring the experiences of asylum-seekers, EU and EEA labour migrants, non-EU labour migrants and returning Irish migrants, highlighting "children's agency and subjectivity

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[40] Bushin (2009:431) explains "a children-in-families approach to researching family migration decision-making requires that researchers include children in their research frameworks and allow children to be active research participants when undertaking qualitative research. It also means including adult family members in research frameworks so that children's agency in migration decision-making is investigated with the context of both intragenerational and intergenerational familial networks of power."

whilst recognising the complex nature of their identity practices and social worlds as well as the ways in which inclusion and exclusion manifest themselves in their lives". In this context, Anne White's project (White, 2009b, 2010, White and Ryan, 2008), represents an important contribution to understanding contemporary flows of Polish migrants to the UK and offers a valuable insight into different strategies families adopt in negotiating and experiencing migration. It is also noted, however, that White's research exclusively draws upon research interviews with Polish mothers; as such it under-represents the diverse perspectives of children and young people. The accounts shared in this research, although from a relatively small number of participants, indicate that children and young people may experience migration as a separate social and spatial event to that of adults. In particular, Juliet's account demonstrates the fragility of the 'lifeworlds' children and young people fashion for themselves (see James, 1990, Sibley, 1991, Matthews, 2001), as these worlds can be stripped from them without any warning. As the majority of participants in this study made the decision to migrate independently and were the main party in the decision-making process, it is not possible to explore these issues in great depth. The findings here, nonetheless, do stress the importance of undertaking research of this nature, in particular to explore how and why children and young people migrate, both independently and as part of family-moves, and how children and young people are informed of and influence decisions that have important implications for their world(s).

Overall, White's (2010) assertion that young people are particularly vulnerable to unemployment has significance to the 'push' factors revealed in the study. Some of the research sample experienced difficulties in finding a job after completing educational programmes. Rather than presenting the participants of the research as representative of a 'new' era of the 'late modern' (Bauman, 2001, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991), the research findings indicate that the level of agency or 'freedom to choose' can, at times, be experienced paradoxically (Walker and Stephenson, 2010). The chapter now moves forward to consider 'pull' factors in participants' decision-making.

6.2.2: 'Pull' Factors

The accession of Poland to the European Union in 2004 changed the political circumstances for, and range of opportunities available to, Polish nationals (Burrell, 2009a). In attempts to understand the high numbers of Polish nationals who migrated to the UK, disparities between the economic conditions in Poland and the UK are indicated as being central in existing research. As White (2009b:71) asserts, "the current wave of migration from Poland to the United Kingdom is clearly connected to the overall economic environment". Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009) identify three central 'pull' factors have been decisive in the volume of Polish migrants to the UK; the political conditions of 'open access' to UK's labour market, the expansion of the British economy creating a strong demand for labour, and the relatively low cultural barriers for those familiar with the English language. In addition to the more structural 'pull' factors evident in the participants' accounts, the chapter will also illustrate personalised 'pull' factors within some participants' biographies.

During the research interviews, nearly three-quarters of participants (*n* = 29) spoke of there being a sense of opportunity: an opportunity that would bring economic improvements, but also a number of social benefits that would improve their positioning for the future. As illustrated in the quotations in the preceding section comparing the economic conditions in Poland against the UK, the data suggest that many participants had negative outlooks, prior to migration, when contemplating their prospective financial future. The results of the study suggest that, for this particular age group, the timeliness of EU expansion in 2004 in providing the opportunity to migrate to the UK coincided with there being no specific anchors binding them to Poland:

> Jowita: "We had the chance to come here, like because of European Union, and I was about to start university in Poland. I had got my place but didn't pass the entrance examinations and my mother suggested it, like 'why don't you just go to England?' I knew I was going to be leaving home after my studies anyway and so I decided to come here."
>
> (Female, 22)

Michał: "I didn't really think about it, it wasn't planned… one day I woke up and thought I am going to come to England! I was fed up with the university and thought I would come to England. At that point in my life, it was an adventure for me… I just left university and thought why not?"

(Male, 24)

For this particular cohort of Polish migrants, when in a position where they had to make important decisions about the future, the perceived range of opportunities afforded by migrating to the UK proved fundamental to their decision-making processes. Importantly, rather than being determined by economic realities, participants seem to understand such movements in relation to perceptions of a 'better' life. Links between participants' decision-making processes and *envisioned futures* (see Section 8.2), recall previous discussions (see Section 3.2) on ideas of 'late' or 'liquid' modernity (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991). Bauman's (2007) arguments on 'lateral' movements as opposed to 'vertical' orientations are particularly helpful in understanding how these young migrants reached their decision over whether or not to migrate. For example, Michał's attitude of '*why not*' draws links with Walker and Stephenson's (2010:525) description of an "ideal-typical subject of late modernity", in that Michał exercised a relative freedom in his calculations and modified social connections through his mobility.

Most participants discussed, through the rhetoric of 'opportunity', how there was a careful consideration of 'odds' which strengthened the case of migrating away from Poland and ultimately helped them to justify their decisions. The quotations from interviews with Michał (above) and Grażyna (below) demonstrate the optimism some participants had when contemplating the future they would have if they migrated. This optimism is argued not to be solely based on an economic formulation. When analysing the data, no differences were found between participants based on factors such as gender, age, location in Poland or educational attainment. For some participants, such as Paweł, perceptions of the future were key to the decision to emigrate, whereas, for others, migration to the UK helped to facilitate transitions to 'independence' by moving out of the 'family home' (see Section 8.2.1):

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Grażyna: "I thought it could be nice to go [to England]… after a certain period of time in school you think you can go away and see something different… because we [Poland] joined the European Union you've got opportunities which our parents didn't really have and it's actually fun."

(Female, 24)

Pawał: "I was studying until I was 20… when I was 17 or 18 I already knew that I would have no future… I know [sic] I had to leave the country."

(Male, 24, translated)

An important dimension here, as alluded to by Grażyna, is that participants may understand these opportunities as a 'generational choice' which is distinctly different from previous generations in Poland. Grażyna's account draws links with the results of Pyšňáková and Miles (2010) study where the notion of 'choice' is presented as a generational change resulting from the transition from socialism to post-socialism in the Czech Republic. Section 6.2 discussed the rise of 'individualism' throughout Central and Eastern Europe as a result of political change. Galasińska and Kozłowska (2009) argue that these transformations have profoundly changed how young Poles perceive the opportunity of migration. Rather than being compelled to 'grab' any opportunity to migrate because of travel or work restrictions, they assert that young people in Poland see migration as taking place "in a dynamic, flexible and open space… giving the impression that people can choose when and where to migrate" (Galasińska and Kozłowska, 2009:90). Indeed, Pyšňáková and Miles (2010:541) conclude that the political change in the Czech Republic now means that "young people equate freedom with choice". When relating these ideas to the high number of young Polish people who have migrated to the UK, White (2010) discusses how young migrants are viewed by their elders as being 'braver' in 'choosing' to migrate. Additionally, White (2010:577), drawing on Siara's (2009) results, points out that 'younger people' in Poland adopt 'untraditional' views on gender-based norms of migration ("father = breadwinner and mother = chief parent"). The data support these arguments, as both male and female participants expressed similar experiences of decision-making, negotiating choice and risk. For some research participants, such as Bogumił, these negotiations

were viewed as being easier for young people than for older generations, indicating the importance of 'age' as a marker of difference between Polish migrants:

> Bogumił: "My brother came here once. My parents didn't come because they don't really like to travel. It's easier for me to go to Poland than for them to come here."
>
> (Male, 23, translated)

A few participants described how the opportunity to 'freely' move between the UK and Poland had influenced their patterns of consumption. For instance, in discussing branded athletic clothing, Natalka compared the prices of specific items between the UK and Poland and suggested that some Polish individuals take advantage of the lower prices by purchasing goods in the UK to take back when returning to Poland. In another example, Amedej described the amazement of his friends to the prices of particular items and declared that these types of promotions were very unusual in Poland:

> Natalka: "In two and a half months I earned actually lots of money and I bought lots of things that I couldn't in Poland because here it was cheaper… like sports clothes… they're <u>really</u> expensive [in Poland], even three times [the amount], and this was quite a shock to me how different that was. People are even coming here when there are 'Sales' on because it is so much cheaper and you can save some money. Here you can buy a top for about £12 but if you go back to Poland it would cost about £40."
>
> (Female, 24)

> Amedej: "One of my friends when he came here, when he saw the prices in the shop, he was actually taking pictures because he couldn't believe it… (laughs)… <u>seriously</u>, for example ketchup, it costs £1, and he is getting one more free!"
>
> (Male, 21)

The preceding section concluded with examples where the decision to migrate to the UK was made by parents rather than through participants' own volition and reveals to an extent how these participants interpreted migration as being somewhat 'forced'. This section will conclude with

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an account where a family relationship was central in the decision to migrate, but rather than the participant understanding this as being a 'forced' migration, the perception of choice was more evident. Małgorzata was 16 years old when she first migrated to the UK and she discussed how the migratory decision was based on bringing her family together in one place rather than living in separate countries:

> Małgorzata: "My dad first came to England and he was here, and my parents were trying to figure out if they want to stay in Poland or come here. So, I joined my dad to see if it would work and if I would be able to stay here, with my mum in Poland at that time. After five months, my brother joined us, which meant that only my mum was still in Poland. A year after, my mum joined us. This was because my mum had a job and the house to sort out and then she came here."
>
> (Female, 18, translated)

For individuals like Małgorzata, the migratory decision to come to the UK, despite being similarly influenced by familial structures, was experienced differently to that of Juliet and Adalbert (see Section 6.2.1). This difference could reflect the level of agency in the decision-making process, highlighting the relevance of the core tension between *agency* and *structure* here.

The participants of the study arrived into the UK from a range of places throughout Poland (see Figure 5.8); however, no evidence was found to suggest that participants from particular provinces in Poland were driven by regionally-distinctive sets of motivational factors. Instead, the findings presented here suggest that young Polish migrants' motivations cannot be generalised, with each participant having individual and sensitive circumstances or biographies that set the scene for their departure from Poland. Although no data were found to link participants by geographical location of residence within Poland, the accounts indicate that commonalities do exist between participants based on their 'membership' of a particular age generation of Polish nationals. For instance, many of the participants, in describing their lives before migration, discussed the completion of an educational programme and related thoughts about their own future.

The data suggest that there are a number of factors to be considered when discussing young Polish migrants' pathways to Northamptonshire. For most participants, the economic benefits of being in the UK were 'known' and influential, but it is stressed that this knowledge was not necessarily decisive. The research results indicate the importance of participants' *envisioned future(s)* (see Section 8.2.1) to their decision to migrate. The accession of Poland to the European Union in 2004 created a new pathway, an opportunity that was not available to previous generation of Polish young people, which had the perceived prospect of improving their standard of living both economically and socially. By considering the responses of this cohort of Polish migrants, and the high numbers of young people from A8 nations moving to the UK (see Chapter 2), the high proportion of young people central to these flows of immigrants is suggested to be influenced by the opportunity being presented at a point in their life course which afforded a high level of mobility.

The section began by questioning the extent to which young Polish migrants are free to choose to migrate. Discussion of the data reveals that there are many factors that contribute to decision-making, showing that for most of the sample the rationale underpinning migration was comprised of both agency *and* structure. Having provided an overview of the 'pathways' to the UK, the chapter will now considers how these factors intersected on experiences of 'arrival' and participants' subsequent 'social networks'.

6.3: Changing Social Networks

The chapter thus far has indicated that a range of 'new' pathways were available to this cohort of young Poles who perceived the benefits of 'travelling on'. The data suggest, however, that each participant's pathway was constituted by both agency and structure to varying degrees. As such, while political conditions in Poland are understood to have changed following accession to the European Union, the decision to migrate to the UK is suggested to have many underlying factors. The data presented in Section 6.2 highlight the importance on 'untangling' factors woven together in each participant's biography and decision-making practices and thus demonstrate an important

tension within the suggested 'paradox of choice' (Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010). This section focuses upon participants' experiences of 'arrival' into the UK, focusing particularly upon consequences of migration for their social networks. Following discussion of changes to participants' social networks, the section reveals how initial experiences of 'arrival' shape how participants identify their own limitations and strengths as individuals.

Section 4.3 argued that migrants' connections with people are transformed as they engage with 'routes' while simultaneously being influenced by their 'roots'. The roots/routes homophone is particularly useful in understanding migratory experiences and transformations and how migrants connect with other people and spaces (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Blunt and Dowling, 2006, Salih, 2002, Vertovec, 1999, 2001). Ryan *et al.* (2008) suggest that migrants have different abilities to access or engage with networks, rendering each migrant's circumstances individual and unique. Importantly, the assumption that migrants are able to enter dense social networks simplifies the experiences of newly-arriving migrants (Ryan *et al.*, 2008). In contrast to what could be described as romanticised visions of transnationalism, migrants' decisions to engage with 'routes' may result in the creation of a 'dual identity'. This, rather than harmoniously bringing two social fields into one (see Glick-Schiller *et al.*, 1995), can result in experiences of 'living in limbo' (Armbuster, 2002, Nowicka, 2006, Salih, 2002). This section demonstrates that as the participants migrated to the UK, the width and depth of their social networks contracted, resulting, for some, in a sense of loss of belonging.

Chapter 5 outlines the narrative-based research methods used to uncover important events and experiences of migration as defined by the participant. Whiting (2000) argues such methods are particularly powerful in allowing participants to re-interpret experiences which can change how an individual views, feels and evaluates their life. When analysing data related to the contraction of social networks, a sense of loss was particularly evident in many accounts, particularly those of female respondents. The difference between male and female participants in describing these changes links with the results of Barbara's (2008) study of gender differences between Polish adults in the expression of narrative schema of love. In her study, Barbara (2008) argues that in their

accounts women were more expressive and displayed greater emotional involvement in formulating a story about love. Although the data illustrated in this section is biased towards female accounts, it is not the intention of the author to suggest that female participants disproportionately experience these changes more frequently or strongly. Rather, in this study female participants appeared to be more likely to articulate these changes in the course of discussing their migratory experiences.

About half of the participants (*n* = 24) described experiences and changes to their relationships with friends and family who had remained in Poland. The accounts shared below were taken from the final stages of the exercise in which participants were asked to reflect on positive and negative aspects of their migratory experiences. A regular theme within the accounts was a sense that the participants were now living very different lives to those of friends who had remained in Poland: that the pathways they had chosen had weakened their position of insideness within their 'native' networks. For example, Malina described her life as separated from her friends in Poland, evident in how little social time they now spend together. Malina explained that she had moved into a position whereby she has acquired more disposable income (see Section 6.2) but acknowledged that her friends in Poland do not share this position. In contrast to the results of Chan's (1999) study, where it is argued return migrants to Hong Kong view themselves as better people to the '*Xianggangren*' (people of Hong Kong) by taking responsibility, Malina's accounts suggest that she perceives herself as benefiting from valuable migratory experiences, unlike her 'Polish' friends who she believed to have 'settled down'. On the one hand, Malina reflects that she has gained important experiences through migration and now has high[er] ambitions, but on the other hand, she has now 'lost' her place within her group of friends in Poland and weakened her connections with her 'roots':

> Malina: "I have lost a lot of friends. I've been seeing people maybe twice a year and now they've got families and babies and different lives. When we see each other, we have a quick drink but no more than that... I can't find myself... you know I said all my friends are having babies and families and stuff and [I] feel strange, it's [because

it is] not the same as it used to be… rather than thinking how to enjoy themselves, they are thinking how to survive with like one salary… it's difficult."

(Female, 24)

Connections with 'roots' were described as being very important to the participants' sense of self, as illustrated by the subsequent quotation by Małgorzata. The data suggest that the strength of self-defined 'roots' deteriorates through migratory experiences, which in the accounts were described as both a literal and metaphorical sense of distance. This supports the views of Salih (2002) and Al-Ali (2002), in that some participants described a loss of belonging in their everyday lives. Section 4.4 considered the concept of 'hybridity' in relation to the types of changes to identity(ies) that may occur through migration. The results indicate that the process of a 'hybridising' identity may exacerbate migrants' perceptions of 'placelessness' and feelings of isolation. The data also recall Gilroy's (1993) arguments of syncretism, as identity(ies) are infused with cultural fragments through a process of constitution (Hall and du Gay, 1996) (see Section 4.4). The following account by Małgorzata demonstrates an awareness of the influences that inhabiting a 'foreign' cultural space have had to her sense of 'rooted' identity(ies):

Małgorzata: "I am Polish, I feel Polish and I don't want to lose it; <u>that</u> is the most important thing. But my family is here, and so my life is actually here in England at the minute, but I don't want to forget my roots. Of course after some time you have got your friends in Poland and when you go away and you are not in touch with them day-to-day then you have got different things, so if you go back to Poland then you don't really have anything to talk about. It's a weird feeling, but it's common."

(Female, 18, translated)

The data also indicate there are a number of limitations to the range of social networks accessed in the UK. For about three-quarters of participants (n = 29), the initial connections made within the UK were centred on work places. An important aspect of attempts to create or establish new connections in the UK was each participant's ability to communicate in English, a feature which is examined in Chapter 7. In the case of Agnieszka, working in a warehouse was shown to offer some

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opportunities to meet other Polish migrants but few chances to expand her social networks beyond these ethnic-specific groups:

> Agnieszka: "I started working and the only people I met with were people that I was working with. There were much more Polish people than any other; there were not very many English [people] there. When I started working there I was on the line constantly staying in one place, and I didn't have much time to talk to people. When I got promoted, I started doing checks and stuff, and I didn't have to stay on the line all the time and I got to walk around and talked to many different [non-Polish] people. This is when I started talking to different [non-Polish] people."
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

Despite the limitations of connections made with other newly-arriving migrants within the UK, some participants explained that creating ties with newly-arriving Polish migrants was important in terms of practical support and access to resources. In Ryan *et al.'s* (2008:679) study of Polish networks in London, participants had a sense of distrust towards the wider Polish community and "the idea that Poles 'do not help each other' emerged frequently in [their] study". Ryan *et al.* (2008), utilising Granovetter's (1973) concept of 'weak ties', stress the importance of ethnic-specific, informal networks of 'transient' acquaintances within Polish networks, affording access to different levels of support. Building on these ideas, the results of this study indicate that the participants' social networks of 'weak ties' could be characterised as an 'informal economy', or what Gill and Bialski (2011) term a 'barter system'. For instance, Grażyna indicated that migrants access a range of 'weak ties' within Polish networks to facilitate access to everyday 'practical' resources and/or skills. In what is described as an 'informal economy', exchanges of 'skills for money' were common place and considered essential to maximise access to resources and opportunities. Jowita also explained that not knowing the intentions of the 'weak ties' in relation to their length of stay in the UK adds a further restriction on the relative social investments made with these connections, in effect limiting the strength of social 'bonds' evident in participants' networks (Putnam, 2007). Indeed, with respect to the nature of exchanges within the Polish 'informal economy', both parties following 'skills for

money' exchanges depart equitably retaining no debt or obligation. There were, however, a few examples, illustrated by Gracja's quotation, where the exchange between two 'weak ties' was interpreted as unfair, which was suggested to restrict the future support and/or resources available within the wider network:

> Grażyna: "We are sort of self-sufficient, because of the number of us… different people is bringing different something from Poland. So for instance, simple examples like hairdressers, someone to translate for you, you can go to the local shop and then ask, and they will do it for you, or someone has got a friend that can do it for you. You pay for it to each other, so it's an exchange thing… even if you want to get to an airport, someone can give you a lift or something… people do it for money… it's a common thing.
>
> (Female, 24)

> Jowita: "To be honest, it's very hard to make any friendships here. Some people go [back to Poland] every day… I hate this about England; that you can't have any friends and sometimes it's not worth making friends because people seem to disappear."
>
> (Female, 22)

> Gracja: "I am [now] more careful and I don't trust that much people I used to. I was more helpful to those people who don't speak English just whenever they needed me, but so far I've been here for four years and nobody did help me. So if they need a few words to help them, fine, but if they try to use me, just someone to sort out their bills or, I don't know, simple things, not anymore!"
>
> (Female, 23)

Another key limitation to creating contacts or accessing UK-based networks for newly-arriving migrants, suggested by some participants (n = 5), was the range of negative stereotypes encountered on a daily basis, as illustrated in Grażyna's account below. The participants who described such encounters explained that these had adversely affected their confidence and success in attempts to build social networks. For instance, Alicja describes her own encounters with her

neighbours and explained how she believed that a perceived stereotypical inscribed difference had placed a distance between them which was too great for her to strengthen the relationship. It was suggested by a couple of participants that this 'difference' was infused by an unspoken ethnocentrism, drawing parallels with the literature presented in Section 4.3 on notions of 'whiteness'. Kundnani (2001) argues that popular and media discussions of immigration are usually focused upon national identity rather than racial or ethnic identity which consequentially 'blurs' distinctions of ethno-centrism. When portraying encounters with her neighbours, Alicja was hesitant to describe the difference ascribed by her neighbours to her identity as 'racist' in the account, highlighting the obscure or subtle boundaries of ethno-centrism:

> Graźyna: "Another thing when you are abroad is that you have to fight stereotypes, such as 'Polish people are stupid', 'Polish people drink', 'Polish people steal your jobs'... or whatever. And you have to fight it, like, maybe not fight, but you <u>have</u> to prove [to] others it's not true."
>
> (Female, 24)

> Alicja: "What I notice in Northampton is that the people are closed, they will talk to you the first time… [pause] I wouldn't call it racism but I do feel separated and isolated… they highlight this difference that I am not English."
>
> (Female, 23)

For a few participants in the study, encounters with these stereotypes had resulted in a fear of being in the urban environment, as demonstrated in Janina's quotation below. In spite of the suggested difficulties in creating UK-based networks, approximately half of the participants stressed the importance of having some connections to avoid being solely dependent on ethnic-specific ties. The data demonstrate the importance of *envisioned futures* to such views, rather than factors such as gender, age or location. Indeed, such views were most evident by those who intended to remain in the UK, what Eade *et al*. (2007) term *stayers*, rather than those whose migration strategies were more akin of *searchers*, *hamsters* or *storks* (see Table 2.3). For example, Ania suggests that migrants

who are dependent on Polish networks exclusively are limited in terms of the opportunities and information available to them:

> Janina: "The other thing is that you have to be really careful here… because sometimes even when you speak Polish too loud, someone might stab you or something… so you have to be really careful especially at night when you are on your own and when you are with your friends."
>
> (Female, 22)

> Ania: "I don't identify myself with the Polish community that is here in England because the Polish community from my point of view is not close… because of the Polish shops and the Polish places, you can go to places and you feel like there is a community of Polish people… I don't feel like I belong in there because I have got friend-friends, English friends, Italian friends… so I don't want to be seen as 'just a Polish person'. I have a got Polish friends but I don't want to isolate myself from English people and this country."
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

Overall, the social networks that the participants of the study had created, accessed and developed are described as consisting of a small group of close-knit 'strong ties', and having access to a wider network of 'weak ties'. The social networks evident, both in terms of Polish and non-Polish groupings, are argued to be limited by a range of factors including trust, unpredictability, experience and negative stereotypes. The varying pathways identified in Section 6.2 are suggested to be influential in each participant's level of motivation and energy in shaping their social network(s), either making them wider or deeper. For most participants, like Kasia, their social networks are described as being compartmentalised, accessing strong and weak ties based on the varying supportive requirements:

> Kasia: "It depends, I have got friends here that are really, really close to me but if I am homesick, which happens very often, then I just ring my mum… sometimes you feel like you have to talk to someone that is here and who has sort of similar experiences as you. If you talk to someone from Poland who is in Poland and has

never migrated, then of course they will be supportive but they are not going to share your opinions, they are not going to tell you something that will keep you going which will help you. And then the other way around, sometimes you need to speak to someone from Poland who have [sic] known you for ages, since you were ten or something… and it's different because they will know what to say…"

(Female, 23)

The data above reveal a number of challenges newly-arriving Polish migrants face when attempting to create or maintain connections with other people. The participants described how the experiences of creating their social networks could be understood as a period of discovery and change. As well as experiencing a new country, a key finding that emerged from the analysis of this phase in the participants' journeys was a distinct insight into how the participant thought about and understood their own capabilities. Most participants ($n = 34$), irrespective of gender, age or location, described how they have 'unearthed' aspects of their own self through their migratory experiences and have learnt about their own character. The participants who described these changes viewed themselves as being 'tougher' and 'mature' individuals, having explicit links with notions of 'growing up' (explored in Chapter 8). Juliet, for example, describes how she modified her personality in a precautionary action to defend herself against harm:

Juliet: "Before I came here I was really sensitive and it was really easy to hurt me emotionally when someone said something to me. Here, I have to change my attitude because when you are in a new environment, you are surrounded by people that don't really know you and they can easily hurt you, only because you are different, because you are Polish, and I had to tell myself I have to protect myself."

(Female, 18, translated)

Mikołaj: "If it comes to your behaviour and your attitudes, it [migration] teaches you how to respect. Of course I know how to respect others, but when you are abroad and you live with other people, you actually realise how hard it is… how hard it is to be here, to work and be self-sufficient."

(Male, 24, translated)

Irena: "Of course you get those days when you are like miserable… but it's an adventure, it's a good thing, an experience, you think that way otherwise you are going to cry all the time."

(Female, 23, translated)

The participants who described these changes during this phase of migration, despite some having experienced highly emotional changes to their social networks, identified a series of individual benefits related to ideas of self-esteem. Reyneri (2001) argues that a migrant is more likely to portray themself as being content to those at home so as to preserve their reputation. Likewise, participants' reflections within this project suggest that young migrants cast their identity(ies) positively as a potential 'smokescreen' (see Section 4.3). In so doing, self-esteem is boosted by interpreting and presenting the 'migratory experience' as beneficial rather than detrimental. For example, Kornelia's quotation below demonstrates how she frames her own experiences positively, identifying beneficial factors which she can take from bad situations that reinforce her own level of self-worth. Moreover, Konrad sees himself as having a more positive attitude towards 'challenges' or difficult situations that arise, influenced by the knowledge of what he has achieved and experienced through migration. For Graźyna, she now views the world differently, arguably possessing more confidence rather than fear of travelling to new places, viewing new experiences or challenges as being achievable:

Kornelia: "I'd rather think about positives now because I look back and see myself… now I express more value for myself because I <u>don't think</u> I'm stupid, even when other people think I'm rubbish, whatever, I still think I could do something more…"

(Female, 23)

Konrad: "Also, [I have gained] confidence and the fact that I know that even if something is difficult, like a situation, I know I can get through this."

(Male, 23, translated)

Graźyna: "I have got a note, 'the world is smaller for you'. If you travel a lot then it's not a problem for you ... [I can go] to Holland and visit my sister and it's not a

problem. It's not a problem for me to go there, whereas for my friends from Poland, they are like 'oh my God, you are <u>going there</u>', and I am like 'yeah, it's not a problem', and then you go there."

<div align="right">(Female, 24)</div>

Zarek: "I think I am the same person, but I know how to cope with things now… I would probably do things differently now when I go back to Poland. I have more experience and I will cope differently."

<div align="right">(Male, 24, translated)</div>

Overall, the social networks of many of this cohort of Polish migrants in Northamptonshire have been shown to undergo a series of changes as a consequence of migratory experiences. Markers such as gender, age or location appear to be unimportant in linking participants' experiences, with factors such as *envisioned futures* and *circumstances* being key (see Section 8.2). The data illustrate how participants' connections to people in Poland have transformed, with participants charting differences between the 'paths' that they have travelled in comparison to peers who remained in Poland. A range of tensions were also identified within the social connections made to individuals in the UK, and themes of trust and language will be further explored in Chapter 7. The participants' social networks are suggested to have a small number of strong ties, as well as having weak ties to a much larger number of connections so as to maintain access to certain resources or skills. Participants discussed how they compartmentalised their connections, contacting different individuals to meet specific needs. Although the accounts of changes to participants' social networks were for some highly emotive, the experiences were cast as beneficial to participants' sense of self. Having considered the different pathways to the UK and experiences during participants' initial settling period in the UK, the chapter now considers a framework to understand and position experiences in relation to migrants' self reflections.

The final section of the chapter will outline a framework to help understand important 'events' defined by participants within their migration experiences. Chapter 5 outlined how the semi-structured interviews using narrative were designed to uncover participants' 'stories'. Accounts of migration, however, were found to comprise a range of intimate and smaller *events*. While the notion of 'events' is problematic in its meaning (Halfacree, 2011), such happenings are understood here as taking place in the everyday lives of participants. While such events may be interpreted from the 'outside' as banal or meaningless, from the inside, they were instrumental to the identity negotiations of young Polish migrants. The event-*al* composition of participants' migration experiences may include moving out of the family home in Poland, travelling to the UK, finding somewhere to live in the UK, gaining employment, meeting 'English' people or changing family/social dynamics. Indeed, accounts of these events were diverse and unique to each individual's biography, and such diversity posed a challenge within the analysis. The proposed event-al disposition of migration draws inspiration from Kraftl's (2010) arguments of events of hope and crisis within childhood and youth. He asserts that "youth cultures are not simply overwritten by dominant representations or constructions of childhood" but rather are 'enlivened' by particular kinds of events (Kraftl, 2010:103). Whereas such events mark for Kraftl (2010) a time and place where childhood matters, here, such events mark a time and place where migration matters in the context of participants' biographies.

While the migration experience is purported to be comprised of a variety of events, it is additionally argued that it is important to contextualise such events when attempting to make sense of such accounts. Section 3.4 examined the potential impacts of migratory experiences for notions of youth transitions and it was argued that, within 'late modernity' (Bauman, 2007), young people live in a mediated state of tension: between 'permanence' and 'stability' on the one hand (roots), and 'mobility' and 'transformation' (routes) on the other (Henderson *et al.*, 2007). Informed by Giddens' (1991) concept of 'fateful' moments, and by Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) notion of 'critical' moments,

Figure 6.1 attempts to bring together these conceptualisations within a framework to help understand migratory events in the 'late modern'.

Figure 6.1: Framework of Individuals' Accounts of Late-Modern Experiences
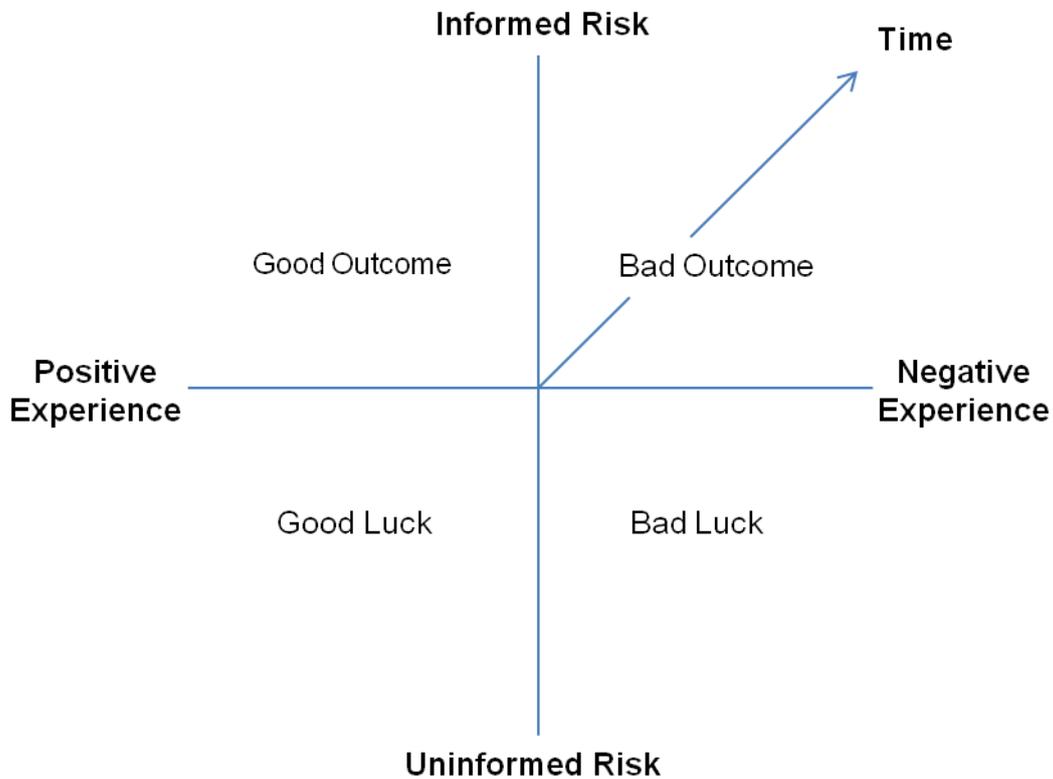
Giddens (1991) contends that when 'fateful' moments occur, people engage in an assessment of risk determined with a particular action (e.g. in the case of this research, the decision whether or not to migrate to the UK). Incorporating these arguments into the framework, the 'y axis' determines the extent to which an individual is aware of the potential risks of migration. Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) understanding of 'critical' moments, rather than examining potential consequences in the future, focuses on a reflective process whereby an individual interprets the significance of an event after it has occurred. The 'x axis' determines whether or not an event was significant in its positive or negative effects. In addition, the 'z axis' is also informed by Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) notion of 'critical' moments by representing the temporal dimensions of the process of recalling and explaining events, as these may change over time. The resultant diagram situates experiences into

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four categories of decision-making as defined within a particular phase in the life course at a specific time: experiences that were interpreted by participants to be 'good outcomes', 'bad outcomes', 'good luck' or 'bad luck'. An important strength of the framework is that it is open to change over time, thus particular events or experiences may be reflected upon differently upon in the future, locating a particular event into a different category.

The section now considers a range of examples that relate to a participant's motivations in migrating to the UK, and the effects of these movements to their social networks, to demonstrate the applicability of the framework.

Example 1

Figure 6.2: Bogumił and Krysia's Experiences of 'Other' Cultures through Migrations
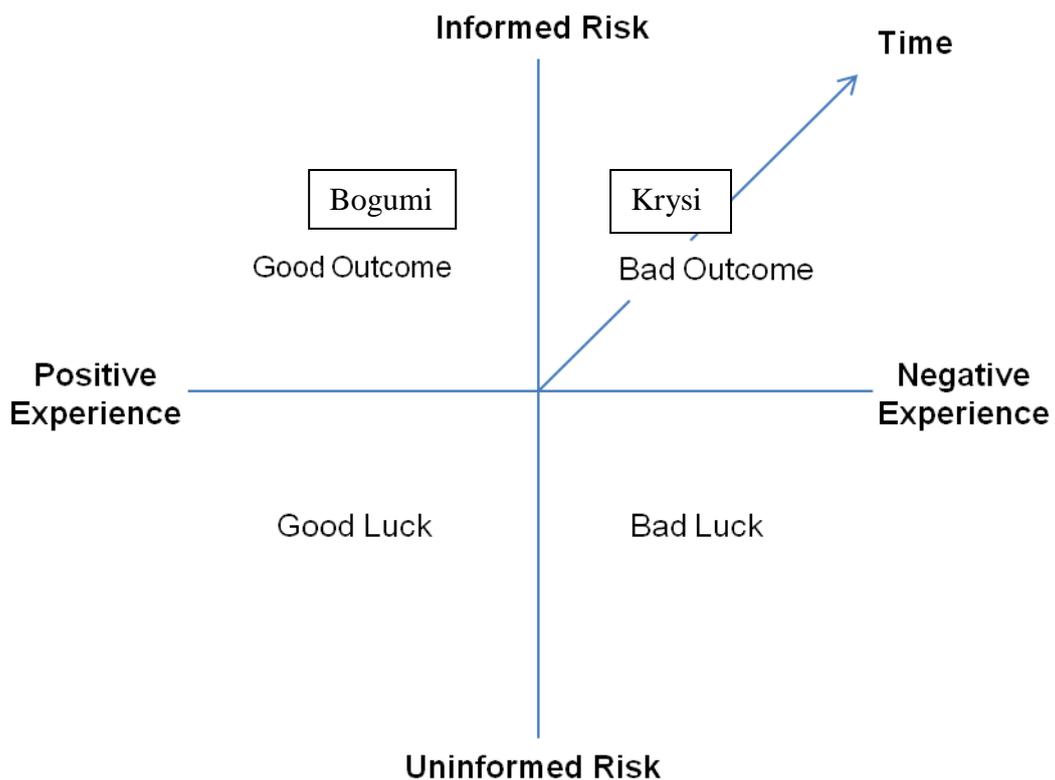
The first example is experiences of 'new' cultures through migration. It is argued in Section 4.3 that ethnic diversity in Poland is low, as 96.7% declared in the Polish Census 2002 that they were Polish (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2002). Moreover, the lack of diversity within Poland and sense of

'whiteness' was outlined in Harker's (2009) article in the *Guardian*, describing how a 'black face' was crudely altered to 'white' in a Microsoft® promotional campaign in recognition of the ethnic homogeneity within Poland. Section 6.2 reveals that three-quarters of the sample understood the accession of Poland to the European Union as creating opportunities and 'pathways' which were not available to previous generations of Poles. For participants like Bogumił, the main objective of migrating to the UK was to save money for a particular purpose (in his case for his wedding and future marital home). He recognised that a perceived benefit of migration was an opportunity to experience 'other' cultures while residing in the UK. In the case of Bogumił, although it can be argued he was 'informed' in the sense he was aware that the UK is more culturally diverse in Poland, the realities of experiencing an 'other' culture could still have been interpreted positively or negatively. The subsequent quotation illustrates how the experiences of migration for Bogumił have had a profound influence on his own sense of self:

> Bogumił: "I am a more open person definitely. If it comes to people I am more open-minded. Because I work with people from different nations, countries and sometimes you have got a first impression of somebody probably because of their culture or their habits. At the beginning I would do that; I would assume they are that kind of person. But now I am at a stage where I know even if someone makes an impression, even if it's a first impression, it doesn't have to be the right one. Now I know you have to get to know someone, the different habits and cultures. It's just different and you have to give it a chance."
>
> (Male, 23, translated)

The example above highlights how Bogumił's experiences of 'other' cultures through migration are understood as having had a positive influence over his character and how he engages with 'other' people. When situating these experiences of migration into the framework (Figure 6.2), it can be argued that they are understood as a 'good outcome', as Bogumił identified the associated risks of migrating to the UK and he interprets these experiences positively. When discussing changes to his future plans, Bogumił declared that he intends to travel to Africa to volunteer and acquire new

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skills, and that now he views his migratory experiences in the UK as opening further 'pathways' and opportunities. For Bogumił, his own interpretations of migratory experiences in relation to 'other' cultures have changed him by viewing himself as less judgemental and more accepting of diversity:

> Bogumił: "In March, I would like to go to Africa to volunteer. My cousin is… he is paralysed, so my main motivation is to save some money while I am here to help him. I would like to go to Africa because I would like to help children having the same problems as my cousin… maybe I can help them and learn how to do it… then I can go back to Poland and help my cousin."
>
> (Male, 23, translated)

In contrast to such positive experiences of 'other' cultures, for other participants, their experiences were understood more as negative. A number of participants in the research described frustrated experiences of stereotypes (see Section 6.3) faced in everyday life in Northamptonshire, providing examples of 'bad luck' within the proposed framework. For participants like Krysia, migratory experiences of 'other' cultures have created a sense of distance from UK-based social networks, and she described in her accounts how she now operates in a limited, exclusively-Polish network. Krysia migrated to the UK at the age of 15 years with her mother. For Krysia, the experiences of encountering 'other' cultures were not, unlike Bogumił, a motivational factor in the decision-making process. When entering the UK school system, Krysia described a profound 'otherness' ascribed to her by her peers. While no distinct differences were found between participants' accounts on the basis of gender, age or location, a couple of participants suggested that those who migrate by themselves, particularly females, may be more vulnerable, as illustrated in Wilhelm's account:

> Krysia: "They were divided, some of them like us, some of them hated us… and they didn't know anything about us! They just had the stereotypes… 'you're Polish so we don't like you'."
>
> (Female, 18, translated)

Wilhelm: "I think we (Wilhelm and his brother) are very lucky. We met the right people. The people we met were genuine. I don't like people bullying me or other people. I don't like that. We looked at what happened with other people that came to the UK on the internet when we were in Poland, and so we knew we had to be careful. But we are guys that are quite strong, so that didn't happen to us!"

(Male, 24, translated)

The framework illustrated in Figure 6.2 is useful in distinguishing between accounts. It is also important to consider, however, the temporal aspects of the framework, as reflections upon experiences may differ in another time and place: for example, negative experiences could be understood as being positive or beneficial. The framework, taking this into account provides a useful tool to understand the process of reflecting upon 'pivotal' moments in the life course.

Example 2

Figure 6.3: Justyna and Marek's Experiences of Changes to Relationships with People in Poland

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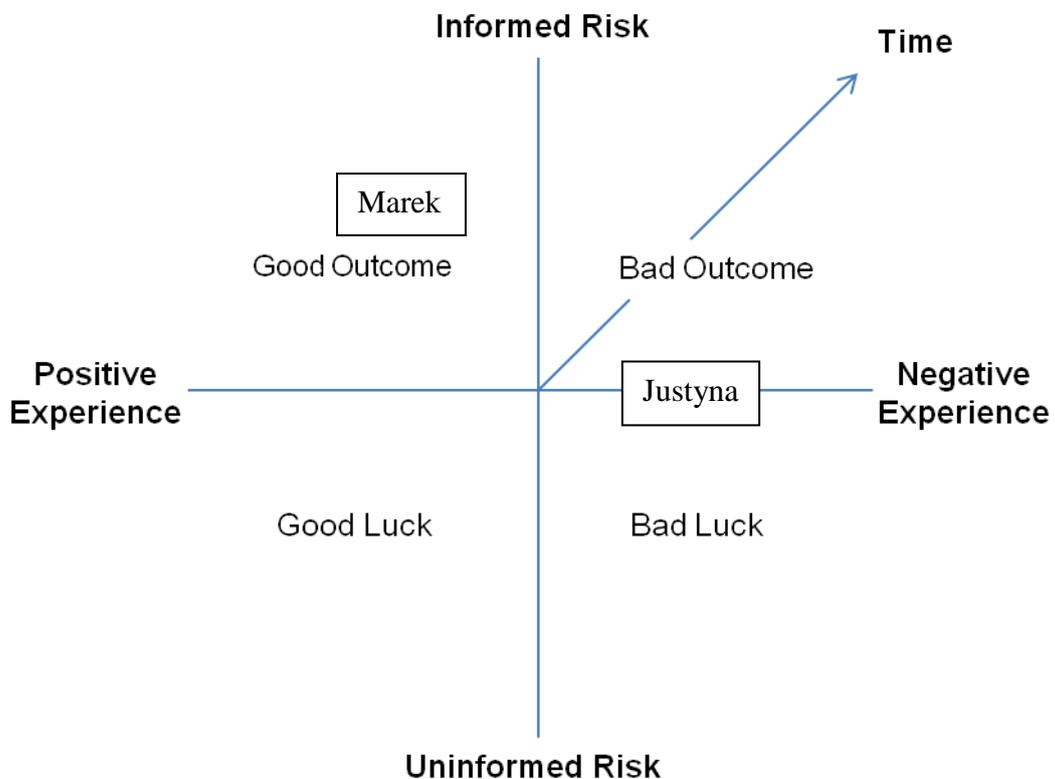
During the research interviews, about half of the sample (*n* = 24) discussed changes to connections they had with people who remained in Poland. For some participants, particularly female respondents, there were emotional implications in experiencing a weakening of what were once strong connections. This weakening challenges participants' perceptions of their 'rooted' self-identity(ies), as illustrated in the quotations in Section 6.3. When considering accounts such as Justyna's, it is evident that these types of experiences could be understood as a combination of 'bad outcomes' and 'bad luck'. Justyna described difficulties in finding work within her village in Poland and limitations to her future options. Justyna's motivations link heavily with the cultural 'push' factors discussed in Section 6.2.1: she felt she had no choice but to migrate in pursuit of a better future. She also described, however, how her decision to migrate to the UK has now resulted in an ever-expanding gap between her life and that of her friends. Participants recognised the importance that their length of residence in the UK had in the weakening process. In the case of Justyna, she is reflecting on these connections approximately three years after making the decision to migrate. By not being in the same physical spaces over this period of time, the sense of having shared experiences becomes distant as their topics of interest change:

> Justyna: "One thing is I'm losing my friends in Poland… [pause] and even if I go to see them and [we] talk to each other, I'm talking about my stuff and they are talking about their stuff. We are speaking but we have nothing in common anymore. It would be different if I was still in Poland because we would still have things in common… sometimes I regret that I came."
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

When considering the experiences of these changes in social networks, it is crucial to recognise that these impacts were reflected upon following different lengths of time of residence in the UK. For Justyna, these changes were reflected upon after three years of residence in the UK. In contrast to these experiences, participants who had arrived in the UK more recently, such as Marek (who has lived in the UK for a little over a year), understood their relationships to friends in Poland

as being positive with few changes. In Marek's case, his migratory experiences of social networks could be identified as a 'good outcome', in that he has had positive experiences through migration without experiencing negative changes to his social networks in Poland. It is evident, however, that the length of time away from Poland is a key factor in the awareness or recognition of changes within social networks. The way in which the relative strengths of social connections lessen over time without sufficient maintenance is striking. The influence, however, that time (or the 'z axis') has within the reflections and consequential positions within the framework remain unknown in his particular journey. For Marek, the question of changes to his friendships to people in Poland appear in this particular moment as peculiar and were not seen as an important element in his migratory experiences:

> MC: "You have talked about your friends back in Poland; do you think these friendships have changed since you have been here?"
> Marek: "No not really, they just say 'come back'. It's only been a year, so it hasn't changed too much."

> (Male, 23, translated)

Figure 6.3 is asserted to be a useful tool to reflect on migratory experiences, such as Justyna's and Marek's, in considering the 'calculations' made in relation to risks prior to migration and the resultant experiences shared in the research. For Justyna, when considering whether or not to migrate, the knowledge that she would be moving away from her group of friends was clear. The risks, however, to these connections that the changes in physical distance posed can be both interpreted as either/both 'informed' and 'uninformed'. The risks were 'informed' in the sense that Justyna recognised that by moving away from Poland, the ways in which the network kept in touch and the frequency of that contact would change. By understanding these changes to the relationships as negative, it could be recognised that a deterioration of the relationships was a 'bad outcome': a known risk that unfortunately happened. Furthermore, as migrating to the UK was the first occasion in which she had been absent from these localities for a significant and prolonged

period, it could additionally and simultaneously be argued that she was not in a position to be aware of, or fully comprehend the impacts of migration before her departure from Poland. Thus, Justyna's experiences can be also understood as 'bad luck', with the descriptions of different 'topics' being one manifestation of these 'unforeseen' changes to her social positioning through migration.

Example 3

Figure 6.4: Adalbert's Experiences of Social Network Changes
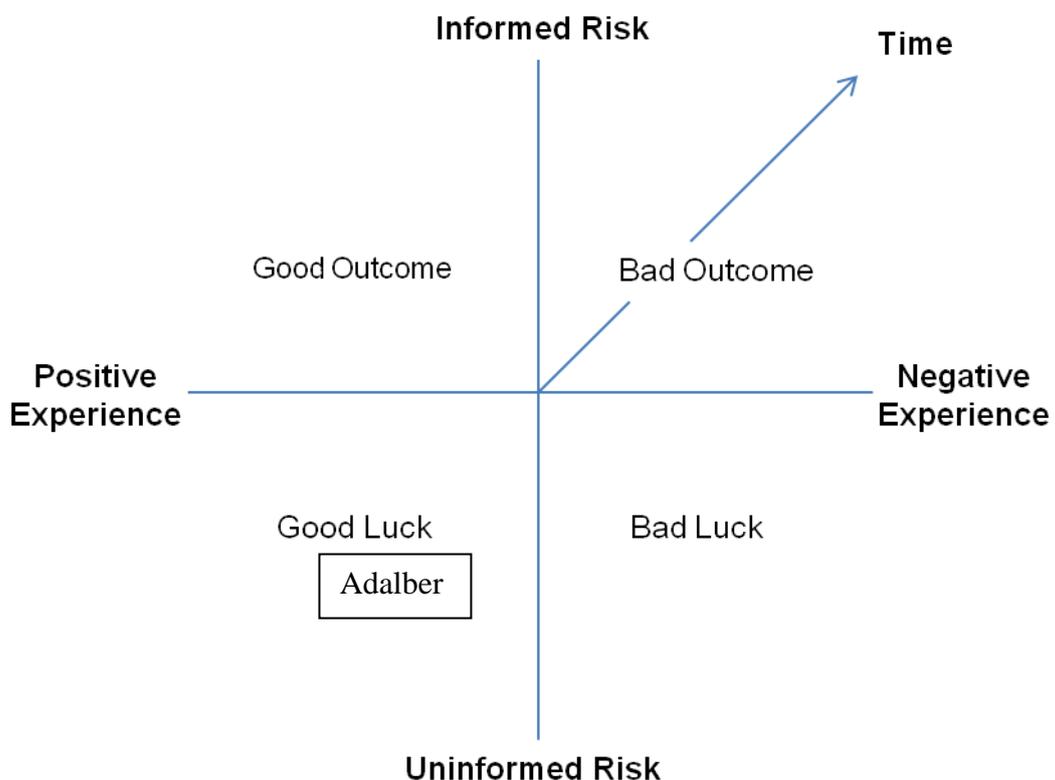
The final example used to highlight the validity of the framework (illustrated in Figure 6.4) is Adalbert's accounts of perceived changes to his social networks through migration. In Giddens' (1991) and Beck's (1992) arguments on 'late modernity', introduced in Section 3.2, traditional institutions are asserted to have fragmented: one consequence of this is arguably that 'living' is increasingly individualised and poses greater risks. Giddens' (1991) notion of 'fateful' moments describes how an individual engages in an assessment of risks with a particular action and these ideas informed the creation of Figure 6.1. In the case of Adalbert, however, his migratory journey

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was more 'forced' in nature, as his parents made the decision to migrate to the UK (see Section 6.2.1). Since he was not active in the assessment of risk associated with migration, this limited agency could influence how the migratory experience was both defined and understood. During Adalbert's interview, he recalled the tensions that were evident within the family unit when deciding whether or not to migrate to the UK. On his own admission, at that time and place, migration was not thought of favourably in his own mind, as his priority was to maintain his relationships with his girlfriend and friends. Despite these preferences, however, his parents decided to migrate to the UK to improve both their immediate economic situation and position them advantageously in the future, both economically and socially. During the research interview, Adalbert, five years later, interprets the decision to migrate as being 'correct' and now views himself as being in a 'better' position as the breakdown of relationships with his peers has had identifiable benefits:

> Adalbert: "Some of the positives… I think one of the most positive things is that I came here! Most of my friends who were my good friends in Poland are now like criminals… They were like normal before when I lived there, but now [when] I go to Poland; they're totally different. They get themselves in trouble so I'm glad that I came here… I was talking to my girlfriend about it, and she was saying 'why did you go there?, why did you go there?', and I said 'Well if I stayed here, then I would be like a criminal, we're together now and so you should be happy!'"
>
> (Male, 18)

Adalbert's account is particularly useful in demonstrating how migratory experiences, or 'pivotal' moments more widely, were typically defined and understood individually rather than collectively by migrants. For Adalbert, at the point of embarking on a particular 'pathway', the identifiable risks were the breakdown of his relationships with his girlfriend and wider peer network, but five years later with the benefit of hindsight, there was arguably a greater risk in continuing these relationships. In positioning these experiences within the framework, it could be argued that, from Adalbert's perspective, the results of migration have been 'good luck' as the experience is

being interpreted from the point of view of 'uninformed risk'. The same migratory outcome could, however, speculatively be understood, and indeed positioned within the framework, differently from the perspectives of his parents: being understood as 'good outcomes' as opposed to 'good luck' as they were the active parties in the 'assessment of odds' and arranging their 'assets' accordingly (Bauman, 2007). The example above supports calls for more research into how children and young people experience migration (see Bushin, 2009, McKendrick, 2001, Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011).

Overall, the proposed framework (Figure 6.1) assists in making sense of 'events' within the participants' migration experiences. The 'events' illustrated in this section are argued to be unique to each participant's biography. The data have shown the importance of considering past and present experience(s), while at the same time identifying the potential future 'trajectories' of the participants. By focusing on each individual's 'pushes' and 'pulls', a range of factors have been revealed within the 'events' of migration for each participant. Rather than view the host of factors identified as comprehensive or complete, it is important to recognise that the accounts of the participants have been socially produced at a particular time and place in their biography. Such an approach reaffirms support for Halfacree and Boyle's (1993) 'biographical' approach within migration studies, as the migration decisions of the participants have been informed by a range of subtle personal and biographical factors emphasising the 'situatedness' of their everyday lives. Thus, it is suggested here that these factors (both individual and collective), are unevenly woven together to produce a variety of migration 'choices', defining how each participant reconstructs and evaluates their 'events'. Figure 6.1 provides a useful apparatus to distinguish between 'events' of migration within the data and interpret how each participant made sense of their experiences in relation to their decision to migrate to the UK.

6.5: Summary

Overall, this chapter has provided a foundation for subsequent chapters by considering a tension between agency and structure evident in many participants' decision-making practices,

which impacts on how they make sense of their experiences. The chapter began by considering whether there is a 'freedom to move' for Polish nationals and noted that although economic rationales were important for many participants, these factors may not necessarily be decisive. For many participants, a new 'pathway' opened when Poland joined the European Union in 2004 which resonated with this particular cohort of migrants as, at that point in their lives, there were few 'anchors' tying them to Poland.

The chapter then moved on to consider the impacts of migration in relation to participants' social networks. The data illustrated detail a range of changes which were evident in the analysis of the participants' connections to Poland-based networks. The participants described how they view themselves as living different lives with alternative priorities to those who remain in Poland. When creating new social networks in the UK, a number of limitations in creating 'strong ties' to people in the UK were described. Nonetheless, a number of benefits were also identified in engaging with 'weak ties' in an 'informal economy': most notably an improvement in the resources and opportunities they are in a position to access. Stemming from these discussions, the importance of 'trust' and language is discussed in Chapter 7. Although the scope of participants' social networks are suggested to have decreased through migration, the data suggest that experiences of migration were important both in discovering a different way of living, but also, and perhaps more importantly, in appreciating their own limitations and sense of character.

Reflecting on participants' accounts of migration, three important points are raised. First, the ways in which people narrate migratory experiences impose challenges in the analysis of such data. When analysing the data, it was crucial to contextualise accounts, taking into account the interacting and intersecting positionalities of those present (see Chapter 5), and the importance of the 'timings' of the research interviews. Section 6.4 proposes a framework that helps in 'positioning' participants' accounts, making sense of the reasons why and how participants frame their biographical experiences at the 'time' of the interview. Second, the data show the migration experience is comprised of a number of smaller events, each of which is informed by the

participants' chosen 'pathways' contextualised by their biographies. The data reveal how, from the 'outside' looking in, participants share a number of characteristics, but no great variations were found between participants based on traditional social characteristics used as 'markers' for difference and diversity ('gender', 'age', 'education' etc). When looking from 'within', however, participants shared 'stories' and Chapter 7 goes on to show how participants understood difference and diversity between Polish migrants. Third, the data resonate with what Pyšňáková and Miles (2010) define as a 'paradox of choice': participants negotiated a number of structure-agency balances in their decision-making. Importantly, such findings suggest that while economic rationales may have been central for many, participants often articulated a range of factors that informed their 'choices'.

This chapter has provided a more nuanced insight into the migratory experiences of young Polish migrants in Northamptonshire. At the outset of the chapter, it was argued that a paucity of research evidence exists about current migrant populations in the UK in relation to the motivations, experiences and intentions of migrants (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008). The discussion within the chapter has explored these often-overlooked issues by examining the 'pathways' to Northamptonshire (motivations) and some initial migratory experiences related to participants' social networks (experiences). The next chapter will travel further into the worlds of young Polish migrants by considering notions of 'difference', 'everydayness' and 'home'.

Chapter 7: 'Everyday' Life in the Polish Community

7.1: Introduction

Chapter 6 revealed a range of factors influencing the migration decisions of participants. In particular, Section 6.4 advocated the use of a biographical approach in understanding how and why particular events are presented (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993). It was noted that participants constructed accounts and evaluated experiences differently based on past, present and future phases of their biographies. This chapter aims to build on these ideas to identify diversity within the Polish communities in Northamptonshire and highlight the importance of this to everyday experiences and constructions of 'home'. First, the chapter will reveal markers of difference used by participants to group 'other' Polish migrants (Section 7.2). Second, the chapter highlights the impacts of these groupings on everyday experiences of residing in Northamptonshire as a 'Polish migrant' (Section 7.3). Third, the chapter evaluates participants' explorations of 'home' (Section 7.4).

7.2: Differences between Polish Migrants

This section considers participants' views of different types of Polish migrants in Northamptonshire. Chapter 5 showed that the research sample comprised 'different' participants based on their age, gender, length of residence in the UK, 'home' location in Poland, and occupation. The rationale of constructing the sample in this way was, from the *outside*, to engage with a range people from a number of potential groups within the wider Polish community (see also Eade *et al.,* 2007). While the participants share the commonality of being young Polish migrants, the data reveal that they identify difference within this group using criteria other than traditional social markers. The identified factors uncovered in the data highlight the importance of each participant's perception of 'other' Polish migrants' biographies in identifying diversity. As such, the analysis of the data extends Halfacree and Boyle's (1993) case for a biographical approach in migration studies. Young Polish migrants may seemingly appear "in a zone of sameness" (Tucker, 2003:114), but from the inside a number of subtle differences were uncovered.

During the research interviews, all participants described their encounters with other Polish migrants living in Northamptonshire. Sections 6.2 outlined issues relating to the strength and depth of social networks the participants had with other Polish migrants. This section will firstly overview and illustrate four markers of difference that many of the participants identified as criteria to form and strengthen their social networks. The section will then go on to reveal five 'types' of Polish migrant within the research sample and indicate how each of these types were defined by migrants themselves through these markers of difference. The section draws some links 'cultural markers' of difference (Holloway, 2005) identified when focussing upon White rural residents' attitudes towards Gypsy-Travellers. Holloway (2005:358) argues that 'bodily' or traditional markers of difference alone are insufficient at articulating otherness when researching ethnic groups and in effect "place[s] them all in an undifferentiated category". In contrast to Holloway's (2005) project, however, this research highlights markers of difference 'within' rather than 'between' ethnic groups.

7.2.1: Markers of Difference and Diversity

When describing their encounters with other Polish migrants, participants identified a variety of social markers of difference. These descriptors, linked to an individual's biography, are crucial to understanding how different groups of Polish migrants distinguish each other. Section 2.3 suggests that Eade *et al.'s* (2007) study provides a good vantage point from which to consider differences between Polish migrants. Dividing their respondents into the "four neat, rational groups" (Burrell, 2010:299) of *storks*, *hamsters*, *searchers* and *stayers*, Eade *et al.* (2007) categorise Polish migrants on the basis of their migratory strategies. Despite the 'neatness' of their typology, little evidence is provided about how Polish migrants distinguish and perceive diversity within Polish migrant community(ies). This study examines participants' biographies revealing how they understand differences between themselves and other Polish migrants. In so doing, distinctions made between participants are not based on 'migration strategies' *per se*; rather, migratory experiences are understood as 'events' within a biographical strategy. Thus, the experiences shared

by participants, and the manner in which they frame such accounts, can be contextualised within each individual's unique biography, exposing a more detailed and nuanced insight into Polish migration. The participants, through their 'insider' vantage points, shared a range of important factors separating 'us' from 'them', and the following account by Adalbert illustrates the importance of the motivations underpinning an individual's movements:

> Adalbert: "There were some people just coming here just to work. Renting just a room to do the work and then go back to Poland. There are some other people that come here and put their children into schools to get their children education here. But then again, there are some of the people, they just come here just to be here. They see that it involves a bit of work, but it's just that they want to be here."
>
> (Male, 18)

Adalbert's account suggests a variety of reasons why people migrate and the ways in which push and pull factors influence how newly-arriving migrants live while in the UK. For example, he indicated that some people migrate to the UK exclusively to work, having a lifestyle that has minimal overhead costs to maximise the total amount of money that can be saved while in the UK. In these circumstances, the individual's 'priorities' while in the UK were suggested to be principally economic. In contrast to these people, he explained that others come to the UK with their family to settle indefinitely. While it could be argued that there may be an underlying economic rationale for this, the individual's 'priorities' are suggested to give more attention to the social aspects of their lifestyle. A further layer evident in Adalbert's description is the 'time' period within the individual's biography. For those individuals described as coming to the UK to earn money, it could be understood they are focussed on the future, paying less attention to their present situation. In another account, Jowita confirmed the importance of each person's motivations to migrate to the UK in understanding Polish migrants encountered:

Jowita: "I can say that I don't have any connections to communities here just because I just have different goals than these people. Because most of the Polish people that came here are people that don't have no [sic] chance in Poland, like no jobs. Although [I had] very difficult times, I came here for different reasons; I wasn't desperate, I don't feel a part of that community."

(Female, 22)

Jowita believed that many people who migrated to the UK did so because of a perceived lack of job opportunities in Poland. She explained that she felt separated from people who migrated for these reasons as she had different 'priorities'. In Section 6.3, further frustrations were outlined in relation to the uncertainty about other migrants' intended length of residence in the UK: "...*sometimes it's not worth making friends because people seem to disappear*". Differences between the permanence of migrations reveal another marker used by many of the participants to assess migrants encountered: 'stability'. Each individual's level of 'stability' is argued to be crucial to the width and depth of social networks created or maintained through the process of migration (see Section 6.3), and is also a key factor in distinguishing between different types of Polish migrant. For some people, such as Dawid, an individual's level of 'stability' could be identified through a migrant making a significant investment or commitment while in the UK (such as enrolment on a University course) which would have a strong influence over their length of stay:

Dawid: "My perception of a Polish person in the UK is still, from my experiences, a lot of them are people who don't speak the language and they work in warehouses. And often when I go down the street and I hear them swearing, swearing, swearing. I don't know if that sticks in your head. And I think 'Jeez, they are not people I would really like to live here', because they don't give a good picture of Polish people to the Brits. So that's how I perceive the Polish people. I know a few people that go to the University and I so admire them because it tells me they have got something going on in their life and the fact they know the language enough to live here. I think it's really stupid to come to a country where you don't know the language at all. Maybe it is courageous in some ways, but if you know it a bit and you want to

improve it then go ahead. But if you are not going to learn it then… [gestures pushing away]"

(Male, 24)

In addition to the theme of 'stability', Dawid indicates that 'language' is a distinct marker used to identify difference within the Polish community. He suggests that the ability to speak English is a determining factor in his relationships with 'other' Polish migrants and is a signifier of potential future pathways. Other participants' accounts suggest that both the ability to speak English, and the effort made by the individual to develop these communication skills are important markers. Agnieszka, as the following quotation illustrates, views those who make little effort to develop their English-speaking skills unfavourably:

> Agnieszka: "Some people behave like they were in their own country and they almost expect that the English should understand their Polish. They don't put any effort in. But there are more people that try to learn it. At work they ask me if they want to know a word or make sense of it. They ask me if I know the translation of the word and I can see they are trying to learn it."
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

Overall, analysis of the data revealed four key factors, illustrated in Figure 7.1, that were considered in the assessment of 'other' Polish migrants encountered: 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language'. When examining the data, participants' descriptions of these factors were framed as ranging between two dichotomous points (Figure 7.1). Although each of the identified factors is considered independently, the participants appeared to use or draw links with some or all of these markers when describing differences between Polish migrants encountered.

Figure 7.1: Framework of Difference from 'Within'

Economic	⊢————— **Priorities** —————⊣	Social
Present	⊢————— **Planning** —————⊣	Future
Temporary	⊢————— **Stability** —————⊣	Permanent
Poor	⊢————— **Language** —————⊣	Good
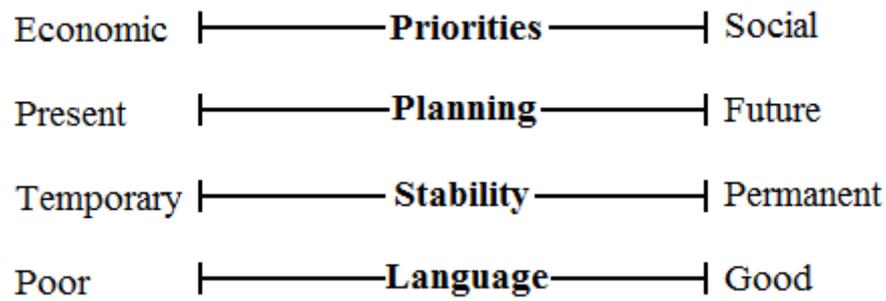
Factor 1: 'Priorities'

The first marker that participants appeared to use to distinguish between different types of Polish migrants is a balance of 'priorities' in the individual's life. When attempting to decipher an individual's 'priorities', the participants identified a perceived tension between economic benefits and social benefits in a migrant's lifestyle choices. The participants viewed the idea of economic and social 'priorities' to an extent as being causal. For example, if a migrant was motivated to earn a sum of money within a specific period, their 'priorities' would be located within the binary towards economic, giving less emphasis on the development of social dimensions (see Adalbert's quote above). In another example, if a migrant was seen to give importance to building connections with other Polish migrants, the balance in their perceived 'priorities' would favour social within this category (see Jowita's quote above).

Factor 2: 'Planning'

The second marker indicated by the participants to be important is 'planning'. This indicates the time period in a migrant's biography they are perceived to be focussed on while residing in the UK. For example, individuals who migrated temporarily to the UK with the intention of saving money and returning to Poland at a later date are arguably focussed on the future, rather than their current situation (see Adalbert's quote above). In contrast to this, Adalbert also suggests that other people may "*just want to be here*", taking advantage of benefits and opportunities in the present rather than focus on the future.

Factor 3: 'Stability'

The third marker suggested by the participants in the study is termed 'stability'. This refers the perceived temporariness or permanence of 'other' Polish migrants' living conditions. For instance, people who come to the UK with their family (particularly with children) are suggested to live in a more 'stable' condition. Long-term commitments such as enrolment on University courses were also indicators of an individual's perceived level of 'stability'. For some participants, and other migrants referred to by them, their current situation is more 'temporary' as they view their 'permanent' situation somewhere else at a later point. Jowita, for example, described how a lack of knowledge over a contact's 'stability' influenced the relative social investment made in such connections (see quote above).

Factor 4: 'Language'

The fourth marker of difference evident in the data was the perceived ability or effort made in developing and speaking English. The participants explained that the 'language' ability of the people they encountered was important not only in identifying difference, but also when related to issues of 'trust' (see Section 7.3). Those viewed to be making good efforts to develop their English-speaking skills, were understood to be separate from those who do not (see Dawid's quote above). 'Language' is argued to have more value than just a means of communication: it has value in helping distinguish "who [is] 'like us' in terms of ways of seeing and being in the world" (Temple, 2010:301).

7.2.2: Types of Polish Migrant

The four markers used by participants when assessing other Polish migrants (Section 7.3.1) were applied to data relating to participants' biographies. In so doing, it is argued that five distinct types of Polish migrants were identified by migrants themselves. This section reveals each of these groups in turn, illustrating their positioning within the framework and supporting these distinctions with examples from interview data. Some ties with the groups identified by Eade *et al.* (2007) are

evident. Figure 7.2 illustrates the five different types of Polish migrant encountered in the research. By working with young Polish migrants, the research provides new insights into difference and diversity within the Polish 'community(ies)'. Table 7.1 shows details of the participants within each 'type' of Polish migrant identified. Figure 7.2 is a schematic diagram as the relative position on each continuum within the framework is not measurable (Waite, 2011).

Table 7.1: Types of Polish Migrant by Sample (Frequency)

		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
Gender	Male	7	7	4	1	1
	Female	6	9	2	0	3
Age (Years)	< 22	5	3	1	0	3
	> 22	8	13	5	1	1
Time Spent in the UK (Years)	< 2	3	1	2	0	0
	> 2, < 4	8	7	3	0	3
	> 4	2	8	1	1	1
Poland Location (Population 1,000s)	<20	5	6	3	0	0
	>20, < 100	5	5	0	1	2
	>100	3	5	3	0	2
Occupation in the UK	Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	10	7	6	1	2
	In Full Time Education	0	5	0	0	2
	Administration and Secretarial Positions	1	2	0	0	0
	Sales and Customer Service	2	0	0	0	0
	Unemployed	0	2	0	0	0
Location in the UK	Northampton	9	11	4	1	3
	Wellingborough	0	3	1	0	0
	Kettering	1	1	0	0	0
	Daventry	2	0	0	0	0
	Corby	1	1	2	0	1

Figure 7.2: Framework of the Types of Polish Migrants (Schematic)

Type 1: *"You go there, save some money and go back"*
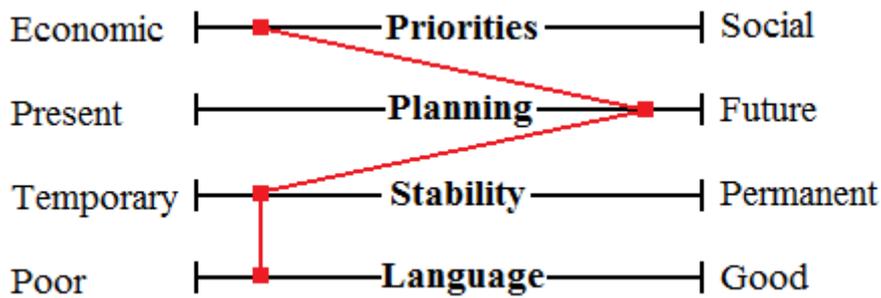
Type 2: *"I might not go back"*
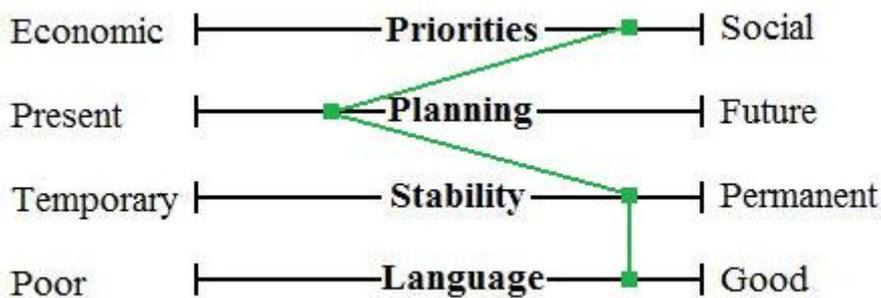
Type 3: *"I live day by day"*
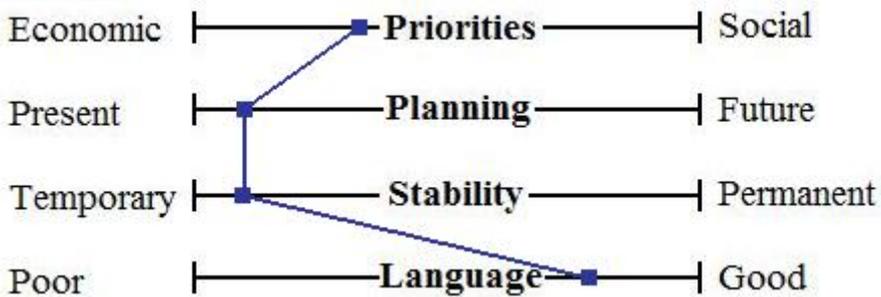
Type 4: *"If I have money, I spend money"*

Type 5: *"I didn't have the choice to go home"*

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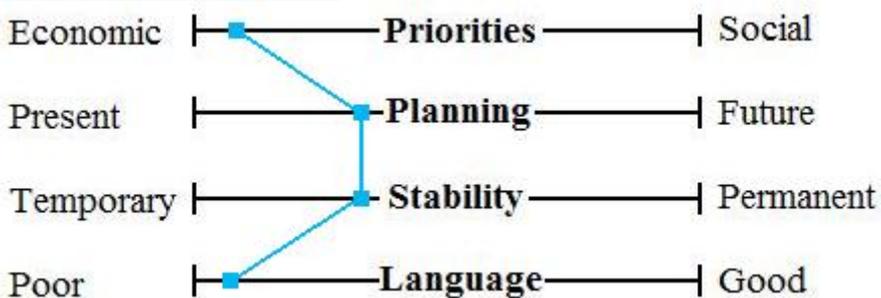
Type 1: "You go there, save some money and go back"

There were 13 participants who demonstrated characteristics associated with a Type 1 profile through their biographical accounts. These individuals are suggested to have a significant 'economic' motivation prioritising the accumulation of money, usually during relatively short periods in the UK (Figure 7.3). Table 7.1 shows that the participants categorised with a Type 1 profile was balanced in terms of gender, age, length of residence and original home location in Poland. As indicated by Adalbert in the previous section, the people who 'prioritised' in this way live in a more 'temporary' situation, displaying a relative 'instability' in their living arrangements and intentions. It is implicitly suggested by Dawid in Section 7.2.1 that many of those understood as having this profile, due to their perceived intentions to move back to Poland at some future time, have poor 'language' skills.

Figure 7.3: The Markers of Type 1 Participants
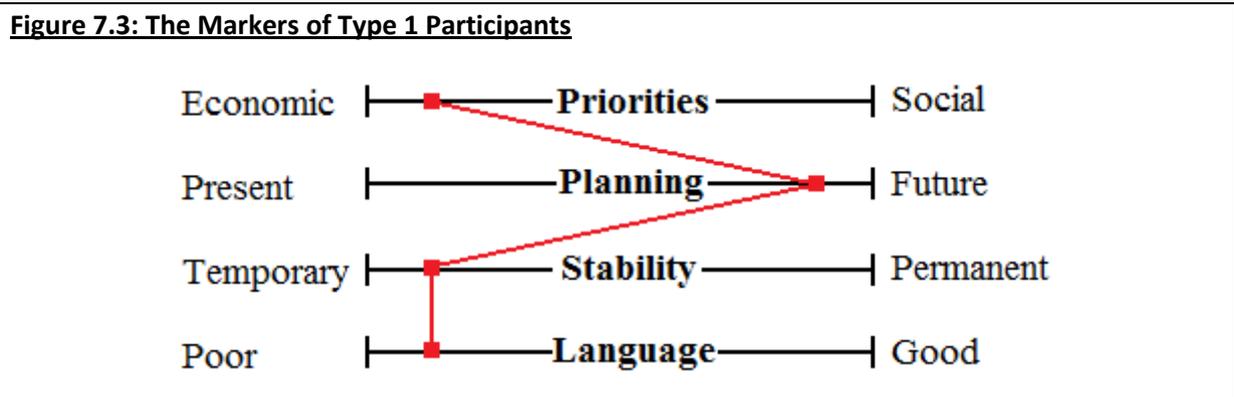
The data resemble what Eade *et al.* (2007:11) label *hamsters* and *storks* in viewing each individual act of migration "as being a one-off act to acquire enough capital to invest in Poland" and as "source of social mobility back home". The distinction between *hamsters* and *storks* in Eade *et al.'s* (2007) typology is the 'nature' of the migration, where the former reside in the UK for a longer period and uninterrupted, and the latter are 'circular migrants' coming to the UK regularly for short time periods. The accounts of Marek and Artur outline their motivations to come to the UK and some features of their everyday lives which display Type 1 features.

Marek: "We had a plan to come here and get a job and make some money. Now in Northampton there are many that are Polish, so I can go to Polish shops, speak Polish and it's not a problem. I have now got two jobs but I have few friends here. I work with a few English [people], so I try to speak to them, sometimes. I want to stay here maybe another two years or maybe three but then back to Poland."

(Male, 23, translated)

Artur: "I had a goal: to come here, save money, and go back. When you set yourself a goal in your mind, you don't think… OK, it's really hard to leave your family and everyone but you have got this goal. You go there, save some money and go back and you are going to be happier."

(Male, 24, translated)

First, in terms of 'priorities', both Marek and Artur share explicit economic motivations underpinning their migration decisions. Marek points out the imbalance in his own life by saying he has "*two jobs but… few friends*". Both were employed in warehouse settings and had been in the UK for just over a year.

Second, the everyday experiences of Marek and Artur in the present could be understood as having an imbalance between the 'planning' of their work and social lives. They both appear to focus on a future period in their biography where the perceived rewards of such a lifestyle will be received. The notion of a future benefit to this lifestyle is intimated at through Artur's comment that "*you are going to be happier*".

Third, the 'priorities' and 'planning' of Marek and Artur inform their perceived 'stability' to varying degrees. Marek's situation could be interpreted as being more stable than Artur's, as he intends to remain in the UK for "*two years or maybe three*", whereas Artur was less clear about his intended length of residence in the UK. When relating this back to the Type 1 profile, both individuals can be understood as viewing their time in the UK as temporary and potentially enabling a 'better' future. As such, their biographies while in the UK arguably display markers of their level of 'stability', which in these cases are more 'temporary'.

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Fourth, Marek and Artur's perceived interest in developing English language skills was observed as relatively 'poor'[41] in the research interviews. In each case, they viewed their future as being in Poland and their economic focus has provided little motivation to take steps to improve their level of English. For instance, Marek indicates small efforts to speak English in the work place, but notes the range of Polish facilities available in the local environment which do not require English-speaking ability. When discussing his English-speaking ability, Marek described a lack of confidence in using these skills which relates to ideas presented in Section 7.3. Both individuals were able in the interviews to understand English and demonstrated some conversational phrases, but both were more comfortable and confident in speaking Polish.

Type 2: "I might not go back"

When analysing the research sample, there were 16 individuals whose biography fitted the profile of a Type 2 migrant. Figure 7.4 illustrates the perceived markers of a Type 2 migrant and shows a big contrast to the indicators of a Type 1 migrant. Table 7.1 shows that no differences were apparent between participants in terms of gender and location in Poland. These were, however, generally 'older' participants who had resided in the UK for a longer period of time. While individuals who were identified as Type 2 had some economic priorities, their accounts also demonstrated a keen interest in the social domains of their lives. This was informed by their perceived intentions of creating a permanent sense of 'stability'. This group of participants did foresee their futures in the UK and were taking active steps in securing their position in the UK through, for example, enrolling on educational courses or creating a permanent home with other family members. Indeed, there were five participants who were completing full-time educational courses (see Table 7.1). In many ways, this type of 'planning' was both focussed on the present and future (Figure 7.4). With these intentions, this group of participants also expressed the importance of developing their English-

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[41] It is not the intention of the author to be judgemental in assessing English-speaking ability, but rather, through reflecting on the data, interpret the perceived value each participant invested in developing this ability.

speaking ability and viewed this skill as a key facilitator of a 'prosperous' future period in their lives. When considering the connections to Eade *et al.'s* (2007) typology, Type 2 migrants are expressed as *stayers*. The subsequent accounts of Pawał and Gracja provide examples supporting these descriptions.

Figure 7.4: The Markers of Type 2 Participants
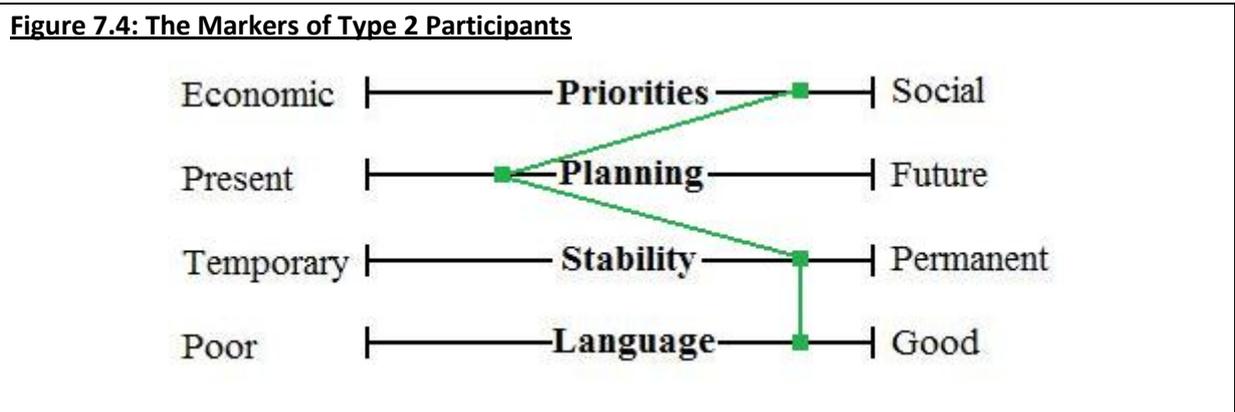
Pawał: "Back then [when I made the decision to migrate], England had the best earning possibilities. It was the easiest one to learn as a language. Initially when I came here with a thought I might just earn as much money as I can, but now this changed to basically just living here. I know now that Northampton is very nice and I will stay here. I'm a forklift driver now and I have got three licences. Because I am Polish that's quite hard. I went to college so I could learn how to operate forklifts. I am still doing my driving licence though. I think that moving here has had a lot of challenges but I would love to set up a family over here and just live a peaceful life."

(Male, 24, translated)

Gracja: "Everything has changed. We are planning to move from Kettering because it is very small but we haven't made a decision where yet. Maybe Bristol we think. All of my friends, my mum, they are like 'what are you planning to do?'. On the one hand, I would like to go home but then again I don't want to live with my parents… all of us squeezing… no, no, no. I don't have enough money to buy a house or buy a half mortgage for a house in Poland, so I decided to enrol on a course in September and it takes three and a half years. The thing is, hopefully, when I finish my course here, I will be able to find a good job here. But in Poland, liked we talked about before, even people with degrees are struggling to find things [jobs]. To be honest,

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I'm thinking if everything goes OK and I finish the course, I am thinking that I might not go back. [Pause] I definitely never regret that I came here."

(Female, 23)

First, Pawał and Gracja's interviews revealed a focus in their everyday lives on creating social contacts in combination with their economic interests while residing in the UK. Pawał explains how he initially arrived in the UK with a Type 1 mentality, in that he was predominantly focused on the accumulation of money, but through his experiences in the UK he now wants to "… *set up a family over here*…". Both Pawał and Gracja indicate the importance of the 'social' aspects of their lives and are in the process of creating a 'new' family home in the UK.

Second, the notion of 'planning' for Pawał and Gracja embraces both positions of present and future periods of their biographies. While it could be argued that their accounts are more focussed on the 'future' - both intimate that they intend to create a permanent home in the future - the focus they share also has a strong emphasis on the present, as they are manoeuvring themselves into a position where this perceived future is possible. For example, the quotations illustrate they are both gaining educational qualifications to enhance their future employment prospects. Thus, the individuals who displayed features linked with a Type 2 profile were concentrating both on the present and future in their 'planning'.

Third, the relative 'stability' of both Pawał and Gracja is suggested to be permanent as they do not foresee their future in Poland and are both engaged in the attainment of educational qualifications while in the UK. In Section 6.2, Gracja discussed her family home in Poland and revealed that her extended family lived in her house, a situation which she described as "*impossible*". These 'push' factors, in combination with a perceived difficult labour market in Poland, could have intensified the motivation to 'settle' while in the UK. The relative stability of Gracja is understood as combining aspects of her past, present and future, stressing the importance of a biographical approach within the project.

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Fourth, the marker of 'language' is distinctly different to that of Type 1. In a quotation

illustrated in Section 6.3, Gracja explained how she is now more selective in who she helps with her

improved language skills. In many ways, the perception of having a good English-speaking ability has

influenced how trusting she is of Polish migrants she meets. On occasions, she explains how some

people had taken advantage of this skill to resolve a variety of issues; "… *but if they try to use me,*

just someone to sort out their bills…". The marker of 'language' is argued to be an important

difference between Type 1 and Type 2 migrants. For example, if a Type 1 migrant approached a Type

2 migrant for support, the perceived poor effort to develop English-speaking ability may determine

whether or not help was provided.

Type 3: "I live day by day"

There were six people in the research sample who demonstrated the characteristics of a

Type 3 migrant (Figure 7.5). Table 7.1 shows that the participants identified as Type 3 tended to be

individuals who were male and had been in the UK for shorter periods of time. In some ways Type 3

migrants share some features with Type 1 migrants. For example, a Type 3 migrant displayed similar

'priorities' and 'stability' to a Type 1 migrant, but was different in the perceptions of 'language' and

'planning'. The individuals that can be understood as Type 3 favoured economic 'priorities', but

demonstrated some social features in their everyday lives separating them from the markers of Type

1. They displayed a high level of temporariness with their level of 'stability', and the subsequent

examples show evidence of distinct geographical movements as they move in accordance to new

opportunities that arise. To facilitate these movements, however, this type of migrant demonstrated

more of a balance between present and future planning, as well as a better level of English speaking

ability than those grouped as Type 1.

Drawing connections with what Eade *et al.* (2007:11) term *searchers*, Type 3 migrants

employ a migration strategy of 'intentional unpredictability' as they adapt to "a flexible, deregulated

and increasingly transnational, post-modern capitalist labour market". Individuals identified as Type

3 displayed features that position them somewhere between Type 1 and Type 2 migrants. The data emphasise the importance of the 'timing' of the interview in relation to each participant's biography. Some of the individuals identified here and now as Type 3 may, at a later point in their biography, modify their lifestyle, exhibiting markers more closely aligned with Type 2 migrants.

Figure 7.5: The Markers of Type 3 Participants
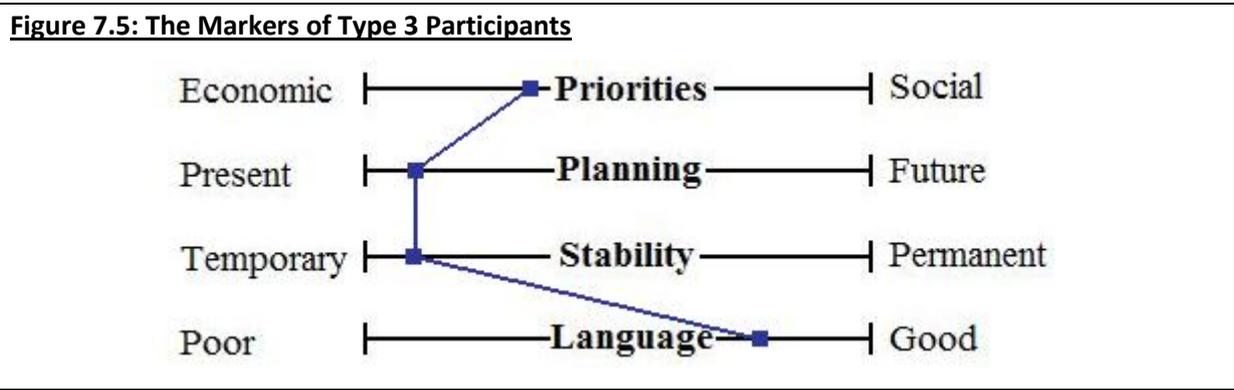
Tadeusz: "I was 20 years old when I come to England. I had just finished school and was working and thought I would travel. My friend came back from Glasgow to stay at home for Christmas and we just speak, like 'how are you doing?', 'what's it like?' you know. She said 'I have a free room in my flat if you just want to come for a few month'. I took three days to make this decision and I bought the ticket. Two weeks later I come. After a few months in Glasgow, I was struggling to find some work and I went to stay with another friend. He lived in Liverpool. He said 'if you want, you can come and stay at my flat and I can find some job for you'. Two days later I put all my clothes, you know, in the bag, and I go for bus. I come to Liverpool. Sometimes people make a good decision; sometimes they make a bad decision. I never planned this, my friends just say and I go there. I then was speaking with my friend in Northampton, she say she tired and she make like 60 hours. I said 60 hours, I would be happy with 60 hours. I was like 'I want this job' and she said 'OK you can come'. Two weeks later she find a room and I just take a bus. I put all my things in a bag. I start Liverpool 18th of February, I move to Northampton 18th of April."

(Male, 22)

Michał: "I don't really plan in advance… so I take things as they come. I live day by day. I don't know if I want to stay in England or go to Poland at the minute. I may even go to another country soon. I don't really know."

(Male, 24)

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First, the argued 'priorities' of Tadeusz and Michał could be understood as favouring economic but also having a significant social dimension. For example, Tadeusz describes how his journey has been informed by the prospect of employment opportunities presented by his social networks around him. By establishing contact with his 'old' friends and acquaintances, he identified appropriate support structures and capitalises on such foundations by manufacturing a range of opportunities. Tadeusz's migratory experiences draw strong links with what Walker and Stephenson (2010:525) term as "ideal-typical subjects of late modernity", as he dissolves attachments that restrict labour market flexibility.

Second, both Tadeusz and Michał demonstrate that their 'planning' involves elements of the present and their future. For instance, Michał describes how he lives "*day by day*" but is in the process of thinking about where his future path will lead him. Michał's motivations to come to the UK (see Section 6.2) may also inform his degree of planning and links with the Type 3 migrant profile, as he describes how migrating to the UK was "*an adventure for me*". Within the framework (Figure 7.5), the positioning involves greater consideration of the present situation, as the 'odds' of an opening versus the 'risks' of not grasping different opportunities are evaluated.

Third, the descriptions of Tadeusz and Michał's 'planning' indicate the temporariness of their everyday lives as they move from location to location, 'drifting' between opportunities. Tadeusz's accounts illustrate 'planning' to be an ongoing process and he displays a high level of flexibility to pursue new prospects. He describes the experience of packing all his "*things in a bag*", moving quickly to capitalise on new information.

Fourth, the individuals that could be identified as Type 3 migrants all displayed a good level of 'language' ability and were able to converse in English to greater extent than Type 1 migrants. This may be explained by a greater attention given to the social aspects of life, maintaining more of a balance in their 'priorities'. While the individuals encountered expressed a good level of ability, they were less likely to take steps to improve their 'language' proficiency than those identified as Type 2 migrants (see Figure 7.4).

Type 4: "If I have money, I spend money"

The fourth type of Polish migrant revealed in the analysis is described by participants as a 'material kind'. During the research, there was one participant who displayed markers similar to that of a Type 4 migrant. The behaviours of this type of migrant, nonetheless, were indicated to be distinctive by participants. In Pyšňáková and Miles' (2010:543) study working with young people in the Czech Republic, participants indicated that if individuals fail to "centre his or her life around a particular lifestyle, his or her image alone could not be accepted as authentic". In such instances, their participants would label the individual as a 'poser', 'shampoo', 'superficial' or 'faker'. The following description by Leon provides a detailed overview of the perceptions of markers displayed by such individuals in their everyday lives. Leon describes how Type 4 migrants would possess some economic 'priorities', but would be concerned with spending their earnings to project a lifestyle of 'wealth' and 'success' that was interpreted by the participants as lacking a sense of authenticity. In their consumption patterns, Type 4 migrants are suggested to give little attention to 'planning' their future and rather are concerned in acquiring signifiers supporting a particular lifestyle of 'success'. Type 4 migrants, in displaying such behaviours, have different consumption practices than the previously identified types of Polish migrants, with money being valued in the here-and-now rather than saving for the future. Leon's overview reveals that these individuals could be understood as relatively permanent in their 'stability'. This is expressed as a lack of ambition as he says "*they get a certain job… and they don't want to develop anymore*":

> Leon: "There are those that come here who are driven by money. They are a material kind. When they get here, they are full of ideas to develop and so on but when they get a certain job and they are on a certain level, they don't want to develop anymore. When they have a good job, they are afraid they are going to lose it. Even if it isn't brilliant, they will keep it. There are those who think about the future, but there are those that when they have a good job, they spend and spend. Spending it all every week and they just live their life."

> (Male, 23, translated)

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Figure 7.6: The Markers of Type 4 Participants

Economic	Priorities	Social
Present	Planning	Future
Temporary	Stability	Permanent
Poor	Language	Good

Tymoteusz: "I am trying to save money but it's not that easy. If I had money, I spend money. I don't think I have a large sum of money that I could buy a car or buy driving lessons with. All I do is go to work, get some money and then buy clothes and things like that. I find it difficult to trust all Polish people. I want to try to meet English people but I don't know how."

(Male, 24, translated)

First, Tymoteusz's account reveals his 'priorities' to be a combination of economic and social. He describes how the material cost of such a lifestyle restricts his ability to have a "*large sum of money*". Tymoteusz's social networks within the UK could be described as ethnic-specific, consisting of a small group of close-knit Polish friends. At the point of the interview, he had lived in the UK for about four years, sharing accommodation with a friend from Poland. Second, the 'planning' Tymoteusz demonstrates is arguably focussed almost exclusively on the present, with little attention paid to creating foundations for the future. Leon's account reveals how this perceived disregard for the future is a central indicator of those considered to be what is described as a 'material kind', a negative sign read related to notions of maturity (see Chapter 8). Third, when considering the relative 'stability' of Tymoteusz, his situation may be understood as fairly permanent in that he has a self-fashioned lifestyle with his companions while in the UK. During the interview, when discussing the future pathways in his biography, he did not foresee any immediate changes to this lifestyle. Fourth, Tymoteusz's account specifies some motivations to "*meet English people*" but seems to lack a strategy to create such networks. He described some encounters with English

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colleagues working in the warehouse where he was based, but suggested that his overall 'language' ability restricted the strength of these ties. The perception of Tymoteusz's lifestyle could potentially limit the range of support available from different types of Polish migrants when taking into account the 'tone' of Leon's description of this type of Polish migrant.

Type 5: "I didn't have the choice to go home"

There were four participants whose biographies matched the markers of Type 5 migrants. The personal stories shared by these participants indicated that their overall experience in the UK was difficult and in many ways they wanted to return to Poland. Factors surrounding their migration journey, however, resulted in a reluctance to return. Table 7.1 details participants defined as Type 5 migrants. This group of migrants consisted mostly of females who had resided in the UK for a few years. The 'priorities' these Type 5 migrants were typically economic when considering the UK, but contained significant social dimensions when thinking of Poland. In terms of 'planning', these individuals were concerned with both the present situation and the future pathways available. The consequences of their present situation for their economic positioning and social happiness in the future were weighed-up. Their level of 'stability' could be viewed as more temporary, but the reluctance displayed by individuals to return to Poland implies a form of permanence. The overall motivation to develop 'language' was perceived as poor, with the notable exception of Amedej who had completed an English-speaking course (see Figure 7.11).

Figure 7.7: The Markers of Type 5 Participants

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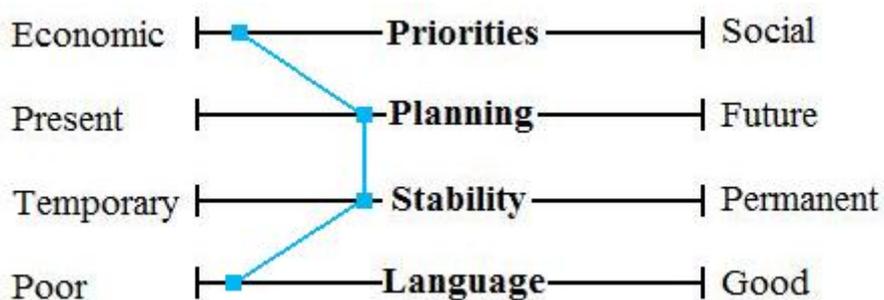
Kasia: "I got a job, through an agency, in a sausage factory. I have no idea how I did that for one year at the beginning. It was packing. It was horrible, with the boots and all day standing; I was like 'God, please shoot me'. Every day the same for a whole year. It was too much, so after one month I called the agency here to say 'it's too much for me'. I didn't have the choice to go home because I had borrowed so much money to come here and my plan was to earn money. The lady from the agency said 'we can't do anything' <u>and</u> 'your references would not be good' <u>if I quit</u>. I was supposed to be here for one year, but now I've been here for three."

(Female, 23, translated)

Amedej: "If I go back to Poland, I would have to live with my parents again… I don't want this. I would like to buy a house for myself but I can't because I don't actually have the money. I want to go back to Poland at some point, because I don't actually want to stay here. I don't know… [I will go back to Poland] tomorrow, next year… The thing is it's really difficult to contact English [people], because where you work like in my place, you have loads of Polish [people] around you. It used to be that you had to know English for Health and Safety but now they just translate everything."

(Male, 21, translated)

First, the 'priorities' of Kasia and Amedej could be understood as having both facets of economic and social markers. Taking into account their particular biographies, however, the focus was presented as primarily economic as they attempted to manufacture conditions that would facilitate a 'successful' return to Poland. For instance, Kasia describes how the initial migration movement presented a financial burden to her family (her parents) and to return to Poland without a sizable economic return could result in this being perceived as 'wasted' capital. In her case, although she describes strong feelings of unhappiness while living in the UK, to return could be interpreted as 'failure' against the seeming odds of success at the point of her departure.

Second, the 'planning' of Kasia and Amedej could be interpreted as present and future. For example, Amedej reflects on the pressures of his current financial position: "*I would like to buy a house for myself but I can't because I don't actually have the money*". His planning in reaction to these pressures could be located as demonstrating an awareness of both the present and the future

(Figure 7.7). The financial pressures of Amedej's situation in Poland were illustrated in Section 6.2 where he left Poland seeking better future prospects: "*I didn't have a job, there was nothing really I could do… the money was crap*…".

Third, the perceived 'stability' of Kasia and Amedej's positions could be interpreted as either stable or adaptable. In other words, given the right conditions in the long-term they intend to permanently migrate back to Poland, but given their financial pressures in the short-term they are also understood as relatively likely to remain in the UK. In terms of 'stability', it is difficult to assess the long-term plans, as Amedej says: "*I don't know… [I will go back to Poland] tomorrow, next year…*".

Fourth, the long-term intentions of Kasia and Amedej could influence their motivations or intentions to improve their 'language' while in the UK. Amedej's account reveals how his work environment is seen as a key location to develop English, but now the need to develop some English-speaking ability is no longer required. Unlike other Type 5 participants, Amedej had completed an English-speaking course to create new opportunities. Kasia, however, displayed little motivation to further develop her English skills.

Overall, this section has stressed the importance of taking into account the biography of each participant when considering notions of difference and diversity. The data draw some links with Eade *et al.'s* (2007) typology (see Table 2.3) but, in adopting a biographical approach that facilitates discussion of past, present and perceived future experiences, the project has revealed how participants recognise diversity within the Polish community(ies) in Northamptonshire. The discussion here extends Ní Laoire *et al.'s* (2011) research findings that suggests Polish children view a shared migrant experience as being central in the connections within their friendship networks. Indeed, the data show particular features, or shared characteristics, within migratory experiences which influence social bonds within participants' social networks. Indeed, rather than characteristics such as gender or age being decisive in participants' relationships with others, the data suggest that an individual's 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language' are important markers of difference

within Polish migrants' ethnic-specific social circles. The framework of difference (Figure 7.1) illustrates these tensions, defined by more than migratory strategies alone, which young Polish migrants use in order to assess other Polish migrants encountered.

The analyses above also emphasise the implications of the researcher's positionality entering a research project of working with an 'other' culture (see Chapter 5.4). Retrospectively looking at the indicators of difference used in the selection of participants (e.g. age, gender, occupation, length of residence etc), the research sample comprised a majority of Type 1 and 2 migrants, with fewer individuals that could be understood as Type 3, 4 or 5 migrants. This research has, through adopting a biographical approach that facilitates participants in expressing important 'events' in their own terms, uncovered these unforeseen markers of difference utilised from 'within' Polish communities in Northamptonshire. The chapter now considers the influence of these differences between Polish migrants on notions of everydayness.

7.3: Everydayness

This section illustrates data related to participants' descriptions of everyday life in Northamptonshire. Horton (2008:365) stresses the value of recent geographical work that "can, in effect, be characterised as a succession of overlapping *realisations*, *reminders* or *acknowledgements* of the presence and fundamental importance of hitherto underestimated aspects of everydayness" (emphasis in original). Indeed, by focussing on the 'banal' and 'ordinary', de Certeau (1988) suggests that people's 'ways of operating' in daily life are exposed in everyday events. When examining the data relating to participants' accounts of 'everydayness', particular themes were evident which relate to the 'framework of difference' illustrated in Figure 7.1. Goffman (1959) suggests that notions of self are 'performances' situated in and across specific places. In relation to participants' everyday accounts, specific biographical markers are suggested to be simultaneously displayed and translated when encountering other Polish migrants, informing the relative strengths of their social connections. This section will highlight some key themes evident in the data and draw attention to

differences between accounts in relation to suggested barometers of difference used by participants.

The experiences of work for Polish migrants are identified by Burrell (2010:300) as one of four key themes of academic enquiry and she suggests that "new migrants have generally been defined principally as workers". Additionally, Pollard *et al.* (2008:30) argue that "the large majority of post-enlargement migrants have come to the UK to work". The motif of work is understood as being central to the East European migrant experience (Burrell, 2010). In this study, participants' experiences of work predominantly focussed on the 'benefits' and 'limitations' of their individual employments. This research, however, identified subtle differences, based on migrant type, evident between participants in their accounts of work. For instance, Patryk and Zarek, identified as Type 1 migrants who both have economic 'priorities' shaping their everyday experiences, discuss their experiences of work on a monetary basis:

> Patryk: "Life here is much easier than in Poland, because in Poland I was working but living with parents and I <u>still</u> didn't have any money. There was never enough for like anything. And here I am living alone. I am still earning and I am able to save a bit and still able to buy things. The problem is, though, that wherever you work, especially in warehouses, is that you have all the time contact with Polish…"
>
> (Male, 19, translated)

> Zarek: "The main thing is that I can help my family. I can save money and send it to them. That's the reason I am here. If I were in Poland, I wouldn't be able to survive. I couldn't earn enough money for my own bills."
>
> (Male, 24, translated)

Working in warehouses, both Patryk and Zarek view their employment as giving them an opportunity to save money. Patryk, however, identifies that his work environment presents barriers to meeting English people. Both were relatively content in their employment position as it aligned with their overall 'priorities' within their biographies. Section 6.2 illustrates Zarek's account of his previous employment in Poland which he perceived as restricting his future prospects, aligning with

the account of Patryk above. Patryk and Zarek's perceived 'planning' and 'stability' from their

interviews are positioned as future and temporary respectively, which may limit the range of

opportunities available to progress within their work, or to "'trade up' in their job, finding better

paid work" (Burrell, 2010:300). The process of 'trading up', as suggested by Burrell (2010), arguably

changes the nature of migration for Type 1 migrants and alters their positioning within the

framework suggested in Figure 7.1. For example, related to Eade *et al.'s* (2007) notion of *storks*,

Type 1 migrants who gain employment in temporary, short-term 'entry-level' positions maintain a

higher degree of flexibility in the migratory behaviour they display. But the act of 'trading up' any

given position may restrict this type of 'transnational' migratory behaviour because of contractual

obligations. The following quotation by Irena demonstrates a partial transition from a Type 1 to a

Type 2 migrant:

> Irena: "When I worked on the line, I was mainly talking to Polish people because
> they were standing around because these were the people that were around and I
> didn't speak any English to anyone. But then I got promoted. I had to start speaking
> to my managers and my supervisors and I had to start talking to them in English and
> I am trying to learn it now and I'm picking it up from the television."

> (Female, 23, translated)

Irena's account indicates the expectation of speaking English in the relatively higher

positions of the workplace. The notion of 'trading up' (Burrell, 2010) in employment arguably is

limited by, and conflicts with, the 'lifestyle' of a Type 1 migrant. In particular, the 'stability' and

'language' markers displayed by Type 1 migrants (Figure 7.3) could be directly linked with the

prospects of 'trading up' in work. The accounts of Patryk and Zarek (Type 1 migrants) both illustrate

identified benefits of their job, but when comparing these with those of Gracja and Melania (Type 2

migrants), the latter tended to emphasise other, non-monetary, benefits of their employment. For

instance, Figure 7.8 highlights the significance given by Gracja of 'trading up' her employment which

she equates to a "*whole new experience*".

Figure 7.8: "A whole new experience"

Gracja: "This is the first place I was working as a receptionist. It was a big step for me because I was looking for an admin job just to get some experience in the admin sector. I was quite happy when I applied for a job and got it. It was just part-time and I was still managing with English. You could wear nice clothes, get your hair done, your make-up, it was good. A whole new experience. I'm more positive now than a few years ago because I started to believe in myself and I'm doing very well at college and, you know, this is pushing me forward."

(Female, 23, Photo tour)

For Gracja, the process of 'trading up' her employment consisted of a movement from a warehouse setting to an administrative role. The change in work environment provided a boost to her confidence and self-esteem. Gracja indicated the importance of 'language' skills to her new position and outlined that she was currently working towards additional educational qualifications to further 'trade up' her position. While for Gracja these improvements to her sense of 'self' and the experience of work were directly linked with a move to non-warehouse settings, other Type 2 migrants identified benefits within warehouse settings. For example, Melania's account shows that her contract of work in a warehouse involved four work shifts in consecutive days, followed by four days off:

> Melania: "I don't know really [where I want to be in the future] but I don't want to
> finish work in the warehouse. I am happy with the four days work and four days off,
> because when I have got four days off, I completely forget about work. I enjoy

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myself and I haven't really got time for rest because I meet with everybody, do some

work at home, then some sleep and then do again. I want to be happy at work

because if you look, I do four days work and four days off. By the end of four days

work I am sick of it. I think pub is great. Go to pub and chill out to meet your friends

when you have time off. This I quite enjoy. I think it's so much different here to in

Poland. There [in Poland] it's only young people with young people, but here I go

with my boyfriend, his family, his friends who are like 60 [years old] but still laugh at

the same jokes."

(Female, 19)

Melania's account of work draws strong links with Figure 7.4 by viewing work as more than a

means to save money and rather 'prioritising' social dimensions to her lifestyle. The accounts above

show differences between participants in the ways they discuss their experiences of work. Whereas

Type 1 migrants tend to discuss work through monetary terms, Type 2 participants were more likely

to discuss other benefits to their employments.

Another theme identified in the data related to the perceived lack of permanence of 'the

everyday'. These accounts draw links with ideas of 'stability' within the framework illustrated in

Figure 7.1, showing markers of perceived difference between Polish migrants. For many of the

participants, the perceived temporariness through performances of self (Goffman, 1959) of many

Polish migrants encountered placed restrictions on the strength and depth of social networks.

Justyna's account reveals negative consequences of exercising her own labour market

flexibility, as an "ideal-typical subject of late modernity" (Walker and Stephenson, 2010:525).

White's (2010) research shows that many Polish people's 'livelihood strategies' were migration-

based, pointing out that young Polish migrants have greater agency than their elders. Making these

movements possible, White (2010:578) argues that "many young Poles feel reasonably secure about

going abroad because they have access to social networks: friends and friends of friends who can

help them come to Britain and provide some support after they arrive". The account of Justyna

shows the strengths of these social networks to be influenced by ideas of 'stability', as social ties are

formed or dissolved by the migratory markers of difference. While Justyna's account of the

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temporariness of everyday life is expressed with an example of social connections, others like

Gustaw, described these experiences using examples related to accommodation:

> Justyna: "I remember with a friend I used to live with, we started to ignore each other and so I asked him 'why are you ignoring me?'. And he said 'you are here today and you probably won't be here tomorrow'. And so he didn't want to be friends because of this reason. I've got some friends here now and sometimes the way they talk about Poland I know that one day they might not be here. It's really sad but that's the way it is."
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

> Gustaw: "You don't have this confidence, like you are going to have this house or have this place. You don't have this confidence that tomorrow you will have this place because someone can send you a letter saying you have to move, like you have to move out or something."
>
> (Male, 20, translated)

The perceived lack of permanence for some Polish migrants draws links with experiences of 'home' (see Section 7.4). While many of the participants expressed specific economic benefits of working in the UK, often on temporary contracts of employment, the lack of permanence was indicated to be an influential 'everyday' concern. Figure 7.9 illustrates a place that represents the lack of permanence for Alicja:

Figure 7.9: "It's just so sad when people are leaving stations"

Alicja: "I still remember the first time that I came here and it's just so sad when people are leaving stations… any sort of stations… there's something pessimistic in them when you can come here… You welcome people and then you always have to say goodbye to them because they never come back for a longer time. Apart from that it always gives me this… tiny, little… I don't know… sun in my life. When I see the bus taking [people] to the airport, I always think that one day I will be able to jump on it and thinking 'thank God I won't be coming back here again'."

(Female, 23, Photo tour)

Overall, the theme of 'stability' here is demonstrated to be a core factor impacting on the everyday lives of young Poles in Northamptonshire. The perceived temporariness of other migrants' 'performances of self' (Goffman, 1959) is suggested by the participants to be decisive in the strengths of social networks and support available to migrants. While Justyna's account illustrates a fractured relationship on the basis of perceived temporariness, Gustaw's experiences indicate insecurity in living situations. The significance of this matter is displayed in Alicja's poignant account (Figure 7.9) as she provides a glimpse into the emotional dimensions of her migratory journey.

Another theme identified in the data was an increase in Polish residents and shops in Northamptonshire. These changes were linked by the participants to the growing number of Polish migrants coming to Northamptonshire to work or reside. Most participants indicated that many Polish migrants move to Northamptonshire but the reason for this remains unclear. For instance, the

accounts of Mikołaj and Janina illustrate changes in Northamptonshire since Poland's accession to

the EU:

> Mikołaj: "Five years ago there were very few Polish people but now everywhere you
> go, in every street, is Polish people and Polish food."
>
> (Male, 24, translated)

> Janina: "When I first came here I don't think there is any Polish people at all, but
> there is a few of them. Like two weeks ago I went out to a club and on the dancing
> floor there were like 25 English and about three times as many more Polish and I
> was like 'what are they doing here'!"
>
> (Female, 23)

The accounts of Mikołaj and Janina reflect WRS figures on migration into the county.

Chapter 5 demonstrated that between May 2004 and December 2007, Northampton had the second

highest number of Worker Registration Scheme applications (14,250) out of 342 Local Authority

Areas (LAAs) in the UK (Pollard *et al.*, 2008:62). In addition, the Northamptonshire Observatory

(2008:3) states that of LAAs, "Northampton is 4th in the UK for percentage of Worker Registration

Scheme applications 2004-2007 at 5.7%, Corby 11th at 3.6% and Wellingborough 31st at 1.8%". While

the specific rationale for Northamptonshire remains unclear, the participants discussed some

positives and negatives linked to these changes. For instance, Malina and Ania suggest that the

increase in the number of Polish people has had a positive effect on their everyday experiences by

helping them to settle in Northamptonshire:

> Malina: "I am quite happy with Polish shops. I love meat, so when I go for ham in
> Polish shop I feel better. When I go, I don't go to Polish church every Sunday, but
> when I feel like I want to go to Polish church, I know I have got it. For example, I
> don't always eat Polish food, but when I miss and I know I have it here, it makes me
> more happy."
>
> (Female, 24)

Ania: "When we first moved into Northampton, it was like a flat. It was a totally new building, so everyone was new to the building. Because Northampton is very specific with the number of Polish people, we didn't really have a problem because others were Polish as well. The first place we lived, there were 17 flats and 15 of them there were Polish people… so you don't really feel like you are abroad. I go shopping here and I feel like I am in Poland. Like here [in Wellingborough] we have got three Polish shops and here there are many Polish people so it's easy to adjust."

(Female, 22, translated)

Both Malina and Ania's accounts indicate that the increased 'presence' of Polish 'people' and 'places' is a positive factor, drawing links with experiences of 'home' (see Section 7.4). These observations appear to link with Lynch's (1960) discussion on 'nodes', as particular geographically-separated and 'demarcated' places are understood as 'Polish spaces'. Given the research methods employed (see Chapter 5), it is not possible to develop these ideas further, however, the data suggest a cartography of Polish migrants' life worlds, in combination with semi-structured interviews, would be useful in exposing inclusive and exclusive places. Ania suggests that the process of 'adjustment' to living abroad has been aided by ethnic-specific support and helped her to foster a sense of 'home'; "*you don't really feel like you are abroad*". Malina also indicates the provision of Polish goods and access to a Polish Church provides a sense of comfort, particularly when homesick. While such places act as important social spaces, Rabikowska and Burrell (2009) note that there may be a reluctance by migrants to use shops as venues for meaningful social interaction. The Polish Church, for a few of the sample, was a key 'place' where support could be sought (Figure 7.10). The majority of participants, however, did not discuss religion in the course of their interviews.

Figure 7.10: "When you think about this place, you think about home"

Graźyna: "We are at the [Polish] Church. When you think about this place, you think about home, you think about friendship and God of course. I feel a part of home is here… so… plus the priest, he is there for all of us, he is an extraordinary personality. He is a special person. Even if you feel bad, even if there is something wrong, you can go and talk to him".

(Female, 24, Photo tour)

In contrast to Malina and Ania's positive views of changes to Northamptonshire over time, Adalbert points out that the increase in Polish residents and Polish shops restricts the integration of Polish migrants into the wider community. Having resided in Northamptonshire for five years, Adalbert reflects that he was initially isolated when moving to the UK being the "*only one*" who was Polish. He indicates that he "*had to speak English*", developing his communication skills quickly to create social networks. The high numbers of Polish migrants coming to Northamptonshire (Pollard *et al.*, 2008, Northamptonshire Observatory, 2008), however, is suggested to have changed the urban environment making English-speaking skills less of a necessity.

> Adalbert: "I think it has changed because I was only one. I was then the only one from Poland. But now I know - because I have got some friends and they go to school - and there's a lot of Polish teenagers so they don't treat them like me. Because at the time I was the only one that was different, but now there's lots of

Polish people in the town and in school. I'm quite glad I came here earlier, like five years ago, because I had to speak English so I had to learn quickly."

(Male, 18)

Developing English-speaking skills was viewed by many participants as being their greatest outcome of migration. Temple (2010) suggests that English language proficiency is seen as central to mixing with English people and argues 'language' is used to differentiate between 'us' and 'others'. While Polish migrants' social networks may be expanded through increased 'language' ability, participants described a sense of fear in using their English-speaking skills:

Melania: "At the beginning it was hard to talk to anyone, because of the new surrounding, the new place, new people. You don't really know how to behave. You are basically too scared. You are surrounded by English people and you have to speak."

(Female, 19)

Łucjan: "We come here to this country and we have to chase you all the time because you have the knowledge. We don't know how to say it in English. You come here and you want to make life easier because it's hard."

(Male, 20, translated)

Both Melania and Łucjan indicate that they, to an extent, feel limited by their own 'language' skills. For instance, Melania describes that she found it difficult to communicate with English people when she first moved to the UK. Łucjan indicates that migration is a difficult process and that language presents a significant challenge when 'settling'. His comment that "*we have to chase you*" refers to experiences in the workplace where he recently had been unsuccessful in gaining a promotion. This has links with the discussion earlier in the Section where it is argued 'language' skills are viewed as central to 'trading up' work. In another example, Michał indicated that he decided to work in a warehouse setting with other Polish migrants, with 'language' being a key factor in this decision-making:

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Michał: "I wasn't very confident about speaking English. Although I learned it in Poland, I didn't learn it well enough to get the job I wanted. I didn't bring anything with me so I thought the best thing [would] be with a warehouse job."

<div align="right">(Male, 24, translated)</div>

Michał's account shows that ability and confidence are key factors in the use of English, especially for newly-arriving migrants. Since his arrival, Michał has developed his 'language' ability but is not yet in a position to 'trade up' his work. Figure 7.11 is an image from Amedej's 'photo tour' showing Northampton College where he studied an English language course. He understands these experiences as creating opportunities to expand his social networks beyond the ethnic-specific ties he had previously. In Ryan *et al.'s* (2008:678) study, however, they argue that it is important to "differentiate between those who manage over time to improve their skills and develop wider social networks and those who remain within a limited circle of co-ethnics". The results of this research suggest that young Polish migrants appear to distinguish between one another in a similar fashion, using 'language' as a distinct marker of difference.

Figure 7.11: "It opened many doors for me"

Amedej: "We are at Northampton College. I think it opened many doors for me. I don't think... without speaking English, I wouldn't be able to speak to you or meet you, for example. It was how I developed… It meant I'm not in a Polish ghetto like many people are."

<div align="right">(Male, 21, Photo tour)</div>

Amedej suggests that by developing his 'language' skills, he was able to escape "*a Polish ghetto*". Ryan *et al.* (2008) indicate that tight networks of co-ethnics may lead to cheating and exploitation, exacerbating the perceived process of 'ghettoization'. The notion of living in a 'ghetto', as Amedej understands it, is not defined by a physical location but rather is spatially-dispersed (Brimicombe, 2007, Ryan *et al.*, 2008). While, Amedej interprets the development of 'language' as a means of operating outside of the Polish 'ghetto', Kornelia highlights that by developing her English-speaking ability, she is vulnerable to be exploited:

> Kornelia: "People try to use me all the time. But as I said, I'm not very keen to help anymore because I said, OK if you asked me once, that's fine, but not once a week. Some of the stories, I don't want to get involved with people like that anymore."
>
> (Female, 23)

Kornelia's account draws strong connections with another theme identified in the data of everyday experiences, issues of trust. The subject of trust was raised in most of the interviews as a key everyday dilemma and Svašek (2009:129) indicates that "Polish migrants tend to have ambiguous feelings about other Polish migrants". It was suggested in Section 6.3 that many of the participants relied upon 'weak ties' in their ethnic-specific networks in order to access a variety of resources and support mechanisms. Indeed, Ryan *et al.* (2008:685) argue that "it would appear that the greatest level of distrust was among those migrants most reliant upon ethnic-specific networks". The accounts of Natalka and Maciej highlight the significance of trust to everyday life as a Polish migrant:

> Natalka: "Trust is the most important thing to me... and it is the most hard [sic] thing that I try to accept; that it's really hard. You try to find, but you find out the next day the person you are trusting [they] do something horrible too. And you are feeling like is that because Polish person or have the people changed in Poland. Maybe they just found he had different job and they changed! So I'm trying to explain to myself

because it's confusing to me and it's really hard for me to stay here. They are jealous maybe, I don't know…"

(Female, 24)

Maciej: "The first thing is you can't trust anyone. Even if you think you might know him or her… especially a Polish person. It's a Polish thing I would say. The thing is that, when you are friends with someone in Poland and they know you are in England, they think that you have connections and you can arrange for them to come here, get a job and they expect you to help them. So basically they live with you in your house. Sometimes the landlord doesn't even know about it. And then once they get a job, once they have money, they don't need you and they just leave you with the bills… by friends! This happens very often I would say, when someone is expecting you to help him or her to come to the UK and get started."

(Male, 23)

Natalka and Maciej's accounts show how they struggled to establish trusting connections with other people in Northamptonshire. They both point out that establishing trust with other Polish migrants is particularly difficult. In Ryan *et al.'s* (2008) study, they suggest that their participants had complex relationships with the wider 'Polish' community(ies), involving different levels of trust. Building on these ideas, Ryan *et al.* (2009a:161) found a recurring theme in their data was the idea that "Poles don't help each other" and "Poles may deliberately compete and undermine each other". The evidence of this research, highlighted in Marek and Janina's accounts, support such arguments as most participants were distrustful of the wider Polish community(ies):

Marek: "If I have to trust somebody, then a Polish person would be the last person I would trust."

MC: "Why do you say that?"

Marek: "Because I'm Polish. And I think I have got to know a lot of Polish [people] and I can see what they do. They are lying; they are cheating people who come here. They go after things. Some of them call me friends, but only if they can see a profit from that. Like they make friends with people who can help them and therefore you

can't trust them because they try to use you in their own interests… calling you friends…"

<div align="right">(Male, 23, translated)</div>

Janina: "Sadly many people say here that you shouldn't trust the Polish people here. And it's sad to say that, but that's the way it is. I think because of all this desperation and fighting for jobs, you can say there is this kind of competition."

<div align="right">(Female, 23)</div>

The nature of social connections between Polish migrants is complex. The theme of trust is argued to be crucial in limiting the strengths of these connections, and many of the participants, similarly to Ryan *et al.'s* (2008) study, distinguished between their close-circle of Polish friends and the wider community(ies). In order to access resources and collect information, however, Ryan *et al.* (2008:686) argue that Polish migrants need to "balance distrust with an on-going reliance upon co-ethnics". In Section 6.3, Agnieszka's experiences of ethnic-specific groupings in her work place are described. She expanded on these when discussing attempts to negotiate a balance of trust with her colleagues:

Agnieszka: "At work, we are trying to keep together because it's easier for us to work together than to be an outsider. When I observe people, I can see that some of them try to stick together and work together. But then in a situation when they have to choose between themselves as an individual or the whole group, they tried to pour in as much as they can to themselves rather than looking at the bigger picture."

<div align="right">(Female, 22, translated)</div>

Overall, this section has illustrated a number of key themes in young Polish migrants' everyday experiences in Northamptonshire. The data indicate, in relation to the proposed different 'types' of Polish migrant, that participants framed their experiences of work differently, highlighting different benefits of their employment. Also, participants suggested that the lack of permanence in the everyday is crucial in the social ties that they have with other Polish migrants. To an extent,

these social relations are mitigated by issues of trust, and many participants viewed an improvement in English-speaking skills as providing access to more secure social networks.

Furthermore, the data suggest that additional explorations of 'performances of self' in everyday environments would develop points raised here. Goffman's (1959:112) theorisations of 'make-work' illustrate how workers "...will be ready, when called upon, to give the impression they are working hard at the moment", and this may be beneficial in such research. Further exploration of Polish migrants' everyday worlds has potential to reveal social network maintenance by exploring markers presented in relation to the 'framework of difference' illustrated in Figure 7.1. Also, it is suggested that a cartography would be useful in mapping everyday 'nodes' (Lynch, 1960) to highlight inclusive and exclusive spaces. The chapter now considers participants' experiences of 'home'.

7.4: Experiences of Belonging and Home

The changing relationship between migrants and their home(s) is argued to be a central characteristic of transnational migration (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a). The focus of enquiry here is the socio-spatial relations and emotions that define 'home' rather than 'the home' (see Chapter 4). The data reveal how participants identify with the concept of 'home' and reveal a range of everyday tensions that impact on these experiences. Many studies suggest that migrants' experiences of 'home(s)' challenge the romanticised language of transmigrant 'duality' and exacerbate the experience of feeling 'in-between' (Armbuster, 2002, Nowicka, 2006, Salih, 2002). For Nowicka's (2006:1078) participants, the notion of belonging is negotiated in the everyday: "*I'm here and something pulls me there right now. But when I'm there, something pulls me here*".

Chapter 4 showed the homophone of 'roots' and 'routes' as being particularly useful in exploring ideas of 'home'. Feelings of exclusion and belonging are asserted to be intrinsically spatial (Blunt and Dowling, 2006), as people connect myriad feelings to particular contexts. In this sense, migrants are suggested to create a personal constellation of 'places' which extend across scales and spaces. Tolia-Kelly (2004a) asserts that migrants, rather than severing connections with their

'rooted' 'home', situate identity(ies) within mobile geographies ('routes'). Chan (1999:77)

demonstrates how migrants confront a shift in cultural habitat both physically (the urban

environment) and culturally (different interpretations of 'the everyday') revealing turbulent effects

on a migrant's sense of 'self'. The disorder and amendments of a migrant's identity(ies), in engaging

with 'routes', raise a series of difficulties in how 'home' is understood. This section will explore how

young Polish migrants' perceive 'home', how 'home' is negotiated in the 'everyday', and how some

participants attempt to (re)create the feeling of 'home' in the UK.

During the interviews, all participants (*n* = 40) talked about 'home', however, the nature of

participants' account varied. The theme of 'home' was perhaps raised by all participants as a

response to the researcher's explanation of the project when organising research sessions, drawing

links with Ní Laoire's (2011) reflections of conducting research with Irish return migrants. The data

signal the importance of 'family', 'ownership', 'security' and 'belonging' as core components of

participants' understandings of 'home(s)'. These factors draw links with Datta's (2008) description of

'*dom*', translated to mean house, home, family, residence and residency simultaneously. When

examining the different accounts, there were some of the participants, like Kasia and Paweł, who

attempted to describe their understanding of 'home'.

> Kasia: "This is not a home to me, because home if where your family is and I don't
>
> think this is my home. But now things are different and better because we just
>
> started to live together in one flat. We used to live in a shared house. We only had
>
> one room and so it is completely different. But this is not the real home. Home is
>
> where the family are. I think my next home will be with my boyfriend when we
>
> create it."
>
> (Female, 23)

> Paweł: "Home is safety. It's a place where I can be myself and I don't have to
>
> pretend anything… and people, the people who are in that place are people who I
>
> can trust."
>
> (Male, 24)

For other participants, 'home' was linked to ideas of 'stability'. Rabikowska and Burrell (2009:214) argue that regardless of whether migration is understood as temporary or permanent, "tangible, material markers are brought to the UK to aid the practical and emotional strain of moving to and living in a new country". In this sense, Rabikowska and Burrell (2009) suggest that the 'spaces' where migrants reside are being transformed into 'homes'. The data indicate, however, that experiencing 'home' in the UK is particularly challenging and different because of the perceived 'stability' of the places where young Polish migrants reside. Indeed, the accounts of Bogumił and Natalka show that when comparing 'home' in the UK with 'home' in Poland, the temporariness of the everyday is in stark contrast to the 'permanent' homes in Poland.

> Bogumił: "At home you have got your parents and everything is about safety. So safety and parents are a home, but here you don't have it. You call it a house but you have got two different terms. For you, you change places very often but for us, Polish people, we stay in one place until the end."
>
> (Male, 23, translated)

> Natalka: "Home is a place in Poland. You can save money to have a house and you stay there for as long as you can, usually until the end of your life. Whereas here, you change your home very often."
>
> (Female, 24)

Bogumił and Natalka's accounts draw some connections with Datta's (2008) study of Polish builders in London which showed how participants viewed their 'home' investments. The Polish builders perceived differences with their English counterparts (Datta, 2008), informed by the notion of the traditional Polish home (see Shallcross, 2002), an "image [that] evokes a deep sense of belonging and attachment" (Datta, 2008:523). The above accounts illustrate that some participants believed that Polish people have a very strong sense of belonging, making a lifetime investment in their residence. Małgorzata was explicit about her sense of 'placelessness' in the UK and her intention to move back to Poland:

Małgorzata: "For me, home is always in Poland and for me it will stay like this forever. I consider Poland as my home because I have got my friends, my roots and I have got my family. Although I have got my friends here, I will never consider this place as home. So it's just a place where I have grown-up, not my home."

(Female, 18, translated)

These accounts suggest that everyday experiences inform understandings of 'home'. Participants' understandings of 'home' in the UK conflict with an established sense of a 'rooted' 'home' in Poland. The issues of 'stability' raised in many of the participants' accounts have a large influence on how 'home' is understood in the UK. The perceived temporariness of young Polish migrants' living circumstances in the UK is illustrated in the following quotation by Łucjan:

Łucjan: "I wouldn't call here like a normal home because it is so temporary. I'm not sure how long I am going to stay here. It's like living all of your time in your bags. You are not building a proper home here because you do not know what is next."

(Male, 20, translated)

The data suggest that the everyday experiences of temporariness may intensify the experiences of being 'out of place' - or indeed 'in-between place(s)' - supporting the findings of Nowicka (2006). The data highlight how the participants may be 'in-between' experiencing 'home(s)' in the present, when related to their *past* 'home' in Poland and future 'home'. Łucjan's account shows how he identifies some connections between his experiences in the UK and what he understands as 'home'. While for Łucjan, his future 'home' is located in Poland in some future time, other participants suggested that they were attempting to create their own 'home' in the UK:

Michał: "There are two types of home; my family place, my family home which is back in Poland and it was created by my family. But here, I am trying to create my own home. My own one but it's not my family home. You can try to create a home but it will never be the same as the place back in Poland. You can try but it will never happen. It's true: you have got your family home and then you create your own one."

(Male, 24, translated)

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Janina: "It used to be hard at the beginning. I have been here for a few years now and I feel at home here. But on the other hand, I also feel at home in Poland. I don't know that it would make sense to you to kind of feel that I'm in between. Like, when I'm here I miss Poland, but when I am in Poland I miss here. I can say I feel at home here, I really think so."

(Female, 23)

Michał and Janina's accounts illustrate how the process of creating 'home' in the UK is challenging when initially migrating from Poland. Janina highlights how she has created a 'home' in the UK but simultaneously feels in-between 'homes'. Her account links with questions raised by Al-Ali and Koser (2002b:8), "to what extent do transnational migrants conceive of more than one home, with competing allegiances changing through time?", as she conceives of living with more than one 'home'. Indeed, Michał's account distinguishes between two types of 'home' which are distinct in their constitution. While some of the participants maintained a sense of 'home' in Poland linked to their return, others, like Melania, felt that they had lost their sense of 'home' in the 'family home':

Melania: "It's weird now even for me to go back to Poland. It doesn't feel like home anymore. Because I have got my own stuff here, my own life and when I go home, I don't feel like home anymore. I still miss my family but when I go there, I haven't got my own room. I haven't got my own place."

(Female, 19)

Melania's account shows how her decision to migrate has changed how she experiences 'home'. She suggests a sense of a 'loss of place' in her 'family home', which contrasts with the experience of Justyna who describes living 'in-between' two separate 'homes'. During the research, many participants indicated that homesickness was an everyday experience. It is noted by Blunt and Dowling (2006) that homesickness may be heightened at particular times over the life course. The theme of homesickness is linked to discussion in Section 6.3 of participants' changing social networks, as participants like Krysia shared how she and her friends in Poland "*don't really*

understand each other as [they] used to". These types of experiences support the views of Salih (2002) and Al-Ali (2002) who suggest that migrants negotiate a loss of belonging in their everyday lives. Figure 7.12 illustrates the account of Graźyna who, when experiencing feelings of homesickness in the UK, exercises to "*release [her] emotions*". The experience of homesickness was described by the participants in varying ways, and the account of Leon demonstrates how everyday differences between the UK and Poland lead to such feelings:

Figure 7.12: "This is where I come when I feel bad"

Graźyna: "This is my gym. This is where I come when I feel bad... and yeah, when I feel bad because when I do exercises, I feel much better. So when I miss home... when I felt really bad. It's just mainly the most important place for me if it comes to release my emotions... because this is how I do it. So that's why this is an important place for me. Without it, I wouldn't be able to function as a normal person."

(Female, 24, Photo tour)

Leon: "We are miles away from home... it's terrible. OK, you miss everything; starting from your parents and finishing with food, finishing with the weather, finishing with I don't know... It's totally different here and sometimes you can't afford to go home."

(Male, 23, translated)

Some accounts link with Hall's (1987:44) comment that "migration is a one way trip. There is no 'home' to go back to". Many participants expressed a sense of a loss of place (see Melania's quote), a feeling of being 'in-between' (see Janina's quote), and a perception of living different lives with different 'priorities' than Polish friends (see Malina's quote in Section 6.3). Some participants, however, described the experience of creating a new 'home'. For instance, during the photo tours, Konrad and Agnieszka identified their new 'home' in the UK as a key place (Figures 7.13 and 7.14).

Figure 7.13: "It's the first place I can leave dirty socks on the floor"

Konrad: "This is the place where I live. This is where we live together and this was a big decision. Before we lived separately with friends but we decided to live together. We have lived here [Wellingborough] for two years. It's the first place where we can leave dirty socks on the floor and nobody says 'pick that up, it stinks'"

<div align="right">(Male, 23, translated, Photo tour)</div>

Figure 7.14: "We have our privacy here"

Agnieszka: "This is the flat where I live with my boyfriend. We are very happy here. We lived in shared places before but we have our privacy here".

(Female, 22, translated, Photo tour)

Figures 7.13 and 7.14 highlight the importance of perceived ownership of a particular place to create feelings related to 'home'. The experiences of Konrad and Agnieszka draw links with Kasia's quote in identifying core components of what many participants' perceived as 'home'. Both emphasise how they have changed their living conditions, from shared to private, which allows them the ability to establish their own 'home'. The following account by Wilhelm describes his feeling of 'excitement' at the prospect of moving into his recently purchased house:

Wilhelm: "I live with my brother. I'm really excited because we just bought a house. After two years we were really, really happy being here. It's not just because of the money but it's because of the people. They have been really friendly and helpful. In Poland, you have to have one hand on your pocket and here it's not like that. I'm not sure if it will be forever, but this is a new home for us. I think home is like your hat; you like it when it is yours and it fits just right. But you know it if you put someone else's hat on; it doesn't fit. It's the same with homes. Hopefully this new house will be a home, but it will take time."

(Male, 24)

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Wilhelm's account shows the importance of ownership in strengthening feelings of 'home'. While Wilhelm was in the process of purchasing property with his brother, most of the other participants who were attempting to (re)create a 'home' place in the UK were doing so with long-term partners. Ania described how she and her husband discussed how best to create a 'home' for their new-born child:

> Ania: "My home is here now because my child is with me, my husband is with me. A year ago we had a big conversation about whether I should go back to Poland with the little one and him staying here. But then we came up with the conclusion that it wouldn't be a home. We would really like to go back to Poland because we have got our families there. That's the major difference [between the UK and Poland]; you have your roots and your family. You can't go and see your relatives. This is really important for Polish people."
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

Ania's account shows how the role of family was central to her understanding of 'home'. The importance of conventional gender roles and migration is discussed by White (2010) and she notes how many young people in Poland share their elders' views that the best migratory situation is for fathers to migrate and mothers to stay at home. This was described by one of White's (2010:576) participants as being customary and "*perhaps it's in our mentality*". But White's (2010:577) research suggests that traditional Polish-household gender roles ("father = breadwinner and mother = chief parent") are, for some, being eroded and this "helps explain why young women prefer to join their boyfriends and husbands in the West". Ania's account, however, indicates that the experience of 'home' in such situations, for all members of a family may be a key factor in the decision-making process.

Overall, this section has demonstrated some key factors that influenced participants' experiences of 'home'. Many of these factors are linked to the 'everyday' experiences of young Polish migrants. Notably, temporariness is indicated to be highly influential in participants' accounts

of 'home'. Many of the participants described their experiences of feeling in-between 'homes' because of this perceived lack of permanence (see also Armbuster, 2002, Nowicka, 2006, Salih, 2002). For participants in the process of (re)creating a 'home' place in the UK, the importance of ownership and privacy were significant issues. The participants' experiences of 'home' are also suggested to provide a new insights into the decision-making practices of young Poles in 'long-term' relationships, and contributes to research on traditional gender roles in Poland (see White, 2010).

7.5: Summary

Overall, this chapter has revealed a set of 'markers of difference' used by the participants to distinguish between other Polish migrants encountered. Traditional social markers (e.g. gender, age etc) seem to be less significant when identifying different types of migrants. Rather, factors such as 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language' are used to identify differences between migrants, which, when combined, reveal five types of Polish migrant (Section 7.2). Each of these 'types' of Polish migrants display signifiers that other Polish migrants interpret to establish their social networks while in the UK. Such markers are demonstrated to be derived from perceptions of other Polish migrants' biographies, through their past motivations, present circumstances and future ambitions. These 'markers of difference' shed new light into how and why Polish communities in Northamptonshire are formed and operate.

The chapter additionally revealed the everyday experiences of the participants and demonstrated how social connections are influenced by changing circumstances and issues of trust. The experience of work for young Polish migrants was identified as a key theme and differences were identified between participants in how they discussed their work based on migrant 'type'. Good English-speaking skills were suggested by participants to provide a means of escape from Polish "*ghettos*", but the improvement of these skills may make some migrants vulnerable to exploitation. These everyday experiences were illustrated to influence participants' experiences of 'home' in the UK, and the data suggest that 'ownership' and 'privacy' are key elements of what

participants understand 'home' to be. The data additionally indicate that young Polish migrants may differ in their attitudes towards migratory behaviour than their 'elders' in Poland (see White, 2010). Chapter 8 considers the importance of transitions through the life course, examining the intersections between migratory experiences and 'youth' transitions.

Chapter 8: Young Polish Migrants' Experiences of Transitions through the Life Course

8.1: Introduction

This chapter explores connections between the migratory experiences of participants and their understandings of 'youth' transitions. While the project was specifically designed to provide an insight into the worlds of young Polish migrants, the biographical data indicate that participants recognised a sense of progression to varying degrees within their own life course. The chapter will illustrate participants' negotiations of what I term the relative 'pace(s)' and 'smoothness' of transitions. First, the chapter will provide an overview of the links between the participants' migratory experiences and their perceptions of transitions (Section 8.2). Second, the discussion moves forward to consider the implications of such experiences, highlighting the importance of spatiality, for conceptualisations of 'youth' transitions (Section 8.3.1) and life courses (Section 8.3.2).

8.2: Exploring the Links between Migratory Experiences and Youth Transitions

This section demonstrates how young Polish migrants' understandings of transitions were spatially influenced. Wyn and White (1997) observe that the metaphor of 'transitions' posits individuals on a landscape in which 'pathways' are visible to varying degrees and accessible to differing extents. In the context of a proposed shift from 'modern' to 'late modern' society (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991), Jones (2009) suggests that traditional (or normative) transitions are fragmenting: a process whereby established institutions have begun to lose their potency, resulting in individuals being 'forcibly emancipated' to choose their own pathways. Important to note in this shift is that the responsibility of identifying, assessing and negotiating such pathways to achieve successful transitions rests with the individual (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001, te Riele, 2005). Such 'individualised' (Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991) people must reflexively construct their own biographies and navigate their chosen pathways in response to changing opportunities and risks (Bauman, 2007).

This section explores young Polish migrants' negotiations of their self-selected pathways in the context of 'youth' transitions.

It was noted in Chapter 3 that 'youth' transitions in contemporary society are heterogeneous (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997a, 1997b, Jones, 2009, Molgat, 2007, Teather, 1999). Jones (2002:4) suggests that there is increasing polarisation between "those who make 'accelerated' transitions, between the rich and poor, between those with educational qualifications and those without". Furlong and Cartmel (1997b) argue that 'youth' transitions within Western Europe are more protracted than in many other contemporary contexts. The individualised 'pathways' young people negotiate have increased in their complexity, concealing fixed points of reference which may exacerbate feelings of risk and uncertainty. Additionally, traditional markers of 'adulthood' are suggested to be transitory, reversible and impermanent (Wyn and White, 1997). Wyn and White (1997:97) point out that "the use of a concept of transitions which assumes that the process is simply from 'youth' to 'adulthood' does not take sufficient account... of the multiple transitions involved, their synchrony, and the circularity (or more accurately, the spiralling nature) of the processes of 'arrival' and 'departure' at different statuses throughout life". As illustrated in Table 3.3, Wyn and White (1997) identify distinctions between the metaphor of transitions and the lived experiences of growing up. Jones (2002) notes that the idea of transitions to 'adulthood' can be unravelled into a series of interconnected strands (e.g. leaving school, leaving home, getting married, having children, finding a job etc) in which young people may become an 'adult' according to one criterion but not another. Indeed, Jones (2002) goes on to point out that young people's sense of progress within their transitions may involve 'backtracking' (see Section 3.3). Rather than impose ideas of 'adulthood', this section will explore participants' 'youth' transitions, highlighting in various ways the importance of 'being adult'.

A further point of contention is the pace at which young people negotiate these transitions through the life course. Hopkins (2006) points out that young people's abilities to negotiate their chosen pathways, and the pace at which they do so, are likely to be influenced by a range of factors

(e.g. class, gender, race, sexuality, (dis)ability and locality). Abel and Fitzgerald (2008) argue that while some young people may experience a 'slow-track' to 'adulthood' (see Section 8.3), others may be propelled and 'fast-tracked' due to specific events or circumstances. They argue that "there are multiple maps of youth lifecourse and different timetables of life transitions" (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008:362). Punch's (2007) research with young Bolivian migrants provides a useful starting point in considering the influences that migratory experiences may have on the momentum of navigating pathways in 'youth' transitions. The meanings of traversing such pathways are indicated to be innately spatial, as Punch (2007) argues that participants' 'migrant status' was a central feature of how they viewed themselves and were perceived by others within specific social contexts. It is in this sense that the importance of social experience is unearthed, supporting the view that "the life course is the social biography of the individual, and is constructed not only by biographical age, but also socially" (Jones, 2009:87). This section will build on ideas presented in previous chapters by locating this discussion within the suggested changes to young Polish migrants' social networks (see Section 6.3) and understandings of 'home' (see Section 7.4).

The term 'transitions' is used here when participants indicated a sense of progression within their own life course, while the notion of 'pathways' is understood as a trajectory that is always ongoing and facilitates this sense of transition. Within each identified pathway, the different interconnected strands that combine to define the transition(s) to 'adulthood' as identified by Jones (2002) are suggested to temporally stretch and compress to varying degrees. By leaving their 'roots' in Poland and engaging with 'routes' to the UK (see Section 4.2), the participants' understandings of their 'self-identity(ies)' are revealed to 'reflexively' transform (Beck, 1992). It can be argued that the 'choices' young people make over which pathway to traverse are informed by their *circumstances* (determined by political, economic, cultural and social resources), their *biographies* (shaped by their experienced past, lived present and planned future) and their *envisioned future* (informed by their abilities and perception of the stability of the route, while simultaneously being regulated by notions of 'late modern' risks) (see Figure 8.1). The data will demonstrate how participants' understandings

of everyday temporariness influenced their perceptions of pace within their 'youth' transitions. Being confronted by many choices along their 'routes' (see Chapter 4), often decisions were made with scarce access to resources and support. As a result, participants' understandings of their own 'abilities', 'maturity' and 'independence' were indicated by some to have been shaped quickly and *turbulently* (see Section 8.2.2).

Building on these arguments, the following section will first explore how participants' traversed pathways were afforded and influenced by migratory experiences. The section will then move on to consider the impacts of these suggested changes within their understanding of their life course.

8.2.1: The Influence of 'Circumstances', 'Biographies' and 'Envisioned Future(s)' to 'Pathway' Selections

Figure 8.1 illustrates three dimensions that influenced the choices that young people in this research made in relation to their pathways. The notion of 'choice' has been shown to be problematic when related to migratory decision-making. For instance, White's (2010) research highlights how many of her participants felt forced to migrate, in contradiction to ways in which migration is presented as voluntary within the UK media. White (2010:569) suggests that these feelings are experienced as a universal aspect of the migration culture: "the belief that under some circumstances, to quote Emilia, 'you simply have to go and work abroad'". Section 6.2 illustrated how participants' rationales for migration comprised a range of unique and personal 'push' and 'pull' factors related to their particular circumstances. It is in this sense that the *circumstances* in which people are located influence the experienced paradoxical state of choice (Abbott *et al.*, 2010, Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010, Walker and Stephenson, 2010).
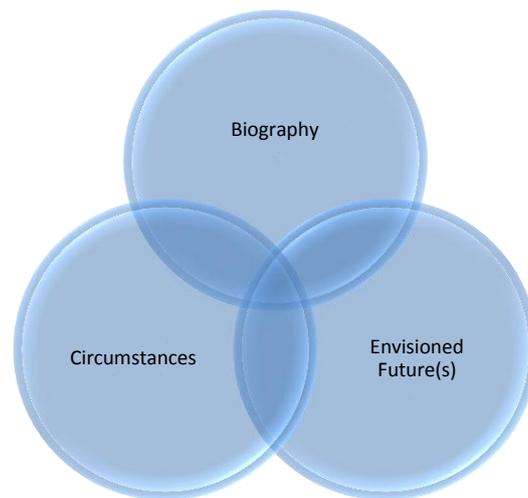
During the research interviews, 34 participants identified connections between their migratory experiences and ideas of 'youth' transitions. Participants' length of residence in the UK, and their 'circumstances' prior to migration were found to be central in identifying differences between accounts. Limited differences were identified in relation to gender and age, however, male participants tended to emphasise the importance of independence more strongly than female participants. For many participants, the movement to the UK was made individually and represented the first significant period of living outside their family home. The theme of independence was discussed frequently and was suggested to be strongly linked to a sense of maturity gained while in the UK. For example, Michał and Grażyna discuss the differences between their living situations in the UK in the present compared to their past in Poland:

> Michał: "Because I lived with my parents all my life, I used to have dinner ready. I have an older sister and she was always cleaning my room. I had to learn to be independent and to do things for myself. And it's not a problem for me now, but I just had to learn how to do things."
>
> (Male, 24)

> Grażyna: "I left Poland but I still love my family. The connection and bond is really strong and it will stay like this forever. The thing is that I have my friends here and

even if something happens, like I have a bad day, I don't want to ring my parents

and tell them I feel really bad because they have their own problems, so I am trying

to solve it by myself. Of course I have my friends [in Poland] but I don't want them

to feel bad about me or worry. I am trying to cope without my parents."

(Female, 24)

Both Michał and Grażyna outline how their migratory experiences have informed their transitions to independence. For instance, Michał describes how he considers himself to be independent in the present, but acknowledges that the experience of *becoming* (Worth, 2009) independent has developed over time. His account illustrates how the social roles and responsibilities within his parental home in the past contributed to his difficulties in adapting during his early migratory experiences. Wyn and White (1997:96) argue that the focus on independence, which is "assumed to be associated with growing up", as a core dimension to 'youth' transitions may obscure the centrality of *inter*dependence. Documenting the everyday negotiations of independence and interdependence, Grażyna's account illustrates changes within her social networks and shows how she attempts to access 'emotional' support (Ryan *et al.*, 2008, 2009a, 2009b) from contacts within her UK-based networks rather than her Polish networks.

Revisiting notions of 'everydayness' (see Section 7.3), the data suggest that the everyday *circumstances* of participants informed the pace(s) along their pathways. Around four-fifths of participants (*n* = 28) viewed their migratory experiences as accelerating transitions. Łucjan indicates that while he would not consider himself a 'child' if he had remained in Poland, he does not imagine that he would have *travelled* as far towards 'adulthood' had he done so. Nearly all of the participants indicated that their decision to migrate has been beneficial in the sense of their 'progression'. This sense of accomplishment was connected to the difficulties encountered within the everyday realm. For example, Agnieszka and Gracja describe their experiences of progression as being highly 'turbulent' (see also Section 8.2.2):

Łucjan: "I have matured just faster. I would say in Poland, I don't think that I would be a child, but I would still be living with my family and I wouldn't now live on my own. And so I can say that the experience makes it [growing up] even faster."

(Male, 20, translated)

Agnieszka: "When I lived in Poland, I was in high school and it was like I was still a child. And when I came here, I had to learn how to fight for myself and for my place of respect."

(Female, 22, translated)

Gracja: "I've grown up in the first year when I came here so much because of this experience. I was like 'oh my God', if you think about it there are a thousand people in my village and there are millions in London. I think back to how I have been treated and that now I can speak English, a lot has changed."

(Female, 23)

There were, however, six participants who indicated that their experiences did not resonate with this compressed sense of transition. A factor that appeared important here was the support mechanisms available when migrating to the UK, as four of these participants migrated with parents. For example, Juliet and Adalbert talk about 'growing up':

Juliet: "Yes [I have changed since migrating] but I feel the same; I'm Polish and working now. It's just that I'm more grown up."

(Female, 18, translated)

Adalbert: "I don't think I've changed too much. I've grown up and now I have to work and stuff. Since I came here, I've started to speak English better. I was a bit a 'chavy' person, but I realised it wasn't taking me anywhere and so I stop doing that and I don't care about these people now."

(Male, 18)

Both Juliet and Adalbert migrated to the UK with their parents and reside with them. Although they recognised some personal development as a result of migration, their accounts do not

suggest the same sense of acceleration as those who migrated independently and had limited social networks. Such accounts demonstrate that participants' everyday *circumstances* and access to *support* structures influence the relative pace of their transitions.

One participant, who recognised her life course transitions as being accelerated, indicated that she was actively attempting to slow her 'progression' and retain her sense of 'youth'. Melania suggested that a specific phase within her biography was particularly important to her understanding of her maturity. Melania's mother migrated to the UK in search of work, leaving her daughter behind in Poland to await later family reunification. For Melania, the effects of this period, in combination with her migratory experiences (see Chapter 6.4), are particularly telling to her perception of experiencing quick 'youth' transitions. Having identified an accelerated pace in her development during her mother's absence, Melania explained how she now is consciously attempting to "*extend this process*", resisting entry to her self-defined 'adulthood' (Jeffrey and Dyson, 2008a). Melania's account recalls Horton and Kraftl's (2006) discussion of 'ongoingness', where they argue that more should be said of 'going on' rather than 'growing up'. Melania describes how she is aiming to 'go on' along her chosen pathway, but simultaneously decelerate her life course progression:

> Melania: "When I came here for the first time, I was mature I think but now from time to time I act really childishly. The reason for my maturity was that before I came to England, my mum was already here. This means I was on my own in Poland for around nine months when I was 14 or 15 [years old]. I stayed there not completely on my own, but my mum is the closest person to me. The thing is that there are times when I should be sensible and I am, but I don't want to grow up so I am trying to extend this process as long as I can."
>
> (Female, 19)

While differing paces of transitions through the life course were uncovered as a result of migratory experiences, participants who made such links viewed such changes as being beneficial in creating and/or developing skills. Many indicated that their experiences in the UK have been

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particularly turbulent and challenging in the context of their biographies (for example, on their social networks (Section 6.3), on their experiences of the everyday (Section 7.3) and perceptions of 'home' (Section 7.4)). For instance, Justyna and Konrad suggest their migratory experiences, particularly the difficult 'events', have boosted their self-confidence and self-esteem:

> Justyna: "I think that moving has had a lot of challenges and there are a lot of things that I've learned quickly. I had to deal with things on my own here, in a foreign language, and now that I've done that I am not afraid to go and ask them [people] anything or to deal with anything, whether in the UK or in Poland, because over here no one can help me."
>
> (Female, 22)

> Konrad: "Also, [I have gained] confidence and the fact that I know that even if something is difficult, like a situation, I know that I can get through this."
>
> (Male, 23, translated)

The accounts of Justyna and Konrad illustrate how they viewed themselves as changing or developing as an individual via migratory experiences. Both Justyna and Konrad describe how they now view themselves as having an ability to endure difficult situations in their future pathways, which raises their sense of confidence in themselves. Interestingly, some participants articulated their understanding of progression, or interpreted the extent to which they had changed, by comparing themselves to their peers in Poland. When exploring differences between accounts, rather than factors such as gender or age shaping their understandings of progression, participants tended to emphasise how difficult migratory events had enhanced their self-confidence and skills. For example, Natalka views herself as being more skilled in evaluating the people she encounters and indicates that her friends in Poland may not have met a wide range of people on which to base their interpretations. For Łucjan, the abilities acquired through migratory experiences have improved his understanding of his own adaptability and he views himself as being better-positioned when contemplating future situations or circumstances:

Natalka: "I've learned life here by living, but with my own eyes I've met different people. I can watch people sometimes and I can, after five minutes, know if I can trust them or not. But maybe my best friends [in Poland] don't know though because they don't meet these same people."

(Female, 24)

Łucjan: "I would say that I am more mature and I feel now that I can overtake any problems because of these experiences. I mean I'm in a foreign country. You know with everything, I've managed to adapt and I feel I could live anywhere in the world now as a person. I'm sure now that it's more the experience."

(Male, 20, translated)

The data suggest that both the circumstances and biographies of the participants were linked with their abilities to *envision future* pathways. For about two-thirds (*n* = 26) of participants, accounts of pathway experiences focussed predominantly on the past and present 'phases' of their biographies and there was a hesitancy to contemplate 'too far' ahead. Exploring differences between accounts, anxieties in relation to 'envisioned future(s)' were more evident in female participants' accounts, particularly those who had limited support structures within their social networks. For instance, Natalka indicates that she recognises self-development in terms of maturity and responsibility, but her current everyday temporariness (see Section 7.3) presents an obstacle in identifying and deciding upon a particular pathway. Natalka's account may be linked with theories of 'late modernity', as Bauman (2007:3) states "each next step needs to be a response to a different set of opportunities and a different distribution of odds, and so it calls for a different set of skills and different arrangement of assets". In another example, Sara identifies a multitude of pathways available to her given her circumstances and biography but is disinclined to think 'too far' ahead:

Natalka: "I am a more responsible person. I am more mature but it's a hard time for me and I need to make a decision about where do I go, what do I do. So I am a bit unstable with things at the minute, with the things I want to do in life."

(Female, 24)

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Sara: "At first I was looking for a job, maybe to start University here, but now I'm just working. When you go to University you have to do a part-time job and it's not really easy to... you know, without parents here and all this stuff, it's not really easy to survive. But then, I am thinking a little about college part-time but I don't want to think [gestures to indicate too far into the future]."

(Female, 19, translated)

While Natalka and Sara's experiences of temporariness could be understood as restricting their ability to *envision*, a third of participants (*n* = 14) provided clearer articulations of future pathways. While nearly all participants had particular ambitions or goals underpinning their movements, those who were able to envision future pathways provided a clearer plan to realise such hopes. A commonality between these participants, emphasised by both male and female participants, and a factor which appears to be important in allowing for such insights, is the stability of their everyday circumstances. It was noted earlier that male participants were more reluctant that female participants to discuss anxieties surrounding difficulties to 'envision' future pathways, but no differences between accounts based on gender were found when discussing the benefits of living in relatively stable circumstances. For example, Ania and Wilhelm discuss their intentions and perceptions of their future pathways. For Ania, forming a family while in the UK has altered her future plans and priorities. Similarly Wilhelm indicates that his support networks and family connections help provide a sense of continuity when contemplating his *envisioned future* pathways (see Chapter 7.4):

Ania: "When I came here, I was twenty so I didn't really know what I wanted. The plan was to come here stay for one year and then go back to Poland. But then I met my husband. I had a baby with him and for now my heart is here with him and the baby... so obviously I have changed because I have got a family. I have got priorities now. When I was twenty I didn't really have them. If it comes to my dreams, I would like to be in Poland, however reality says I don't think it will happen."

(Female, 22, translated)

Wilhelm: "In Poland, everyone was in a rush and you had to worry about the future. But here it's a piece of cake. I feel more safe here and I can plan my future step-by-step. I really like it. I really want to study here and go to university, but I think that it's really hard to predict what will happen in the future. We [referring to family] will see."

(Male, 24)

Overall, this section has demonstrated a series of connections between the participants' *circumstances*, *biographies* and *envisioned futures*. The data revealed how these factors combine to influence both the identification and experiences of pathways and transitions. The chapter now uncovers some of the effects, as suggested by the participants, of negotiating these particular 'routes' (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Blunt and Dowling, 2006).

8.2.2: The Importance of Pace(s), Support and Risk within 'Youth' Transitions

Section 8.2.1 suggests that the pathway choices of some participants were characterised as being 'turbulent'. This subsection explores how this sense of turbulence was defined and presents some examples that illustrate the ramifications of participants experiencing their 'youth' transitions in this way. 'Turbulent transitions' are understood to be major changes within biographies as a result of migration, changes that are made quickly with scarce access to support structures and in environments that contain high levels of perceived risk. Section 3.3 provided an overview of a range of ways transitions through the life course have been conceptualised. For example, 'fractured transitions' refer to young people who leave school without securing a job or training or leave home without attaining a stable home of their own (Alcock *et al.*, 2003), while 'yo-yo transitions' refer to young people who switch back and forth between education and work (Council of Europe, 2001). Jones (2009) argues that 'unsupported transitions' carry high degrees of risk and compromise young people's choices (see Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008, Wilson *et al.*, 2008). The idea of 'turbulent transitions' expands on notions of 'unsupported transitions' by considering the effects of *spatial* changes as a result of migration, the relative *timings* of such changes, and identified *risks* in addition to *support* structures available. 'Turbulent transitions' are distinct also from notions such as

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'fractured transitions' or 'yo-yo transitions' by situating specific trajectories and events within the biography of the individual, focussing upon how individuals understand these changes themselves. It can be argued that some participants not only contend with complex negotiations in relation to their 'identity(ies)', 'home(s)' and sense of belonging as a result of engaging with their 'routes' (see Chapter 4), but also simultaneously experience(d) their transitions to 'adulthood(s)'.

The data relate to a range of concepts emerging in part from 'late modern' theories of the 'reflexive project of the self' (Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991). Henderson *et al.*'s (2007) notion of 'critical' moments is particularly relevant, as participants acknowledge changes to their senses of 'self' when retrospectively evaluating migratory experiences. Particularly for those migrating by themselves (*n* = 31), the initial period after arrival was seen to be central in transforming their self-understood position(s) within life course transitions. Often, participants defined the pace(s) of their pathways in relation to friends in Poland, and many depicted their own pathways as being more accelerated. In addition, these changes were also made with restricted access to support from their previous 'social networks' (see Section 6.3) and included perceived hazardous encounters with people within their 'everyday' environments in the UK (see Section 7.3). Indeed, given the suggested temporariness within the everyday experiences of the participants (see Section 7.3), it is argued that they were frequently 'forced' (White, 2010) to make a series of pressurised 'choices', each containing risk. It is the combination of all these factors that mark the participants' experiences as being 'turbulent transitions' through the life course.

Section 6.4 illustrated changes to Justyna and Marek's social networks as a result of their decisions to migrate to the UK. The data show that many participants define their 'youth' transitions through migratory experiences of independence. These experiences are suggested to compound and mark-out the different pathways that have been 'chosen' between the participants and their peers in Poland. The importance of this identified difference was demonstrated in Malina's account of her awareness of changes within her social networks illustrated in Section 6.4: "*I have lost a lot of friends... they've got families and babies and different lives*". Her account suggests that both she and

her peers display 'markers' related to their perceived 'adult' identity(ies), but that their self-recognised claims to 'adulthood' have been made on basis of different pathways, or strands (Jones, 2002), shaping their relationships. Importantly, Malina's narrative signals the importance of spatiality to transitions, having a bearing on her understanding of her 'adult' status. In another example, Krysia described the influences of these situated differences as no longer sharing the same topics or interests as her friends in Poland, weakening their relationships. Based on the occupation of new geographical spaces, she has made new friends in the UK on the basis of her transformed sense of 'adult' self:

> Krysia: "It's totally different, I've got new friends. My friends in Poland, we don't understand each other as we used to. The contact is different. We don't talk to each other that often, we don't really have the same topics..."
>
> (Female, 18, translated)

The data suggest that participants' pathway choices influence the meaning of, and their positioning within, the life course. In this sense, the data support Worth's (2009) discussion of the importance of 'timings' and 'spacings' within notions of transitions. By using methods which situate migratory experiences within the wider biographies of the individuals (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993), participants' descriptions of changes to their self-identity reveal the importance of the spaces where such modifications are manifest. Indeed, Worth's (2011a:7) research shows that using a method which allows participants to think about the temporal aspects of transitions "confront[s] linear, chronological time with the multiplicity of people's lived experiences of time across the lifecourse". It is in this sense that conceptualisations of 'fateful moments' (Giddens, 1991) and/or 'critical moments' (Henderson *et al.*, 2007) within people's biographies recall debate surrounding the balance between 'structure' and 'agency' within 'youth transitions' (Evans, 2002, Valentine, 2003).

The importance of spatiality to ideas of transitions also became visible when considering accounts of participants' experiences when 'returning home' to Poland (n = 12). Of those who

discussed 'returning home', there were four participants who suggested that their produced 'adult' identity(ies) and status, forged on the basis of their migratory experiences, were not recognised. For these individuals, the importance of 'time' and 'space' to their 'adult' identity(ies) was clear. For example, both Patryk and Gracja's accounts illustrate this point when discussing their relationships with their parents:

> Patryk: "I think my parents treat me the same as they did before I came to England. And every time I go there they still want to pay for everything so I don't have to spend more on any stuff. I can see there is this gap between us. I think when I go back there to stay, it will be different with us."
>
> (Male, 19, translated)

> Gracja: "If I am honest, my father still treats me like a little girl, you know, because they stopped when I was like 20 [years old] and they don't count these four years. They treat me like a 20 year old girl. They still can't believe I am earning money, I'm still at school and I'm doing very well."
>
> (Female, 23)

During his interview, Patryk described how he has matured through his migratory experiences, gaining a number of skills and competencies. Such transformations appeared, however, to be overlooked by many people within his Poland-based social networks, a point epitomised by his parents '*want*[ing] *to pay for everything*'. While also stressing the centrality of economic independence to her perceived 'adult' status, Gracja reflects on similar experiences and suggests that her parents view her as unchanged during the four years she has lived in the UK. Participants' understandings of their 'youth' to 'adulthood' transitions can be argued to be based on their migratory experiences which, crucially, are not experiences shared over time or space with individuals within their Polish social networks. The perception that these changes to their 'self-identity' (Giddens, 1991) were not 'shared' experiences possibly contributed to participants' sense of a lack of recognition as there may be few markers or physical manifestations of these self-recognised changes. The data raise questions over the importance of possessing identifiable markers or shared

experiences (both in terms of time and space) documenting self-understood transitions in response

to socially-constructed and performed 'adult' identity(ies). This point will be expanded upon in

Section 8.3 which considers the value of geographical perspectives to theories of transitions.

The experiences outlined above may be tentatively linked to a general reluctance to move

back into the parental home displayed by many participants, when thinking about the future and

returning to Poland. The data provide a further layer of consideration to the discussion in Section 7.2

on the different 'types' of Polish migrant and in particular, the four participants described as 'Type 5'

who felt they '*didn't have the choice to go home*'. Illustrated in Section 7.2.5, Amedej's comment

that "*if I go back to Poland, I would have to live with my parents again*..." demonstrates how he

would consider returning to Poland but not under conditions that would force him to 'backtrack'

(Jones, 2002) into his parents' home. His reluctance to return to his parents' home underlines the

importance of acknowledging the wider societal conditions of 'late modernity' (Bauman, 2007, Beck,

1992 Giddens, 1991; see also Jones, 2001). When reflecting on three days of being homeless while in

the UK, Amedej acknowledges his sense of ownership and control in selecting and negotiating

opportunities and pathways to achieve his ambitions in the future, 'routes' he strongly wishes to

realise independently:

> Amedej: "For three days I didn't have a house, and at that stage I wanted to go back
> to Poland. But then I realised I could find something for myself. I actually realised I
> should think about life, about my own decisions and future."
>
> (Male, 21, translated)

Overall, this section has demonstrated how migratory experiences were found to be linked

with how participants understood their own sense of self-identity (Giddens, 1991), and/or their

positioning within transitions through life course. Section 7.3 illustrates how issues of trust intersect

with participants' everyday lives and how, by 'surviving' such experiences, they viewed themselves

as 'stronger' individuals. The term 'turbulent transitions' is used here to depict some participants'

experiences of 'accelerated' and 'unsupported' transitions, pathways understood as containing high degrees of risk. The chapter now examines notions of transitions through a geographical lens.

8.3: Reflecting on Young Polish Migrants' Accounts of Transitions

This section considers the implications of the results of this study for contemporary conceptualisations of 'youth' to 'adulthood' transitions (8.3.1) and current debates surrounding the concept of the 'life course' (8.3.2). The aim of this section is to draw attention to how the experiences of this particular cohort of young people reveal often overlooked spatialities central to these debates.

8.3.1: Implications for Transitions

The data reveal how many participants' migratory experiences were interwoven with notions of 'youth transitions'. Among ways of interpreting data which illustrate participants' transition(s) to independence, Section 3.3 noted that much attention has been given to the proposed new developmental stage (see Buhl and Lanz, 2007, Bynner, 2005) of 'emerging adulthood' (Arnett, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2006). Arnett (2004) suggests that 'youth' consists of two stages: 'adolescence' (roughly aged between 10 and 17 years) and 'emerging adulthood' (roughly aged between 18 and 25 years). By exploring the biographical accounts of young Polish migrants aged between 18 and 24 years, this study contributes to this discussion by exploring how the data relate to Arnett's (2000, 2001, 2004, 2006) theorisations.

A range of studies have suggested some limitations to 'emerging adulthood'. For instance, Côté and Bynner (2008) argue that the case for 'emerging adulthood' is challenged by its non-applicability to all young people, and they question whether or not the 'transition to adulthood' has fundamentally changed in a developmental sense. Hendry and Kloep (2010:169) support such concerns, suggesting that 'emerging adulthood' mainly applies "to young adults in higher education, who are still largely recruited from the middle class". This section aims to build on these critiques by applying a geographical lens to 'emerging adulthood'.

Arnett (2004) characterises 'emerging adulthood' as having five key features, each of which will be scrutinised in relation to the results of this study. The first characterisation of 'emerging adulthood' is that it is an *age of identity explorations*, where a range of possible futures are considered as young people move towards more definite choices (Arnett, 2004). Section 7.3 detailed experiences of everyday life for participants and demonstrates the importance and difficulties of trust. 28 participants (see Section 8.2.1) described a more accelerated sense of transitions in which they recognised a series of changes in relation to their sense of self-identity (Giddens, 1991). For example, Agnieszka describes how she sees herself as being located in different *circumstances* (see Section 8.3.2) to her peers and as having obtained/developed her biographical skills on a different 'timetable':

> Agnieszka: "I can see now that I am going to be with my partner forever. And when I look at my friends in Poland, I can see that I am more mature. I can give them advice and I can listen. It's difficult to explain but it's completely different to what it used to be"
>
> (Female, 22, translated)

The data suggest that participants view their migratory experiences as instigating rapid transitions to independence, which for some is tantamount with transitions to 'adulthood', and may compress their experience of 'emerging adulthood'. Related to the implications for 'life course' more widely (see Section 8.3.2), the conditions of 'late modernity' as proposed by Bauman (2007), Beck (1992) and Giddens (1991) mean people are forced to reflexively (re)construct their identity(ies) in relation to changing odds and fluctuating circumstances. A few participants suggested that by migrating, they could re-invent their self-identity to best suit the spaces they occupy and the people encountered. For example, Graźyna describes how she is now in a position to "*start from the beginning*" when constructing and performing her social identities:

> Graźyna: "You come here and everything is totally different, a new way of living, and it's a good thing because you see a different option. Maybe a more interesting way,

maybe. It's a good feeling because I can say I came here and now I am more independent. You start everything from the beginning in a new life. You can re-invent because nobody knows you. You start from the beginning."

<div align="right">(Female, 24)</div>

Graźyna's account stresses the centrality of spatiality to notions of identity change, as these are suggested to be constructed in particular spaces and times. Migration in this sense transforms the spatialities, both in terms of the spacings and timings (Worth, 2009) of such constructions. The data suggest that these types of experiences may be influenced by the *circumstances* in which people are situated and the relative 'turbulence' of an individual's transition through the life course (see Section 8.2.2). By being located in environments with limited access to *support* (see Section 6.3), and restrictions in relation to trust (see Section 7.3), the data show that participants' transitions are contracted rather than prolonged, bringing into question both the pace and the validity of chronological age within 'emerging adulthood'. In effect, the data support Bynner's (2005:378) arguments where he suggests the need to "move away from a blanket categorization of individuals in terms of stages bounded by chronological age towards a broader conception based on a range of 'trajectories' or better 'pathways'".

Returning to the notion of 'emerging adulthood', the data suggest that to varying degrees the participants did engage in an *age of identity explorations*. Arnett (2004:8) argues that:

"emerging adulthood offers the best opportunity for such self-exploration. Emerging adults have become more independent of their parents than they were as adolescents and most of them have left home, but they have not yet entered the stable, enduring commitments typical of adult life, such as a long-term job, marriage and parenthood".

While such a point does relate in some ways to the kinds of 'impermanent' lifestyles of many participants (see Section 7.3), it can be argued that 'late modern' notions of stability are problematic for people of all 'ages' and are not necessarily 'youth'-specific. It should be noted, however, that

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more anxiety was highlighted by female participants as a result of such experiences (see Section 8.2.1).

The second characterisation of 'emerging adulthood' is that it is an *age of instabilities* as educational paths, jobs, partners and living situations frequently change (Arnett, 2004). A key theme in the accounts of participants was the centrality of temporariness to ideas of the 'everyday' (see Section 7.3) and 'home' (see Section 7.4), suggesting that spatiality is again a key factor influencing the extent of this instability. Apart from six individuals who migrated to the UK with parents, all participants migrated to the UK moving out of the parental home, and their understandings of 'stability' are argued to be a crucial dimension influencing their experiences of 'home' while residing in the UK (see Section 7.4). These accounts of temporariness, however, were not specifically associated with how participants viewed their life course development. For instance, Ania's account illustrated in Section 7.4 showed how she has created a 'home' in the UK, with her husband and new-born baby contributing to her sense of being 'adult'. Despite viewing herself as an 'adult', however, she described how her present situation and possible future trajectories will consist of instability to varying degrees, further suggesting that the notion of stability is not confined to those on the cusp of 'adulthood'.

The feature of 'instability' is a key feature in Arnett's (2004:3) rationale for 'emerging adulthood', as it is suggested that "for today's young people, the road to adulthood is a long one". While there are many examples which demonstrate the centrality of temporariness to participants' lives, some participants defined their more 'mature' and/or 'adult' status by 'surviving' and responding such everyday instability. Section 8.2.1 illustrated how some participants defined their life course 'positioning' in relation to their pathway experiences rather than traditional markers (Arnett, 2004) or 'rites of passage' (van Gennep, 1960). Nonetheless, it is crucial to note that while some participants understand themselves as being 'adults', tensions may arise if such identity performances are not understood or acknowledged by others. Such friction is revealed in Section

8.2.2 by participants, such as Patryk and Gracja, who discussed their relationships with their parents when 'returning home'.

Thirdly, Arnett (2004) characterises 'emerging adulthood' as being an *age of being in-between*: as being neither 'adolescent' nor 'adult'. While some participants described 'liminal' experiences related to their sense of belonging (see Section 7.4), often participants understood their sense of self-identity as either 'being adult' or not. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, such identity performances may not be interpreted by others in the same way. It is argued in Section 8.2 that participants' understandings of maturity and independence, associated by them with ideas of 'adulthood', were shaped quickly and turbulently, possibly resulting in a lack of data in relation to their sense of being 'in-between' as Arnett (2004) defines it. Such descriptions stress the fluidity of spaces and times that inform the development of participants' life course positioning. The subsequent section discusses the implications of the study for life course theories more widely and reveals how 'adulthood' is being questioned through ideas of 'late modernity', as the stability and security of 'adulthood' are no longer guaranteed. The conditions of 'late modernity', in particular the 'reflexive project of self' (Giddens, 1991, Beck, 1992), may contribute to a greater number of young people describing their circumstances as being in an *age of in-between* because they do not subscribe to traditional notions of 'adulthood'.

The fourth descriptor of 'emerging adulthood' is that it is a *self-focused age*: young people are suggested to have more environmental freedoms as less social control is imposed by others (Arnett, 2004). Section 6.2 revealed a range of individualised 'push' and 'pull' factors that informed the participants' decision-making practices. Around two-thirds of participants stated that remaining in Poland would limit the range of future opportunities available to them (see Section 6.2.1), and that living in the UK was a means of achieving social and economic independence. For instance, Ania and Mikołaj's accounts illustrate how their relationships with their parents were negotiated as they were exposed to greater freedoms:

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Ania: "I applied for a position. It was September and they [employer] didn't get in touch with me for four weeks or something. That was the hardest time because I didn't have a job. Nothing! My parents were like 'come back, come back' and I was like 'mum, give me this chance. If it doesn't work out then I can always come back, but if I don't I will regret it. I know myself and give me this chance'. I wasn't old, 18 or 19 [years old] but give me this chance to do it. 'I'm not going to stay at home forever...'"

(Female, 22, translated)

Mikołaj: "For me, meeting new people was good especially because our parents are very strict with us. I mean, when they said to be home at a certain time, even 15 minutes late there would was a big punishment so when I came here I got a bit crazy, to be honest with you."

(Male, 24, translated)

While both Ania and Mikołaj's accounts draw links with a suggested *self-focused age*, there were many accounts that demonstrated the complexity of independence. For instance, Section 7.4 showed how experiences of homesickness were frequently discussed, indicating that the spaces participants now occupy may afford more independent freedoms, but at the cost of a greater geographical distance to 'home'. Also Zarek's account demonstrates how the perceived benefits of migration were not considered for him alone but accounted for his family who remained in Poland, indicating limitations of being of a *self-focused age*:

Zarek: "The main thing is that I can help my family. I can save money and send it to them. That's the reason I am here, because when you migrate you are obviously in a different situation."

(Male, 24, translated)

The final characteristic of 'emerging adulthood' is that it is an *age of possibilities* where young people are suggested to be highly optimistic about their future (Arnett, 2004). Arnett (2004:16) suggests that "emerging adults look to the future and envision a well-paying, satisfying job, a loving, lifelong marriage, and happy children who are above average". As discussed in Section

8.2.1, around two-thirds of participants were reluctant to discuss their future plans in great detail as their present circumstances changed frequently, limiting their planning ability. The data suggest that many participants tended to look to past experiences, which were seen as instrumental in acquiring or developing the range of skills they had, influencing their level of optimism for the future.

Overall, the notion of 'emerging adulthood' has been useful when interpreting participants' accounts. While some data relate to Arnett's (2000, 2001, 2004, 2006) theory, this section has identified a number of inconsistencies between its five defining characteristics and the ways in which participants here discussed transitions through the life course. Importantly, the data show how the spatial contexts in which participants are located influence the relative pace(s) and meaning(s) of their 'youth' transitions. Indeed, it can be argued that participants, to varying degrees, experienced 'turbulent transitions' (see Section 8.2.2), as they were located in everyday spatialities containing high degrees of risks and susceptible to change. Given the lack of 'stability' in their everyday settings, the participants' mobilities demonstrate the relative flexibility of their circumstances as they identify and negotiate the 'opening(s)' and 'closing(s)' of pathways influencing their abilities to *envision future* pathways. The data suggest that, in addition to the importance of the spacings and timings of young people's 'youth' to 'adulthood' transitions, their sense of self-identity and access to support structures are of paramount importance. The section now moves on to consider four factors emanating from the data (*spaces*, *timings*, *self-identity* and *support*) which can be argued to influence participants' life course developments.

8.3.2: Implications for Life Course

This subsection aims to build on previous discussion to identify what the data mean for contemporary understandings of life course. The importance of 'reflexivity' in the construction and performance of identity(ies) has been suggested within 'late modern' theory (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1991). As a result of such arguments, traditional conceptualisations of transitions within the life course have been challenged. As Bauman (2007:3) points out, "a life so fragmented

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stimulates 'lateral' rather than 'vertical' orientations" (see Chapter 3). This suggested process of 'fragmentation' stresses the flexibility, instability and dissimilarity of the multiple pathways and meanings within ideas of transitions. Rather than introduce a new model, the contribution here will reflect on the key interrelating factors related to transitions through the life course within the biographical accounts of the participants.

A range of interconnected factors influenced and shaped participants' understandings of transitions. The first of these factors was the *spaces* in which young people are situated. Experiences of migration have been suggested as provoking key questions about how places are constructed and experienced in an increasingly globalised and transnational world (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002a, Massey and Jess, 1995). In Chapter 2, it was suggested that geography becomes ever more central as people move across spaces and forge new relationships with people and place(s). Stressing the importance of the spatialities of 'everyday' life, a geographical approach is advantageously placed to reveal the different important life spaces (Valentine, 2003).The data presented from this study have shown how the participants' connections to people are influenced through the *spaces* they inhabit (see Section 6.3), and their sense of belonging in their 'home' places is challenged by weakened(ing) social relations (see Section 7.4). The range of 'pathways' available within young people's transitions is influenced by migrations and the environments in which they live. This draws connections with Bynner's (2005) and Molgat's (2007) arguments which link notions of 'youth' to 'adulthood' transitions with changing societal structures. The participants understood to be '*living day by day*' (see Section 7.2) provided an illustration of the importance of *spaces* as they move from place-to-place to take advantage of different opportunities.

The second factor asserted to influence the participants' understandings of transitions were the *timings* of their chosen 'pathways'. Section 8.2 has demonstrated how many of the participants viewed themselves as undergoing an accelerated sense of transition. The data draw links with Worth's (2009, 2011) arguments that propose a more complex understanding of time, within transitions moving away from linear and chronological understandings. For example, Worth's (2011)

research demonstrates how by exploring individuals' biographies (their past, present and future) using a 'life map' method, different understandings of 'lived time' were articulated. In this study, participants' accounts of acceleration within life course progression as a result of migration (see Section 8.2) suggest a more complex and social interpretation of age (see Table 8.1). In the light of the 'late modern' (Bauman, 2007), the sense of stability and security constituting traditional understandings of a complete and finished 'adulthood' is being questioned (Horton and Kraftl, 2006). Individuals living in the 'late modern' are depicted as creating 'reflexive projects of the self' (Giddens, 1991) which strengthen Horton and Kraftl's (2006) ideas of 'ongoingness', as these developments are fashioned in a cyclical process (Wyn and White, 1997). The outcomes of such negotiations have been demonstrated to position young people differently within their understandings of life course(s) based on their time-experienced pathways (see Section 8.2.2).

The third factor linked with notions of transitions was the participants' biographical sense of *self identity*. Related to the proposed importance of *spaces* in shaping transitions, Beck (1992:135) argues that under the conditions of a reflexive biography, different societal spaces "*must* be individually manipulated as a 'variable'" (original emphasis). To achieve this, the assets and skills within people's biographies are arranged differently according to emerging opportunities (Beck, 1992). Chapter 4 introduced the homophone of 'roots' and 'routes' as a means of weaving together notions of identity with place and migrations (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002, Blunt and Dowling, 2006). By moving through different spaces, migrants' identity(ies) are suggested to modify in the process of becoming (Hall, 1996). The data revealed how the 'turbulence' within transitions is crucial in how the participants view themselves and their understandings of their skills (see Section 8.2.1). Their described experiences are argued to not only inform the participants' sense of self-confidence but also define and shape the 'adult' domain in which they see themselves occupying. As such, the participants' sense of *self identity* is viewed as a core component informing their understandings of transitions.

The final factor suggested as shaping transitions were the structures of *support* available to participants. The notion of *support* is argued to be a key factor when related to notions of risk within the 'late modern' (Beck, 1992). For Giddens (1991:28), "living in a 'risk society' means living with a calculative attitude to the open possibilities of action, both positive and negative, with which... we are confronted in a continuous way in our contemporary social existence". Changes in participants' social networks as a result of migration are indicated to compress the range of support structures available to them (see Section 6.3). Sharing their everyday encounters (see Section 7.3), the relative strengths of new connections within these new *spaces* are understood as being regulated by issues of trust and perceptions of temporariness. It is in this sense that the data draw links with ideas of 'unsupported transitions' (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008, Wilson *et al.*, 2008): those that carry high degrees of risk and compromise young people's choices. In being confronted with many choices in an everyday environment susceptible to change, the ways in which participants described negotiating pathways with 'positive' outcomes (see Section 8.2.1), against the odds, are suggested to contribute to their positive perception of *self* (Kornelia: *"...now I express more value for myself because I don't think I'm stupid... I still think I could do something more"*).

Côté and Bynner (2008:263) contend that proposed changes in the life course demand "an increasing role of personal agency and resource mobilization in determining the direction life takes". The results of this study illustrate that young people's experiences and understandings of transitions through the life course are heterogeneous. Furthermore, the data show the importance of experiencing diverse pathways, as differences were found in relation to pace, support and risk. It can be argued that the data reveal a range of factors influential in shaping participants' trajectories through life course(s) which contribute to key discussions present in the youth studies literature (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1: Reflecting on Young Polish Migrants' 'Youth' to 'Adulthood' Transitions

Metaphor of transition*	Experience of growing up*	Experience of growing up through migration	Evidence from data
Linear process, e.g. school to work	**Cyclical process**, e.g. school to work to school to work	Process based on negotiations of everyday *spaces*, provisions of *support* and *self identity*	See Section 7.2 for discussion of different types of Polish migrants which illustrates the importance of biography to notions of 'process' (e.g. Paweł: *"I know now Northampton is very nice and I will stay here... I went to college so I could learn..."*, Kasia: *"I didn't have the choice to go home because I had borrowed so much money to come here..."*)
Uni-dimensional, e.g. establishing work skills	**Multidimensional**, e.g. establishing livelihood, sexuality, identity	Dimensions stretch and compress based on 'pathway' choices	See Section 8.2.1 for examples indicating differences between situations in UK and Poland (e.g. Łucjan: *"I would say in Poland, I would still be living with family and I wouldn't now live on my own"*, Natalka: *"I've learnt life here by living... I can watch people... and I can, after five minutes, know if I can trust them... maybe my best friends [in Poland] don't know though..."*)
Points of arrival, e.g. first job	**Always becoming**, e.g. changing jobs, changing relationships	Involves points of arrival and departure within a reflexive project of the *self identity*	See Section 7.4 for participants' discussions of 'home' (e.g. Ania: *"We had a big conversation about whether I should go back to Poland with the little one and him staying here. But... it wouldn't be a home"*) and Section 8.2.1 for example of an attempt to 'go on' rather than 'grow up' (e.g. Melania: *"...there are times when I should be sensible and I am, but I don't want to grow up so I am trying to extend this process..."*)
Circumscribed by biological age	**Social meaning of age**	Social meanings of age(s) change based on *spaces*	See Section 8.2.2 for discussion of participants' sense of maturity not being recognised by parents (e.g. Patryk: *"I think my parents treat me the same... I can see there is this gap between us"*) and Section 6.2.2 for examples of participants' perceptions of belonging to a different generation (e.g. Bogumił: *"My parents didn't come... It's easier for me to travel..."*)
Horizontal dimension, with emphasis on contemporaries	**Vertical and horizontal dimensions**, whereby age intersects with generation	Different generational groupings based on 'pathway' negotiations (i.e. the perceived pace of transitions (*timings*), provisions of *support*, 'skills' acquired)	See Section 8.2.1 for discussion of gaining 'skills' quickly whilst being in a relatively isolated situation (e.g. Justyna: *"... moving has had a lot of challenges and... I've learned quickly"*) and Section 6.3 for examples of changing relationships with peers (e.g. Malina: *"I have lost a lot of friends. When we see each other, we have a quick drink but no more than that... I can't find myself..."*)

* Based on Wyn and White (1997:99)

As illustrated in Table 8.1, the research findings were considered in relation to five distinctions made by Wyn and White (1997) between the metaphor of transitions and young people's experiences of growing up (see Table 3.3). First, the process of migration for some participants suggests limited opportunity to develop in a cyclical process because of everyday circumstances, particularly in respect to access to support. The data detail how some participants, through the rhetoric of 'survival', experienced such changes in a more 'linear' fashion, highlighting the importance of *space* and *support* to this process. Indeed, such experiences were important to participants' understandings of *self-identity*, as many described their transitions to 'independence' as being more accelerated and unsupported than that of their peers (see Section 8.2.2).

Second, the data suggest such changes are 'multidimensional', with participants developing a range of skills within comprehensions of *self-identity* through everyday experiences. In this sense, pathway choices can be seen as 'stretching' and 'compressing' the development of specific facets of identity differently through time. For many of the research sample, migrating to the UK, often alone, prompted a number of shifts in how they interpret their sense of self. For example, by negotiating 'risky' pathways, resulting in positive outcomes, participants can be seen as developing a set of skills, understood as being different to peers in Poland (see Section 8.2.1).

Third, the data illustrate how many participants experienced changes as a result of everyday temporariness, drawing some links with Wyn and White's (1997) observations. Wyn and White (1997:99) suggest the notion of pathways adds "a kind of 'outdoor' component, conveying an image of different 'roads' to be chosen in leaving one sheltered position (compulsory schooling) and in arriving and becoming established in another (a job)". While it is suggested in Chapter 3 that the life course is understood as a social process (Hopkins and Pain, 2007, Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011, Vanderbeck, 2007), participants discussed how their senses of *self-identity* have modified through 'lived time'. Highlighting the relevance of transitions for this cohort, their accounts also tended to emphasise the importance of points of arrival (e.g. first job, first residence) and departure (e.g. leaving 'home', ending relationships etc).

Fourth, the data indicate the importance of the social meaning of age - as opposed to biological age - within their accounts. Interestingly, the meaning of age was suggested to be understood differently spatially. For instance, in Section 8.3.1, the data suggest that tensions arise in social situations where 'aged' performances are misunderstood. The data draw links with Hopkins and Pain's (2007) 'relational' discussion of age, as participants performances of 'aged identity(ies)' shift according to spatial context.

Fifth, the data suggest that participants' experiences of transitions through life course were understood in terms of both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The data illustrate how participants view themselves as belonging, vertically, to a specific generation of Polish nationals, having different opportunities in comparison to older generations (Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010) (see Section 6.2). In reference to horizontal dimensions, the data show how pathway experiences are central in differentiating between different peer groupings. While Section 7.2 illustrated different types of Polish migrants, a distinct difference revealed in the study is the centrality of a *shared* experience of migration as a primary feature of identity constructions, differentiating between those who do, and those who do not, migrate. Through their migratory experiences, some participants distinguished themselves from peers in Poland based upon the timings and support of such pathway experiences.

Overall, this section highlights the importance of understanding experiences of transitions in relation to participants' biographies. The data have illustrated how the participants' understandings of transitions have been informed by their *spaces*, their *timings*, their sense of *self-identity* and their available *support*. Indeed, the data suggest that these factors combine to form the relative pace(s), 'smoothness'/'turbulence', and risks of such changes. These factors were found to be central to how this cohort of young people understood their transitions, in this space and time, which may or may not draw connections with other young people in different settings.

8.4: Summary

The chapter opened by revealing the importance of participants' *circumstances*, *biographies* and *envisioned future(s)* to their pathway choices (Figure 8.1). The data demonstrate how participants' circumstances were informed by the spaces they lived in, which shaped the accessibility of resources and provision of opportunities available to them. The 'biographies' of the participants were also shown to influence their decision-making practices, as their experienced pathways provided them with a range of skills. As such, their migratory experiences were viewed as changing their positioning when assessing future trajectories. The planning abilities of participants was linked with their *envisioned future(s)*, as those who migrated independently experienced temporariness within their everyday living circumstances, and were reluctant to 'think' too far ahead.

The life course experiences of the participants were characterised as 'turbulent transitions'. This was understood as major changes within their biographies were made quickly as a result of migration, with scarce access to support structures and in environments that contained high levels of perceived risk. The notion of 'turbulent transitions' builds upon that of 'unsupported transitions' by considering how the spatialities of young Polish migrants shaped their understandings of transitions biographically. The migratory experiences of participants are suggested to compound and mark-out the different pathways 'chosen' by the participants and their peers in Poland, influencing the relative strengths of connections within their social networks. Indeed, it can be argued that the different criteria used by the participants to make sense of 'adulthood' further reinforce the perceived differences between themselves and their peers.

The chapter then considered how the experiences of young Polish migrants relate to contemporary conceptualisations of transitions. First, the notion of 'emerging adulthood' was reviewed in relation to the experiences of the participants, and the data show each of the five 'emerging adulthood' descriptors as being variable through space and time. By examining the biographical accounts of young Poles, the data illustrated how participants negotiated the 'openings' and 'closings' within their pathways, impacting upon their abilities to plan ahead. Four key

dimensions were revealed as influencing how participants made sense of their transitions: *space*, *timings*, *self-identity* and *support*. These factors were then considered in relation to Wyn and White's (1997) illustration of the differences between the 'metaphor of transitions' and the 'experiences of young people growing up' to outline how the participants 'grew up through migration'.

Chapter 9 summarises the key research findings presented in Chapters 6 - 8, in relation to the research project's stated aims (Section 1.3). The limitations of the research are considered and future areas of research are outlined.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1: Introduction

This thesis set out to explore the lives of young Polish migrants residing in Northamptonshire, and the impacts of migratory experiences upon transitions through the life course. The project investigated differences between participants in relation to their motivations for migration, their everyday experiences in Northamptonshire and their future trajectories. Building upon studies that have identified distinctions between post-accession migrants from the 'outside' (Eade *et al.*, 2007), this research provides new insights by exposing original social markers of difference that inform their everyday encounters with peers from 'insider' vantage points. In contrast to previous studies that understand post-accession migration as an 'empirical event', the research demonstrates how migration to the UK has influenced how this cohort of young people think about themselves. Such changes have shaped these individuals' transitions through the life course, and four factors were revealed to be critical in these processes: *spaces*, *times*, *self-identity* and *support*.

This chapter provides a 3-stage conclusion to the thesis. First, the chapter will present key findings organised by each of the research aims presented in Chapter 1 (Section 9.2). Second, a critical discussion of the limitations of the research is provided (Section 9.3). Third, the chapter highlights areas for future research (Section 9.4).

9.2: Summary of Key Findings

Prior to the accession of eight new EU member states - known as the A8 - in May 2004, the UK Government anticipated that workers from the A8 would replace unskilled migrants from outside Europe (Home Office, 2005). The post-accession migration of A8 nationals has been described as "the most important social and economic phenomena shaping the UK today" (Pollard *et al.*, 2008:7). While various sources provide insights into socio-demographic and employment data for post-accession migrants (see Section 2.4), much less information exists about motivations for migration,

the everyday experiences of post-accession migrants and the future intentions of these migrants

(Anderson *et al.*, 2006, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008, Pollard *et al.*,

2008, Sumption, 2009). This research has helped to address this gap by providing a case study of

post-accession Polish migration in Northamptonshire, using qualitative methods to explore the

experiences of young Polish migrants aged between 18 and 24 years. While the project is set in a

particular place and time, the research methodology and its findings may be applied to different

contexts and other groups of migrants. The following discussion highlights some of the key findings,

reflecting upon their value to migration studies and youth studies generally, and studies of A8

migration specifically.

9.2.1: Young Polish Migrants' Experiences of Migration in Relation to their Biographies

The first aim of the research was to explore experiences of migration in relation to young

Polish migrants' biographies (see Chapter 1). Here, the specific objective was to explore young Polish

migrants' motivations for migration, everyday encounters and future trajectories, responding to

Halfacree and Boyle's (1993:343) call for "in-depth investigation[s] of the biographies of migrants in

order to gain appreciation of the intentions implicated in the migration decision". To achieve this,

participants prepared a narrative of their experiences framed by four biographical times: *life in*

Poland, the *decision to migrate*, *life in the UK* and perceived *future pathways* (Chapter 5). In so

doing, participants were encouraged to share events or experiences that were important to them

along their chosen 'pathways' (Callender, 2011b).

Participants' motivations for migration were identified, revealing individual 'push' and 'pull'

factors. Following the rapid popularisation of 'individualisation' in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)

(Walker and Stephenson, 2010), it is argued that many nationals from CEE may understand choice

paradoxically (Abbott *et al.*, 2010, Pyšňáková and Miles, 2010, White, 2010). The data show how, at

the time of accession, Poland was seen to be a place of limited opportunity, a perception

compounded by broad socio-economic factors. It is noted that young people have been

disproportionately affected by a recent Europe-wide economic recession (Leaman and Wörsching, 2010), and recent studies in CEE show how young people are particularly at risk of unemployment (Galasińska and Kozłowska, 2009, White, 2010). In this study two-thirds of participants (n = 27) highlighted constraints to the range of opportunities available to them, both in relation to their present and to future prospects. Restrictions in the spending power of those who were employed in Poland were often cited as a key 'push' factor.

The research findings also demonstrate that while economic factors were important to participants' decision-making, their narratives of such negotiations often involved more personal motives in relation to their future aspirations within their transitions through the life course. Nearly three-quarters of participants (n = 29) described how their migration to the UK was motivated by a perception of social benefits, in addition to economic benefits. The UK was perceived to be a place of opportunity, offering both greater economic prospects and facilitating their transitions through the life course by moving out of the family home. These things were understood to be key 'pull' factors.

For some, migration was a decision taken within the family. These young people moved with their parents who were the prime decision-takers. Differences were found between these participants' accounts based upon their involvement in the decision-making processes. Those who had limited involvement framed their experiences more negatively, influencing inter-familial relations (see Section 6.2.1). In contrast, increased participation in the decision-making was found to be beneficial in how migration was assessed. It is argued that a 'children-in-families' approach would be useful in exploring children and young people's participation in migratory decisions (Bushin, 2009, Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011). The findings link well with recent discussions in youth and population studies literature that argue that the absence of children and young people's experiences within migration studies has been deeply problematic (Aitken, 2001, McKendrick, 2001, Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011, van Blerk and Ansell, 2006b)

These findings emphasise the importance of considering migrants' biographies when exploring migratory decision-making. Halfacree and Boyle (1993:334) argue that conventional approaches to migration are based upon limited conceptualisations, whereby "'migration' [is] regarded solely as an 'empirical event'; a largely preordained 'response' to the 'stimulus' of the potential for a higher 'income' at some other residential location". They assert that the focus of such conceptualisations is the environment and economic context, rather than the individual. It is noted here that many explanations of post-accession A8 migrations tend to give prominence to economic factors, providing little detail with regards to social factors. This research demonstrated how each participant identified and experienced individual stimuli for migration, revealing the centrality of both economic *and* social factors in such negotiations.

Participants' accounts of everyday life in Northamptonshire were revealed. These findings provide additional insights into post-accession Polish communities in Northamptonshire. First, most participants described their experiences of work, and accounts tended to emphasise the benefits and limitations of their individual employments. The data detail how some participants, influenced by markers such as 'stability' and 'language', 'trade-up' their work positions. While 'trading-up' their position may offer financial and social benefits, such changes may also restrict return visits to Poland to see family and friends, and/or their flexibility to react to new opportunities. Distinct differences were apparent when comparing different 'types' of Polish migrants' accounts, strongly linked to each individuals' 'priorities' (see Section 7.2).

Second, participants' perceptions of 'temporariness' were found to be central to their everyday experiences. White (2010:578) argues that "many young Poles feel reasonably secure about going abroad because they have access to social networks: friends and friends of friends who can help them come to Britain and provide some support after they arrive". This study highlights how participants' social networks are shaped by changing states of permanency. The issue of permanency in some participants' plans is argued to be at times strategic, while at other times beyond their control. Post-accession Polish migrants' unpredictable movements and strategies,

either intentionally or unintentionally, limit the relative strengths of connections established in the UK, which may consequentially locate many participants within small and close-knit support networks (Callender, 2011b). These results expand upon Eade *et al.*'s (2007) characterisations of *searchers*, who are described as adopting an apparently deliberate and adaptive migration strategy of 'intentional unpredictability', by drawing attention to differing levels of permanency in participants' lives.

Third, the theme of 'trust' was found to be important to participants' everyday accounts. Trust appears to be emerging as a key topic in a range of recent studies of contemporary Polish migrations (Gill and Bialski, 2011, Ryan *et al.*, 2008, 2009a), and Svašek (2009:129) argues that "Polish migrants tend to have ambiguous feelings about other Polish migrants". The results of this study resonate with Ryan *et al.*'s (2009:161) recurring theme of 'Poles don't help each other', and support the suggestion of a binary opposition between particular Polish networks and a more general population of Polish migrants. Indeed, while participants may encounter many newly-arriving Polish migrants in Northamptonshire, such contacts, because of issues of trust, may not be interpreted as appropriate to fulfil their support requirements. Furthermore, some participants, particularly those who migrate alone with few contacts, may experience a high degree of vulnerability in their everyday lives, as they may find themselves dependent on such ties when pursuing opportunities.

A framework was proposed to make sense of young Polish migrants' accounts of decision-making (Section 6.4). The framework draws on notions of 'fateful' (Giddens, 1991) and 'critical' (Henderson *et al.*, 2007) moments, categorising participants' accounts as being framed as: 'good outcomes', 'bad outcomes', 'good luck' or 'bad luck'. The framework can be applied in other contexts and events, providing a useful apparatus to assess 'late modern' conditions of flexibility, choice and risk (Bauman, 2007, Beck, 1992, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, Giddens, 1991). The results here emphasise how participants' migratory experiences comprised many smaller 'events' (Kraftl, 2010), each containing decisions and outcomes. The framework assists in making sense of

why and how participants framed their experiences, at this time. While the notion of 'events' is difficult to pin down in its meaning (Halfacree, 2011), the data reveal how participants did not share a complete or cohesive narrative of migration, but rather described what migration meant to them through specific moments or events in their life course. A strength of this study is that it enabled participants to express in their own words their experiences of migration, locating such events within their wider biographies.

About two-thirds of participants (n = 26) emphasised 'past' and 'present' times within their biographies, and were hesitant to contemplate 'too far' ahead. A commonality between these participants was their articulation of temporariness in their everyday worlds. A third of participants (n = 14), most of whom had resided in the UK for more than three years, however, expressed more clearly defined envisioned future pathways. Levels of permanency in participants' everyday lives were found to be a critical distinction between those who described clear future pathways, and those who did not, with fewer differences found in relation to gender or age. The results contribute to current debates in youth studies literature that explore transitions through the life course, by showing the importance of 'pace', 'support' and 'risk' within young people's transitional experiences (Section 8.2.2).

Overall, this research documents and highlights the complexities of the migratory decision-making process for young Polish migrants. The data presented in Chapters 6 – 8 detailed how young Polish migrants often make sense of their experiences, in the present, in relation to past experiences and future trajectories. While the data support, in part, arguments about the centrality of economic influences in migration decisions, the findings show how young Polish migrants articulate their decisions as being more complex, involving social and cultural dimensions, providing a new vantage point to understand A8 migrations. The findings also emphasise the importance of future imaginings when exploring how participants rationalise their experiences. Furthermore, the research builds upon Eade *et al*.'s (2007) arguments, as, from the 'outside', participants' lives may be perceived as intentionally unpredictable in shifting 'late modern' contexts (Walker and Stephenson, 2010), but

from the 'inside', the data demonstrate how their narratives consist of both foreseen and unforeseen factors.

9.2.2: Difference and Diversity between Young Polish Migrants

The second aim of the project was to examine difference and diversity amongst young Polish migrants in Northamptonshire, with a specific objective being to identify and critically reflect upon social markers of difference between Polish migrants. Explanations of contemporary Polish migrations have focussed upon economic disparities between the UK and Poland (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008, House of Commons, 2008), and Eade *et al.*'s (2007) typology of Polish migrants (see Table 2.3) provides a useful starting point when thinking about different strategies employed by contemporary Polish migrants. Little evidence, however, is provided by Eade *et al.* (2007) about how Polish migrants themselves understand differences between one another. This research explored how the participants themselves understood social markers of difference, providing further insights into intra-ethnic dynamics within Polish migrant communities.

Four factors were used by participants to assess such differences: 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language'. Participants described each of these factors as ranging between two dichotomous points (Figure 7.1). 'Priorities' was articulated as a tension between economic and social benefits in migrants' lifestyle choices. 'Planning' referred to migrants' biographical focus, described as either present or future. 'Stability' was related to the perceived temporariness of each migrant's circumstances. 'Language' referred to the perceived ability and/or effort in developing English-speaking skills, which was linked with the theme of trust (Section 7.2). These results are significant to research on A8 migrations, as they expose important factors in encounters between Polish migrants. While the framework was found to be useful in outlining how this cohort understood differences between Polish migrants, it may benefit from further development in different contexts and with different groups of Polish migrants (see Section 9.4.1).

Identified social markers of difference were considered in relation to the participants'

biographies as a whole, and 5 types of Polish migrant were evident: '*You go there, save some money,*

and go back' (Type 1), '*I might not go back*' (Type 2), '*I live day by day*' (Type 3), '*If I have money, I*

spend money' (Type 4), and '*I didn't have the choice to go home*' (Type 5). It is stressed, however,

that distinctions between participants were made using accounts fixed by space and time, and, as

such, these categorisations are subject to change. Some links with Eade *et al.*'s (2007) typology of

Polish migrants were acknowledged, but the findings revealed additional types of post-accession

Polish migrant. Furthermore, the results extend Ní Laoire *et al.*'s (2011) research findings that stress

the importance of a shared migrant experience, by identifying key factors within migratory

experiences that distinguish between different types of migrant.

An important research finding was that participants placed less emphasis on traditional

social markers of difference, such as gender and age, and indeed less diversity was found when

exploring the data using these markers. The results resonate with Ní Laoire *et al*. (2011) arguments

that indicate that shared nationality and/or experiences of migration are central in forming

friendships, resulting in mixed-age, mixed-gender groups (Callender, 2011). While I do not suggest

that gender and age are not important as discriminatory markers, the results show other, more

important, discriminators such as 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language' (see Section 7.2).

Overall, this study revealed how young Polish migrants may seemingly appear from the

'outside' to be "in a zone of sameness" (Tucker, 2003:114), but from the 'inside' a number of subtle

differences are apparent. Such differences were derived from perceptions of other Polish migrants'

biographies, through their past motivations for migration, present everyday circumstances and

future aspirations. The findings here support Halfacree and Boyle's (1993) case for a biographical

approach in migration studies, especially when attempting to make sense of intra-community

relations within migrant populations.

9.2.3: The Impacts of Migration on Participants' Everyday Lives and Transitions through the Life Course

The third aim of the research was to investigate the impacts of migration on participants' everyday lives and experiences of transitions through the life course. The particular research objective here, with respect to the age profile of the sample, was to explore intersections between migration and transitions through the life course. 'Youth' transitions are heterogeneous, and it is suggested in late modernity that young people must reflexively construct their own biographies and navigate their chosen 'pathways' in response to shifting odds and opportunities (Beck, 1992, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, Giddens, 1991, Wyn and White, 1997). The results show the importance of differing timetables of transitions (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008) and illustrate connections between migration and young people's positioning within transitions through the life course. Those who did not discuss such connections had either been in the UK a short period, or had migrated as part of a family move from Poland.

Three dimensions were identified within the data as influencing participants' 'pathway' choices: 'circumstances' (determined by political, economic, cultural and social resources), 'biographies' (shaped by their experienced past, lived present and planned future) and 'envisioned futures' (informed by their abilities and perception of the stability of the route, and regulated by notions of 'late modern' risks). Of participants who drew connections between migratory experiences and transitions through the life course (n = 34), around four-fifths of participants (n = 28) viewed their migratory experiences as accelerating their sense of transitions, while a fifth (n = 6) of participants indicated that their experiences did not resonate with this compressed sense of transition. A key distinguishing factor between these participants were the support structures available to them when migrating, with the former usually consisting of those who migrated by themselves and the latter having migrated with family members. The term 'turbulent transitions' was used to describe major changes within biographies as a result of migration, changes that are made quickly with scarce access to support structures and in environments that contain high

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degrees of risk. The idea of 'turbulent transitions' expands on notions of 'unsupported transitions' (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2008, Jones, 2009, Wilson *et al.*, 2008) by considering the effects of spatial changes. Participants' 'transitional' experiences were found to be related to a weakening of friendships with peers prior to migration, with participants seeing themselves as now occupying a different life course space, having gained a number of skills and competencies.

Within social-scientific work with young people, much attention has been given to a proposed new developmental stage: 'emerging adulthood' (Arnett, 2004). This concept was found to be useful when interpreting participants' accounts, but a number of inconsistencies were documented in relation to its five defining characteristics: an *age of identity explorations*, an *age of instabilities*, an *age of being in-between*, a *self-focused age* and an *age of possibilities*. Four factors were found to have influenced participants' transitions through the life course: *spaces*, *times*, *self identity* and *support*. First, the data show how the *spaces* participants inhabit inform the connections within their social networks to (groups of) individuals. Participants also suggested that different spaces determine the range of opportunities available, stressing the importance for these young people of being in the 'right' place at the 'right' time. Second, many participants suggested that the *timings* of their transitions through the life course have accelerated as a result of migration. Third, participants' pathways experiences have shaped their sense of *self identity* (Giddens, 1991), and they see themselves now as having a better set of skills. Fourth, *support* structures were identified as crucial to participants' pathway experiences.

A majority of participants identified connections between their experiences of migration and transitions through the life course. Issues of temporariness and trust were found to result in challenging everyday events, but participants interpreted these experiences as beneficial to their own sense of progression. The pathway experiences for many of this cohort draw links with accelerated and unsupported notions of transitions, yet also contain significant risk. Such experiences were termed as being 'turbulent transitions' (see Section 8.2.2).

9.2.4: Summary of Key Findings

This thesis contains a range of significant findings, contributing to studies of A8 migration and youth. The research findings are summarised below:

- Young Polish migrants' motivations for migration consist of more than economic rationales. The research demonstrates the importance of 'biographies' to migration studies, as participants rationalised migratory decision-making using past experiences and future aspirations.

- Migration to the UK was viewed by many participants as a means of leaving the parental home, a key aspect within their 'transitions to independence'. 'Pathway' experiences were found to be influential to participants' social networks, as they viewed themselves as being different - having dissimilar 'priorities' and skills - to peers.

- Traditional social markers - such as gender or age - were found to be of less importance as participants placed greater emphasis on shared experiences of migration. Factors such as 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language' were critically assessed when encountering other post-accession migrants, informing the relative strengths of ties within their social networks.

- 'Temporariness' was found to be a crucial factor within participants' everyday lives. Participants' social networks were shaped by changing states of permanency, influencing their access to support structures. Levels of permanency also influenced articulations of future 'pathways', as those experiencing high degrees of temporariness were hesitant to plan 'too-far' ahead.

- 'Trust' was indicated to be an everyday concern, and participants were found to experience vulnerability, as they rely upon relatively untrustworthy contacts when pursuing opportunities. Participants expressed being vulnerable to both the general population of

Polish migrants - who were seen as dangerous - as well as to known contacts - who may take advantage of their accessible resources (e.g. accommodation, contacts, money etc).

- Participants described feelings of being in-between 'homes' while residing in the UK, often articulating such views in relation to issues of temporariness. For those (re)creating a home place in the UK, ownership and privacy were cited as important factors.

- Three dimensions were found to be important to participants' 'pathway' decision-making: 'circumstances' (determined by political, economic, cultural and social resources), 'biographies' (shaped by their experienced past, lived present and planned future) and 'envisioned futures' (informed by their abilities and perception of the stability of the route, and regulated by notions of 'late modern' risks).

- A majority of participants identified connections between their experiences of migration and transitions through the life course. Four factors were found to have influenced participants' transitions through the life course: *spaces*, *times*, *self identity* and *support*. These factors combine to form the relative pace(s), 'smoothness'/'turbulence', and risks of such changes. The term 'turbulent transitions' was used to describe major changes within biographies as a result of migration, changes that are made quickly with scarce access to support structures and in environments that contain high degrees of risk.

9.3: Limitations of the Research

This project explored difference and diversity in the lives of young Polish migrants in Northamptonshire, outlining motivations for migration, everyday experiences and envisioned futures. There are, however, some limitations evident, which link with some interesting areas for future research.

First, this research investigated the experiences of 40 young Polish migrants and, as such, the results are not representative of all young Polish migrants. It should be noted that the sample favoured migrants who had resided in the UK for over 2 years, and those aged older than 21 years.

The thesis drew attention to the importance of migrants' biographies in shaping how participants account their experiences, often making sense of migratory 'events' in relation to what they have experienced, or indeed what experiences may lay ahead. Future research that reveals the experiences of those younger than 21 years, and those who have resided in the UK for less than 2 years, may provide new insights with respect to diversity. The insights provided in this thesis, however, provide a useful contribution to A8 migration studies, by documenting participants' individual responses to 'push' and 'pull' factors within their migratory decision-making.

Second, the findings of the research stress the importance of temporariness and insecurity in participants' everyday lives. This thesis provides a commentary upon participants' lives set in a particular time and space. Furthermore, participants' accounts of their experiences were also constructed and performed specifically in relation to the researcher's 'positionality' (see Section 5.5.2). This thesis, by itself, does not provide a comprehensive overview of how participants' biographical constructions may change over time, as their opportunities and plans change. While the research expands upon existing studies of A8 migrations, illuminating a range of factors critical to the lives of post-accession Polish migrants, research that explores how such accounts change over time may provide interesting data in relation to how migrants interpret particular events in the future (see Section 9.4.2). Such points link with what Garapich (2008:736) views as the one of the greatest challenges of researching migration: the "race against a fast-moving reality".

9.4: Areas for Further Study

As the thesis developed, a range of issues became evident that would benefit from further consideration and these points are addressed in this section.

9.4.1: Social Markers of Difference

The research uncovered four factors which were used by participants to distinguish between ostensibly-similar newly-arriving Polish migrants. These markers allow the identification of five differing types of Polish migrant, extending Eade *et al*.'s (2007) typology of Polish migrants. It can be

argued that these distinguishing social markers of difference begin to tease out important shared experiences of migration, found to be crucial in recent migration studies (Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011). There is considerable scope for further research to investigate how the importance of such markers changes over time, and whether additional social markers of difference exist. Also, it is important to note that participants shared their accounts while living in Northamptonshire, and these experiences may differ from those residing elsewhere. Furthermore, a more balanced sample, with respect to 'insider' markers of difference, may provide additional insights into how such types of migrant interact, adding to understandings of intra-community relations. The findings demonstrate the importance of biographical studies to migration, as an individual's positioning within the framework is closely aligned with opportunities and lifestyles that 'lie ahead', rather than what is occupied at present.

9.4.2: (Re)Interpretations of Experiences through Time

Longitudinal research would extend the research findings presented in this thesis by highlighting how participants' identity(ies) shift over time. For instance, it was noted how through the process of 'trading up' work positions (Burrell, 2010), participants' new positions may restrict the flexibility they had to engage in transnational movements (Figure 7.1). Longitudinal studies that engage with participants at different stages during their migratory journeys may highlight the importance of differing interpretations of time: 'times of insecurity', 'times of vulnerability', 'times of hope', 'times of success' etc. In so doing, a more complete perspective through which to understand migratory experiences, and migrants' biographies may be obtained.

9.4.3: Everyday Spatialities

Participants described the spaces they occupied as consisting of a number of geographically-separated and 'demarcated' 'Polish spaces' (e.g. 'the Polish Church', 'Polish shops', 'Polish Club', specific residences etc), drawing links with Lynch's (1960) discussion of 'nodes'. Lynch (1960:72)

distinguishes between two differing types of 'node': "junctions of paths" and "thematic concentrations". Further research would be beneficial in providing a fuller understanding of contemporary Polish migrants' uses of spaces, which may reveal a hidden cartography of Polish places within Northamptonshire. Such research would expose how migrants respond to different spaces, organising their 'performances of self' in differing settings (Goffman, 1959). Goffman's (1959) theorisations of 'make-work' may be useful in the comprehension of such research, as individuals organise and transmit specific markers to best negotiate particular places.

9.4.4: Intersections between Migratory Experiences and Youth Transitions through the Life Course

The project revealed intersections between experiences of migration and transitions through the life course (see Chapter 8). The term 'turbulent transitions' is used to describe shifts within biographies as a result of migration, made quickly with scarce access to support structures and in environments that contain high degrees of risk. While this research draws attention to the relative 'smoothness' of transitions through the life course, the use of such metaphors indicates differing extents of planning by and agency of those negotiating such changes. In the context of participants' accounts, such metaphors are appropriate as all participants discussed, to differing levels, some form of planning and agency in their experiences of 'pathways' (Wyn and White, 1997). Further research, however, may identify, what could be termed 'dislocations' within notions of transitions, whereby agency and planning is not evident in such negotiations in transitions through the life course.

Additionally, while Ní Laoire *et al.*'s (2011) research draws attention the lack of research into children's experiences of migration (see also Bushin, 2007, 2009), it is also recognised that little literature exists detailing the connections between migratory experiences and notions of transitions through the life course. This research considers such intersections and illustrates how many participants framed their experiences of migration as being directly linked with their self-identity, indicating the value of exploring such links within migration studies.

9.5: Conclusion

This thesis has explored the lives of young Polish migrants residing in Northamptonshire. The thesis addresses a significant gap in the literature by illuminating the everyday experiences of young Polish migrants. Participants' migratory events have been shown to influence their senses of self-identity, which are positioned within their wider transitions through the life course. This project demonstrates the importance of exploring 'biographies' to identify factors that are critical to the decision to migrate. Such an approach revealed complex reasons that go beyond economic accounts. The research highlights a realm of diversity that exists within post-accession Polish migrant communities, illustrating the importance of temporariness, trust and language to everyday encounters. A host of social markers of differences were detailed - 'priorities', 'planning', 'stability' and 'language' - which allow the identification of unforeseen social groupings. It can be argued that these factors provide alternative avenues of enquiry within A8 migration research, and begin to identify key issues within 'shared experiences of migration' that are seen to be significant to social networks (Ní Laoire *et al.*, 2011). Overall, this thesis calls for a more sensitive understanding of A8 migration, which can only be achieved by exploring the biographies, experiences and encounters of post-accession migrants.

Understanding Polish Migration Research Pack (English)

Understanding Polish Migration

Understanding Polish Migration Exercise

Introduction:

Firstly, please let me extend my thanks for considering taking part in this research project. Secondly, the exercise is where you are able to tell *your* story of migration, to share the experiences that are most important to *you* and reflect on how these memories have changed *you* as an individual. To help answer understand the exercise, a series of frequently asked questions have been listed below. Any further questions will be gratefully received and answered through the contact details on the Information Sheet.

Frequently asked questions:

What is the story supposed to be about?
The story is structured with a journey in mind, starting in Poland before migrating and ending with you ambitions for the future. What the project is interested in are the encounters where significant events have taken place and how this has affected you.

How does it work?
The exercise works in two clear stages. The first is preparation for your story; this is where you think about what events have taken place and how they have affected you. To help you do this, a planning sheet and guidance sheet are attached to aid you in selecting the experiences that have meant the most to you. The second is the exercise itself; this is where we meet in a pre-arranged location and you tell your story.

Do I tell the story in Polish or English?
The decision about which language to tell your story in is up to you. However, if you decide to tell your story in Polish, an interpreter will be present to translate from Polish to English.

How long does it need to be?
No pre-determined time has been set for each story, as some will have more to say than others.

Where is the story told?
The location selected where the story will be told is at the suggestion of the participant. The location is needed to be relatively quiet and private. It must ensure the safety of both participant and researcher. For instance, a local coffee shop would be ideal.

How do I take part?
To take part, please contact me through the details provided on the Information Sheet. A suitable time and place will be agreed upon to facilitate your story.

To summarise, I would once again thank you for reading this and consider taking part. There are no expectations of what is required in each story as they are individually unique, each contribution will be appreciated. Every individual's viewpoint will be valuable and help towards making sense of community relations in Northamptonshire. I sincerely hope that you will take part and look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Exercise Overview

1. Life in Poland	2. The Decision to Migrate
The story begins with a look back to the reasons that inspired migration. • What was your life like before you decision to move? • Try to describe the places where you lived. • For you, where was home? Is this home now? • What kind of person were you when you were living in Poland?	The story then moves onto the decision to migrate. • What was important in the decision to migrate to the UK? • Why did you ultimately decide to migrate? • How did you select where you were going to? • Did you stop in any significant places before arriving in the UK/Northamptonshire?
3. Life in England	**4. The Future**
This part of your story is about your life now. • What is happening in your life now? (Family, friends, employment, education, social life etc) • How has migration changed you? • For you, how do you understand home? • What are the positive and negative features of migration? • How would you describe the Polish community?	The final section looks at your intentions for the future. • Where do you consider yourself and your home to be in 2 years time? • Where do you consider yourself and your home to be in 5 years time? • Do you think you will stay in the UK or return to Poland? • Has migration changed your view of the world?

Exercise Planning (Notes)

1. Life in Poland	2.The Decision to Migrate
3. Life in England	4. The Future

Appendix B

Understanding Polish Migration Research Pack (Polish)

Zrozumienie Polska Ćwiczenia Migracji

Zrozumienie Polska Ćwiczenia Migracji

Wstęp:

Po pierwsze, proszę dać mi rozszerzyć moje podziękowania dla biorąc udział w projekcie badawczym. Po drugie, ćwiczenie jest wykonywanie gdy jesteś w stanie opowiedzieć swoją historię migracji, w celu wymiany doświadczeń, które są dla Ciebie najważniejsze i zastanowić się nad tym, jak te wspomnienia uległy zmianie Ciebie jako osoby. Aby pomóc zrozumieć odpowiedź wykonywania szereg najczęściej zadawane pytania zostały wymienione poniżej. Wszelkie dodatkowe pytania będą z wdzięcznością i otrzymał odpowiedź na dane kontaktowe na arkusz informacyjny.

Często zadawane pytania:

Co to jest historia powinna wynosić około?
Ćwiczenie jest o tym, co doświadczenia migracji były dla młodych polskich (im) imigrantów zamieszkujących obecnie w Northamptonshire. Fabuła jest zorganizowany w podróż na uwadze, rozpoczynając w Polsce przed migracji i kończący się z Tobą ambicje na przyszłość. Jaki projekt jest zainteresowany są spotkania, gdzie znaczące wydarzenia miały miejsce i jak miało to miało wpływ na Ciebie.

Jak to działa?
Ćwiczenie jako wykonywanie robót w dwóch etapach. Pierwszy z nich to przygotowanie na swoją historię, to jest, gdy myślisz o wydarzeniach, jakie miały miejsce i jak mają one wpływu na Ciebie. Aby pomóc tym, planowania i wskazówki arkusz blachy są załączone do pomocy Państwu w wyborze doświadczeń, które oznaczało najbardziej dla Ciebie. Proszę nie myśleć, musisz odpowiedzieć na wszystkie zadane pytania w sprawie wytycznych arkusz. Są tam, aby pomóc sądzisz o swoją historię. Drugi jest wykonywać samodzielnie, jest to, gdzie spotkają się w uprzednio przygotowane lokalizacji i powiedzieć swoją historię.

Czy mogę opowiedzieć historię w języku polskim lub angielskim?
Decyzję o których język, aby opowiedzieć swoją historię w to zależy od ciebie. Jednakże, jeśli zdecydujesz się powiedzieć swoją historię w języku polskim, tłumacza będą zobowiązani do przetłumaczenia z polskiego na angielski. Wynika to z ograniczeń naukowca mówienia i rozumienia Polski. Z zawiadomienia, tłumacz może zostać udzielone na żądanie bez żadnych opłat.

Ile czasu potrzeba, aby być?
Nr wstępnie ustalony czas został ustalony dla każdej opowieści, jak niektórzy będą mieli więcej do powiedzenia niż inni.

Gdzie jest historia powiedział?
Wybranych lokalizacji, gdzie będzie historię opowiedział się na wniosek uczestnika. Lokalizacji konieczne jest stosunkowo cichy i prywatnych. Musi ona zapewnić bezpieczeństwo zarówno uczestników i naukowca. Na przykład, lokalnej kawiarni byłby idealny.

Jak wziąć udział?
Aby wziąć udział, prosimy o kontakt ze mną poprzez szczegółowe informacje na temat informacyjny. Odpowiedni czas i miejsce zostaną uzgodnione w celu ułatwienia swoją historię.

Podsumowując, chciałbym jeszcze raz dziękuję za czytanie tego i uważają uczestniczy. Nie ma żadnych oczekiwań co jest potrzebne w każdej opowieści są unikatowe indywidualnie, każdy wkład będzie doceniany. Każdego indywidualnego punktu widzenia będzie cenny i pomóc w kierunku tworzenia poczucia wspólnoty w stosunkach Northamptonshire. I szczerze nadzieję, że wezmą udział i czekamy na Ciebie spotkanie w niedalekiej przyszłości.

Dziękuję.

Ćwiczenie Orientacji

1. Życie w Polsce	**2. Podjęcie decyzji o migracji**
Historia zaczyna się spojrzeć na powody, które zainspirowały migracji. • Jakie było Twoje życie jak przed decyzję o przeprowadzce? • Staraj się opisać miejsca, gdzie mieszkał. • Dla Ciebie, gdzie w domu? Czt to do domu? • Jakie osoby były, gdy żyjesz w Polska?	Historia następnie przechodzi na decyzję o migracji. • Co było ważne w podejmowaniu decyzji o migracji do Wielkiej Brytanii? • Dlaczego w końcu decydują się na migrację? • W jaki sposób wybrać, gdzie się będzie? • Czy zatrzymać się w znaczący miejsca przed przybyciem do UK / Northampton?
3. Życie w Anglii	**4. Przyszłość**
Ta część to opowieść o swoim życiu teraz. • Co się dzieje w twoim życiu teraz? (Rodzina, znajomi, zatrudnienia, edukacji, spraw społecznych etc życia) • W jaki sposób migracji zmienił się? • Dla Ciebie, jak można zrozumieć domu? • Jakie są pozytywne i negatywne cechy migracji? • Jak opisałbyś polskiej społeczności?	W ostatniej części patrzy na swoich zamiarów na przyszłość. • Jeżeli uważa Pan za siebie i swój dom, aby być w 2 lata? • Jeżeli uważa Pan za siebie i swój dom, aby być za 5 lat? • Czy myślisz, że pobyt w Wielkiej Brytanii lub powrotu do Polska? • Czy migracji zmienił swoje spojrzenie na świat?

Ćwiczenie Orientacji (Uwagi)

1. Życie w Polsce	2. Podjęcie decyzji o migracji
3. Życie w Anglii	**4. Przyszłość**

Appendix C

Case Study Interview Topic Guide

Topic Guide for Case Study Interviews

Intro

Thank you first for sharing your story with me and agreeing to meet again. I've met a number of migrants and I have really enjoyed getting to know more about migration and you all as people. A number of big themes have come out of the research and I would like to ask you a few questions about these themes today. First we will discuss some parts of your narrative and then we will discuss some big themes from the analysis. It is fine to disagree with any points raised and I am interested in what your thoughts are in relation to the key themes.

Original Interview

-

-

-

-

Themed Questions

TRANSITIONS: A common theme in the interviews is the impact moving to the UK has had on 'growing up'.

- When thinking about the person you are now, how different do you think you would be if you hadn't migrated but stayed in Poland?
- How do family/friends view you in Poland? Do they recognise this any changes?
- Many people have spoken about the 'independence' they now have in the UK, during the times when you have needed help, when things are difficult, who were the most important people in your experiences that have supported you?

LANGUAGE: The ability to speak English has been suggested to be extremely important.

- How important to you is speaking English?
- How much influence do you think language proficiency has on how other people think of you?
- What do you think the main differences are between the people that do actively learn English and speak English and those that do not?

EVERYDAYNESS: There have been some really interesting insights into Polish migrants' everyday lives.

- It is suggested that feeling a part of a Polish community here is challenging. Do you feel that you can identify with Polish people that have been here for a number of years?
- How do you feel the Poles that have been here for a number of years perceive you?
- With Poles that are 'newly arriving', some participants have felt it is difficult to build relationships because of trust issues, what things help to distinguish who you can or cannot trust?

- Many participants have discussed how things seem to change all the time, that there is not much stability, what do you think about this?
- Some participants have described a sense of distance between themselves and people from English communities, do you agree with this, and if so, why do you think this is the case?

HOME: A lot of interesting comments were made by participants about their feelings towards home.

- When you think of home, what do you think of?
- When thinking about 'home', a clear sense of family orientation is present in people's responses, but in your opinion, but if your family remain in Poland, do you feel you can replicate the feelings of home here?
- A lot of people have had a number of places where they have had accommodation in the UK, in comparison to the suggested idea of a 'one place' home in Poland, do you think these experiences will shape how you go about finding your home?

Appendix D

Consent Form (English)

Consent Form

Title of Project: The lives of young Polish migrants residing in Northamptonshire

Name of Researcher: Matthew Callender

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated 14/10/08 (Version A) for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at anytime, without giving reason, without legal rights being affected.

☐

I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Researcher   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Appendix E

Consent Form (Polish)

Zgoda na wzięcie udziału w badaniu

Temat pracy doktoranckiej: "Zycie młodych polskich migrantów w hrabstwie Northamptonshire"

Doktorant: Matthew Callender

Proszę o podpisanie inicjałami pod każdym zdaniem

Potwierdzam, że przeczytałam/em i zapoznałem/am się z arkuszem informacyjnym z dnia 14.10.2008 (Wersja A) dotyczącym powyższego badania.

Rozumiem, że moje uczestnictwo w tym projekcie jest dobrowolne i mam prawo wycofać się z niego w każdym momencie, bez podawania konkretnej przyczyny.

Zgadzam sie wziąć udział w powyższym badaniu.

Imię i nazwisko uczestnika   Data   Podpis

_____   _____   _____

Doktorant   Data   Podpis

_____   _____   _____

Appendix F

Information Sheet (English)

Title of Research:
'*The Lives of Young Polish Migrants Residing in Northamptonshire*'

Invitation Paragraph:

You are being invited to take part in a research project, taking part will be crucial to understanding and representing Polish migrants' experiences of migration. Before you decide whether to take part in the research, it is important for you to understand why the research is taking place and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If there are any queries, please do not hesitate in making contact even if it is just for more information or peace of mind. Please take time to decide if you wish to be involved.

Thank you for reading this.

Purpose of the Research:

On May 1st 2004, the so-called 'A8'[42] joined the European Union (EU). At the time of enlargement, the UK, Ireland and Sweden allowed relatively free employment and movement rights of nationals of the A8. Migration to the UK of A8 nationals has been described as the most important social and economic phenomena shaping the UK today, yet despite the considerable implications for the distribution of funds on local and national levels, little is known about the scale or nature of this migration flow. The motivations, experiences and intentions of East European migrants' living in the UK are not well documented or researched.

Northamptonshire has been the destination for a significant proportion of A8 migrants, with the county approving the second highest number of migrants (14,255) with the Worker Registration Scheme[43] (WRS). The highest proportion of applications to the WRS between May 2004 and March 2008 were Polish Nationals (67%), followed by Slovakian (10%) and Lithuanian (9%). Within the county, significant locations for these A8 migrants to work are Northampton (14,255), Corby (2,330) and Wellingborough (1,790). With an estimated 43% of newly arrived A8 migrants being aged 18 to 24, the research will focus on this particular age range. Investigating Polish experiences of migration, focussing on implications for their identity and interpretations of 'home', will provide new insights into notions of Community Cohesion and the barriers that hinder integration.

The Department for Communities and Local Government announced £50 million funding over three years to support community cohesion. However, without effective consultation with newly-arrived migrants, the Government's approach to current migration trends could be interpreted as working *on* A8 migrants rather than *with* A8 migrants to force community cohesion. With this 'deficit' in mind: this research will attempt to open up new evidence that will have the potential to infuse and enrich current thinking about Community Cohesion.

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[42] 'A8 migrants' refers to nationals of Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.
[43] A8 nationals that intend to work in the UK for a period of 1 month or more are required to register with the WRS.

Why have I been chosen?

The participants for the research were chosen at random in places with a perceived higher probability of meeting young Polish migrants. Participants will also be recruited through 'snowballing' the research sample. Three study sites within Northamptonshire (Northampton, Corby & Wellingborough) have been selected based on a high number of Poles completing WRS and National Insurance Applications.

Do I have to take part?

It is your decision whether or not to take part in the project. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. Importantly though, at any time during the research you can decide to withdraw, without necessarily giving a reason, at any time. The research is based on *collaboration* rather than exploitation, it is vital that participants of the research are comfortable sharing their experiences.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The first stage of the research will be the production of your 'story' of migration. An opportunity will be provided to share your experiences, encounters and motivations that underpin your decision to migrate between Poland and the UK. The exercise will culminate with your future ambitions being discussed having had those experiences. A more detailed account of the practicalities of this exercise is provided in preparation of your story.

The second stage of the research involves a series of case studies examining different aspects of the participants' story by means of in-depth interviews. The participants selected for inclusion in this stage will be selected based on difference and diversity found between participants' stories. The case studies will culminate with a photo tour of the participants' locale with images being captured where key experiences have taken place.

Will taking part be kept confidential?

During the course of the research the names of the participants will remain strictly confidential. No individual will be able to be identified when the research is published.

It will be the position of the researcher to report illegal activities to the appropriate people.

What will happen to the information shared during the research project?

All information gathered will be available to myself and Professor Hugh Matthews (Director of Studies). For every other individual, the information will be data coded to maintain the anonymity of participants.
A copy of the final thesis will be given to The University of Northampton and the British Library where it can be accessed in its entirety. A summary of the results will be made available to participants through the associated research website. A further copy of the research will be presented to supporting institutions.

The intended finish date of the project will be 19th May 2011. The thesis in its entirety will be available following the examination of the work by peers.

Who is funding the research?

The project is part of my research degree programme and will form the basis for a qualification of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Human Geography. The research is being funded through a bursary from The University of Northampton and the Local Area Agreement (LAA) in Northamptonshire.

Contact Details for Further Information:

My e-mail address is: matthew.callender@northampton.ac.uk

Or alternatively you can write to me at the following address:

Matthew Callender
The Knowledge Exchange
The University of Northampton
Boughton Green Road
Northampton
NN2 7AL

Appendix G

Information Sheet (Polish)

Temat pracy doktoranckiej:
"Zycie młodych polskich migrantów w hrabstwie Northamptonshire"

Paragraf pierwszy zaproszenie:

Zostales zaproszony do wziecia udzialu w pracy doktoranckiej, ktora posluzy jako istotne ogniwo w zrozumieniu i przedstawieniu przezyc polskich migrantow w Wielkiej Brytanii. Zanim zadecydujesz czy chcial/chcialabys wziac udzial w tym badaniu, bardzo istotna rzecza bedzie zrozumienie dlaczego akurat ten temat pracy doktoranckiej zostal wybrany oraz dlaczego jest realizowany. Prosze zapoznaj sie z ponizszymi informacjami ostroznie, a jezeli masz ochote porozmawiaj na ten temat z innymi. Jezeli masz jakiekolwiek watpliwosci?, nie wachaj sie skontaktowac sie z piszacym ta prace nawet jezeli bedzie to jakas z pozoru blacha sprawa. Zadecyduj na spokojnie czy chcial/chcialabys byc czescia tego projetktu.

Dziekuje za przeczytanie tego.

Cel pracy doktoranckiej:

Pierwszego Maja 2004 tak zwane 'A8' dolaczylo do Uni Europejskiej (UE). W momencie rozszerzenia wspolnoty Wielka Brytania, Irlandia oraz Szwecja pozwolily na zatrudnienie i przeniesienie praw? Narodowosciowych z 'A8'. Migracja nowych czlonkow UE do Wielkiej Brytanii zostala opisana jako spolecznie najwazniejszy a zarazem ekonomiczny fenomen ktory nadal ksztalt dzisiejszej Wielkiej Brytanii, pomimo znacznego zamieszania z przeznaczeniem funduszy na lokalne i narodowe potrzeby?, nadal malo jest wiadomo o naturze migracyjnego przeplywu. Motywacje, doswiadczenia i intencje wschodnio-europejskich migrantow zyjacych w Wielkiej Brytanii nie sa wystarczajaca udokumntowane i zbadane.

Northamptonshire stalo sie miejscem docelowym dla duzej czesci nowych czlonkow UE, gdzie county potwierdzil druga co do wielkosci najwieksza liczba migrantow (14,255) w UK podajac sie przy tym na 'Worker Registration Scheme'(WRS). Najwyzsza proporcja aplikantow do WRS miedzy Majem 2004 a Marcem 2008 stanowili Polacy (67%), a za nimi Slowacy (10%) i Litwini (9%). W regionie znaczaca ilosc imigrantow zamieszkuje wlasnie Northampton (14,255), Corby (2,330) i Wellingborough (1,790). W przyblizeniu okolo 43% zamieszkalych migrantow A8 jest w wieku od 18 do 24, dlatego tez obecne badanie skupi sie na osobach z tego konkretnego przedzialu wiekowego. Analiza zjawiska polskiej emigracji po 2004 roku, jej wplyw na tozsamosc i interpretacje pojecia 'dom', pozwoli lepiej zrozumiec relacje wewnatrz spolecznosci emigrantów i czynniki, które utrudniaja proces integracji.

Departament zajmujacy sie spolecznoscia i Lokalny Rzad (The department for Communities and Local Government) oglosily £50 milionowy fundusz na nastepne 3 lata, ktory bedzie mial na celu wesprzec przynaleznosc spoleczna. Jednakze, bez skutecznej komunikacji z nowo osiedlonymi migrantami, rzadowy projekt dla obecnej migracji moglby byc zinterpretowany jak pracowanie nad migrantami A8, a nie pracowanie razem z nimi zeby razem wspomoc przynaleznosc spoleczena. Z tym 'deficytem' w glowie, obecna praca doktorancka sprobuje znalezc nowe argumenty, ktore beda mialy potencjal do natchnienia i wzbogacenia obecnego myslenia o przynaleznosci spolecznej.

Czemu zostalem wybrany?

Do tej pracy doktoranckiej uczestnicy zostali wybrani w przypadkowych miejscach, gdzie prawdopodobienstwo ich spotkania bylo wieksze. Uczestnicy beda rowniez wybrani poprzez tak zwany "snowballing" -czyli spotykanie znajomych osob ktore juz uczestnicza w projekcie. Trzy miejsca w Northamptonshire (Northampton, Corby & Wellingborough) zostaly wybrane ze wzgledu na duza ilosc Polakow unbiegajacych sie o WRS i Numer ubezpieczenia (National Insurance Number).

Czy musze uczestniczyc w badaniu?

Decyzja o uczestniczeniu w tym badaniu nalezy tylko i wylacznie do Ciebie. Jezeli zdecydujesz sie wziac w nim udzial, zostaniesz poproszony o podpisanie formularza wyrazajacego zgode na twoje uczestnictwo w badaniu. Powinienes pamietac, ze w kazdym momencie badania mozesz sie wycofac i zrezygnnowac z uczestniczenia w dalszym badaniu, bez podawania konkretnego powodu. To badanie oparte jest glownie na wspolpracy, a nie na wykorzystaniu kogokolwiek, dlatego bardzo waznym czynnikiem jest to, ze uczestnicy beda sie czuc swobodnie opowiadajac o swoich doswiadczeniach.

Co sie stanie jezeli zdecyduje sie na uczestnictwo?

Pierwszą fazą prowadzonego badania bedzie przypomnienie pana/pani histori imigracji. Bedzie to szansa podzielenia sie doswiadczeniami, napotkanymi przeszkodami ktore spowodowaly pana/pani decyzje o wyemigrowaniu z Polski do Wielkiej Brytanii. Majac w glowie przeszle doswiadczenia, to cwiczenie zakonczy sie opowiedzeniem o przyszlych ambicjach, planach. Bardziej szczegolowe omowienie cwiczenia znajduje sie w drugim arkuszu - moja podroz.

Druga faza pracy doktoranckiej zajmie sie indywidualnymi opowiesciami uczestnikow, majac na celu szczegolowe opowiedzenie danej historii. Uczestnicy tej fazy beda wylonieni na podstawie odmiennych doswiadczen i innych "historii migracji". To badanie zakonczy sie z "photo tour" kazdego z uczestnikow gdzie konkretne sytuacje beda przyporzadkowane do zdjec, ktore mialy miejsce na emigracji.

Czy udzial w badaniu bedzie poufny?

Podczas redagowania projektu wszystkie dane uczestnikow pozostana poufne. Zaden uczestnik nie bedzie zidentyfikowany kiedy badanie zostanie opublikowane, a stanie sie tak dzieki kodowaniu danych. Kazdy uczestnik pracy doktoranckiej zostanie poproszony o wybranie nowego imienia pod ktorym bedzie identyfikowany w badaniu.

Doktorant bedzie odpowiedzialny za zgloszenie jakiegokolwiek naduzycia nielegalny.

Co stanie sie z informacjami udzielonymi podczas badania?

Kodowanie danych gwarantuje pełną anonimowość uczestników badania. Jedynymi osobami , które będą miały w nie wgląd będą doktorant i Profesor Hugh Matthews. Osoby postronne nie będą miały wglądu w zebrane dane.

Kopia końcowej tezy zostanie przekazana do Uniwersytetu w Northampton (*The University of Northampton*) i Biblioteki Głównej w Wielkiej Brytanii (*British Library*) gdzie praca będzie przechowywana do ewentualnego wglądu. Końcowe wyniki zostaną udostępnione na stronie internetowej poświęconej temu badaniu. Kolejna kopia badania zostanie zaprezentowana wspierającym projekt instytucjom.

Zakończenie pracy doktoranckiej zostało wyznaczone na 19 maja 2011. Cała praca będzie dostępna po zrecenzowaniu jej przez osoby do tego uprawnione.

Kto jest fundatorem badania?

Badanie jest częścią mojej pracy doktoranckiej i będzie podstawą do przyznania mi tytułu Doktora Filozofii (PhD) na kierunku *Human Geography*. Badanie jest sponsorowane dzięki grantowi przyznanemu przez Uniwersytet w Northampton (*The University of Northampton*) oraz *Local Area Agreement* (LAA) w Northamptonshire.

Kto jest odpowiedzialny za recenzję pracy?

Projekt został omówiony i zatwierdzony przez Uniwersytet w Northampton (*The University of Northampton Research Degrees Committee*) oraz przez trzech innych promotorów. Doktorat będzie oceniony przez wewnętrznego i zewnętrznego egzaminatora (eksperta w dziedzinie *Human Geography*).

Kontakt z doktorantem:

Email: matthew.callender@northampton.ac.uk

Adres:

Matthew Callender
The Knowledge Exchange
The University of Northampton
Boughton Green Road
Northampton
NN2 7AL

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