



MA DISSERTATION

MIGRATION MOTIVATIONS

OF

FEMALE POLISH UNIVERSITY GRADUATES IN STAVANGER

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EUROPEAN MASTER IN MIGRATION AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

MATRICULATION NUMBER 3328757

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SUBMITTED ON JULY 28, 2017

Annex 2

Declaration of authenticity

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted is my own and that all passages and ideas that are not mine have been fully and properly acknowledged. I am aware that I will fail the entire dissertation should I include passages and ideas from other sources and present them as if they were my own.

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Abstract

Polish migration to Western Europe is often perceived as economically motivated labor migration. Scientific accounts of Polish migration to Norway have contributed to this understanding by employing economic models of migration to explain contemporary intra-European east-west migration and focusing on particular groups of migrants. Little research has been conducted about migration motivations of highly educated Poles migrating to Norway. Based on narrative interviews this research explores the migration motivations of six female university graduates from Poland living in Stavanger, a city in the south west of Norway. The research focuses on individuals' perspectives on migration decision making and follows the research question: Why do Polish university graduates come to Norway and what are their considerations about future mobility? The study revealed very diverse motivations for migration from Poland to Norway, i.e. adventure seeking, aspirations for a change in life, independence from family well as family considerations. In some cases, these aspirations correlated with economic considerations in other cases economic motives were almost absent. Social networks played a crucial role in stimulating migration and in directing migrants to Stavanger. Considerations about settlement, return and remigration revealed that migrants were very satisfied with their lives in Norway. They had been able to attain various goals of economic and non-economic nature and were satisfied with their situation at work, their lifestyle and social lives and thus intended to remain in Norway in the near future. Yet most informants refrained from making long term plans since they had a strong sense of uncertainty about the future. They perceived their situation in Norway as temporary and open-ended. The strongest factor holding migrants in Norway was their family situation. Informants in permanent partnerships or with children appeared to have settled more or less permanently in Norway and did not aspire to return or re-migrate. Younger single migrants were still very mobile between Poland and Norway and considering return an option. The study contributes to a more detailed understanding of migration motivations of highly educated Poles coming to Norway and their aspirations for the future. However, there is an urgent need for further research on issues concerning this group.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Gunhild Odden, who supervised this research project for her encouragement and advice; Oleksandr Ryndyk, who shared his ideas with me and helped me with the informant recruitment; my informants for their time and willingness to share their inspiring and moving stories with me; and my mother, who supported me during the whole process.

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1 Introduction

During my studies of Migration and Intercultural Relations I learned about various aspects of Polish migration history and present-day population movements from Poland. The accounts and discussions of the topic sparked my interest, since my personal familial background lies to one half in Poland. As child of an immigrant woman from Poland in Germany I grew up with the Polish language, various Polish cultural traditions and with a close contact to Poles, mostly family members living in Germany and in Poland.

Even before my studies I had observed that many people in my social environment had very particular ideas about Poles in their country. In Germany on the country side where I grew up, for example many thought immediately of seasonal workers, berry pickers and harvesters. When I lived in Norway for a year during my studies, I found that many local Norwegians had an image of a construction worker or cleaner in mind when talking about Poles in their country. I understood that this image in most cases reflected a personal experience and observation. Many Poles were coming as harvesters to the German countryside every year during my childhood and in Norway indeed it seems that on every other construction site Poles are working. However, from my personal experience I knew that these visible groups were only one part of the Polish population living abroad and that there were other groups that did not fit these images.

During my studies, I found that even in the scientific literature there seemed to be a strong focus on particular groups of Poles which were perceived as *typical* cases of Polish migration while other groups were only rarely talked about and contemporary Polish migration to western Europe was mostly conceptualized as economically motivated labor migration. In Norway, which is a relatively new migration destination of Poles, such concepts seemed to be mostly unchallenged.

A review of the literature about Polish migration to Norway, confirmed my impression of a one-sided representation of Poles in Norway. During the initial years after Poland's accession to the European Union and the arrival of large numbers of Poles in Norway researchers studied Polish migration almost exclusively in the framework of economic migration. Most studies dealt with Poles in low skilled professions and focused on work related issues. There was almost no evidence of the presence of other non-working-class migrants from Poland. Only very recently there has been a significant effort to account for Poles experience in Norway beyond the work place and attention has been given to Polish families and children in Norway. Yet most research continues to view Polish migrants explicitly or implicitly as low skilled workers. Even though recent statistics suggest that many Polish migrants arriving in Norway hold university degrees there has been no research conducted explicitly addressing the experience of highly educated migrants. Furthermore, and despite some inquiry into Poles

motivations to stay or return to Poland migration continues to be seen in many cases as primarily economically motivated migration.

Thus, I felt inspired to embark on a research that seeks to document sides and issues of Polish migration that were overlooked by many studies and thus challenge the dominant representation of Poles as purely economically motivated labor migrants. In order to contribute to a greater diversity of representations of Poles in the scientific literature about Polish migration to Norway I adopted a twofold approach: Firstly, in order to challenge the narrative of a purely economic migration and to highlight the diversity of aspirations and motivations behind migration decisions of Poles coming to Norway I decided to conduct a study of migration decision making of Polish migrants in Norway. Secondly, in order to challenge dominant representations of Poles in Norway as low skilled manual workers, address the lack of attention to their educational background and highlight the diversity of skills they bring with them to Norway I selected Poles with university education as the group under study.

I adopted a qualitative research approach with narrative interviews as main method of data collection in order to explore individual perspectives on migration decision making. For the study, I interviewed six female university graduates from Poland living in Stavanger about their migration histories, their personal reasons and motivations behind migration to Norway, the experience of working and living in the country as well as their aspirations for the future. I thus combined retrospective reconstruction of past migration motivations with prospective considerations about future mobility and immobility. The central research question guiding the research is: *Why do Polish university graduates come to Norway and what are their considerations about future mobility?*

In the following chapter I first give a short introduction to Polish migration history to western Europe in general and Norway in Specific. Then I provide some evidence for a one-sided representation of Poles in Research on Polish migration to Norway. This is followed by a discussion of theoretical approaches to migration decision making. With this discussion, I aim to position myself in relation to these theories. Once I have clarified my position I will describe my aims and research question. This is followed by an elaboration of the choice of methods for this study and an effort to justify the selection of particular approaches. The findings from this study are presented and discussed in two parts, the first deals with motivations for leaving Poland and coming to Norway, the second with considerations about settlement in Norway, return migration to Poland and remigration to a third country. At the end of the study I summarize the findings and draw some overall conclusions.

1.1 Context of the research

1.1.1 Polish migration history

Migrations of Poles from their homelands to countries all over the world have occurred since centuries. Since the partition and occupation of the Polish Kingdom by Russia, Austria and Prussia in 1795 and following economic exploitation and devastation of the region and political persecution and oppression of Polish minorities large numbers of Poles have emigrated mainly to Western Europe and North America (Trevena 2009). Large scale migration of Poles occurred again after the outbreak of the Second World War. Large numbers of Poles were forcibly displaced mostly by the German Nazi government but also by the Soviet regime and forced to work in various countries around Europe while the Polish government and large parts of the Polish military transferred first to France and later to the UK forming the Government of the Republic of Poland in exile. After the second world war, Polish soldiers who had fought under British high command were granted the right to settle in the UK. Also, parts of the forcibly displaced populations remained abroad (Zubrzycki 1956). During the second half of the 20th century only very limited emigration from Poland occurred due to restrictions of mobility under communist rule. Emigration was possible only on grounds of family reunion and after imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981 as refugee (Garapich 2007). After the fall of communism and restructuring of the state and the economy the labor market situation in Poland was very difficult, with unemployment rates reaching a level of 20 % in 2003, in some regions up to 30%, particularly high among young Poles (Central Statistical Office of Poland 2017). Despite persisting institutional barriers to seeking work abroad, migration to various western European countries increased. Under the Europe Agreement of 1991 between the European Union (EU) and Poland Poles could work legally as self-employed or business owner in western Europe. However, many also worked unofficially in the clandestine sector (Spencer et al. 2007).

In 2004 Poland became a member state of the EU and under the free movement of labor agreement Poles obtained the right to move and take up work in other member states¹. Some countries restricted these rights temporarily until 2011 (Luthra et al. 2014). Nevertheless, large scale migrations from Poland to other EU member states and states of the European Economic Area (EEA), who participated in the free movement of labor agreement have occurred since 2004. Kaczmarczyk and Okolski (2008 p.599) described these migrations from Poland already in 2008 as “one of the most spectacular population movements in contemporary European history”.

¹ Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States and Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union

1.1.2 Polish migration to Norway

Norway, a member state of the European Economic Area and thus part of the free movement of labor agreement had received only small numbers of Poles before 2004. Some had arrived as early as 1830 fleeing the counter reformation in Poland. During the second world war Poles were also brought to Norway to do forced labor, yet most of them left the country in the years after the war. During communist rule, some marriage migration occurred and some highly educated specialists were allowed to work in the country. In the 1980 also political refugees from Poland were granted asylum in Norway (Godzimirski 2011).

However, large-scale migration from Poland to Norway occurred only in the aftermath of Poland's accession to the EU. With several thousand new arrivals, each year since 2004 the number of Poles registered as residents in Norway grew from about 7000 persons in the beginning of 2004 to 97.000 in early 2017 (Statistics Norway 2017a). Even though other countries such as the UK and Germany have received higher total numbers of Polish migrants since 2004 Norway has been the main destination of Poles among the Nordic countries and compared to Norway's total population the numbers are very high. Poles represent currently 1,85 percent of the total population of Norway (Statistics Norway 2017b). They are the largest immigrant group in the country making up for 13,41% of the total foreign population in Norway.

1.1.3 Research on Polish migration

Embedded in a policy discourse of 'free movement of *workers*' intra-European east-west migration since 2004 has been viewed primarily as labor migration. Migration from central and eastern Europe has been understood according to economic models of migration and framed as the outcome of large disparities in wage levels and prosperity between eastern and western EU member states (Massey et al. 1999, Borjas 1994, Wallace 2002, Drinkwater et al. 2009). As Luthra et al. (2014 p.1) notes "investigation of migration from eastern Europe (...) has tended to be thought of in terms of traditional labour migration (albeit circular rather than static), and the focus has been on labour market outcomes". Poles coming to western Europe have been thus mostly perceived as economic migrants of a particular class.

However, such one-sided depiction and understanding of post accession migration from Poland has been increasingly challenged, mostly by qualitative studies. A number of researchers has sought to document both, the complex specifically non-economic motivations of new EU migrants and the diversity of People within this group (Ryan et al. 2009; Krings et al. 2013; Cook et al. 2011, Burrell, 2010). On the one hand, this research finds numerous and diverse examples of non-economic motives

in contemporary inter European migration from Poland including migrations for love, adventure (Favell 2011), self-development (Cook et al. 2011) independence from family (Botterill 2014) and the emotional wellbeing and education of children (Ryan et al. 2009). On the other side, it highlights that various kind of people with differing characteristics migrate. Not only workers but people of various ages, in various family situations and with differing skills and education background are on the move between east and western Europe (Ryan et al. 2009; Favell 2011; Botterill 2014). Luthra et al. (2014 p.1) speaks in regard to Polish migration to western Europe of “new complexities of mixed migration motivations and migrant heterogeneity”. Such greater variation in migration motivations, future intentions and migrant characteristics have also resulted in much more complex and diverse migration patterns and more variation in migrants social, economic, and cultural integration (Luthra et al. 2014; Eade et al. 2007; White 2014). Luthra et al. (2014 p.10) write that this new migration system between eastern and western Europe is “qualitatively different - more varied in terms of the demographic characteristics of the migrants, their motivations, and their economic and social experiences in the destination country - than traditional economic migration”.

Similar as in other western EU member states Polish migration to Norway after Polands EU accession has been perceived as economically motivated labor migration (Friberg 2012, Napierała and Trevena 2010; Baba and Dahl-Jørgensen 2010). Researchers as well as policy makers initially assumed that Poles in Norway were temporary guest workers who come as target earners who would return to Poland once they had met their economic goals in Norway (Stormowska 2015).

It comes no surprise that a large proportion of research on Polish migrants in Norway has focused almost exclusively on work-related aspects of Poles stays in Norway. Numerous studies defined *Polish workers* as the subjects of their research. While a number of articles appeared dealing with *Polish workers* in general (Friberg and Tyldum 2007; Friberg and Elring 2011; Friberg 2012; Friberg et al. 2014; Torvatn and Pettersen Buvik 2011; Engebriksen, Ståpor, Andenæs 2017; Ryndyk 2013b) many researchers focused on Poles in a specific sector and selected professions. Numerous studies focused on male construction workers (Friberg 2010b; 2011; Eldring, Fitzgerald and Arnholtz 2012; Saksvik, Dahl-Jørgensen and Danielsen Tvedt 2013; Wasilkiewicz et al. 2016; Napierała and Trevena 2010), female nurses (van Riemsdijk 2006; 2008; 2010a; 2010b; 2013), female domestic workers and cleaners from Poland (Eldring and Alsos 2010; Friberg 2010b; Saksvik, Dahl-Jørgensen and Danielsen Tvedt 2013).

At the center of these studies stands the analysis of Poles work lives, their fairing on the labor market and their needs and experience at work while their “lives beyond the workplace” (Spencer et al. 2007) are mostly not explored. Such a heavy focus on Poles professional lives suggests that Poles in Norway were seen first and foremost as workers, often of a very particular sector. These studies, by exclusively focusing on particular professional groups and limiting their focus to work related issues have

contributed to a relatively homogenous representation of Poles in Norway as low skilled workers in manual professions. Ryndyk (2013 p.8) after reviewing the literature in 2013 wrote:

“With an exception of a few studies, the available research seems to perceive Polish migrants in Norway as a homogeneous group, in this way reinforcing the commonly accepted stereotypes from the public debate. There is an urgent need for a comparative study that could deconstruct the notion of “Polish migrants in Norway” and shed light on the diversities within this group”.

Only recently researchers started to challenge the one-sided picture of Poles in Norway and began to explore and cover aspects of Poles live beyond the workplace, namely family life and wellbeing. Such recent studies deal with parenting strategies (Bjørnholt and Stefansen 2016; Ślusarczyk and Pustułka 2016; Pustułka et al. 2015; Pustułka and Ślusarczyk 2016) transnational family practices (Bell and Erdal 2015; Pustułka 2015; Ślusarczyk and Pustułka 2016) and children’s experience (Slany and Strzemecka 2015a; Strzemecka 2015; Pustulka et al. 2016; Slany and Pustułka 2016; Slany and Strzemecka 2015b). These studies have widened the analytical focus to issues beyond Norway and brought new groups such as children, young people and older people to the focus of research on Polish migration to Norway.

Recent research has also challenged the early concept of temporary guest workers. Studies found great diversity of motivations, aspirations and migration strategies among Poles in Norway including open ended and transient migrations as well as intentions to settle with their families in Norway for long term or permanently (Friberg 2012, Gmaj 2016; Bjørnholt and Stefansen 2016; Iglicka, et al. 2016; Stormowska 2015). Recent studies discussed Polish migrants’ mobility employing concepts of *permanent* and *normalized mobility* (Erdal and Lewicki 2015), *liquid mobility* (Bygnesa and Erdal 2016), and *mobility maze* (Slany and Pustułka 2016) and explored motivations beyond economic considerations (Narum 2008; Herzberg 2015). The title of an article “The Poles in Norway—we wanted workers but people arrived” (Iglicka et al. 2016) illustrates how perceptions about Polish migration have changed from a very narrow focus on Poles as temporary laborer’s in Norway to a broader understanding that highlights issues beyond the workplace and includes various groups of migrants. Despite the inclusion of the family into the research agenda the image of Poles as low-skilled workers has not been challenged. The skills highly educated Poles bring with them to Norway are underexplored and no research focuses explicitly on the experience of university graduates from Poland in Norway. In 2012 Fryberg argued:

“Educated young Poles with English-language skills may prefer destinations such as Ireland and the UK, where these skills can be put to use in customer-related service occupations, (while) Poles going to Norway work in a narrow set of industries and occupations completely

dominated by low-skilled work in construction and industrial manufacturing, agriculture and cleaning”.

Five years later such descriptions must be challenged. Statistics Norway (2017c) finds that 32,6% of Poles aged 16 and over have completed at least one university degree. While this research was already under way the results of a survey among 633 Polish couples in Norway were published that found that particularly many young women from Poland hold university degrees. 58,3% of female respondents aged 18 to 30 had completed higher education. The level among men of the same age group was 37.3%. The study also observed a severe mismatch between levels of qualification and current occupation among Poles. Only 32% of young and highly educated Poles in the Study work in positions that match their qualification levels. The mismatch is particularly stark among young females of whom only 24,8% had a job that matched their skill levels (Huang et al. 2016). Already in 2011, Friberg has highlighted that Poles face barriers to social mobility because of cultural stereotypes that bar them from higher positions. Yet the issue of deskilling among highly educated Poles has been largely neglected until today. No research exists that specifically explores how to make better use of the skills Polish university graduates bring with them to Norway. Neither does research explore examples of successful skill-transfer, which also exists according to the findings of Huang et al. (2016).

1.2 Theoretical Background

Human migration is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. One of the key questions migration scholars have aimed to answer is “Why do people migrate?” (Hagen-Zanker 2008). However, attempts to answer the question have often been conducted in isolation from each other, sometimes but not always divided by the boundaries of different scientific disciplines. This has resulted in a variety of theoretical models about determinants of migration, often with radically different concepts, assumptions and frames of reference (Massey et al. 1993; Arango 2000).

A key issue that makes the study of migration complex is the dualism between structure and agency, that human migration is part of a complex interaction between structural forces and individual agents. Coleman (1990 p.27) describes this interaction as “the effects of properties of the system on the constraints or orientations of actors; the actions of actors who are within the system; and the combination or interaction of those actions, bringing about the systemic behavior”.

1.2.1 Deterministic theories of migration

Some migration theories have focused more or less exclusively on the structural determinants of migration. The Dual Labor Market Theory explains migration as a result of structural requirements of modern industrial economies. The World Systems Approach sees migration as natural consequence of the global expansion of the capitalist system, disrupting traditional work structures and creating conditions of political and economic inequality leading to specific migration phenomena within economically connected systems (Massey et al 1993). These theories operate on national and international levels of aggregation. They solely address the macro level and conceptualize migration as an outcome of broader structural processes while ignoring the active role of the migrant as agent (de Haas 2008).

1.2.2 Neoclassical theory of migration

The Neoclassical Theory of Migration has addressed both the micro and the macro level. It explains human mobility as a phenomenon driven primarily by wage differentials and differing employment opportunities and conditions (Massey et al. 1993 p.432-434). On the macro level labor supply and demand regulate migration flows. On the micro level individuals weigh costs and benefits of movement and make decisions with the aim to maximize their gains and benefits. Migration is also seen as an investment into one’s human capital (Todaro 1969 p.138; Sjaastad 1962 p.92). However, it conceives

of the migrant as homo economicus and does not account for non-economic influences, i.e. cultural and social determinants of migration. It has failed to explain a large number of migration phenomena such as preference of certain migration destinations despite similar wage levels and return migration to economically less prosperous areas. It has also ignored that certain resources are needed to migrate and therefore the poorest are not the most likely to migrate (Massey 1998, de Haas 2008).

1.2.3 New Economics of Labor Migration Theory

The New Economics of Labor Migration Theory shifted the focus from the individual to the household level. It claims that migration is not an individual undertaking but rather a household strategy of risk reduction and income diversification. Rather than seeing the migrant as an independent actor he or she is part of a larger unit (Stark and Levhari 1982; Stark 1991). Thus, the New Economics of Labor Migration Theory has brought the meso level into migration theory, however, by assuming a single common interest of the household it ignores competing aspirations and power relations within the unit (Faist 2000). It has also extended the focus on labor markets from the neo classical model to conditions on a variety of other markets including capital and crop markets. Yet it also fails to explain how other factors beyond economic considerations affect migration decisions.

1.2.4 Value expectancy model

De Jong and Fawcett (1981) proposed the *value-expectancy model of migration decision making behavior* (De Jong and Fawcett 1981 p.53) in order to study migration decisions from a micro level and single actor perspective. They based their model on the assumption that “the strength of a tendency to act in a certain way depends on the expectancy that the act will be followed by a given consequence (or goal) and the value of that consequence (or goal) to the individual.” (Crawford 1973 p.54). According to the model two basic components are important in decision making, an individual’s values (goals and aspirations) and his or her expectation to attain the goals. At the center of De Jong and Fawcett’s model stands the assumption that migration is a mean to attain “personally valued goals” (De Jong and Fawcett 1981 p.47). An individual weights his or her chances to attain certain goals in different loci, including the home place. As such the model is cast in a cost benefit framework. It relies on the assumption that migrants are to some degree free to make choices and do these based on a conscious consideration of a range of factors (De Jong and Fawcett 1981 p.47).

In order to address a tendency to explain migration decisions as primarily economically motivated, De Jong and Fawcett (1981) proposed seven *conceptual categories* of values that summarize commonly

cited motivations for migration: *wealth, status, affiliation, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, and morality* (De Jong and Fawcett 1981 p.57). Figure 1 shows the original description by De Jong and Fawcett of each value goal.

Table 1: Seven conceptual categories of values after De Jong and Fawcett (1981)

Seven conceptual categories of values proposed De Jong and Fawcett (1981)

Wealth includes the wide range of factors related to individual economic reward. Factors contributing to wealth can take various forms and would include at least the following: higher wages, good income, low cost of living, low taxes, good fringe benefits, good welfare provisions, stability of employment, availability of jobs, and ownership of property. Wealth can be viewed as an end in itself, but is also a means by which other goals may be satisfied.

Status encompasses a number of factors connected with social standing or prestige. Occupation and education are important aspects of status; these are also related to income, of course, so the values of status and wealth are closely linked. "Status" alone, however, can also be an important factor in migration. For example, higher status can be achieved by living a more modern or sophisticated life, holding a white-collar job, or having a diploma. The move from a rural area to the city is itself often regarded as a form of social mobility, regardless of economic consequences.

Comfort may be seen as the goal of achieving better living or working conditions. This can include improved housing, a more pleasant residential environment, easier work, shorter or more regular work hours, a healthier or less stressful setting, and so on. By "comfort," we mean essentially physical and psychological comfort.

Stimulation means exposure to pleasurable activity (in contrast to relief from an unpleasant situation). Included here are such valued activities as entertainment and recreation. The relevant descriptive terms include variety, change, fun, excitement, adventure, or simply new experiences (including a change of roles). Stimulation may also be seen as relief from boredom, a benefit frequently cited for rural-urban migration.

Autonomy has many dimensions but refers generally to personal freedom, the ability to live one's own life. The weakening or absence of traditional family obligations may be especially important. In some settings, autonomy may also imply political freedom.

Affiliation refers to the value of being with other persons, in connection with or as a result of migration. Broadly, it can refer to "joining friends or family" as a reason for migration. In many cases this reason may disguise other values, i.e., affiliation with others may be a facilitating factor in

migration to satisfy different. personal goals. In some cases, though, affiliation is the main motive for migration: to get married, to accompany a spouse, to join close friends or relatives who had migrated earlier.

Morality is related to deeply held values and belief systems that prescribe good and bad ways of living, such as religious belief systems. Moral values may have a pervasive influence on behavior, depending upon the degree of the individual's commitment. The morality dimension in connection with migration is often expressed negatively, as in the corrupting or sinful influence of city life. But the seeking of a favorable moral climate can also be important, as exemplified historically in the migration of certain religious groups.

In order to link micro level decisions to macro level structures and account for the causes of the formed intention De Jong and Fawcett (1981 p.56) proposed to consider *individual and household demographic characteristics, societal and cultural norms, personality traits and opportunity structure differentials between areas*. According to De Jong (1981 p.56) and Fawcett these factors form the “background” of migration decisions through their effects on value formation and value attainment expectations. They are so to say the structures that give rise to the values and expectations that lead to migration. The approach relates to what other migration researchers have highlighted: in order to adequately explain and account for reasons behind migration factors and influences on the macro, meso and micro level have to be considered. Massey (1998 p.50) argues that explanations of migration must account for

“the structural forces that promote emigration (...), the structural forces that attract immigrants (...), the motivations, goals, and aspirations of the people who respond to these structural forces by becoming international migrants and (...) the social and economic structures that arise to connect areas of out and in-migration.”

A study of migration decisions should thus not simply describe the motivations individuals cite as reason for migration, but also account for the social, political, economic and cultural context of decision, the structures that shaped peoples’ values and priorities and thus contributed to bring about the migration decision.

1.2.5 Social Networks Theory

Social Networks Theory has advanced the understanding of the interplay between individuals and contexts. Faist (1997 p.188) defines social networks as “social relations (social ties) between individuals in kinship groups (e.g. families), households, neighborhoods, friendship circles and formal

organizations". In migration theory, such "sets of interpersonal ties" (Massey et al. 1993) connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in places of origin and destination. Potential migrants can draw upon such networks as a resource for migration and integration in the place of destination. Social Networks facilitate international mobility since they reduce risks and costs of migration. Social contacts in both sending and receiving countries constitute a form of social capital migrants can transform into "financial, human, cultural and political capital" (Faist 1997: 199). For example, potential migrants obtain information about conditions and cultural norms at places of destination as well as practical support during the journey and with finding a job or housing and emotional support (Massey et al. p.1993:448-449). A number of concrete hypotheses for migration decision making have been derived from social networks theory.

The *Affinity hypothesis* argues that social contacts, close ties to family members, or high investment in a local community at the place of origin can hold potential migrants back and reduce their likelihood of migration (Ritchey 1976: 389; Haug 2008). The *Conflict hypothesis* is the inversion of the affinity hypothesis (Haug 2000). It argues that intra familial or intra communal conflicts or pressure at the place of origin can be a motivation to migrate in order to avoid conflict and escape pressure or oppression (Hugo 1981: 196). The *Facilitating hypothesis* postulates that social contacts abroad channel migration to their own places by facilitating adjustment to the new location with support to find work, financial support, encouragement and access to their personal contacts and friends (Ritchey 1976: 389; Tilly and Brown 1967). The *Information hypothesis* was developed separately, can however be seen as an extension or specific case of the facilitating hypothesis (Haug 2000). It suggests that friends, relatives and other contacts at the place of destination can provide information about living conditions, job opportunities etc. and thus increase the propensity to migrate. Usually the trust in information provided by social contacts is greater than in general information (Ritchey 1976: 389; Tilly and Brown 1967). Finally, according to the *Encouraging hypothesis* social contacts at places of origin, most importantly the family of a potential migrant, may also actively encourage and support or sponsor migration (Hugo 1981 p.196; Pessar 1982).

Social networks can perpetuate and sustain migratory flows despite the absence of wage differences for example. Each migration contributes to the expansion of the "transnational network" (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994 p.3-7) and every new migrant reduces the costs and risks for members of his social network, thus increasing the likelihood that someone else will migrate as well, which will again expand the network. Massey et al (1993 p.451) state: "each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely".

Social networks theory brings the focus to the role of social relationships and how they facilitate and shape migration. Stressing the importance of social relationships in migration phenomena creates the

possibility of a middle perspective between the oversocialized deterministic view of macro level explanations and the undersocialized theories of individual choice on the micro level. In a way, Social Networks Theory is able to reconcile both views by acknowledging, the impact of social structures on individuals and groups and at the same time giving the migrant agency to make choices and navigate these structures individually: “Studying networks, particularly those linked to family and households, permits understanding migration as a social product, not as the sole result of individual decisions made by individual actors, not as the sole result of economic or political parameters, but rather as an outcome of all these factors in interaction” (Boyd 1989 p.642). However, Social Networks Theory alone cannot explain how migration begins. It does not account for the motivations and choices of pioneer migrants. It is rather a theory that adds to and build upon the before mentioned models and a theory of the “perpetuation of international movement” (Massey et al 1993).

1.2.6 The role of Values and Norms in migration

The impact of socialization and societal and cultural norms on migration behavior has been increasingly explored and highlighted. According to Aarts and Dijksterhuis (2003) societal norms are "mental representations of appropriate behavior". Socialization is the process of internalizing the norms and values of a society (Durkheim 1979). Through socialization an individual learns what is seen as normal, acceptable, desirable and appropriate to his or her and others social position. Social norms and values are the basis of concrete behaviors and various social roles that are expected from each member of a community and thus inform people’s attitudes towards various things and events in human live. Norms and values relate to categories such as gender, class, race, religion and many others. They designate power positions and hierarchies for example between genders or generations. As such they operate as demarcations of roles and domains and structure the relations between individuals in the family and broader society. They are thus a mean to maintain and reproduce a social order and social differences. (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999; Lorber 1994). Individuals who are enculturated with certain values and norms often assume these to be natural, inevitable and immutable (Glenn 1999; Lorber 1994).

Often such values are shared by larger groups such as a population of a region, ethnic, social or religious group but they are transmitted through personal networks, namely the family to the individual. Boyd (1989) noted that families or domestic units are “socializing agents”, they transmit values to individuals and act as sites of socialization. Even though internalized values and norms are a powerful force that influences people’s imagination and actions, humans are nevertheless not predetermined to act and believe in specific ways but agents that can choose to follow or resist common practices and believes (Cromdal 2006). Through resisting to dominant discourses individuals

can subvert and reshape values and roles in a given context. Thus, norms and values are “relational, and (...) spatially and temporarily contextual (Donato et al. 2006). However, the ability to resist to such normative prescriptions will largely depend on an individual’s position in the family and society, the resources available to her/him and the structures that exist to enforce a certain role and behavior upon an individual (Boyd and Grieco 2003).

An individual’s behavior and decision cannot be fully understood without considering the structure of power relations in the family and society. From such a perspective, decisions, including migration decisions are made against role expectations, internalized values, and in the absence or availability of resources and structures that constrain or enable individuals within powerful discourses such as gender (Boyd and Grieco 2003). Thus, it is worth to study the norms and beliefs within and expectations and roles ascribed to certain groups and how they influence personal aspirations and attitudes towards migration in general and towards particular migration destinations and migration patterns.

Some researchers have suggested to refer to values and norms that relate to migration as “migration culture(s)” or “culture(s) of migration” (Massey et al 1993; Cohen 2004; White 2011). White (2011 p.61) defines culture of migration as the “climate of opinion regarding migration” at a certain place and time. It refers to the values associated to migration, the norms or conventions about “how and why people should migrate, which people should migrate and where they should go” (White 2011 p.5), in other words, whether migration is seen as normal or desirable, for whom and under what conditions and at what time. Massey et al (1993 p.452-453) argues that migration culture develops within communities that experience high prevalence of migration: “Migration becomes deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people's behaviors, and values associated with migration become part of the community's values.” For example, migration might become a “rite of passage” (ibid. p.452-453) for young people. However, the term culture is also problematic since there is a danger to imagine culture as a clear cut, static and distinct set of values that is equally shared by all members of a community or society. Since individuals have certain degrees of choice and are more or less free to embrace, reject and reshape shared values in fact culture is ever changing in time and space and might be seen differently from person to person. Therefore, migration studies must be cautious about the use of the concept, refrain from generalizations and treat findings as place and time specific and relationally constructed.

1.2.7 Return and repeat migration

Most existing theories explaining migration focus on the initial migration and do not address return migration explicitly. Mobility is implicitly assumed to be a onetime event that results in permanent settlement (Hugo 2003; Dustmann and Achenbach 2015). Particularly economic theories have been criticized for their underlying assumption that “migration for a better life happens unidirectionally” from developed to less developed places (Achenbach 2016). Yet empirical studies from around the world suggests that return and repeat migration are very common patterns and that a large proportion of migrants voluntarily return to their countries of origin during their lives (Dustmann and Görlach 2015) and Morrison (1971) as well as Massey et al. (1993) find that previous migrations increase the likelihood to migrate again. Despite the widespread occurrence of return and repeat migration comparatively little research has been conducted on the determinants of such moves and it remains unclear how initial and return or repeat migration decision differ from each other (Cassarino 2004: 253; Faist 1997; de Haas 2008).

DaVanzo and Morrison (1982: 2; DaVanzo 1980: 2; 1981: 117) have advanced the theocratization of return and repeat migration with three concepts: imperfect knowledge, location specific capital and learning by doing. DaVanzo (1981) assume that persons have imperfect information of conditions in destination areas. Thus, a person’s initial migration decision is based on assumptions and expectations (see also De Jong and Fawcett 1981). However, anticipated benefits might be overestimated, or not attainable due to unforeseen barriers etc. Return migration might then be a corrective move guided by better information about the destination place. According to this concept a migrant gets to know the environment of the destination place better after his arrival and then reevaluates the benefits of his stay. The result may be either stay, return or remigration. (DaVanzo 1980: 2; 1981: 117).

The concept of location specific capital refers to the idea of “factors from which an individual can only benefit in a particular place” (Achenbach 2016). Concrete assets such as a regular clientele, license to practice an occupation or company seniority and property ownership as well as intangible goods such as friendship and community connections, personal knowledge of the area, of cultural habits and the language can be only drawn upon in certain places and their value is not transferable (DaVanzo 1981: 116; DaVanzo and Morrison 1982: 4). Thus, it has to be rebuild in each new place which is an investment. DaVanzo (1981: 116) argues that location specific capital decreases also in places a person is absent from. She derives following implications for return and repeat Migration:

Location specific capital at former places of residence is an asset and thus pull factor that increase the likelihood of an individual to return to a place of origin or, in the case of repeat migration, to a migration destination the person has lived before. However, prolonged absence will result in reduced value and thus less pull of location specific capital, thus the likelihood to return to a former place of

residence should slowly decrease over time. However, as DaVanzo points out, people might continue to stay connected with their place of origin and continue to invest in their location specific capital there thus keeping it from depreciating.

Finally, DaVanzo proposes the idea of “learning by doing”, that the experience of a migration will impact on future decisions on mobility. Persons who view their migration as rewarding might be motivated to migrate again, while those who had a negative experience might not move again. This applies mainly to repeat migration or “double return abroad” (White 2011), the return abroad after a person has returned home from abroad.

DaVanzos considerations link well to the social capital approach of social networks theory with its assumption that social contacts in both sending and receiving countries represent a form of social capital migrants can draw upon and thus transform it into “financial, human, cultural and political capital” (Faist 1997: 199).” As explained earlier Migrant networks reduce the cost and risks of migration, since they can provide potential migrants with information and support for finding a job or housing and with cultural norms (Massey et al. 1993:448–449). During a stay, abroad migrants extend their networks while also maintaining links to their host society, thus becoming part of transnational networks (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994: 3– 7). Just as in the initial migration a return migrant can obtain information about the conditions at origin place and aid for return and reintegration through his social networks.

1.3 Methods and Methodology

The aim of the study is to challenge one-sided representations of Polish migration with a detailed and diverse account of migration motivations and experiences. In order to highlight and understand the complexity and diversity of individuals motivations, considerations and aspirations in a decision-making process it appeared most promising to study the perspective of the individual actor. Thus, the study aims to understand how an individual perceives the world around her and makes decisions. Moustakas (1994 p.44) argues that a qualitative research approach is an appropriate method to describe mental phenomena such as “memory, judgement, and in general, mental representations of anything whatsoever”. As I explained in more detail in chapter 1.3 migration decision making is a complex process of interaction between individual goals, structural conditions and social contexts and relations. Thus, a method was required that allows to understand individuals’ behavior in the context it happened. Moules (2002) argues that qualitative research can provide an understanding of a person’s reality within the context of her live. Qualitative research with its interpretive perspective allows the informants to define their own reality and encourage them to construct meaning for themselves while the researcher interprets the information provided by informants and looks for patterns and structures across different cases (Denziln and Lincon 2008). Thus, themes and relationships can be discovered.

Why do Polish university graduates come to Norway and what are their considerations about future mobility? is the central research question of this study. In order to specify the approach and subject of the research I reviewed theoretical approaches explaining migration and studied what they said about the individual actor and her decision-making. I used the insights from this review to define major areas of interest and formulate sub-questions that would help to answer the central research question.

- 1) *How were informants socialized towards migration, what values did they learn about migration during their childhood and youth?*
- 2) *What are informants previous migration experiences and how did they influence their later decision to move to Norway?*
- 3) *What were the concrete aspirations motivating migrants to leave Poland and move to Norway?*
- 4) *How did the process of migration decision making looked like, when did informants started considering moving abroad and why?*
- 5) *What was the role of social contacts in facilitating or preventing migration?*

- 6) *Where migrants able to attain their migration goals and aspirations in Norway? What did migrants experience in Norway and how did it influence their choice to stay in Norway, return to Poland or re-migrate to a third country?*
- 7) *How do informants evaluate the economic, cultural, social and natural environment in Norway and Stavanger and how does it influence their considerations about future mobility?*
- 8) *How do factors such as family situation, social ties, age, and gender influence migrants' mobility choices?*

These questions were used as guidance for the interviews as well as the analysis of the data. Yet, in order to avoid theoretical presupposition in my research and remain sensitive and flexible to emerging issues I selected narrative interview technique and thematic coding, a data analysis technique related to grounded theory as main methods of data collection and analysis. Thus, theoretical insights were not used as fixed framework for the analysis but rather as *sensitizing concepts* and starting point for a critical analysis.

1.3.1 Sample and Informant recruitment

The most important criterium for selection of informants for this study was their educational background and their current place of residence. Informants should have completed at least one University degree, normally a Bachelor's degree and Stavanger should be their current place of residence. Since I did not aim to produce representative results, but rather contribute to more complete knowledge about migration motivations with in depth accounts of individual views, informants with diverse backgrounds and personal situations were selected. I deliberately welcomed informants of different age, marital status, number of children, education, profession or length of stay in Norway.

All informants were recruited in Stavanger. Limiting myself to one locality beard the risk of a sample that would reflect experiences specific to this place. This was however not seen as problematic, since the study did not aim to make general findings about the overall group of highly educated Poles in Norway. Conducting the interviews in Stavanger had the significant advantage that I was familiar with life in Stavanger since I was living and studying there as a foreigner since a year. Thus, I was able to relate to some experiences of my informants through personal experience. I was also not constrained by time limits and distance for establishing contacts, conducting the interviews and following up.

Diverse recruitment strategies were employed and informants were recruited from a wide range of entry points. Thus, the risk of obtaining a sample of individuals with similar histories, experiences and views was avoided. The research project was announced to Poles in the greater Stavanger region on

several Facebook sites including the Facebook group Poles in Stavanger and the Facebook site of the Polish Saturday School in Stavanger. The announcement included a call for volunteers to participate in the study. The announcement was also printed and hung out in a Polish restaurant and a Polish delicacies store. However, this advertisement strategy resulted only in the recruitment of one informant. Much more successful was to approach Poles in Person and start an informal conversation. I approached Poles in locations where one could expect to meet people from Poland such as the Polish restaurant and the Polish delicacy store but also in the street and shops when I heard them speaking Polish or listening to Polish radio and thus recognized them as Poles. Approached individuals were mostly very happy and excited to have a chat in Polish and to hear about my study. Often, they offered without being asked to share their experience during an interview. My interviewees offered also to ask their Polish friends to give me an interview. However only one further informant was recruited this way.

Interviewees could suggest any place for the interview. For me it was important that they could feel comfortable and that they did not have to invest too much of their time and other resources into the interview. One informant invited me to her workplace, where the interview was conducted during quiet hours, two informants met with me in a café, two invited me to their homes and one interview was conducted via skype.

Table 2: Overview Study Sample

| | Eva | Paula | Justina | Marta | Izabela | Katazjna |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Age | 27 years | 30 years | 30 years | 31 years | 31 years | 42 years |
| Stay in Norway | 4 years | 3 years | 6 years | 9 years | 6 years | 10 years |
| Education | Bachelor in Law and public administration | Master in Landscape architecture | Bachelor in English language and culture | Master in Landscape architecture | Master in Geophysics | Master in Geophysics |
| Status | Single | Single | Single | Permanent relationship | Married | Married |
| Children | No | No | No | No | No | Four |
| Occupation in Norway | Sales | Sales | Hospitality | Hospitality | Petroleum Industry | Petroleum Industry |

Table 2 gives an overview about the sample of informants for the present study. The sample consisted of six females born in Poland and living in Stavanger. They were aged between 27 and 42 years. Two informants had completed a bachelor degree four held a master degree. Informants had lived three to ten years in Stavanger. Three informants were single at the time of the interview, one was in a relationship, two were married. Only one informant had children. The limitation to one gender was

originally not intended, however focusing fully on the experience of woman migrants appeared to be justified since, according to statistics and a recent survey there are significantly more female migrants holding University degrees in Norway and they seem to be particularly affected by deskilling (Huang et al. 2016).

1.3.2 Data collection

The narrative interview has been chosen as primary technique for data collection in this study. Narrative interviews have been proven particularly suitable for the reconstruction of subjective views and activities since they allow to understand “biographical processes against the background and in the context of concrete and general circumstances” (Flick 2009 p. 184). The technique offers the narrator the opportunity to “to unfold their views unobstructed by the interviewer as far as possible” (Flick 2009 p. 184). Because of the “threefold narrative Zugzwang” described by Schütze (1976) of this form of presentation is likely to reveal a richer version of events and experiences. Narration requires informants to bring a story to an end once it is started, to provide an account that includes the necessary details for understanding the process and to condense the story so it remains understandable and within a given timeframe. Thus the method encourages and stimulates an interviewee to tell a story and even speak of events and actions that might be avoided in other conversations due to shame (Schütze 1976, p. 225).

Narrative interviews were conducted as suggested by Riemann and Schütze (1987). Informants were asked to describe their migration history. They were instructed to start the narrative in their childhood, describe living conditions and family situation and explicitly refer to any *migration related events* in their personal life and in the lives of close relatives or friends. They were asked to continue with a detailed reconstruction of the situation in which they were when they *began to think about moving to Norway* and in a last step recount their *experience since their arrival in Norway and what their considerations* about staying in Norway, returning to Poland and moving on to a third country have been. After the narrative had come to an end the researcher followed up on various fragments of the narrative and encouraged informants to speak about particularly relevant aspects in more detail.

In most cases interviews were of one and half or two hours duration, sometimes longer, depending on the willingness of the informant to elaborate in detail about her experience. If I had not done so during our first contact I took some time to explain my personal migration background to the informants before the interview in order to loosening up the situation and to establish initial. I also thoroughly informed and the content and purpose of the study, and how I was planning to conduct the interview. Furthermore, informants were informed about the procedures to ensure confidentiality and measures that I was planning to take to anonymize the accounts and asked to interrupt the interview at any time

should they feel uncomfortable with the situation. Finally, every participant was asked whether she agreed to be audio recorded and whether they had any questions, personal or regarding the study. Once all issues had been addressed the interviews could begin.

The interviews were conducted in Polish language and audio recorded. Later they were translated into English and transcribed in one step. The narrative interviews were complemented by informal conversations with the informants and informant's friends and family members as well as other Poles living in Stavanger. Notes were taken during interviews as well as during or after informal conversations.

There were several factors that contributed to a very open and honest situation between the researcher and the informants and facilitated mutual trust. Firstly, it seems to me that since informants had been students at universities themselves recently, they could relate well to what I was doing and understood the situation. Second, being close in age but slightly older than me might have given them a sense of talking to a peer. Thirdly me having a Polish background seemed of great importance. Informants could speak in the language they felt most comfortable with and I could show them that I was able to relate to various experiences in their live due to growing up in a half Polish family and thus familiar with various Polish traditions. Being also a foreigner in Stavanger and having lived several years outside my country of origin further helped me to relate to informants' experience of living abroad. Overall, I had the impression that I was seen as one of them, one in a similar situation and with a understanding of their background. Nevertheless, they were the experts who could tell me about their experience and I was the listener and learner, since I never lived in Poland and thus never experienced live in Poland and being a Pole abroad. Furthermore, my spoken Polish is also somewhat below the level of a native speaker which might have been reassuring for them, since I could not resort to sophisticated professional language but rather simple phrases and also sometimes had to ask for explanations of the meaning of a word I was unfamiliar with. All these factors contributed to establishing an effective communication and willingness to share various experiences. Informants seemed to trust that the interview was for a good purpose and that their confidential information would not be abused.

1.3.3 Ethical considerations

Since the study was an inquiry into people's lives and considerations it was likely that sensitive private issues such as the informants' family situation, financial settings, social situation, legal status, etc. might come up. In order to prevent any harm and abuse of informants' information the study. Since potentially confidential information was collected, I was required to define measures to protect informants' identity and direct and indirect private information. Measures were developed following

the ethical guidelines for social research of the Norwegian National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Measures were approved by the Data Protection Official for Research at the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. Thus, any records that contained private information such as the audio recordings were handled with due care and measures were taken to protect these. When the recordings were transcribed the interviews were anonymized, all direct and indirect confidential information was deleted or replaced with invented Names or more general information.

1.3.4 Analysis

The analysis of the data aimed to pay close attention to the informant's narratives, remain sensitive and open to all concerns they related to their migration decision making and to avoid theoretical presupposition. Thus, instead of choosing an existing framework of migration decision making to analyze informant's narratives a grounded theory approach was selected. Grounded theory approaches aim at "developing a thematic structure, which is grounded in the empirical material" (Flick 2009 p.322-23). Flick (2009 p.319) proposes "thematic coding" as a method for analyzing data from qualitative interviews. It treats each narrative as individual case study before comparing them among each other (Flick 2009 p.319). Following this approach, in a first step, short descriptions of each case were produced to preserve the greater picture and interconnections of the informants' narratives. Second, informants experience and views were structured and made comparable to each other applying open, axial and selective coding technique (Strauss 1987, pp. 27-28). Narratives were thus broken down into small units that represented an idea. Individual units were labeled with a code that represented the idea in one or a few words. Mostly, informants' words and expressions were used as codes (*in vivo* codes). Codes were then grouped into thematic categories which were again labeled with codes. Notes were produced explaining the content of categories. Thematic categories that were obtained during open coding of the first narrative were used to analyze all further cases. At the same time, they were continually reassessed against the new narratives and where necessary new categories were added or existing ones modified. This thematic structuration of each case according to the same categories enabled comparison of individual cases among each other. The next step of the analysis was the cross-comparison among cases focusing on the variations, disparities, and similarities between cases. In a last step, the results from the data analysis were discussed against existing theoretical concepts and findings from other empirical studies meaningful to the research.

1.3.5 Self-reflexivity

In qualitative research researchers do not strive to erase their influence on the research and thus their results, but seek to recognize them and make them explicit. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 17) write “rather than engaging in futile attempts to eliminate the effects of the researcher, we should set about understanding them”. In order to make my influence on the research outcomes visible I have sought to document my actions and choices and reflect about and discuss their implications. As mentioned earlier, during an interview, the researcher and the interviewee co-construct meaning through their interaction. The method of narrative interview seeks to reduce the impact of the researcher on the content of the interview, yet his very presence and personality will influence what the informant chooses to tell, what to highlight and what to leave out. Thus, I acknowledge that my gender, my appearance, my national background, my social and economic status and generally all features of my identity and social position have had a certain impact on the results. I sought to document some of these features which appeared important and discuss the potential implications on the data collection. Besides the data collection the researcher exerts an enormous influence on the results with his analysis and presentation of the data. Even though I chose thematic coding as method of analysis which seeks to develop meaning from the data itself instead of imposing explanatory structures on it, it must be acknowledged that I could never be free of preconceptions, expectations, aims and preconceived understanding of the situation. My previous knowledge about the topic and about migration theories as well as my aims have influenced how I approached the data and how I constructed meaning. With a detailed description of theoretical concepts of migration decision making in the chapter 1.3 I sought to make my previous knowledge of theories and my position towards them explicit. During the discussion of the data I introduce findings from various empirical studies, some of which I was aware during the process of coding and analyzing. Thus, instead of claiming that I the results *emerged* from the data, I conclude that they are rather a synthesis of close reading and analyzing of the data and my previous knowledge as well as personal experience. Through a process of repeated reflection about my assumptions, motivations, decisions and actions during the research process I sought to become aware of the ways in which I influence the results and make these explicit. Yet there are certainly many ways in which I influence the results that I am not even aware of.

1.3.6 Presentation of Findings

The presentation and discussion of the findings from this study is oriented along the chronology of my informants' accounts. Findings from this study are presented and discussed in two parts. The first part explores informants' narratives of life in Poland and the process of deciding to move to Norway. The second part focuses on the experience of living in Norway and considerations about staying in Norway, returning to Poland or re-migrating to third countries. Each part is subdivided in several chapters which refer to a particular aspect of migration decision making.

The chapters are divided according to theoretical considerations. In the first chapter of the first part (chapter 2.1) I explore informants' childhood and youth and early memories of migration related events, if such existed, as well as elaborations on how migration was seen in their families and among peers. This chapter relates to the theoretical concept of migration cultures.

The second chapter of the first part (chapter 2.2) addresses migrants own previous migration experiences and how these affected their attitudes towards living abroad. The findings are discussed and contextualized with insights from theoretical considerations about repeat migration.

In the third chapter of the first part (chapter 2.3) I explore informants' considerations and motivations to leave Poland and live abroad. Motivations are discussed against the seven conceptual categories of values proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981).

The fourth chapter of the first part (chapter 2.4) addresses the process of migration decision making in more detail. It explores when informants started considering moving abroad and why. It also addresses the question of choice of destination. Why did informants choose to move to a place in Norway and what were their thoughts about it? Here the social network approach is employed to explain the findings.

The first chapter of the second part (chapter 3.1) begins with a summary of informants' employment trajectories in Stavanger to provide the context of their aspirations and considerations about staying in Norway, returning to Poland or re-migrating to a third country. These are followed by an exploration of their current aspirations and goals for the future. This exploration is again structured according to the conceptual categories of values proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981).

The second chapter of the second part (chapter 3.2) of the analysis explores issues around uncertainty and open-endedness of migration. My informants experience of living between Poland and Norway and processes of settling or remaining mobile are discussed in the light of recent concepts of intra-European mobility as liquid and open ended.

The findings are presented employing verbatim quotation technique. Particular excerpts from the respondents' narratives are quoted throughout the text to support the argumentation and provide authentic examples of respondents' expression of thoughts and emotions (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006).

1.3.7 Note on Wording

Migration and migrant is a key concept and frequently used term of this study. Therefore, I would like to clarify how I understand and employ the term. Human migration is commonly understood as movement of People in relation to national borders. It is often distinguished between internal and international migration. It might be further defined in relation to the purpose of the movement and the duration of a stay (International Organization for Migration 2017). This study deals with international migration between Poland and Norway. Migration refers to the crossing of national borders for the purpose of changing the place of residence. The place of residence is the place where an individual intends to spend the majority of his time. In the case of my informants it is the place where they currently live and work. Holyday trips, visits or business travels to other countries are thus not regarded as migration. Migrants in this study are those who have crossed a border for the purpose of changing their residence. I have deliberately chosen the intention to change the country of residence as criterion for migration because I am interested in migration aspirations and considerations. These occur when an individual intends to move from one place to another, no matter how long she/he remains there.

Furthermore, the study deals with highly educated Poles. In this study, highly educated stand for having completed at least one university degree. This was in the case of my informants a Bachelor Degree that requires three years full time studies. Four out of six informants held also a master degree that required two additional years of full time studies. Since it is beyond the scope of this study and found to be irrelevant for answering the research question, I do not analytically distinguish between the experience of those holding only Bachelors and those also holding a Master degree. Both groups were treated as highly educated migrants. Throughout the study I use university graduates interchangeably with highly educated migrants.

2 Migration from Poland to Norway

In the following part of the study I describe my informants' lives in Poland and their motivations to move to Norway.

I begin the analysis of my informant's migration motivations with an exploration of prevailing attitudes towards migration in their social environment in Poland in order to understand the context in which my informants formed personal values and goals as well as expectations about migration. I give a brief overview of my informants' previous migration experiences and how these experiences informed their later migration decisions. I explore the values that my informants expressed in relation to their decision to move to Norway. On the basis of my informants' narratives I reconstruct how my informants evaluated the possibilities to attain certain values in Poland and abroad and how they prioritized different values and goals. Furthermore, I address the migration decision making process and the role of social networks in this process. Lastly, I discuss the choice of Norway as migration destination.

It must be bared in mind that my informants accounts are retrospective reconstructions of migration motivations, cognitive restructuring or rationalization of choices made on other grounds might have occurred, thus the results may be biased to some extent.

2.1 Attitudes towards migration

According to De Jong and Fawcett's (1981) value expectancy model societal and cultural norms are important factors in the formation of individual values and expectations towards migration. In order to get an understanding of the context in which my informants formed personal values and goals as well as expectations related to migration I begin the analysis of my informant's migration motivations with an exploration of prevailing attitudes towards migration in their social environment in Poland in which they grew up and were socialized. Thus, in the following chapter I explore the migration experiences of immediate relatives and friends of my informants and their attitudes towards migration. I asked my informants to describe their childhood and youth and address any events that related to migration, i.e. migration of family members, migration among friends and peers and views and opinions on migration of those living in Poland.

My informants accounts revealed generally positive attitudes to migration within their families. However, in most cases the parents of the informants had never lived abroad and migration had not been a talked about topic within the family during informants' childhood. Justina remembers that her parents never considered to migrate, the topic came up only when her older siblings began to go abroad for educational purposes.

No, there was never such a need, that someone of us or my parents had to go abroad for earning money. There was no need, the business was going well, I think we were doing well financially. Talk about going abroad only started when we, the siblings started going abroad, but that was more in terms of education.

Izabela was the only one who had some early memories related to migration. When she was a young girl her father used to go to western Germany for several months a year to work during the harvest season. But for her this was something else then her own migration which was more long term and that she referred to as for good.

For good, I was the first one. During 'the good times of our parents' they were going to the German Federal Republic, to western Germany. But you know, this was informal work (dorywca praca), a month or two, that style. But there is no one in my family who went for good.

The very limited migration experience of informant's parents in most cases did not translate into negative attitudes towards migration or fears. In fact, in most cases parents had encouraged their children at various points during their lives to go abroad and supported such endeavors financially. Izabela seemed confident that their parents were fine with her daughter living abroad.

They are okay with it. I mean, they were always very supportive regarding working abroad. They thought it was a good opportunity and everything. I suspect that when I really left they were a bit upset. You know, they realized that I really left. (...) So, I suspect it was a bit difficult for them in the beginning but I think now they are very used to it...

Katarzyna was the only one who had encountered clearly negative attitude towards her migration plans from her parents' side. She had been the first one in the family to go abroad and she said that not everyone in her family was "looking with pleasure at it".

Researcher: And your parents, how did they view the move to Norway?

Katarzyna: Very bad. Very bad. My dad is such a, my dad died six years ago, but he was a patriot from A to Z. "How can you betray your country and go somewhere else?!" Very bad! My mum also very badly came to terms with it. She even, she did not go to the doctor, but I am not sure if she hadn't a depression after my, after our emigration.

However, Katarzyna's parents had not tried to hold her back. Katarzyna suspected that they did not want to see the family split up: "No. I think they would not let it happen that I would again be separated from my husband. For that reason, they did not try."

Despite generally positive attitudes to migration and working abroad some mothers had been quite stressed about their daughters moving abroad and had tried to persuade them not to go or to come back. However in all case the initial difficulties were quickly overcome once the parents realized that the distance could be rather easily bridged with contemporary communication and transportation means. Even in Katarzyna's case her parents' worries and negative attitudes to their daughter's move abroad were overcome once they had visited her in Norway and reassured themselves that she was doing well and the place and conditions acceptable.

Katarzyna: My mom was waiting every single day for a call. And calling from the mobile, it cost us a lot, and only my husband was working during the first time here in Norway. So, I was not calling her very often, only let's say every three, four days and only for a short moment, a few minutes, just to say that everything is fine, don't worry. She was worrying about us all the time, except these three minutes every third day, so most of the week she was worried. (...) She was scared that Norway is so dark, that it is cold, that I am such an optimist, but then I will be in the cold and dark. We came here in January and they came to visit us for Easter, so in March, April. And they saw that it doesn't actually look so bad here, only then my mom got better. From the accounts of my brother and sister I conclude that she had a depression, for this reason.

Every time we talked to her, she said... She wasn't taking any medication, but she could not sleep at nights, because she was worried. It was difficult.

Researcher: It's really nice that they came to visit you.

Katarzyna: Yes, after such a short time. After three months. That really calmed them down, it calmed my mother down. My father too.

In most cases informants' parents had never migrated and thus had not been an inspiration for the informants to go abroad. Informants accounts however suggest that siblings might have inspired each other to go abroad. All informants except one had siblings who had been abroad for at least several months. Three of the informants had older siblings who had been abroad before the informants had migrated and could have inspired them while in two cases the informants were the first to migrate and potentially inspired their family members.

Justina's sister, who was ten years older went several times to Germany and the Netherlands as an au pair. She was studying German language and Culture and went abroad to improve her language skills. Justina recalls memories of the time:

The 90s in Poland were fine, but in the west, in Germany it was still much better. I remember that she helped us a lot, she helped us very much. She was staying in well situated families, she had her pocket money and I remember that she helped us, not financially, but she brought lots of things from the west, things that were still unknown in Poland, like a machine to cut meat, a lot of kitchen equipment. She brought me a lot of toys, when I went to school with this super fancy pens, pencil case and rubber it was a furor, there was nothing like this... it was new.

Her older brother also went abroad, he spends a year in Spain during his studies and later went to work in the US during holidays for three months. When Justina finished school, she also wanted to go abroad. It was her wish to do an au pair in the US. She admits that her sibling's trips abroad may have inspired her. She had witnessed how much her sisters stay abroad helped her to acquire a foreign language, and wanted to improve her own English, so she decided to go to the US: "No, I didn't know anyone in the US, no one tried to persuade me to come, maybe indeed I got a bit inspired by my sister, because she went a couple of times abroad and it helped her a lot with the language." But her siblings did not just serve as inspiration, they also actively encouraged her and helped her to pay for the initial expenses of her trip.

Researcher: Could you afford it yourself?

Justina: No, my parents and my siblings supported me. My parents, but also my siblings, they were working already, there was help from every side.

Researcher: So, they were thinking that it is a good idea to go to the US?

Justina: Yes, my brother was very much 'Yes, sister, go, super, I will help you!' There was this issue, that I had to do the driving license, there was this requirement (...). This also took some time to do the license and they, I don't know who, my brother or my sister, he helped me financially because I wasn't working, just after finishing school.

Eva has an older brother who had been abroad when she was still in School. He had just married and left to France for six months to earn for a house for his family. However, the marriage did not survive the separation and they divorced. Eva felt that the experience of being abroad enabled him to understand and support her in her migration. Anticipating that her mother would be stressed about her plans to go abroad, Eva did not tell her about a two weeks' inspection visit to Stavanger. She had only spoken about it to her brother.

Researcher: And what did your parents think about you moving to Norway?

Eva: They didn't know. The first time when I came here they didn't know at all. My mum would be so stressed. I didn't tell her at all. I told my brother. And we said, we would have all the time contact, if something happens. My mum found out the moment when I was landing in Poland, when I was returning, then she got to know. That was the first time. And then the other time my mum said, ok, try it out.

In Izabelas case it was just the opposite, she was the older sibling and suspected that her younger brother, who had moved to Germany two years ago had gotten inspired by her move abroad. However, not only close relatives such as parents and siblings might have had an influence on informant's imaginations related to migration and thus their motivation to migrate. My informants all new other people, often peers, who had migrated. My informants described migration as "very popular" particularly among students. Thus, many of their friends had been for temporary stays abroad, i.e. during their studies for an internship, a student exchange or to earn some money during the holidays. Justina told that companies who organized au pair stays abroad for polish youth came to her school to advertise their services and that it was very common among girls in her school to go on such a program.

This au pair program was very popular at the time, a lot of girls went abroad, a lot of girls also from my town went. (...) So, there were this companies, they came to our school and advertised

themselves. And this program was very popular at the time and I decided that I wanted to do this very much. (...) Back then job fairs were organized at schools, firms or teaching institutions came and presented themselves, and there were also this companies, at the time there were lots of this companies who organize this au pair programs, lots and lots of these companies.

She knew a family where the daughter had gone to the US as well and the feedback from her and her parents confirmed her in her wish to do an au pair in the US.

There was a girl, (...) I met with the parents, because the girl was still there (abroad), so we met a couple of times with the parents. And they told me "Go! Go! A. is very content, super, everything great, she is certainly not coming back". I got a lot of information from them. Also from the girl, I cannot remember if it was Skype already or if she called, so we could speak and she could tell me how it works, the whole procedure. So, I spoke a lot to this family (...).

Izabela did a semester of her studies abroad. She told that most of her friends did something similar. Two girls of her cohort also did the exchange and student from earlier years had done so as well. She had the impression that students in general did go abroad a lot: "During studies, the majority of my friends went to work abroad during the holidays, or to do internships abroad, some went for an Erasmus semester (...)". While most of such trips abroad were temporary some turned into permanent stays. Izabela's cousin went to England: "She planned to go there for a holiday only, you know, to earn a bit, but she liked it, and since she lived there with friends she stayed there..."

Even though most informants' parents had never lived abroad, most of them saw migration as positive, and an opportunity. All informants had been encouraged by their parents to go abroad. Such findings echo earlier research on Polish migrants in the UK. Botterill (2014) writes that her informants, young Poles in the UK, reported that migration to the UK was conceptualized as an *opportunity* and viewed as desirable by their parents in Poland. Some parents had viewed migration as a chance they had not had during times of communist rule. Parents often associated migration to the west with better education and thus better life. Lopez Rodriguez (2010) confirms that such values, that she calls "meritocratic", are widespread among Poles and that conceptualizations of migration to particular destinations as opportunity often relate to good education which is perceived as instrumental to success (Lopez Rodriguez 2010). Discourse that constructs migration to the west as positive and desirable, i.e. as leaving the uncertainties of post-communist transformation in Poland and way to stability and "normal life" (Galasińska and Kozłowska 2009; Rabikowska 2010) or "good start" in relation to social mobility (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009: 38) have been noted by other researchers too. My informants did not describe such concrete values attributed to migration, neither by their parents nor siblings or other peers. However the "climate of opinion regarding migration" (White 2011 p.61)

in my informants' social environment was described as strongly positive and encouraging. My informants perceived migration as normal and desirable. They expected positive outcomes of migration and were thus willing to engage in migration themselves. Migration after finishing school or during studies was described as very popular and considered a good opportunity for a first migration, which was often a temporary stay abroad.

Several of my informants had older siblings who had migrated abroad. Some of my informants explicitly mentioned that watching their example and mostly positive experience had an influence on their own aspirations while others assumed that their younger siblings might have gotten inspired by their move. A positive impact on personal attitudes towards migration through exposure to migration experiences of siblings has also been noted by Ryan et al. (2009) and Botterill (2014) who carried out studies with Poles in the UK. Botterill writes (2014): "...the perceived successes of siblings and cousins are seen to be particularly influential to young, single people in their decisions for mobility". Botterill (2014) concludes that the family through the "continuous exposition to certain concepts and ideas regarding a place (UK) or event (migration) shapes (young) people's attitudes and aspirations". Such findings are in line with Boyd's (1989) concept of family as "socializing agents" who transmit values, i.e. about migration to individuals.

Besides the function of siblings as role model my informants highlighted the importance of supportive attitudes among family members. Most of my informants were actively encouraged and sometimes financially supported by their siblings and parents to peruse their migration plans. Such accounts confirm the encouraging hypothesis from network theory (Haug 2008).

2.2 Own previous migration experience

As already mentioned in chapter 2.1 several of my informants had previous experience of living outside of Poland before they decided to move to Norway. In this chapter, I will give a brief overview of my informants' previous migration experiences and how these experiences informed their later migration decisions. From a perspective that tries to explore the factors of migration decision making of Polish migrants living in Norway such previous mobility is in two ways relevant: first, exploring the motivations behind earlier migration decisions will contribute to better understand migrants' motivations to go abroad in general and second, the experience from the previous mobility might have had an impact on later migration decisions, in this case the decision to come to Norway. According to the value expectancy model proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981) previous migration experiences are part of the socialization and value formation of a person and thus relevant for later processes of migration decision making.

Four of my informants had previous migration experience at the time they decided to move to Norway. These previous migration experiences were temporary stays of at least several months in outside of Poland for the purpose of studying or working. Justina had done an au pair in the US for a year after she had finished high school. Katarzyna interrupted her studies after two years and went also to the US to work for a year. Izabela, did a semester of her studies in Trondheim in Norway and Eva had participated in a two months student exchange to France when she was at high school.

Such experiences, even though sometimes not very long and mostly with the intention of return to Poland after a limited period of time, were perceived as important moments of change in my informant's lives. For Justina and Izabela their first migration was strongly linked to the experience of achieving independence, growing up and becoming an adult. In both cases this was linked to the experience of going through difficulties and loneliness. Justina spoke about her experience in great detail:

It was hard for me, I was missing my home very much, I had to learn the language, in the beginning it was very difficult. (...) This program gave me a lot in terms of language, culture and personally. There was very much to learn, (to be) on your own, to become independent. But it gave me a lot of friends, (...) lots of acquaintances, this kind of real friendships that continue until today. A big adventure and a big life experiences this kind of trip abroad (duża przygoda, duża nauka życia taki wyjazd). Later on, I asked myself if I had prolonged the program for another year, because I was very much liking it in the end. I still missed (home) but I lived and enjoyed this live there, which was different, this freedom (...). I lived all the time with my parents, so I had left my family home. In my family home, even though I was 20, there were

some duties, if you live with your parents, they will nevertheless impose some things, they try to shape you (uksztaltować ciebie). And there, I had to do everything on my own (musiałam sama wszystko). There was no... there were conversations with my parents, but they didn't impose something, "no don't go there, don't do this because that..." they wouldn't impose or prohibit something there. I had to decide myself what is good what is bad, where I shouldn't... Who to be... You learn a bit about yourself, how to cope, who you are, actually. Because earlier, I was a child, I was twenty years old, but I felt a bit like a child, I had older siblings, my brother and sister were older, they were a bit like parents for me, I always say, I had like two pairs of parents, the older parents and my older siblings, so I always felt like a child, and here actually you had to grow up and...form yourself, mentally, you had to grow up and be an adult. And it happened, when I came back my mum also told me that I had changed a lot, that I am independent, more serious, (samodzielna, poważniejsza), and that I don't cuddle her so often anymore (...), that it changed me a lot. (...) It was a jump into deep waters (się rzuciłam na głęboką wodę). I didn't have any experience. I had never been away from home for a longer period of time. Yes, I jumped into deep waters, it was a great adventure but also great stress. And a great life experience (nauka życia).

Throughout the further interview Justina referred back to her experience in the US. She explained that her later decision to go abroad again and move to Norway was also motivated by the experience of independence and self-actualization during her stay in the US and that she hoped "to learn something about myself again" in Norway. Compared to Justina, Izabela's experience may appear less serious, yet the themes are similar: facing challenges, being left alone and having to make decisions on your own but also experiencing this independence as satisfying and rewarding.

It was the first time I was completely on my own (zdana na siebie tylko). (...) You leave the majority of friends in Poland behind and suddenly you are completely on your own. On the one hand, it's a kind of freedom because you have a lot of time for yourself, on the other had you have to make an effort to make new friends and to find something to do, because everyone you know is in Poland. (...) In Krakow, I lived with my grandparents. This was also a bit different, another feeling when I came to Trondheim, suddenly, you know, I lived on my own, grandma wasn't cooking dinner anymore, it was a bit more independent. But I liked it very much, finally I had a chance to live on my own.

Izabela also expressed the idea, that her first experience abroad had an impact on her later migration to Norway:

I mean, it is a difficult thing to leave, really, I think, because you leave all your friends. (...) For me it was probably a bit easier because of Trondheim (her first stay). Because I already left once. So, it was a little bit easier to leave once again. But I kind of understand that it's not very easy decision to just say okay, let's leave work and friends and family and everything and go. Not everyone wants to do that and not everyone is ready.

Other researchers have also noted that it is common in Poland to live in the family home until one sets up an own family and that emigration is often the first step out of 'home' (White 2014). It is particularly common among students to live well into their twenties, sometimes thirties with their parents or grandparents (Stenning et al., 2010). Migration within Poland is not very common (White 2014) instead going abroad is often seen a 'good start' (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk, 2009: 38). Botterill (2014) found that aspirations for an independent live can become a major motivation for going abroad. She quotes one of her informants saying: 'leave mother, leave the family home and start my own life, it was the main reason to go' (2014 p.240). First mobility can thus become a 'rite of passage' for young Poles (Eade et al. 2007).

Little research has been conducted on how such first migration experiences influence further migration decisions. Empirical studies suggest that previous migrations increase the likelihood to migrate again (Morrison 1971; Massey et al. 1993). My informants accounts confirm the idea of "learning by doing" in migration proposed by DaVanzos (1982). Informants viewed their first migration as rewarding and were thus motivated to migrate again.

2.3 Values and Expectations

De Jong and Fawcett (1981 p.57) proposed seven categories of values that they found to be common and influential values in migration decision making: *wealth, status, affiliation, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, and morality*. In this chapter I explore the values that my informants expressed in relation to their decision to move to Norway. On the basis of my informants' narratives I reconstruct how my informants evaluated the possibilities to attain certain values in Poland and abroad and how they prioritized different values and goals. I discuss how my informants' values and expectations relate to what is known about structural conditions in origin and destination locations as well as societal norms and values in Poland. In order to explore the values and expectations of my informants I asked them to reconstruct the situation in which they were at the time of migration decision making and in detail explain their considerations. It must be bared in mind that my informants accounts are retrospective reconstructions of migration motivations, cognitive restructuring or rationalization of choices made on other grounds might have occurred, thus the results may be biased to some extent.

2.3.1 Wealth

Most research on labor migration is based on the assumption that migration occurs in response to economic opportunities and aspirations of maximizing economic gains. My informants accounts of their migration motivations featured only few references to values that fit in to the category of *Wealth* as described by De Jong and Fawcett (1981 p.57). Only one informant mentioned a lack of employment opportunities as reason for considering migration. Justina was the only one who had started thinking about going abroad, because she could not find a job in her home town. After her studies, she had worked in a temporary job as administrant for a construction company from abroad. However, when the construction was completed she lost her work.

I was looking for Work in Torun. I sent out lots and lots of CVs, I went to some interviews. I wanted something in Torun. At that time, I didn't want to go abroad yet. I thought that since I had this experience from the construction side, a bit at the construction side, a bit in administration, I had learned a lot, I had this confidence that I know a lot, that I will somehow manage to find work there. I was very much convinced that I would find work. After all it was difficult. And later it turns out that it was difficult because Torun, it is a one of those cities were unemployment was actually very high. I was not fully decided if I really wanted to go abroad and if I really wanted to be again an au pair. But since I couldn't find work in Torun, I thought no, I have to find something abroad. This work at the construction side was over and I had to

find the next job. (...) I send many, many applications but it was really poor response. And then my dad said "try it abroad". A large number of Poles were going abroad.

The lack of employment in Poland has been identified as one of the primary drivers of emigration from Poland in much of the research on post accession migration to western Europe (White 2011). Economic conditions in Poland have been very difficult after the collapse of communist rule and during the restructuring of the state and economy into a democratic capitalist system. Unemployment in Poland was significantly higher than in most other EU countries reaching levels of 20,6% nationally in some regions up to 30% in early 2004, just before Poland's accession to the EU (Central Statistical Office of Poland 2017). The unemployment was particularly high among young Poles. In the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship, the region Justina refers to, the unemployment level was 17% in 2010, when Justina was looking for work (Statistical Office in Bydgoszcz 2010).

Justina did not consider trying to find work in other, potentially more prosperous parts of Poland. It seems that she considered migration abroad as the only alternative to finding a job locally. Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009), Nowicka (2012) and White (2011) observed that this is a typical behavior among many Poles. According to their findings many Poles have a perception that conditions in Poland are everywhere similar and that if one has to change location it is favorable to move abroad. Many young Poles do not even consider looking for work in other parts of Poland. i.e. urban centers because they don't expect to find jobs in Poland that will correspond to their qualifications and will meet their expectations regarding wages and possibilities of professional advancement. Instead they prefer to try out something different and go abroad, often encouraged by examples of friends who have already a job abroad (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk 2009; Nowicka 2012; White 2011).

As earlier described, the higher education sector in Poland has rapidly expanded since 1990 and led to a mismatch between the number of people with university degrees and workplaces for graduates in Poland. Structural conditions in Poland might thus be one of the causes of what Fihel and Kaczmarczyk (2009) call the "brain overflow", emigration of Poles with university education from Poland to other EU countries since 2004. Yet Nowicka (2012) shows that the assumptions held by many young graduates about the Polish labor market do not necessarily correspond to actual opportunities. Thus, one can also speak of an aspect of a migration culture, where it is perceived as more desirable and normal to move abroad than within Poland. Justina's father's suggestion to go abroad illustrates how normal it is to consider migration abroad rather than migration within Poland as a solution to unemployment.

2.3.2 Stimulation

Nevertheless, Justina did not consider migration only out of a lack of opportunities in her home town. At another point during the interview she stated: “I was thinking about economic reasons, easier to find work, but also to learn something about myself again.” Justina refers back to the experience of independence and self-development she had during an earlier stay abroad and aspires to regain such values with her move to Norway. While it might not have been a motivation in itself to go abroad, it was at least a factor in her consideration that contributed to the overall positive evaluation of the option of migration.

In contrast to Justina all other informants stated that there were suitable jobs available in their home towns. In fact, most of my informants had a job or at least an offer for a job in Poland at the time they decided to go abroad. Izabela for example, was offered a job in her profession during her studies. However, she decided to refuse the offer and instead go to study a semester abroad. She explained her motives as follows:

I really didn't want to work during studies. In my opinion, you should dedicate your time to other things than work during studies. So generally, I preferred to go somewhere else and try out simply something different, some new adventure, in the sense of living in Trondheim and studying abroad, than studying in Poland and working a couple of days a week in some polish company. Even though it probably had given me a better... I t would have payed more money, it would have added to my CV, maybe a better start in looking for work later... I don't know, it could have given me a lot of things, but I decided that I would prefer to go abroad, see how it is to live outside of Poland, simply get some new experience other than work. Because for work I would have time (later), that's how I saw it, this years of studies I wanted to devote (poświęcić na) to something else than work. That's why I also didn't work too much during studies.

Izabelas account shows that she was not worried about economic security, she was very confident being able to find a job. Her priority and main motivation to go abroad at the time of her studies was the wish to explore, a sense of adventure, to get to know new things and see something out side of Poland. Such motivations relate well to the value category of stimulation described by De Jong and Fawcett (1981 p.57). Izabela clearly states that she prioritized these values over other values that relate to the category of wealth and status and stability. She does not aspire to increase her income through payed employment, she does not aspire the security of having a stable job and relevant professional experience on her CV. Instead she favors new experience of live abroad.

After a semester, abroad Izabela returned to Poland and finished her studies. However, she had the impression that job opportunities in her profession were limited in Poland and above all not exiting.

Thus, she applied for jobs in Norway and the UK. She explained her choice to accept an offer from Stavanger as follows:

Yes, it seemed preferable to me and it still does. Because in Poland the opportunities are more limited in my profession. Here I got quite a good offer. And let me tell you that this offer included traveling to various (on the job) trainings during the first six months. First two weeks in France, then six weeks in Abu Dhabi, later 10 weeks in Houston. When I heard that this would be the start of my work, you know, I didn't think twice. Then later I came back to Norway and started work, but the training continued for three years. During this three years, I had trips of two to five weeks long trips to England, the US. So generally, when I heard that I would travel to and live in other places around the world, that I would have the chance to travel, I immediately accepted the offer.

Again, motives that correspond to the category of stimulation are highlighted while economic considerations are completely absent in Izabela's account. This does not mean that there were no economic incentives or that Izabela was not aware of them. Rather it shows what aspects and considerations the informant wanted to stress and how she makes sense of her decision in the retrospective.

The motive of adventure and curiosity as reason for migration among young Poles has also been noted by other researchers (Fihel and Kaczmarczyk 2009; Favell 2011; White 2011; 2016; Nowicka 2012; Krings, Moriarty and Wickham 2016). The commonness of the association of adventure to migration points to another aspect of local migration culture among young and educated Poles where migration is constructed as desirable and justified in terms of self-development and broadening the horizon.

While Izabela constructed her migration decision almost exclusively around values relating to stimulation most informants related their migration motivations to more diverse values, often a mix aspirations for wealth, stimulation and others. Katarzyna for example, interrupted her studies and went for a year to the US to work and learn English. She describes economic considerations as main motivation for going abroad:

I had one year break during my studies. I went to the US where I worked and studied English. This was mostly because my parents were rather poor. I simply knew, if I wanted to have more I had to work for it myself. An opportunity arose, a friend of mine was there and her sister was running a business there, so I simply went there for a year. I was there for a year and it was a pleasant break during the course of my studies. (...) I think there were two main motivating reasons. First the money and second curiosity to get to know something new. I knew, at the time the exchange of Dollar and Polish Zloty was still a bit different, that after working for one

year in the US I would be able to support myself for two years in Krakow, during my studies. I also bought myself a computer, I bought a bicycle, I bought myself the books that I wanted, I bought myself a Walkman or Discman, back then that was simply "Hallo". Yes, so simply I was able to save something and did not need to wait and see if my parents would give me something.

On the first sight, it seems that economic considerations are the dominant factor in her decision to go abroad. She elaborates on her parent's financial situation and her calculation of benefits (exchange rate). However, there are three other motives, partly related to the first: the migration enabled her to buy things that were of prestige in Poland, thus through targeted earning she was able to afford material goods that affected her status. Second, she repeats twice that she wanted not to rely on her parents support, an implicit wish of independence and financial **autonomy**. Lastly, she mentioned also that she was curious to get to know a new place. In a later part of the interview she explains that economic returns were never her only motivation and that she tried to balance work and getting to know places:

I always highlight when I tell my children about it, when I left for this year, it was never just about work "...working, working, working, money, how much more do I have?", but I was always also making sure to see something there, so a couple of times I took a week of and during this year. And I saw Lake Tahoe, the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon. I tried to visit all of this there, but it was very intensive, intensive year.

Paula also described both, economic and non-economic considerations. Before migration she had a permanent job at the local authorities where she worked in her profession as an urban planner. Paula had come to Norway after a friend had suggested her a job in a Souvenir store in Stavanger. She elaborated as follows about her choice to give up the stable position in her hometown and instead take a temporary job abroad:

"I was ready and open for a change, I wanted to change my situation, to see and live something different, go on an adventure (...) My salary in Poland was limiting me, my life was very limited, I could not do many things, it was enough to survive, but I realized that I had stopped dreaming, aspiring of things for myself and that I was satisfied with how it was. And when I got the offer and the pay and other things were ok, I saw it as a chance, there was no reason to say no, I could always come back to projecting".

Paulas quote also shows that she aspired for values and goals that are strongly linked to the category of stimulation. She aspires to dream again, experience things, live an exciting, eventful and varied live.

However, in her account stimulation is also linked to considerations about wealth, since her economic situation in Poland does not allow her to lead the stimulating live style she aspires for. The low earnings in Poland are perceived as a barrier to these aspirations, that can be best overcome through migration. Her low wage in Poland is a reason to take up a job abroad, however the higher salary in Norway is not the motivation in itself but rather a mean to achieve other values. Migration to Norway is on the one hand a stimulation and change in itself, on the other hand the Norwegian salary allows her to live a different live style and fulfil stimulation related aspirations that were not accessible due to the low income in Poland.

2.3.3 Status

Interestingly, and just as Izabela in her first migration decision, Paula prioritizes the immediate benefits of migration, higher salary and experience of a new environment over stability and advancement in her profession in Poland. Earlier research on Polish university graduates in the UK shows that such a behavior might be the result of a widespread believe that working conditions and opportunities for professional development are better abroad than in Poland. A study conducted among university graduates in the Wielkopolska Voivodship for example found that informants assumed that employers abroad will offer “fairer employment conditions, adequate salaries, a justified workload, regular contracts, better social security, and better development perspectives” (Nowicka 2012; see also Powiatowy Urząd Pracy 2009).

Similar believes were found in Novickas (2012) study conducted among Polish university graduates living in the UK. Some of her respondents had not even tried to find work in Poland and left for England directly after their studies, assuming that that they would not be able to find jobs that correspond to their qualifications and at the same time provide “decent salaries” in Poland. Others had worked in Poland but were dissatisfied with the temporary nature of much employment and very limited or non-existent possibilities for professional development in Poland. Motivated by aspirations for financial independence from the family and attracted by the cities in the UK which were perceived as more exciting, they decided to give up employment in Poland in favor of jobs that played well compared to Polish salaries but were unskilled work not in their profession (Novicka 2012).

Janeta et al. (2011) noted that Polish graduates are willing to accept work for example in the hospitality sector, which is not their profession and below their qualification when they go abroad, because it is seen as “a good start”. It offers opportunities to get in contact with people, financial benefits and flexibility. Nowick (2012) finds that many believe that “all poles start low”. The often see their first job as a temporary solution, i.e. to problems such as financing studies, paying of debts, “gain time to search for something better”, others again hope for promotion on the job. Eade et al. (2007) suggest

that many young Poles believe that it in western Europe hard work and learning on the job will be rewarded with promotion irrespective of class background.

2.4 Migration decision making process

In the previous chapter I discussed some values and goals my informants mentioned when they spoke about the reasons why they went abroad. However, these motivations were often not enough to explain why my informants choose to leave Poland and move to a particular place at a particular time. De Jong and Fawcett's (1981 p.57) value expectancy model is not specific about the process of migration decision. It implies that a perceived lack or dissatisfaction with locally available opportunities lead to considering migration and exploring opportunities abroad. A comparison and evaluation of opportunities to attain values and goals at the place of origin and potential migration destination will then lead to a decision whether and if so where to move.

However, in most cases the accounts of my informants do not correspond to such a pattern. Their accounts feature values, goals and aspirations as well as discontent with the current situation in Poland. Nevertheless, in most cases these are not the impetus for considering migration. In most cases my informants said that "an opportunity" to go abroad arose, and only then they started to consider migration. Thus, the consideration and evaluation of conditions abroad happened, but not out of dissatisfaction but rather in response to a concrete occasion.

In Paulas case such a concrete opportunity appeared when she met a Polish couple who lived in Stavanger. It was a random encounter, she got to know them during a holiday with her siblings in the Carpathian Mountains in Poland. They invited her to visit them in Stavanger and later suggested her a job in a Stavanger souvenir store. Only then Paula started to evaluate her situation in Poland and consider migration an option. For the reasons described in the previous chapter she decided to accept the offer. A similar story was told by Eva. She also randomly met a Polish person who was living in Stavanger and on a holiday in Poland. During her studies, she was working at a restaurant:

I was walking around the desks and checking if everything was clean etc. and I found a bag someone had forgotten under a table. I took it. A person came back after two hours to pick it up. And he gave me some money as reward, but I didn't take it, apparently there was something valuable in his bag, so he asked if he could have my contact. This was a guy around forty and had a fiancée. I gave him my mail and we were writing for a while. He wanted to thank me, to give me money, I didn't accept any money. After a while, I knew that they were in Norway, he suggested me to visit them in Norway. I didn't know what was going on. I had my plans in Poland (ułożone życie), I was about to finish Uni, I had good work, I was happy about my promotion, it was a couple of months after my promotion, and there suddenly someone comes and number one, tries to give me a lot of money, two, invites me for a journey. I didn't

know what was going on (o co chodzi), and I said no, I am going nowhere. And we met a couple of times in Poland, for dinner, we talked, we got to know each other and we became friends.

Same as Paula, Eva is also invited to Norway by someone who lives already there. However, she initially refuses to accept the invitation, since she is happy with her situation in Poland and does not aspire for change. However, this changed within the months after the encounter:

I was writing my bachelor thesis, a very difficult examination, economic law, terrible books, I had a lot of law. Afterwards, as fate would have it, I had already enough of this work (at the restaurant), because as much as I had been happy about it before, somehow (...) my boss started to plague me terribly, for example I had to work 16 hour a day, from 8 in the morning to midnight, several days in a row, no free time and many responsibilities. (...) And I thought, for this money, so much stress, so much nerves it's not worth it. And the end of the story is, (...) my grandfather died (...) and I told my boss that I needed three days off, because of the funeral of my grandfather. But he did not agree (...). And I told him, okay, then these are my last three days I am working for you. I stayed one more day, and then I said I am not coming anymore. I quit this work, there was the funeral, I thought everything through, and after this funeral I thought, work is not everything and that I had to change my life maybe. And I changed it. I quit this job, and focused 100% on my studies, to finish my bachelor thesis. I really put myself into it, so it would be tip top. And I defended it and then I left for Norway. I wanted to orient myself whether I could find work here. (...) I had gotten this Norwegian language course from these people as thank you. (...) And they were all the time encouraging me to come and try it out. I tell you, they changed my life and they helped me very, very much. (...) And several days went by and I found work.

Eva was increasingly dissatisfied with the working conditions. Long hours and low pay are the main factors of dissatisfaction. She decides to quit the job after her employer denies her to attend the funeral of her grandfather, which is an unacceptable situation for her. As a consequence, she finds herself in a situation without work and thus free to reconsider the option of migration to Norway. Just as the other informants, she does not consider looking for other employment in Poland. As she states at another point in the interview she was even offered a job in her profession during her last semester of studies. Instead she decides to “try it out” after being continuously encouraged to consider migration to Norway.

Evas account illustrates how the willingness to consider migration and respond to an opportunity depends on personal circumstances. Just as in Paulas and Evas case, Katarzyna and her husband started considering migration only in response to an concrete suggestion of work abroad. A university friend

and a former colleague of her husband was working at an Oil company in Stavanger: “One day he called to my husband and told him that the company that he was working with was still looking for a specialist with the same specialization that my husband was working in.” Katarzyna then describes her and her husband’s situation in Poland and their considerations whether to accept respond to the suggestion or not:

My husband also went on assignments abroad during the three four years that we lived in Torun. He went on assignments to India. Just, these assignments were of such kind that they really annoyed me because sometimes he disappeared for two three months, sometimes for a month. Here was a small child, here I was going to work, and he is not here and I never knew when he would return. (...) Once he went for two weeks but returned after one and half months, so three times longer than I had counted on. We could not plan any holydays, simply it was unpredictable. And he also worked in very diverse places, sometimes in the desert, sometimes in some small villages, sometimes in a town. It was very hard to be in contact. They used satellite telephone, if it worked, and it was very costly. So sometimes he calls and then suddenly the connection breaks down. The contact was simply not the best. We were writing on the internet, but it was simply a weak contact. Furthermore, I got pregnant. He continued to travel abroad, but we were both already exhausted from this lifestyle. And the money wasn't either the best.

Katarzyna describes strong dissatisfaction with certain conditions, that are mostly related to the requirements of her husband’s job and the needs of the family that do not match, long stays abroad, while Katarzyna is on her own with a young child and a job. The salary is mentioned briefly in the end, but seems to be not a major concern. Even though Katarzyna describes that the situation has been like this since a considerable amount of time they had not considered migration until the invitation from the college in Norway. Only then they started to evaluate benefits and costs of migration and it becomes clear that this is a chance to change their situation.

When the opportunity arose to go abroad, and I was on maternity leave at the time, well I was pregnant with A, and it was clear that I would go on maternity for a year, that I would not have to be at work, so we could try it for a year, to go to Norway and see, if we like it, then great, if not we return. I could simply take one year off from Geophysics Torun, take this maternity leave.

It is not clear whether Katarzyna refers to the invitation of the college as opportunity or if it relates to the whole situation, including her being on maternity leave and thus free to leave to Norway without risking unemployment. It is clear, that in this case the migration decision is somewhat complicated by the fact that not a single person is migrating but a whole household. All household members needs

must be considered and negotiated. They are not necessary the same for all household members. Besides Katarzynas career also the child's needs had to be considered. Katarzyna describes her thoughts:

I thought that for sure better now than later. I thought if he (the son) would be already seven or six and had started school in Poland, when these connections in School are more intensive, that would be definitely worse than now. So, that was the last chance.

The three previously described cases of migration decision making suggest, that the model of value expectancy (De Jong and Fawcett 1981) needs to be extended. The assumption, that migrant's decision-making process starts with dissatisfaction about locally available opportunities does not correspond to my informant's accounts. In the three previously described cases the evaluation of migration happens in response to what my informants perceived and described as an *opportunity*. An already abroad living person known and trusted by the potential migrant suggests a job or invites the potential migrant to his or her place abroad. My informants repeatedly highlighted the importance of having someone to go to. Eva for example stated: "I knew it was the only way, they wanted me, I had a place to sleep, that's very important".

The influence of other migrants on individuals' migration decisions has been extensively studied as the role of social networks in migration (Massey et al 1993). Social networks have become a major research focus in the study of Polish migration. The existence of huge migration networks between Poland and western countries and its importance for migration decision making has been described by numerous researchers. White (2011 p.73) suggests that social networks "constitute a major factor of primary importance in explaining recent east west migration in Europe" One key assumptions about the role of social networks in migration is the *facilitating hypothesis* (Haug 2008). It is argued that social contacts abroad channel migration to their own places by facilitating adjustment to the new location with support to find work, financial support, encouragement and access to their personal contacts and friends (Ritchey 1976 p.389; Tilly and Brown 1967).

The notion of opportunity in my informants' accounts was sometimes underpinned by religious notions of destiny and predestination. Both Eva and Paula, who were devout believers, saw more than a simple coincides or favourable circumstances that led to their migration. They used formulations such as "as fate would have it", "a door was opened" or "I think it was destiny" when they spoke about the circumstances of their migration. They attributed the quality of a calling from a force majeure to the invitation which certainly increased their willingness to accept the offer.

Similar notions were also observed by White (2011), whose informants responded viewed invitations from abroad as an opportunity one has to take advantage of sometimes despite no urgent necessity and simply for the sake of it being an opportunity, while others who were not invited abroad did not

consider migration despite difficult conditions. The opportunity was seen as “fates gift, (that) cannot be rejected” (White 2011 p.72) and a survey conducted among Poles in small towns in eastern Poland finds that “there is a pool of Poles who are not planning to take any active steps to migrate but who might well depart abroad if the opportunity presents itself” (White 2011 p.72). Furthermore White (2011) observes that observes a discourse that illustrates the active role of already established Poles abroad in chain migration. Already established migrants “persuade”, “collect” or “pull over” new Poles abroad. In a socio-cultural environment where chain migration is the appropriate way to migrate it is not surprising that random encounters such as in the case of Eva and Paula can lead to invitations abroad and finally result in a migration. It is normal to invite people abroad and it is normal to respond to such invitations. White (2011) argues that in the Polish context networks are no longer simply used as a “mechanism for migration, but rather that they are often truly a cause of migration, in the sense that migration would not have occurred without an invitation from an existing migrant”. My findings correspond in many ways to her observations and suggest that the discourse of opportunity and practice of responding to invitation and joining others is a phenomenon that can be observed irrespective of place and educational background. Nevertheless, not all of my informants waited to be invited. Justina migrated twice without being invited and knowing anyone at the destination place.

2.4.2 Experimental migration

However, as the following accounts show there is also another dimension to the idea of opportunity, that relates to the persons situation in Poland. The concept of opportunity was not just applied to a concrete invitation or suggestion of work abroad from another migrant. It could also be a reference to a broader constellation of factors and events, a reference to a particular situation the migrant found himself in at a particular time. For example, Justina did not get a place to study right after finishing high school, which was an opportunity to go abroad for a year.

Katarzyna’s account (see above) also illustrates such a situation very well. She states, that since she was pregnant, and thus eligible for in total one year maternity leave (6 months paid, 6 months unpaid). As she says the family “could try it for a year, to go to Norway and see, if we like it, then great, if not we return”. In this case Katarzyna is in a situation where she does not risk being without a job if the migration fails and they decide to return to Poland. Katarzyna would have the possibility to return to her employer. Thus, the situation is favorable since risks of migration are low.

In Eva’s account the situation changed from a situation where migration was seen as undesirable, since her situation in Poland was relatively satisfying, to a situation where she had quit her position, finished her studies, and was looking for new perspectives. In this situation was also willing to “try it out”. My other informants made also comments, that they could return to Poland and were not worried about

being able to reintegrate, find work and return to their lives in Poland. Izabela stated: "I could always return, no Problem at all." Justina related her decision to the consideration that return was cheap and at all time possible since transportation within Europe was cheap. Migration was not a big financial investment, thus not associated with risk:

And this mother, she was hearing that I was still unsure whether to come or not, whether to risk it... and she said, look, you come, if you don't like it you can go back at any time, it's not that I will hold you back. Try it, risk it. And I thought, the lady is right. It's not far, its Europa, it's very close. If I don't like it I buy a ticket and I am returning. No big issue. And I said, I am going, I am decided. And I didn't know much about Norway at the time. I googled Stavanger, what it was like... I liked what google showed me. And I came here. (it was not the US)

These considerations show that migration decisions were by no means final decisions much more an experiment, often open ended and without definite plans for the long term. In Paula's case for example it was even more a temporary undertaking that turned into a more long-term stay. "I saw it as a chance, there was no reason to say no, I could always come back to projecting. It was anyways temporary, I did not think about it as a permanent perspective, the hole stay in Norway."

My findings are supported by an earlier qualitative study conducted by White (2011) in eastern Poland. She finds also strong tendencies among her informants to view migration as something one can experiment with. "Having somewhere to go back to" is an important consideration and gives potential migrants "a sense of security that feeds into the belief that it is worthwhile experimenting with migration because return is always possible" (White 2011 p.75). Migration decisions are often made in situations where costs and risks of migration are low, i.e. after studies, when unemployed or temporarily laid off. White notes a generally positive and supportive attitude towards experimental migration, i.e. the willingness of some employers to grant employees unpaid leave in order they can go abroad in order to experiment with life abroad. Nowicka (2012) and Moskal (2011) also found such notions in their studies among young and highly educated Poles in the UK.

Viewing migration as experimental allows to see the migration decision as preliminary and correctable. It reduces the pressure of having to make the right choice and thus motivates potential migrants to "give it a try" (Novicka 2012). It can however also lead to situations were potential migrants take decisions without thoroughly considering its implications (White 2011; Novicka 2012). I argue that being in a situation where absence from Poland is not associated with risks and return is easily feasible can be an important aspect of the idea of opportunity and increase the willingness to migrate.

2.4.3 Norway as migration destination

According to De Jong and Fawcett's (1981) value expectancy model, migrants choose a migration destination where they expect to realize most of their prioritized value-goals. This implies that migrants consciously evaluate and weigh up the advantages and disadvantages not just of staying and going abroad but also of various places abroad. As shown in the previous chapter, the process of evaluating various places can be however, significantly shortened by placing a high importance on the existence of social contacts or a concrete job offer. In such cases migrants do not explicitly consider and evaluate their chances to attain certain values in different locations. Instead they assume or trust that the presence of a social contact has an impact on their chances to attain these values that cannot be made up for by any other means. Nevertheless, place related considerations happen. When migrants evaluate migration in response to an invitation, they have to at least compare the local Polish context and the place they were invited to. The following chapter explores migrants' considerations about Stavanger and whether they considered alternatives in their migration decision making process. My informants' accounts revealed rather limited knowledge about Norway and Stavanger prior to migration and little effort to acquaint themselves with information about the place. My informants for example did not undertake research about socioeconomic or cultural conditions in Norway. Instead, it seems that they relied mostly upon popular knowledge, information from other migrants who had invited them and in several cases on an inspection visit. Izabela described her knowledge of Norway as follows:

I knew they had great ski jumpers and cross country racers. You know, I knew that there are fjords and so on, because I was studying geology. Norway features quite a bit when it comes to Glaciers and glacier formation. I had heard about it, about the fjords, about the Norwegian mountains, and I had friends that went to Norway and I heard that they really liked it. So, I had some sort of idea from pictures and stories.

Paula also had an image of Norway in her mind: "I had always this picture of Norway: beautiful mountains, good roads, nice cars." Before she decided to move she visited her friends in Stavanger. Thus, she had an impression of the place and conditions. Paula explained that she adores hiking in the mountains and being in the nature. She claimed that the opportunities in Stavanger region were an important consideration in her decision to move abroad. In Poland, she had to travel a day to get to the mountains, here it was just at her doorstep. Particular values of stimulation made Stavanger as destination attractive for her.

Marta was the most enthusiastic about Norway as a place and attributed great importance to liking the place in her decision to move to Norway:

I lived in Stettin. I came here the first time because my dad was here. I came with my sister and my mum for holidays. I terribly fell in love with Norway and couldn't stop thinking, this would be my place. (...) It was magnificent. I fell in love. Beautiful nature, I liked the quiet, everything, I really liked it. (...) and I went back home, I was studying, and I knew, as soon as I finish Uni I will come here, I couldn't wait for it. So, I studied, lived in Stettin, everything was fine. My dad was here. (...) I studied and studied and once in a while we came here for holidays. And in the beginning, he was visiting us rather often in Poland, and later (...) we came here often for holidays, and every time I felt stronger that I want to come here... I want to come here. And finally, the day came when I finished studies and I came here. That's how it started.

Martalena had certainly the most detailed idea of Stavanger at the time when she was deciding to move to Norway since she had family in Stavanger, a source of detailed information and she had been there herself several times. She claims to have fallen in love with the place as reason to move. However, she offers little concrete reasons for her appreciation of the place. She mentions the beauty of the place and the quietness. It seems that the repeated exposure to the place contributed to form values that resulted in the wish to move to Stavanger. Marta's accounts however revealed that there were also other places she was very enthusiastic about. For example, she had considered to move to Spain. However, the presence of family members in Stavanger and the absence of social networks in Spain must have strongly influenced her choice of Stavanger. Marta was not the only one who had considered other places as migration destinations. Eva for example had always dreamt of going to the US but she did not get a visa at the time of her migration decision. When she came for an inspection visit to Stavanger she was rather disappointed by the rural character of Stavanger: "I came here for a week from Krakow to Stavanger. They (friends who invited her to Stavanger) showed me around the city, and then I asked them, but where is the city center? Where are more people? To my surprise there was nothing else..."

Like Eva, Izabela admitted that she would have gone to another place, if there would have been an opportunity. She was planning to study a semester abroad and there was an exchange partnership between her university and a university in Norway. "Honestly, I am not entirely convinced, if I had the choice between Norway and Spain, if I had picked Norway. But it happened that there was the option Norway, so why not."

Justina was the only informant who had migrated not in response to an invitation or job offer. She had searched the internet for au pair positions in various European countries. She stated a rather vague preference for Scandinavia.

Justina: I remember, I didnt want to go to the US anymore, I had decided that in Europe, different countries. I remember that I wanted Scandinavia the most.

Researcher: Why?

Justina: I don't know. Maybe because I probably like the cold. There was something, I don't know, something why I liked Norway. I guess there was a Eurovision song contests and a boy from Norway won. He played the violin. And somehow Norway was talked about (jakoś się o tej Norwegii zrobiło głośnie), there were various... And somehow, I liked Norway, I said what a wonderful country, I really would like to go there.

Researcher: But you heard about Norway only through television and internet?

Justina: I didn't really know about Norway because I didn't know anyone who had lived in Norway before. Only through television and internet more or less. I didn't know that much about Norway. Most about Norway I learned here.

The place of destination was not a major concern of hers. Instead, she was much more focused on finding a suitable family to work with. That was due to earlier migration experience. She had chosen a family for her first au pair in the US without getting to know them through skype in advance and later had to change the place because she was very unhappy with the conditions in the family.

I had put together my portfolio as au pair, that I was looking for families, and I had very many offers from different families. But since I knew how it worked, I was very demanding with regard to the choice of family. In order to not have to change again I was very demanding. I had lots of conversations with many families from different countries, from Germany, from England, from Spain, and from Sweden, and later I found this family from Norway.

It seems that she her interest for Norway only started to grow once she had found a family that appeared to be suitable for her in Norway. Such accounts illustrate well, how the characteristics of a place were often of secondary concern to the informants. Only in Marta's account particular qualities of Norway were given as reason to move to Stavanger. All other informants seemed to familiarize themselves with Stavanger only in response to a concrete invitation or job opportunity. As Justina's comment illustrates such information was rather superficial: "And I didn't know much about Norway at the time. I googled Stavanger, what it was like... I liked what google showed me. And I came here." Most informants based their decision on what they saw during an inspection visit or what they knew from their social networks and from popular culture.

It seemed that there was a strong confidence, that Norway was a desirable place and thus rather little research was undertaken to inform themselves about conditions in Norway, i.e. welfare provision. The fact that Norway is a country which is perceived as part of the west is simply enough for many to

believe that conditions will be fine. Such beliefs about life in the west have been described by White (2011) among others. She writes that her informants believed that In the west, everyone can have a decent standard of living, people do not have to watch every penny and hard work is fairly rewarded. Whites' informants associated the west with legal work, pension and health care and enough available jobs that are adequately remunerated for everyone. Life in the west, no matter where, was easier and more rewarding than in Poland. (White 2011 p.82-83).

My informants seemed to rely on such perception or images of life in the west and take them as substitute for a thorough examination of the conditions in Norway. It seems that the west is seen as somewhat homogenous place. Specific characteristics of western countries seemed to be of little importance to my informants in their migration decision. One other informant not from the sample, a Pole who had lived in England and later moved to Norway went as far as to say: "I tell you, I see it like this, in the end in every country...it's the same. I don't see such a difference, well I am not talking about what they pay you but about how you live. No difference." While national characteristics were mostly not considered, some of my informants mentioned characteristics of the place, such as the size of the town and the leisure opportunities as factors that mattered to them.

The relatively little attention that was given to Norway as destination is in stark contrast however, to some of my informants' accounts of previous migrations to the US. Here the destination place seemed to matter a lot. Two of my informants had been to the US, a third was aspiring to go there. All expressed a fascination for the US. Justina remembers how she wanted to see America after finishing high school: "I decided that I wanted to do this very much. (...) I don't know why I was so determined to go to the US, maybe I had this American Dream". Eva could not go to the US because she didn't not get a visa after her Studies. Now, a few years later she had finally gotten one and planned to travel to the US at the end of the year. She said she had been fascinated by the US since a long time and that she hoped to find an American husband one day:

"In my bottom of my heart I always wanted to have an American. I don't know why. Since many years, I adore America, maybe that's why something pulls me there, maybe also because I haven't ever been there. Maybe I imagine some American dream..."

America, the US was a mythical place in their imagination. Such associations were definitely not present in relation to Norway. Certainly, this can partly be explained by the century old migration history from Poland to the US, the stories that have developed around this migration in the Polish consciousness. Norway is a relatively new migration destination of Poles and knowledge about the place seems to just spread among the population in Poland.

3 Settlement, Return- and Re-migration

Migration decision making is a process that is not over once a migrant has reached his or her place of destination. Instead it is often followed by a long and continuous process of evaluating the initial migration decision. As described in the previous part of the study my informants thought of the move to Norway as an experiment and some had initially thought about it as temporary. Return was always an option. Thus, the decision to work and live in Norway was over and over reevaluated and several of my informants had in fact returned to Poland with the intention to stay there for good or without having decided upon the future. In this part of the study I describe and discuss my informant's experiences of living in Norway and their plans for the future. I explore the motivations and aspirations that shape my informant's attitudes to staying in Norway, to return to Poland and to re-migration to third countries.

3.1 Considerations about future mobility

As in the first Part, I will analyze my informants' considerations about stay in Norway, return to Poland or re-migrate to a third country along the seven categories of values *wealth, status, affiliation, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, and morality* proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981 p.57). This approach allows to compare motivations behind initial migration and current motivations to remain or leave Norway and study if and how values and aspirations change over time. It is also suitable to assess whether migrants were able to attain the value goals behind their initial migration to Norway. In order to explore the values and expectations of my informants I asked them to describe their experience of living and working in Norway so far and their current plans and aspirations for the future.

It must be bared in mind that my informants' considerations about the future are qualitatively different from their accounts of considerations behind their decision to Norway. Those were retrospective reconstructions of motivations behind a decision and action that were already realized and thus potentially biased by cognitive restructuring and rationalization of choices. The considerations about future mobility or immobility are prospective. They are not biased by knowing the outcome of the process. Yet they are thoughts, dreams, fears and reflections at a specific point in time. They are biased by current circumstances and recent events. These considerations are not necessarily plans and they might change over time and potentially never translate into actions.

3.1.1 Summary of employment trajectories in Norway

Before I begin with the analysis of future aspirations I summarize my informants' employment trajectories since their first arrival in Stavanger in order to provide the context of their future aspirations and plans.

Katarzyna and her husband are Geophysicists. Both have worked for several years in Poland in their Profession. Katarzyna came to Stavanger after her husband got a job in one of the Oil companies in the city. She had given birth to her second child just a few months before she moved to Stavanger. Thus, for the first seven months in Stavanger she was on maternity leave. Then she started to look for a job in her profession. She perceived the language as biggest challenge. The jobs in her industry are in English. She had known English rather well, since she had worked for a year in the US however, she had never used it professionally. Nevertheless, she found work already after the first interview. During the crisis of 2008 her husband lost her job but he was able to find another job within less than three months. Katarzyna lost her work in the wake of the 2015 oil crisis, her company laid off 75% of the staff. She has been on maternity leave since 2015 but when she returned to work after a year she was

laid off since the company had no projects in Norway. Thus, she had stayed at home with her four children for another year. She had attended intensive Norwegian language courses and was currently applying for a job at the Norwegian welfare authority.

After finishing her studies in Geophysics in Poland Izabela had successfully applied at for a job at a Stavanger Oil company. At the time of the interview she had worked for six consecutive years at the company.

Justina had come for a one-year au pair to Stavanger. Afterwards she had found a job as a waiter at a catering company after a friend had recommended her the employer. She had worked there for five years.

Paula had studied landscape architecture and worked in her profession in Poznan, her home town in Poland. She had come to Stavanger for a seasonal job as sales person in a souvenir store. She had worked three summer seasons in Stavanger and lived during the winter season with her family in Poland, where she worked self-employed as landscaper. She came to Stavanger to have some change from home in Poland, see something new, enjoy the nature and earn some extra money. Her stays in Norway had been always temporary until this year she had been offered work also during the winter season and thus stayed in Stavanger.

It was anyways temporary, I did not think about it as a permanent perspective, the whole stay in Norway. I only recently realized that I spend already a sizable amount of time here, and that I may as well make myself a bit more at home here. So, I started to get nice things for my apartment and room, to decorate it. I think my stay has become a bit more long-term recently.

Eva had been invited by friends, a couple she had met in Poland, to Stavanger. They had given her a Norwegian language course as a present and suggested her to stay and find work in Stavanger. Eva had studied already some Norwegian by herself in Poland, before she left so she was able to take the A2 level course when she arrived in Stavanger. She started to look for a job once she had arrived in Stavanger.

I started learning Norwegian in Poland, I simply wrote down some words, and when I was traveling with the metro or bus, simple words like one to three... And when I came here, in January, after Christmas I went to the course. Not the beginner one but A2 and I was very proud of myself, that I could go there directly and that I could count to twenty, I was so happy. And several days went by and I found work. (...) I took my CV and went through the city. (...) I wanted to work in a restaurant too, something with coffee, something like that... (...) I found a work for the weekends, so, Friday, Saturday, Sundays I worked in a café (...). I studied 4 days a week and the rest I worked.

After three months, she decided to stop the course and work full time. She found work in restaurant very quickly. However, the employer did not want to pay her at the end of the month. Eva went to court and was able to get her salary which boosted her self-confidence.

So they didn't pay me and I went to court here, and in the end I got the money, and I was again very proud of myself because in a foreign country, not knowing the language very well, not knowing the law exactly, I had this force, strength within, this "I will show it to you".

While she had been working in the restaurant a Polish couple who was also running a restaurant in Stavanger had offered her a job. She accepted and after the issue with the other employer was solved she started working for the Polish couple. She worked there for one and half years, after which the restaurant close down due to the 2015 oil crisis. The experience of being able to deal with the situation with her previous employer had inspired her to support friends, mainly other Poles in Stavanger to deal with legal matters.

So I got the money and this taught me, that I really want to work with law, and after while it developed, because my friends asked me "How did you do that? Could you do it for me too?" (...) How to do this and that, official matters, matters with the authorities. I always liked it, but I also knew that working at the office would be too boring for me. I like to be in different places and do different things, so it is interesting.

In the beginning, she did not consider working in her profession, law and public administration, in Norway, since she didn't know the language and Norwegian law well enough. However, the incidence reminded her of her passion and when she lost the work with the Polish couple she came back to the idea of working in the field of law.

Eva: I said I will start doing what really wanted to do. And I opened, I started this Facebook site, Eva is Helping and that was my occupation for a while, helping with all sorts of things, when you had a problem with whatever, I helped you, on the one hand I was looking for some sort of aspiration, motivation, to develop myself, to get to know new things, to learn things, to know everything, and on the other side I also wanted to make money. So I got to know people, more and more and more problems and more problems.

Researcher: And could you live from that?

Eva: Yes, I could live, but there was not much left. But it was not bad, for living, for the flat it was enough, so it was okay.

Eva advertised herself through Facebook sites such as Poles in Stavanger and was recommended in the Polish community. "...one person told the other one, everyone knew"

Marta had joined her father in Stavanger after she had finished her studies in Stettin in Poland. She had started to learn Norwegian already before she came to Norway. She searched for job opportunities on the internet after she had arrived. But she could not find a job in her profession immediately.

I had immediately some different options where I could work, but I didn't want to work in another profession then the one I wanted. And these were various jobs, you know like all girls do, cleaning, cooking, etc. But I dint want it, I said, no, I have studied, it should be something I want to do in the future.

Only after four month she found something related to her university education. It was a small family business of a Norwegian family, a horticultural farm on Rennesoy, an island about 20 kilometers from Stavanger. She worked for a year on the farm but when she got sick she decided to quit the job, since it was a lot of commuting and she did not want to live on the island.

In Poland Marta had also worked as a photographer and educated herself in photography and graphic design. After she had quit the job on the farm she made this list of photographers in Stavanger region, drove around to the places and presented her map. Already the first one she presented herself to offered her a job and she worked for him for two and half years. She quit the job because she wanted to work as landscape architect again. She presented herself to different companies around Stavanger, she wasn't looking through the internet for work, she went directly to different offices and she found a company that liked her projects and employed her. She worked for one and half years in the landscaping office. However, she was very unhappy with the atmosphere in the office. Her main complaint was that her colleagues behaved apparently tolerant and friendly towards others but behind the back they were derogatory, particular towards people with lower education:

So among people they were like friendly and nice, but they treated everyone from above, as if they were something better. (...) One lady was cleaning at the place, and for me there is no difference between a cleaner and an architect, it's the same, she has her job, we have ours, and if I will like her will depend on what kind of person she is and not what she is working. But they, it was terrible, they were pretending to be friendly, but as soon as she left they started to make nasty remarks, that terribly disturbed me, that there is such a class division, and I said, I am not going to hang out with such people. So, I said I stop that, I would like to do something else.

She quit this job as well and worked for two years in a pizza and burger bar. Due to health issues, she stopped the work after two years and intended to open a business for photography and graphic design.

But at the time her mother opened a restaurant with traditional Polish food in the city and Marta decided to help her. She has been working in her mother's business now for almost a year.

3.1.2 Stimulation

Values, that related to what De Jong and Fawcett (1981) described under the category of *Stimulation* had been a major factor in migrants' reconstructions of their decision to come to Norway. My informants seemed generally very satisfied with their choice of Stavanger as far as it concerned the aspect of stimulation. No one expressed disappointment that related to unmet expectations concerning the idea of adventure, change etc. In fact, most praised their lifestyle in Norway in this relation. For example, several of my informants had mentioned that they had been unable to go on holidays regularly in Poland, in Norway they earned enough to afford holidays, even several times a year. Marta for example stated:

I can allow myself much more things, even for the first time in life in January I went for a holiday to a warm place. Never in life I would have done something like that in Poland. It was always normal (living standard), but not to travel four times a year, and now for example I am able to allow myself that.

The new access to stimulating activities was in this case the result of the different salaries in Norway. All of them had traveled around Norway and praised the local environment with its opportunities for recreation and adventure. Izabela for example stated:

I really love the nature. I love mountains and I like outdoor activities, so it's almost perfect country for me, if the weather was better, more times during the year it would be perfect. But still even as it is its very nice with all the landscapes and places to go. That I really like. I like the cycling paths that are everywhere....

Despite the overall satisfaction with the conditions and lifestyle opportunities in Norway Izabela considered further migration an option. She had been in Stavanger since six years working in the same job and felt that a new location could be a welcome change. For her return to Poland was however not an option. She considered the job opportunities in her profession in Poland as very limited and uninteresting:

It's just that the work opportunities are so much better outside of Poland for what I work with. It's a bit difficult to go back and do a very boring job when you have experience with something

more challenging. It's one thing. (...) And the second thing, maybe the even bigger thing why not, I just want to experience something outside of Poland.

She was convinced that she could go back to Poland any time, if she wanted to but at the moment the option seemed not attractive to her, she was more attracted by the challenges of new places. Her account displays strong appreciation of a mobile lifestyle, traveling, adventure, explore different places and new challenging tasks. She felt that the opportunities to live in different place were very good in our times and she wanted to make use of it. Therefore, she was open to leaving Norway and going to another country. Stability, economic concerns and attachment to a place and people seem of little concern for her.

I always felt that if I want I can go back at any time. And live there. And now I have the opportunity to travel, to see different countries, and to be honest, if I could, I would move somewhere else for some years now. So, it's just that, I want to travel and live in different countries. It's very good opportunities nowadays you have, that you can do that actually, you don't need to stay at one place. Sometimes I think, going back would be just an easy option, but I like not easy. For now, I am staying (...) but if there was an opportunity, I... my nature is kind of calling for new stuff. Almost anywhere.

However, she admitted that her situation had changed since she had come to Norway. Now she was married and a move abroad had to be negotiated with her husband. She said she would only accept an offer abroad if there would be opportunities for both of them abroad or if it was temporary. She was also not actively looking for something abroad.

Eva also aspired independence and stimulation at work. She wanted to become self-employed and work in a stimulating environment in the future. She explained that her current job as a sales person in a souvenir store was a mean to that end.

I would like to be self-employed, have an own company, and work with people. I hope, and I really believe in it, that my future that I will have a service company. I am thinking about such a life project, the place where I am working... I have always been interested in self-development, I wanted to have my own business, not to be dependent on anyone, (...) but I know, for your dreams you have to have money, to start your own business you have to have your own contribution, so I am working for that, to have something to live from when I will be unemployed, when I will travel and develop my own business. So, for now it's this work. In the near future, I would like to provide a broad range of services, with an accent on importing cars from the US to Poland. Because I get very sick of monotony, every day the same (...). People ask me where do you take this energy from, because I do a lot of things. I was also thinking about

a business with focus on doing shopping's for very rich polish woman clients, who want products that are not accessible on the Polish marked, but in Norway for example. (...) I spent one month in England last year, in Spain and in England, and from there I was sending shoes, bags with stuff, to woman clients in Norway. I got these clients mostly through Facebook and recommendation. And when I came back here, the girls continued to ask for stuff. But this work through the internet, thousand questions, really people ask so many things, seize, this and that, it takes so much time, from the morning to late night to answer the questions. Therefore, I wouldn't want to do it for normal people, only for those who have more money, so I can earn something too. Actually such a goal of my life would be to work directly for the client, for example you dream of such and such car, I will make it happened for you (...) It is ambitious...

In fact, Eva had quite concrete ideas about her future and had also undertaken steps towards completion of her aspirations. She had experimented with this kind of business and planned a trip to the US at the end of the season to further develop her ideas and explore opportunities. She was the only one who had expressed some discontent in regard to the opportunities in Stavanger in terms of stimulation. When asked whether she could imagine staying in the US she said: "Yes, because here, it is a small town, zero life, I would like to see other places."

3.1.3 Stability

De Jong and Fawcett suggest seven categories of commonly stated values or goals migrants aspire to fulfill. I deem their categories as useful to organize and distinguish between qualitatively different values and goals. I argue that they are particularly useful to highlight the diversity of considerations and aspirations related to migration. However, after reviewing the literature about motivations and aspirations of Polish migrants in Europe and considering the accounts of my informants in Stavanger I suggest adding 'Stability' as another category of values and goals. This value relates to aspirations of leading a stable, predictable live. This can be in relation to personal circumstances, such as living a stable family live (opposite of stimulation), and it can relate to a predictable future in relation to job and income (for example a permanent job), it can relate to the overall economic and political environment, for example a system that offers reliable protection from corruption and other crimes or a stable economy.

Even though stability had not been a major consideration in migrant's explanations about their choice to move to Norway, it was an important theme in the accounts of the accounts about my informants' present situation and for some an important consideration for the future. Eva, Paula and Marta

associated their stay in Norway and the opportunities in Stavanger with stability and valued these. Eva described her current situation as follows:

Well, at the moment, the last several months, last half year, year, I lived very well, as of now, I have a beautiful apartment, in a good place, as if I found like a stabilization in my life, I earn well, enough for life, I can go to Poland once a month, I can allow myself better shoes, a new bag, and I am actually saving... So at the moment, I have it good here in Norway, I have good apartment, work, nice employers, I have several good friends, it's truly good.

Paula spoke in similar terms about her situation:

My life here in Norway is good. I am satisfied and I feel glad about my situation. I feel comfortable. I have a nice living situation, good apartment and nice flat mate. I have good work and colleagues I like working with.

Marta perceived the situation in Poland as unstable and felt that live in Norway was “safer”. Nevertheless, she considered returning to Poland with her boyfriend in the long term an option. They had inherited a house there. However, she felt they would need some savings, in order to be able to cope with the uncertainties in Poland.

Yes, for sure we will still be here for a couple of years, so we can make some more savings, in order for it to be a bit safer to go to Poland, if we should go there. (...) What is beyond any doubt is, that, by living here in Norway, I live more relaxed, because it was always, at home it was normal that there were better and worse times. So, in this regard you can live safer.

Jakub, an informant that was not part of the sample, was running a car painting workshop in Stavanger. He was not willing to return to Poland. He thought the uncertainties in Poland were just too strong, especially for self-employed the conditions were not good he stated. When asked if he was staying in Stavanger he answered:

Yes, unless something happens, 90% we are here. If it would change in Poland so you could return and have a save life there (spokojnie), but that's probably still long years to go. I don't know if we will see such change in our life.

Stability was also an important value in Justina's considerations about stay and return. She had not yet found the stability she aspired. Her job in Norway was on the call, she had no contract with fixed hours. Justina aspired to find something else in the long term. She admitted that she was still unsure whether to stay in Norway or to return to Poland. Last year she had returned to Poland during the winter season

and stayed with her parents, this year her employer had ensured she had work also during the winter season, which motivated her to stay in Norway. Regarding the probability of return she stated:

Now it's more, its 70% that I stay and 30% that I go back. A year ago, it would have been 50/50. This three months in Poland I was more set up to... that I don't know yet. I wanted to return here, but I wasn't sure with this work and my sister was telling me 'how long are you planning to work like this, that there is work there is no work...' I said, well it's not exiting, but I like this work and life here. I have friends, I have this work. This year it's much better, they made an effort to ensure that I have work, because I am working for a long time there, they are content, they don't want me to go somewhere else. This year they took care that I have work, I didn't have to go to Poland during this period. So now actually I think from this perspective, that if it stays like it is now with the work, then I would prefer to stay here. 70% Norway, 30% Poland.

Her sister had questioned Justina's unstable and uncertain situation. Nevertheless, Justina felt positive about her life in Norway. When asked whether she would like to change her situation, she was ambivalent, on the one hand she liked the work, on the other she did not think they would give her a permanent contract. Just as Paula, she felt that she had to improve her Norwegian language skills in order to apply for more stable jobs:

I think, yes, I want to change... I like the work very much because you are all the time on the move, I like being on the move. A lot is happening, a lot of contact with people, we have a nice team... It's only that I don't have a permanent contract, if they would give me a permanent contract, a more stable position, then maybe yes. Currently it's a bit uncertain. So, at the moment I have to improve (opanować lepiej) the Norwegian language and start looking for something else. I think once I will feel more certain about the language, I will look for something else.

Justina was rather open about the work she would like to do in the future. She didn't see it as a priority to find something in her profession. She considered to make use of her language skills and apply in a job as intermediary between Poles and Norwegian authorities. When asked whether she aspired to do something related to her studies she replied:

No, rather whatever. Maybe something actually more related to languages, with English language or even with Polish language, for the reason that there is a large Polish diaspora here, there is a lot of projects going on with Poles, or even at NAV, locally, I know that they employ Poles. But Norwegian is very much required, you have to have a high level.

Justina thought that a prerequisite to finding work in another sector was improving her language skills. However, she was also not doing a course at the time of the interview.

Paula's stay in Norway had also recently changed from temporary to more permanent (see chapter 3.1.1). Thus, her aspirations had also changed. She wished to find work in her profession as landscaper in Norway in the long term. However, just as Justina, she assumed that she needed better Norwegian skills in order to apply for something in her profession. She had also not undertaken any steps to improve her language skills because she worked long hours and had little free-time and was thus too tired to make an effort to learn Norwegian: "I have no time and energy to learn Norwegian at the moment. I work six days a week, in Summer even seven. Nine hours a day."

3.1.4 Status

As already mentioned in chapter 2.3.3 and seen in the summary of employment trajectories, several of my informants were willing to undertake labor that did not correspond to their education and qualification. Eva, Paula and Justina had worked most of the time in Stavanger in hospitality jobs that did not require any formal qualification. Marta had worked in her profession as landscaper but later changed into hospitality jobs. Katarzyna had worked as Geophysicist in an oil company but lost her job in the wake of the oil crisis and was reorienting herself. Only Izabela was working in her profession as geophysicist at the time of the interview.

However, my informants were mostly positive about their work in Norway. They praised the material gains and standard of living in Norway, that would not have been attainable to them in Poland. They also liked their colleagues and the general working environment (see chapter 3.1.3). Nevertheless, most informants saw the work as temporary solution and aspired to change their situation in the long term. Eva for example confirmed several times that she saw her current position as a temporary and transient: "I have worked here in Norway as a cleaner, I am not ashamed. I am not ashamed, because I know it is temporary, a way to something next, like an adapter." She is willing to accept work below her aspirations as a temporary solution to attain values in the future.

Some informants had already concrete ideas and taken measures to change their situation. Some other informants saw challenges such as having to learn Norwegian in order to apply for skilled jobs and had not taken any steps yet.

My informants' accounts resonate with patterns described by Novicka (2012) in her study of deskilling among Polish university graduates in the UK. She observed, that many Polish graduates in the UK found themselves in a situation where they were satisfied with their earnings which "compensated" for the loss in status from not being able to work in their profession. She argues that Polish university graduates judge their circumstance according to a "double frame of reference". Instead of comparing

their situation to British University graduates they look back to conditions in Poland. This allows them to perceive their situation as acceptable. They think they do well compared to their peers living in Poland, who often face the same kind of deskilling yet with much lower wage levels in Poland struggle to meet their needs. In the UK, at least they are able to lead a “normal life” (Galasińska and Kozłowska 2009) and afford some materialistic comfort. Thus, they are willing to accept underqualified positions abroad resulting in very high numbers of Polish university graduates working in Professions below their skills in the UK (Novicka 2012). Such accounts echo my informant’s arguments of satisfaction in their current situation despite deskilling.

Just as my informants, Novicka’s research participants perceived their situation as temporary and transient, on the way to something next, arguing that “their time has not yet come” (Novicka 2012 p.20, see also Goffman 2008). Unskilled jobs were often perceived as opportunity to get some foothold in England, learn the language and have time to apply for something next. Many of her informants also perceived the lack of language skills as barrier to attaining a skilled job in their profession.

Novicka observes that many “get stuck” in this situation of transience. Their position is good enough to satisfy their immediate needs, but their chances to get skilled jobs do not grow over time. They do not learn English as expected, they don’t gain professional experience in their field, instead a hole in their CV develops. Many informants realized that finding a job that matched their skills was after all difficult due to discrepancies between the Polish and the British education system. Polish university graduates in the UK felt that they lack practical knowledge which they did not acquire during their theory based studies in Poland in order to successfully apply to better jobs in the UK. Also their chances to find a job in their profession in Poland had decreased over time, due to years spend working outside their profession. In addition, high costs of living in Poland would force many to return to their parents’ home, thus coming back to a situation of dependence that has been one of the initial reasons for migration. Finally, they wished to maintain a standard of living they had developed in the UK which was mostly not attainable with Polish wages. Thus they were in a situation where they became “suspended in migration” (Novicka 2012 p.20).

The picture Novicka draws of the situation of Polish university graduates in the UK is in many ways similar to the situation of my informants who worked in unskilled jobs. However, Novicka describes more dissatisfaction. She speaks of “narratives of a lack of plans for the future and melancholic stories of living day-to-day” (Novicka 2012 p.6). Her informants seemed frustrated about working below their skills and missing perspectives for professional advancement. My informants engaged mostly in more hopeful discourses. They did not complain about lack of stimulation at work and did not perceived themselves as stuck in a situation.

Marta’s employment trajectory shows, once she had overcome the language barrier, she was able to transfer the professional skills she had acquired during her studies in Poland to Norway. Evas website

“Eva is helping” is an example that there are also opportunities to make use of personal skills in creative ways. The existence of a large Polish diaspora in Stavanger offers also opportunities to make use of personal skills beyond the higher education, such as language and cultural competences, as the considerations of Katarzyna and Justina to work at the Norwegian Welfare Authority show.

Marta, as well as Katarzyna and Izabela who worked in the oil sector are examples that deskilling is not inevitable and can be overcome. In particular the accounts of my informants about a larger group of Polish expats in the Norwegian oil sector suggest, that deskilling does not affect all Poles in Norway and more importantly, that there are examples of migrants that challenge stereotypes about Polish migrant as unskilled laborer in manual professions. My informants accounts suggest that Poles occupy leading positions in highly specialized scientific professions that require high standard education. A number of Polish migrants is working in a sector that is usually not associated with eastern European migration. These professionals are often not counted as migrants but labeled as expats. The oil sector is of course a very particular work environment governed by international companies with international standards, employing very high numbers of international staff. The working language is not Norwegian but English. Thus, the transfer of skills might be significantly easier than in professions such as law for example. Furthermore, Poles working in the oil sector probably represent only a very small proportion of the total migrant population from Poland in Norway. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight these case, as well as the other examples of successful skill transfer to Norway as in the case of Marta and Eva, since such examples can contribute to a diverse picture of Polish migrants in Norwegian society which is necessary in order to address deskilling and hurdles to professional mobility Poles currently face in Norway.

3.1.5 Affiliation, Autonomy and the Wellbeing of others

In this chapter, I discuss considerations about stay, return or remigration that related to other people. De Jong and Fawcett’s (1981) proposed two values that relate directly to other people: *Autonomy* and *Affiliation*. The first relates to the wish of becoming independent from others while the second relates to the wish of being with or close to others. As discussed in chapter 2.3.2 values relating to the category of autonomy were important motivations in some of my informants’ reasons behind emigration from Poland. Considerations about affiliation played a role in two informants decisions to move to Norway. I suggest to add another value category to De Jong and Fawcett’s (1981) Value Expectancy Model, the value category *Wellbeing of others*. The category is useful to distinguish between values that relate to individual needs and desires and consideration of other peoples’ needs. Considerations of other people’s wellbeing can relate to values of all other categories, i.e. migration might be motivated by better income opportunities for the husband, better education for children etc. Nevertheless, it is

useful to distinguish whether values are to be attained for one self or for others, because sometimes individual goals might be in conflict with the wellbeing of others and it is worth exploring how individual needs are weighted against other people's needs and who's needs are prioritized. In this chapter I explore how considerations about *Affiliation, Autonomy and the Wellbeing of others* affected my informants' attitudes towards stay, return and remigration. I explore considerations relating to affiliation to, autonomy from and the wellbeing of friends, partners, children and parents.

3.1.5.1 Friends

Affiliation to friends was sometimes cited as a reason to stay in Norway or return to Norway after a break in Poland. Missing friends in Poland was not mentioned as reason to return. Some informants had mentioned that they had missed their friends from Poland during the first time after arrival in Norway, but all had quickly made new friends in Stavanger. Such friendships were valued as very important for the own wellbeing. The friends of my informants came from a range of different national backgrounds. Most of my informants had large social networks to other Poles in Stavanger. Given the high numbers of Poles in Stavanger the opportunities to make friends with other Poles are good. Some of my informants highlighted that such friendships with other Poles were particularly important for them while others experienced that common ethnic background was not necessarily important for good friendships.

Eva and Paula had mostly Polish friends. They lived with other Poles, at work they had Polish colleagues and during their free time they interacted with other Poles i.e. on Polish diaspora websites such as the Facebook group Poles in Stavanger and in Polish associations and organizations such as the Polish mess in Stavanger, a Polish choir or at the Polish bar.

Izabela and Justina, were significantly less oriented towards Poles in their social activities. When Justina had arrived in Stavanger she did not have any friends and a job (au pair) where she had almost no meeting points with peers, she had used various internet pages, such as expats in Stavanger, or Stavanger active people to get in touch with other people who were new in Stavanger and wanted to meet people. She said she had never been particularly focused on Poles. Izabela had met most of her friends at work. She worked in the Oil industry and since it was a very international environment most of her friends were also from various countries. She said that there was also a group of Poles at work, a network of friends and colleagues that often knew each other already from Poland, most of them had studied at the same academy in Krakow: "Actually a bunch of people who have studied at the same Academy in Krakow, have found work in Stavanger in the Oil industry. So actually, we know quite a few people here still back from the times in Krakow." But Izabela emphasized that this was only a part of her friends. It seems that those with good English skills, particularly Justina and Izabela and had

much more international friends while those who were not very confident English speakers, i.e. Eva and Paula were more focused on Poles.

Most of my informants seemed not to have many or particularly important relations with Norwegians. Izabela and Justina had observed that it was much easier to make friends with other foreigners in Stavanger than with the native Norwegians. Justina explained that foreigners were much more invested to make new friends, since they often came individually and had to build new social networks. Both felt that it was easy to make friends in Stavanger since the city was an “agglomeration of foreigners”.

Katarzyna had more social interaction with Norwegians. She had met Norwegian Parents through her children and was playing an active role in different parents and neighborhood associations.

White (2011) has highlighted the role of friends and social networks in integration of Poles in the UK. She also observed that migrants with poor English skills were much more focused on other Poles in their social relationships. Close ties to other Poles had often positive effects on migrants’ wellbeing, since they felt connected to other people around them and resulted in the intention to stay in the UK. It could however have also adverse effects, because it hindered them to integrate, to improve their English and make efforts to get to know and make friends with the native population. This could then again lead to not feeling integrated and considerations about return.

Some of the friendships in Norway played an important role in my informants’ considerations about stay and return. For example Friends of Katarzyna and her husband had helped and encouraged them to settle in Norway for long term. Katarzyna and her husband knew these people from Poland, but not very well:

When we arrived (in Stavanger) they were living here already since six years. They had left Poland eight years before, so they were already settled here, they had a credit for a flat. With them we became close friends when we arrived here. They helped us very, very much. They kind of pushed us to stay here, they encouraged us to do things we would maybe not have went for by ourselves. For example, we took a credit for a flat only after eight months of living here. That’s very quick. Thanks to them, because they decided to guarantee for us in the bank. We were eligible for a credit of 2.4 million, since I had got a job too, but we wanted to buy an apartment for 2,9 million. So, with their house they guaranteed for us for the missing 0.5 million. This happens very rarely. Here in Norway usually something like that only happens within the family. Friends don’t do this kind of thing for you. And we had not had contact with them for eight years, I did not know them at all before. So, after a few months of knowing each other they helped us in this way.

Such an example confirms much of the literature on transnational migrant networks, particularly ethnic networks and the important role they can play in the process of settling (Glick Schiller).

While friends in Norway were mentioned as important factor in return migration considerations, friends in Poland did not feature in my informants' accounts. In fact, several informants had realized that their old group of friends in Poland did not exist as such anymore. Even though they were living still in the same town their lives had developed into different directions. For example, several of Justinas friends had set up families and had children and Izabela observed that her former friends did not meet among each other very often, she saw them approximately as often as they met among each other despite living in another country. She stated:

You can make friends anywhere you go. And I could always go back and see my friends in Poland and I still keep in touch with them. At some point, you realize that it is not such a big disaster. Because the funniest realization is, I see the group of friends I used to know as often as they see each other living in the same town. It's not that bad and it's not that hard, you just need to get used to it, I think.

3.1.5.2 Partner and children

Often migration plans were affected by values of affiliation related to a person who was seen as a partner, the spouse, boy- or girlfriend. Most of my informants came without a partner to Norway. However, several of my informants had entered long term relationships during their stay in Norway and in most cases these relationships affected how my informants thought about stay, return and remigration. My informants described a diverse range of scenarios where values of affiliation to their partner had influenced their migration decisions. A frequently reported scenario among my informants was that Poles who lived abroad met someone during visits to Poland and entered a relationship. If the relationship ought to last usually one person had to migrate. Eva, for example, had met a boy at a wedding of her cousin in Poland, and they became a couple.

Yes, from Poland, we got to know each other on Holydays, but he lived in England. (...) It was on the wedding of my cousin. My cousin was marring. And I was bridesmaid. And he was best man. (witnesses to the marriage). So, we got to know each other. And then I was also in Poland for over a month, he came here for a week... such magical times.

The relationship was a reason for Eva to reconsider her stay in Norway. Her Boyfriend did not want to join her abroad, among others because he had a job in Poland. When she lost her job in Norway she did not want to look for something else but decided to return to Poland, in order to be able to live

together with her Boyfriend. Another example was Dorothea, a friend of Marta. She had met her husband, who had been in Norway since several years during one of his visits to his home town in Poland. They fell in love and he invited her to join him in Norway.

Marta had come to Norway without a partner and met her current boyfriend, a Pole, in Stavanger through a common friend. Since they were both Polish they considered return to Poland an option, especially since she had inherited a house in Poland. For Marta's sister however, return was not really an option. She had married a Norwegian and the family did not aspire to move to Poland. Izabela was in a similar situation. She had married a Brazilian in Norway. She did not consider return to Poland but she said she would like to move on and see some new places. However, she would only move somewhere if the relationship with her husband could be accommodated:

It would be cool to move somewhere else, but when the opportunity really comes than you need to reevaluate and see. Because either it's for a shorter time and I can just go alone or it's something longer, then we need to arrange something for both of us.

A friend of Justina, also a Pole, had met a Swedish woman in Norway and was planning to set up a family in Norway. The nationality of the partner seemed to greatly affect Poles evaluation of the possibility of return. While Polish-Polish couples considered return an option this seemed not to be the case for mixed couples. Justina, who did not have a partner at the time of the interview also mentioned that she could imagine setting up a family in Poland only if she found another Pole:

Lately I sometimes think about it, and there are these conversations among friends, we are all in this age, everyone is thinking about having family. So lately I also started thinking about it. I don't know. Since I am here already since a while, it's going to be four years, I would like to have a family here. It depends also, I don't know, if I would have a family with a Pole or with a foreigner. If I would have it with a Pole there would be the option, return is possible. If it would be with a foreigner, then rather not (średnio).

Except for Katarzyna my informants did not have children. Nevertheless, all of them had various opinions and considerations regarding having children in Norway. While some informants expressed very general views about the topic, others had elaborated in great detail about the benefits and disadvantages of raising children in Norway.

Izabela, who did not have children yet but thought about having children in the near future considered Norway a great place to raise children.

I think it's a good country to have family. It has a lot of good social security and benefits and I have a lot of friends that have family here. I see that they are happy with that. I mean, I imagine

and I suspect that if we don't move, that I would be happy to raise my children in Norway. Its fine. I don't see a problem with that.

For my informants who did not have a permanent partner at the time of the interview family considerations were rather hypothetical. Nevertheless, some had observed differences in the understanding of family and family life in Norway compared to Poland. Justina for example observed:

In Norway, there is another family model. In Poland, they put a lot of emphasis on... you have to have the wedding, have a marriage and children. And here it's more a lite outlook at it. Family, that's not necessary husband, wife and children. You can have simply a partner and live together and have children or raise them on your own, or raise them alternately.

She would not want to see her children grow up in two separate homes but she was pleased by "...this more open approach to relationships" and that it does not have to be "wedding and until the grave." When my informants spoke about setting up a family in Norway giving birth was a concern to some. Marta explained that most of her friend had been satisfied with the services in Norway:

I have many friends who have children, and they actually don't complain too much. Also, there were many girls who gave birth, and they say the care, everything in the hospital is super, and if they can choose, then for sure giving birth, everything here, because its mega. Some of them had given birth also in Poland, it was also super, but here they were very good taken care of.

My informants were similarly content with what they had heard about the quality of care in kindergartens and schools. Katarzyna, my only informant with experience of raising children in Norway was also very positive about the topic. She particularly liked the cooperation among parents in Norway:

After this years that I spend here I see, between parents there is good communication. For example, the children have a lot of hobbies after school, football for example, today I am taking them there, we have a car with seven seats, so I will take a car full of girls to training at five o'clock. So, I drive the whole group, and then I don't have to drive for two or three weeks. I don't have to drive to R, to bring someone there because I have an agreement with the other mums that they will do it. Same with M, she goes dancing. One week I drive three girls, the other week the other mum drives and the third week the third mum drives. (...) Generally speaking, I have the impression that living as a family here is more comfortable and save then in Poland. Saver in the physical sense, for example, my child when it was six, I send it, it goes on its own to school. I don't have to walk it or drive it every time. There is a system that has been created between households, families, that these children meet up together, and go

together in a group at half past seven to school. That was such a nice example of a difference. That was really nice, something that really pleased me at the beginning.

She also perceived the environment in Norway as much safer for children, which relieved her as parent a lot:

And I am save, I don't need to worry, I know that people here drive the car safely, I can give her away without thinking "this one drives like a maniac, the other one doesn't care for the rules..." I know the child will be brought there safely, really something terrible had to happen to cause an accident, but usually it is save. In this sense, I think it is save here, I am relaxed about the safety of my children. Of course, not always, every mum has anxieties and worries about her children, but generally I feel save here, that gives a good feeling, especially for families.

Overall, Katarzynas experience was very positive and she felt content about her children growing up in Norway:

Generally, I have the impression that the Norwegian society, at least the people that I meet at the kindergarten or school, I observe and I like how the mums and children how they connect and play with the other children. I have a good feeling about it this topic. I know that other poles have other feelings about it, they get comments, but my children find themselves very well in the groups between Norwegian children.

Not all informants were as positive. Marta for example expressed various worries. She had observed cultural differences in the way parents treated and raised children which she perceived as problematic.

Yes, so the only thing I really don't like is that children here are really strongly spoiled, and that's not only and exclusively an issue of education from the side of the parents, but also in what kind of society they grow up. Here it is like this, it is kind of that they are allowed everything. There are for example this ten-year-old boys, they come and, I have never seen that for example, they go to other people places and knock on the door for jokes. Here it happened two times that some boys, Norwegian boys, wanted to show off to their friends and knocked and yelled something, I said oh my god, you would not expect that from children. I don't like to see how the children, they are a bit neglected, because they are not taken care of, that's what I noticed, no one wants to take care, because here it's not allowed to yell at children, and therefore they are insolent (bezczelny), and really grow up being spoiled (rozpuszczony), they are allowed everything, that scared me a bit. I don't know, I have mixed feelings, where to eventually have, how it's going to be with a child.

Another concern were stories about the Norwegian child protection agencies that were circulating among Polish parents. Marta had also heard of them and claimed that some Poles were returning to Poland because they were scared the agency could take their children away. She introduced the agency as follows to me:

My friends are stressed because of the child protection agency who is taking away children. Because here it is the case that, and it is really true, someone doesn't like something, how it is, you know, when you yell at your child, then they can call them. Another friend of mine also gave birth and she was scared, she said when he cries at night, you know that babies cry, but she was scared that someone could think her child is being beaten and call immediately, so she returned to Poland because she was afraid. (...) For this reason, many don't want to bring their children here, because they are scared, because this this things happened with children, with Poles, that they took children away... They took away this girl (...) without any (legal) grounds. Someone said that someone was crying. Like a normal child. How many times a child is crying in the shop, there is no 'Shut up'. Sometimes you have to... maybe not 'shut up!', but firmly... that does not exist here. They fear.

However, Marta admitted that she was not that scared of the agency, for her it was not a reason to consider return.

Even though my informants expressed various considerations and opinions about raising children in Norway, except for Katarzyna such considerations were hypothetical. Even Marta, who had expressed the most detailed considerations felt that she was unable to tell whether such considerations would have an effect on her decision to stay in Norway or return to Poland:

I don't know. I have no idea. I think I haven't really worked out my opinion about it because there are plusses and minuses in Poland and there are plusses and minuses in Norway. (...) I have this uncertainty (rozbicie) even about having children, I don't know what and when, so even if I had a child, for now, if it would be somehow here, we would be here. We will see.

It seems that the experience of immediate needs of ones' children has much more effect on migration decisions. Katarzyna remembers how she almost returned to Poland when she witnessed the difficulties her son experienced during the first months after arrival in Norway:

The first weeks were difficult. I remember that once I came after work to pick U up, and the lady told me that U was just standing and crying, standing and crying and this lady asks him in Norwegian, what do you want? Do you want to eat, are you hungry? What is it? At the end, he

pointed at the glass, that he wants to drink. In this moment, I thought I am packing and going back to Poland if this child is not able to ask for a glass of water here. This really hurt me a lot.

At the time of the interview Katarzyna did not consider return to Poland. Her children were going to school and Kindergarten in Stavanger and she felt that apart from the difficulties they would face adapting to the Polish school system it would be also harmful to disrupt their friendships.

Boyd (1998) as well as Massey et al (1987) have highlighted the importance of family considerations in migration decision making. Habrison (1981) has argued that family structure, composition and stage in family life cycle, the age of family members, size of the family influence probability to migrate. Specific practical needs at a certain point in the family life cycle might stimulate or discourage migration and also influence the direction of migration (Massey et al 1987, Escobar 1987).

Informed by a life course perspective Achenbach (2016), following Kley (2009) has distinguished between 3 relevant life phases for migration and studied their effects on (return) migration decisions. She distinguishes between “phase of early adulthood”, “family phase” “consolidation phase”. The phase of early adulthood relates to young migrants up to the age of 35 who are single or in a non-committal relationship without the wish to have children in the near future. The family phase includes migrants with dependent children but also persons without children, however with a strong intention to have children in the near future. The establishing phase relates to persons above the age of 35 without children or with adult children. Achenbach (2016) and Kley (2011) argue that differing priorities inform considerations of mobility in each life phase: early adulthood is dominated by considerations about “opportunities for pursuing own interests” (Kley 2011: 483) including good education, starting and developing a career and forming romantic relationships. In the family phase concerns about the wellbeing of children are a central factor in migration decisions. In the establishing phase both, career and family factors are considered and weighted.

Achenbach’s suggestions can help to explain the role of my informants’ family considerations in their mobility choices. My two Younger informants under 30 without permanent partner did not consider family needs and suitability of the environment for raising kids in their migration considerations. Children need were still absent from their considerations. Informants who had reached the age of thirty wished to have children in the near future and were thus more concerned about family friendliness and the impact of their mobility choice on raising children. The aspiration or expectation of having children informed their considerations already. In Marta who had a partner expressed much more detailed considerations than Cassia. Yet her considerations differed from those of Katarzyna, who had children and was thus not just in an anticipating but experiencing state of the family phase.

Achenbach further subdivides the family phase according to children’s age. Young children under school age are seen as more mobile and can be taken on migrations, while school aged children are a

factor holding parents at a place. This hypothesis were confirmed by Katarzyna, who had migrated with her two under school aged children to Norway, but was not willing to disrupt her children education in Norway for a return to Poland.

The literature on family considerations in return migration decision among Poles in the UK found similar patterns. Polish parents had postponed or canceled a return to Poland because their children were at school. Parents decided to wait until the children had finished education in Britain. Others, with younger children had plans to return to Poland before their children reach school age in order to avoid disruptions of their children's education (Ryan and Sales 2011). Marta claimed that Poles in Stavanger had similar concerns, some of her friends were determined to return to Poland before their children reached school age.

3.1.5.3 Parents

Another factor in my informants' considerations about settlement and return was the wish to be close to their parents and other family members. My informants claimed that some of their friends or acquaintances had returned to Poland exactly for the reason that they were missing the extended family. In all except Marta's case the parents were still living in Poland. Several of my informants repeatedly highlighted that the family, and good family relations were of great importance to them. By family they usually referred to parents and siblings, sometimes to grandparents. They spoke of very close connection within the family and claimed that regular contact and exchange with the family was essential to their wellbeing. Marta, the only informant with parents and sister also living in Stavanger described her family relations as follows:

We we are overly familial, we great each other 5000 times a day, we have to tell each other every day that we love each other, we cuddle, even if we just go to the shop, to say bye or hi. We are terribly 'warm'.

Eva painted a similar picture of her family relations:

Family life is... they are very connected, close with the family, even being here as least connected one, very often I fly to Poland. I even don't go on Holydays abroad, somewhere else, when I have a chance, it pulls me all the time with one feet to Poland. And there was all the time contact through telephone, Skype, and I get this support all the time from my family. They help me, the care for me, and all the time I feel this connection, all the time.

Eva emphasized the importance of her families' emotional support and the regular exchange and visits to Poland. For her home was still her parents place, a farm on the country side.

Our family place is intergenerational, my grandparents, parents and my brother live there. So always when I think about home, it is only this place, somewhere in Poland, where my mom is where my grandmother is, where the dog is and where the family is.

For several of my informants the wish to be with the family in Poland was a serious issue and a reason for considering return. Some informants described how they felt torn between Norway, where they had friends, independence and were doing well in economic terms and Poland where the family was. Justina described her situation when she returned to her family after a year in Norway:

It was nice to be bag. It's always nice to be back after a longer time. It's a nice feeling. However, after a while, after a few weeks go by you realize that there it was also nice, there I was again independent, I was different, I would say, and here I am again the child. I am coming back to the same situation. So, there (in Poland) I missed the independent life, I missed my friends here (in Stavanger), because I had friends here. I was torn a bit bag and fourth (rozdarta). I wanted to stay, because it was my home, but there I liked it after all. I was torn a bit bag and fourth (rozdarta).

Eva also saw a set of benefits of being in Norway but on the cost of not being able to have a as close relationship to her family as it used to be:

So at the moment, I have it good here in Norway, I have good apartment, work, nice employers, I have several good friends, it's truly good. And thanks to the money from Norway I can have the apparatus for my teeth, all kinds of things, financial, material things. But Norway also took away some things from me. It took the close connection to my family, but sooner or later, it's like that, we are at home we leave home, everyone his own direction. But thanks to the money I can travel to them, I can buy them something, help them out with something, it's also important, that I will have it better...

For her as for all other informants in the end the benefits of living in Norway outweighed the wish to be with the family. Nevertheless, Eva showed a slight sense of guiltiness and felt that she somehow had to justify her choice of leaving the family behind for her own wellbeing. She tried to justify the growing distance to her family by arguing that it would have occurred naturally as part of becoming adult anyways and that her personal wellbeing was important as well. With regular visits to her Parents and some financial support she tried to compensate for her absence in Poland. She claimed that she spend each holydays to travel to Poland and be with her family. At the time of the interview she flew about once a month to Poland: "I have spent my whole holydays since several years in Poland, as much as you can, right?!"

While all informants went regularly for visits to Poland most of them were satisfied with the possibilities that new communication technologies and cheap means of transportation between Norway and Poland offered to keep in touch with the parents, siblings and others in Poland. Izabela for example, was less inclined than Eva to portray the relation to her family as the most important thing in her life. She admitted that instead of spending her full vacations with her family at home she would rather travel the world and see new places. She made use long weekends as a chance to catch up with the family.

I think now they (her parents) are very used to it and you know, skype is a new world of opportunities. So, I talk to them (her parents) very often and also Stavanger and Poland are so well connected right now that there is completely no problem to go for an extended weekend and see them several times a year. And that's what I am doing, because I want to spend my vacation traveling, so I go on shorter holidays to see my family just for extended weekends but I do it regularly. So, I don't go like for two weeks or a month to Poland, I just go several times. And I am pretty sure they are fine with it.

Earlier research on Polish post accession migrants in the UK has described similar discourses of close family relations and the importance of keeping in touch (White 2011 p.177). This research also revealed how many Poles in the UK are spending their holidays traveling to Poland and being with the family and 'at home'. Yet my results suggest that one should refrain from generalizations that all Poles spend all their holidays with their relatives in Poland. As Izabela's account shows she liked to spend her holidays exploring new places around the world. Most of my other informants had also undertaken trips to various destinations in the Mediterranean, the UK and also within Norway and were certainly not spending each and every moment of their free time traveling to Poland. It turned out that even Eva, who had made such claims, had actually been to England and Spain for holidays during the last two years and was planning a holiday for the end of the year to the US. It seems that the wish to spend each and every holiday at home is partly informed by discourses, expectations and norms about how to spend vacations as Pole living abroad. However, these norms did not match the reality of any of my informants' holiday practice. Instead it seemed that my informants were increasingly adapting and taking up ways of spending vacations popular in Norway and Western Europe in general.

It is no coincidence that considerations related to family values were a crucial and sometimes controversial issue for my informants. Researchers have observed powerful national discourses on the value of the family in Poland and how it affects migration considerations (Botterill 2014). In Polish national mythology, the family has been positioned at the top of a hierarchy of values (Bednarski, 1987; Buchowski, 1996). Buchowski argues that it is seen as a 'a sanctuary in a hostile sea of social relations' (Buchowski, 1996: 84). Important roles in the formation of family values are attributed to Polish

Catholicism as well as Polish national mythology that celebrate the family as religious and national symbol of Poland. 'Our Lady of Częstochowa' the 'Queen and Protector of Poland' (Ostrowska, 2004) and the "Matka Polka', heroic mother of sons" are signs "situated between myth and stereotype, central to the country's national identity and its homosocial dimension' (Graff, 2009: 136). After the collapse of state socialism and a reorientation towards western values and in light of large scale emigration from Poland since 2004 the family has been seen as an institution under threat. Preserving 'the family' as a bastion in a changing neoliberal society has become a popular political rhetoric among ruling parties in Poland (Graff, 2009; Hardy, 2009). Religious leaders have warned from the erosion of family values as result of migration and popular media has painted dramatic pictures of the negative effects migration can have on families, among others with stories of abandoned 'euro orphans' (Garapich 2007; White 2011).

Some of my informants reproduced such discourses of family values and accepted traditional roles and responsibilities. Paula for example, expressed strong support for a family model where the children take care of aging parents:

In Poland, the family takes care of the parents. I know here in Norway it is normal to put them into an old people's home, all the old people together. But in Poland you don't do that. This kind of trend of thinking hasn't reached Poland, is not present in Poland, or maybe it is only starting to become a think. (In Poland) people like to be together with each other in the close family, there is a close family connection. When you love someone, you don't want to give him away.

Botterill (2014) has encountered similar attitudes among some of her informants, young Poles in the UK. Her informants reported that providing care for their aging parents would be a reason to return to Poland. They described it as normal that children care for aging parents in Poland, care for the elderly is "always within the family" (Botterill 2014).

Most of my informants however critically distanced themselves from such ideologically guided values and roles. For example, Justina rejected any moral or patriotic reasoning for staying or returning to Poland and to her family. She described her thoughts about a sense of responsibility or familial obligations as follows:

...that I should feel sorry for myself, that I should do work that doesn't give me satisfaction, because I was born here, because my parents live here, my family, because I must be here... because I have some responsibility to..., I don't know, take care of my parents. I never had something like this and I never had something like this imposed by my parents 'you have to live here with us, you have to take care of us... Here is the house, who will take care of the house?'

There was something like that... 'such a big house, there is this and that to do...' but there was never something like 'You have to... don't go, because it has to be taken care of...'. Yes, so actually every time I am, lately every time I visit, there are several aunts that say 'Ohh, you are so courageous'. I say, no its not courage, its more a desire (chęć) to change something for the better, why exactly do we have to... to have our lives worse when you can improve it a lot?

Just as most of my informants Justina felt that she did not need to be present in Poland in order to take care of her parents. Her parents managed well on their own and her siblings looked after them. Furthermore, in case of a emergency she could be there within a few hours. She did not see any problem with the distance, even though she knew that her mother would have liked her to be closer around.

Yes, you have to leave some things behind, but in my case, I would say, I didn't leave much behind, I often travel to visit my parents, if I can I help them, I have older siblings, they also visit and look after them. I say everything is under control. I take the plain and go if something should happen. I don't see a big problem in being abroad, that I am far away. However, my mum told me a couple of times, actually every time I visit, that she would like me to be somewhere close to her. 'But if you are happy there' she says, 'and if you have work there, then I understand it.'

Other informants expressed similar values. Some informants thought it was still too early to think of such issues and all seemed rather convinced that once the parents would need help there would be a solution that did not require informants return, i.e. support from other family members.

The accounts of my informants show that my informants held diverse values about family relations. Some engaged in almost ideological affirmation of the value of close family relations, others did not engage in such discourses and rather critically rejected any responsibilities and obligations towards their relatives in Poland. Nevertheless, in practice all informants prioritized their own aspirations, their own lives. Some had made the experience that they had grown out of home and many felt that there was no potential for self-development in Poland, or more specifically at home. They did not consider return, just for the sake of being close to the family or because of a sense of responsibility and traditional role expectations, even though sometimes they struggled to justify it to themselves.

My informants accounts relate to some extent to the individualization thesis advanced by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) who predicted a decreasing importance of the traditional family. They argue that individuals give up traditional familial roles and commitments to build up their own lives and meet the demands for flexibility of the new globalized world (Beck 1994).

The contradictions between some informants' values and practice points to change and reorientation of personal values as result of migration and exposure to different values in the host society (Massey et al 1993). Yet values relating to family are also contested and changing in Poland (Binnie and Klesse 2011) and it should not be assumed that all Poles hold similar values towards family practices. My informants offered indeed a wide range of differing attitudes towards traditional family norms and values.

3.2 Open-endedness of migration

In the following chapter, I discuss the open-ended character of my informants' migrations and their future plans.

3.2.1 Previous returns

As I have mentioned earlier my informants had not just thought about the advantages and disadvantages of staying in Norway, returning to Poland or migrating to a third country. In fact, four of my informants had returned to Poland with the intention to stay there or undecided about the future since their first arrival in Norway. I have referred to some of their returns and motivations to do so throughout the previous elaborations on my informants' considerations about settlement, return and re-migration. In the following I describe the circumstances of three informants returns in more detail. Even though the returns turned out to be only of short duration, a couple of weeks or months, they were not planned as temporary, i.e. a holiday but either open ended or with the intention to remain in Poland. Thus, the reconstruction of the situation in which my informants decided to return to Poland can offer a better understanding of how and when values and considerations about return translate into migration behavior.

Previous returns to Poland of all three informants had been related to the termination of a working agreement in Norway. Justina returned to her hometown in Poland twice during the six years she had been in Norway. The first time it was when her au pair contract ended. She had lived and worked for one year with a family in Stavanger. When the arrangement ended she faced the choice of either having to find another job and a place to live in Stavanger or return to Poland and look for work there. She was undecided whether to stay or return and had no strong preference for either place. She had postponed the decision until after the end of her au pair and not made any efforts to find work while she was still in Norway. She described the situation as follows:

I was au pair for more than a year, and despite having many friends it was still a time that I missed my family, Poland... I was not sure whether I should go back to Poland or stay here and look for work. After this year with this family I went back to Poland. I went back for about one and half months. I went back with the idea, maybe I stay, maybe I come back here. Because I went to Poland, not taking all of my stuff with me, I left a part here. (...) I left it for the case that I come back. (...) I don't know if I was looking for work.

It seems that her return to Poland was a sort of strategy to buy herself more time to make the decision about where to look for work. She describes that she felt torn between the wish to be with the family in Poland and her friends in Norway. Return was also an opportunity to test how it is to be back in Poland. She stayed with her parents during her return and had thus no costs except the travel expenses. Her return can be seen as a strategy of postponing a decision where to invest into a job search and housing. Several years later she was in a similar situation:

Last year, for example, because at work it was a weak season, I returned for three months to Poland. It was last year December, January, February. For three months, I lived with my parents. There was no work at the time and I was just moving out from one apartment. Somehow it was convenient to go back (zjechać) to Poland. I say I actually went back (zjechałam), because I was content with my work, but not so much, because until today I don't have a permanent job, it's called on call, when they need (help). And then the season was over, it got quiet, I didn't have much work and also the flat, I had to move out. Again I took one big bag and I went to Poland. And I said, 'either I will find something in Poland or I come back'. (...) I was looking for work in Poland during this three months.

As Justina's account reveals in both instances of her return two factors coincided, she had neither work nor housing and which meant no obligation to stay in Stavanger. Thus, she was in a situation where she had to either renew her migration decision and "reinvest" in her stay in Norway, look for work to bridge the winter season or for a job that would suite her aspiration of a permanent position and to find an apartment and enter a renting agreement, or to return to Poland. Returning to her parents was associated with smaller risk, since she could live with her parents and did not have to invest in housing right away but could first see if she could find a job. In this sense, it was an opportunity to postpone the decision about return and explore opportunities in Poland. Eva had also returned several times to Poland since her first arrival. Once it was with the intention to not return to Norway:

And for one and half years I worked in this restaurant for this Poles. And then the oil crisis came, there was little work, in 2015 and they laid me off, he closed the restaurant because it wasn't rentable anymore. I want back to Poland again. (...) in this year, in 2015, I said, I packed my stuff, I moved out of my apartment, I said no, this is the end, I am done, finished, I am returning to Poland for good. (...)

Just as Justina, she had no work and instead of looking for another job she decided to return to Poland. However, losing her job was not the only reason for her return. She had lost her job several times before, but it had never been a reason to return to Poland. When asked, she revealed that she had a boyfriend in Poland at the time, and that she wanted to live close to him. "I wanted to return because

I had a boyfriend in Poland. (...) I packed my stuff and left to Poland.” Just as in Justina’s case, the decision to return happened at a point in time when two apparently important factors coincided. They were present at the same time. Eva had been in the relation for several months, but since she had had a job she had not migrated earlier.

3.2.2 Double return abroad

Since my informants were residing in Stavanger at the time of the interview, it is clear that earlier returns to Poland had been followed by what White (2011) calls “double return migration” – the return abroad after having previously returned to Poland from abroad. From a theoretical perspective a double return to Norway or repeat migration is a renewal of an earlier migration decision with the significant difference that migrants have better information about the opportunities to obtain certain value goals at the destination place and thus potentially adjusted expectations (DaVanzo 1981).

Justina’s return to Norway was mostly motivated by similar values as her first migration to Norway. She had left Poland because she could not find work in her home town in Poland and because she wished to be independent from the support of her family (see chapter 2.3.1). Even though she had missed her family when she had been in Norway she realized that return meant to go back into the same situation she had aspired to leave earlier, a situation of dependence on the family.

It was nice to be bag. It’s always nice to be back after a longer time. It’s a nice feeling. However, after a while, after a few weeks go by you realize that there it was also nice, there I was again independent, I was different, I would say, and here I am again the child. I am coming back to the same situation. So, there (in Poland) I missed the independent life, I missed my friends here (in Stavanger), because I had friends here. I was torn a bit bag and fourth (rozdarta). I wanted to stay, because it was my home, but there I liked it after all. I was torn a bit bag and fourth (rozdarta).

She missed the experience of independence and a sense of fulfillment in Poland. In addition, Justina had developed new networks of friendship in Norway, a reason for her to return.

But meanwhile my friends here from Stavanger were writing ‘K, come back, come back, what are you going to do in Poland?’ And I said I have to go there anyways because I left there lots of things. Either I go and just pick up my stuff or... I thought, maybe I will go back and try to find some other work.

It remains unclear how much effort Justina made to find work in Poland, however it seems that she lacked a strong incentive and intention to find work in Poland. Her friends' intervention was enough to motivate her to return to Norway and try to find work there.

Eva had returned to Poland in order to live with her boyfriend. After a short period of time however, she realized that the value affiliation, of living with her boyfriend was in conflict with other aspirations, i.e. for stimulation:

I thought everything would be wonderful, I packed everything, I went, and I was disappointed, it was not as I thought. (...) I was there one and half months and I realized, that's not it, no, no, no, no, no, its no. I am coming back here. (...) Something burned out. At distance, you have your life he has his life, different worlds (...) it was clear it didn't make sense. (...) And on top of this I wanted to a city and he had work in this small place, he was accountant, he was earning well, but it was a small place. (...) he was a super boy, very nice, wanted me to be his wife, but no, I dint feel like being his wife, maybe wife yes, but this stability, he had already a stable life, in one place, no, maybe not yet.

Eva explains that they lived in "different worlds" which refers to differing values as she then explains: he lives a stable live with a stable job in a small place in Poland and does not want to give it up. Eva aspires stimulation, a larger city, changing places, and independence. She thus decides to return to Norway.

Both informants had competing values that could not be attained simulations since they could be attained only in different places. Informants had to set priorities. In both cases my informants prioritized values related to independence, stimulation and self-development over values of affiliation, i.e. attachment to the family or a partner. As such they confirmed their earlier migration decisions.

Paula had also returned several times to Poland since her first arrival in Norway. In her case however, moving to Norway had been planned as temporary, not open-ended or permanent. When she first came to Norway she had work for one summer season in a souvenir store and she had not intended to stay after the season was over. Thus, she had returned to Poland for the Winter, lived with her parents and worked in her home town. The next year she had come to Norway again for the summer season and returned for the winter. Only in the third year she had stayed also for the winter. Initially Paulas trajectory was a classic case of seasonal migration without the intention to settle in the host country. Return was planned from the outset and thus part of the initial migration decision. Thus, it had not been her intention to stay more permanently and happened only in response to a suggestion of her employer who offered her work for the winter season.

As those examples show, my informants considered return to Poland only in terms of return to their home towns and to the parents' house. Paula explained that having an own apartment would make no sense for her neither in financial terms nor would she like to live alone. Eva described her home as an intergenerational place where the whole family, her grandparents' parents and her brother lived together and how she would like to be with them. As described earlier (chapter 2.2) it is common in Poland among young people to live with their parents up into their late twenties, even thirties and not having a own apartment until they set up their own family. It seems that this is related to various structural conditions that make independent living unattainable for many young Poles, but also cultural norms and values about living together as extended family. Living as a single in an own apartment or flat is often economically impossible or seen as unnecessary and a waste of money. Yet Eva and Justina experienced return to the family as problematic (see above). Eva commented on the returns to her family's farm:

I like animals, I like to work, to help there, but it wouldn't be what I really... I really like it very much to come home, to be there, in the village, and its super, but rather to relax, to take a break, but not to be there for good. I really respect all these people, my brother, my parents, it is hard work, but I don't develop, don't grow there.

After the experience of independent living in Norway some of my informants perceived return to their family as a step back into dependency and lack of opportunities for personal development. Novica (2012) described similar tendencies among her informants, Polish university graduates in the UK. They did not want to return to Poland since they did not aspire to return into dependency of the family but were also due to excessive costs of living in Poland unable to set up individual households.

3.2.3 Unpredictability

As the above examples show small events and changes in a situation could trigger or prevent a return. Thus, it is not surprising that my informants perceived their situation as very fragile and open ended. They had the impression that the future was difficult to plan or predict and expressed suspicion towards certainty and plans. One factor could change and the whole picture might look different. As Evas account of her return to Poland illustrate how one might fall in love and suddenly the priorities change (see above). Marta was very cautious about what might be in the future. Despite having various plans and ideas she felt very uncertain how things would turn out. Just as Justina (see above) she had the impression that both Norway and Poland offered advantages and disadvantages and felt torn between different ideas and opportunities:

But I say, it can be different, I said, I have this uncertainty (rozbiecie) even about the children (having children), I don't know what and when, so even if I had a child, for now, if it would be somehow here, we would be here. We will see. And concerning things like the studio, it's clear, here there is less competition, because there are studios, there are these things, but not so many, and if you open something really nice, then there is the chance that it will work. On the other hand, in Poland it's easier (...) we can get subsidies and there is some subsidy to start the thing. And here, despite everything, you have to start with everything on your own and from zero, because here there is no such thing. There is not even a support for young people or something like that for development, that doesn't exist. (...) I say, it depends from what side you look at it. So or so, one does not exclude the other, even if we would open something here, you can sit here a bit and then later close it and go there and reopen it there. And on the other side you don't know how it will be in this whole life, you can make plans, but later it comes out differently. One thing changes, and suddenly everything is completely (changed). (...) But for now we are happy, we will see, we are thinking about asking for a credit for a house maybe, maybe something like that. Because for now, we think one day we will go back to Poland, but for now we are here, so it would be worthwhile.

Eva went as far as to say that she refused to make plans, i.e. about were to have a family and consider benefits and disadvantages of places in advance, before there was a real need to make a decision:

Researcher: And where would you like to have a family?

Eva: I don't think about these things, because in my experience, I had this boyfriend, I thought everything would be wonderful, I packed everything, I went, and I was disappointed, it was not as I thought. And a year later I got to know this other boy, who proposed to me, but it want it, he was a super boy, very nice, wanted me to be his wife, but no, I dint feel like being his wife, maybe wife yes, but this stability, he had already a stable life, in one place, no, maybe not yet.

As described earlier (chapter 3.1) my informants were mostly very positive about their circumstances in Norway and wished to stay, yet they were aware that things could change quickly. Justina stated: "I would prefer to stay here. (...) But you never know how life goes! You know nothing." Similarly, even Katarzyna, who was living in Stavanger with her husband and four children since nine years felt that times were uncertain and one could not exclude anything.

I don't think about it (return), the kids feel good here, we have a credit for our apartment, my husband has work, I think, well its obviously difficult to say, everywhere they are cutting, but in his company, they are still expanding, they still have new projects. But you never know, maybe tomorrow comes the notice that they close the office in Stavanger. These are such

times... Yes, but I am, we are both this kind of persons that do not make long term plans, i.e. we do not say, "ok, in one year we will do this and that and be there and there..." We never know what will be in a week. Yesterday we were deciding what we are going to do during our winter holiday. Some have plans for a long time, we usually by a last-minute offer, that's how we do it. Sometimes it helps, sometimes it makes things more difficult.

Katarzyna described a strategy of unpredictability and open-endedness and refusal of long term planning that was also repeated by other informants. Evas solution to the unpredictability of the future was remaining flexible and adapting from situation to situation instead of perusing fixed plans:

Time will tell. Life will write us the best scenarios. You shouldn't think too much about it but you also shouldn't let the time go by. You have to think about it, time goes by, but you shouldn't also go crazy "It has to be this and this way, it didn't work out, I try it the 55 times... once agin, onec agin" maybe it's not for you...

While Katarzyna's account seemed more a lifestyle choice Evas strategy was underpinned by a serious and pronounced trust in a guiding force that took care of her life.

Researcher: And you always go to the church?

Eva: Yes, also when it was bad, various situations in life, I always tried to go, I tried very much to be there. Once a week. These first years here were difficult I had never been abroad. I knew that this is a test, I had to endure and that it would be a lesson for my life. I believe in God, I got this medal from my mom, Maria and the child, I only take it off to clean it. I believe that everything was supposed to be as it is.

In Evas case her believes to some extend influenced her decision-making strategies. Instead of defining clear goals and aspirations for the future and perusing a long-term plan to attain these, she remained flexible and open, looking for opportunities that may arise on the way.

Large scale migrations that occurred within the European Economic Area since the east enlargement of the European Union in 2004 have triggered intense debates about the nature of such legally almost unconstrained mobility. Researchers observed that traditional paradigms of settlement migration and did not adequately capture the diverse temporary and special horizons of migrants' journeys in this unique context of transnational freedom of movement.

Already before the east enlargement of the EU Okólski (2001: 107) pointed to the tradition of temporary and circular migration from Poland were individual household members undertake, often repeatedly, trips abroad in order to work and earn and then return to their families and homes. Okólski terms this kind of mobility which does not result in settlement "fluid and incomplete migration" and

describes it as: “a sort of circulation of individual household members, often repeated, and characterized by short-term employment abroad and a very high proportion of earnings remitted or repatriated to the migrant’s home country, where the costs of living was substantially lower” (Okólski 2001). Wallace (2002 p.604) suggested to term such migration patterns and frequent movements across borders mobility rather than migration.

In the years after the EU enlargement a number of studies appeared which highlighted the temporary nature of the new intra-European migrations. Favell (2008: 703) wrote about ‘regional free movers’ who are “more likely to engage in temporary circular and transnational mobility, governed by the ebb and flow of economic demand, than in long-term, permanent migration”. Fihel and Grabowska-Lusinska (2014: 30) observed ‘repeating migration patterns’ and conclude: “Polish nationals still tend to engage in temporary, back-and-forth mobility for employment, also because of the significant costs of moving their family to the destination country”. Kaczmarczyk (2013: 112) argued that “*for many Polish migrants ‘return’ can often mean only a short break between periods spent abroad*” while Isański, Mleczko and Seredyńska-Abou Eid (2014: 5) found that many Polish labor migrants “travelled to more than one country, their stays either abroad or in Poland were usually temporary, and they frequently returned to Poland for short periods of time.

This new pattern of multiple returns replaces the former trend of settlement in the destination country.” Thus, it is not surprising that Polish migrants arriving in Norway after Poland’s EU accession were initially seen as temporary guest workers who were expected to return to Poland once their jobs in Norway were completed ().

Yet these and other studies also observed an increasing uncertainty about the future and open-endedness of migration among the new migrants from the east. Instead of a clear and predefined intention to settle or return a large number of EU migrants is undecided, does not commit themselves to either option. Moskal (2011) writes about her informants, Poles in the UK, “They undertake a strategy of keeping options open, and adapting as life goes on, not excluding going back, bringing in families to the UK, travelling the world, and moving further overseas”. A growing number of researchers agree that “uncertainty is the most characteristic feature of intra-European migrants’ future plans (Bygnes and Erdal 2016, see also Drinkwater and Garapich 2015; Friberg 2012, Burrell 2009; Eade et al. 2007; Friberg and Tyldum 2007; Iglicka 2008; White and Ryan 2008). Favell (2008 p.7, 64) who studied the mobility of young intra EU migrants observed that his informants perused mobile lives that offered them freedom from traditional lifestyles, culture and family as well as opportunities to seek adventure, self-fulfillment and overcome career frustration. Yet he also finds that such lifestyles can lead to loneliness, breakdown of social and familial ties and cultural disembeddedness, to ‘lives adrift, in fragments, with no social or spatial coherence’ (Favell 2008, p.211).

Researchers agree that these new forms of mobility are closely linked to a specific context that is characterized by a history of circular labor migration, relatively short distances and increasingly cheap, fast and frequent transport as well as persisting differences in wages and prosperity between sending and receiving countries; but above all, by freedom of movement and legal work. As a result of the almost complete disappearance of legal constraints to intra EU mobility, migration has become characterized by unpredictability, temporariness and individualization. Engbersen et al (2010), borrowing from Bauman's notion of 'liquid modernity' (2000, 2007) and 'liquid life' (2005) suggested the term "liquid migration" to describe these particularities of recent forms of intra EU mobility. He speaks of a 'migrant habitus' of open options and intentional unpredictability (Engbersen 2015, p.7-8) while others call the new patterns of transitory and temporary transnational work and living between Eastern and Western Europe "lasting temporariness" (Grzymala-Kazłowska 2005) or "deliberate indeterminacy" (Moriarty, Wickham, Salomońska, Krings, Bobek 2010).

Nevertheless, the notion of liquid migration and individualization have been contested and researchers have warned to not overemphasize the fluidity of such modern intra EU migrations (Friberg 2012, Bygnes and Erdal 2016). Researchers in the UK as well as in Norway observe that increasing numbers of migrants bring families over from Poland or set up families in the destination countries. With a family in the destination country they are much more likely to settle for longer periods. The number of contact points to the host society increases i.e. through the needs of child rearing and migrants commit themselves to stay in one place for example for the duration of schooling of their children (White 2011, Botterill 2014; Ryan et al 2007; 2009; Ryan 2010; Ryan and Sales 2011, Moskal 2011).

Bygnes and Erdal (2016) argued that Poles migrations and settlement in Norway is indeed often "characterized by a high degree of uncertainty and an unplanned nature" yet most Poles are not devoted to mobility but aspire stability and predictability for their future. Poles accounts of plans and aspirations for the future are dominated by the wish to lead what Bygnes and Erdal (2016) call a normal or "grounded life (...) a safe life - living without fear of what the future will bring". Bygnes and Erdals (2016) informants generally expressed the wish to be able to provide for themselves and their families a decent standard of living on a regular and long-term basis. They aspired to work in conditions, where the pay allowed for economic independence and stability, where the working hours allowed for a healthy work life balance, leisure and family time, where employment security and predictability was given. Most informants saw prospects to attain such values of normal and grounded lives in their home countries as very poor where deregulated labor markets offer very hard conditions, including low wages, extremely long working hours and uncertain often temporary employment and limited access to often poor quality social security and services. Even though Poles often do not exclude return one day, it is often postponed until retirement or indefinitely and engaged in building a future in Norway.

Given such findings Bygnes and Erdal (2016) conclude that very few Poles in Norway “envison a free-moving lifestyle, which would uphold ideals of open options and intentional unpredictability”.

Friberg (2012) has proposed to conceptualize current migrations from Poland to Norway in three stages. The initial stage is a situation of temporary work abroad. Poles move to Norway as a strategy of targeted earning in order to build a better life in Poland. Such moves might be stimulated by financial difficulties, loss of work, debts, or the wish to realize dreams that are difficult to attain with normal Polish salaries, i.e. buying a nice car, building a house, starting a business. Such migration is usually planned for a short time period and with clear plans of return. During such migration, social relationships with friends and family members in Poland are perceived as most important ones. The stage is characterized by little investment into the destination, both in terms of building social networks, in housing and in knowledge of language and culture of the destination place. The second stage is the ‘Transnational Commuter’ Stage. Work in Norway is more long term and final return to Poland is not planned for the immediate future. Often migrants who came initially for a short and limited time period find themselves unable to reach their targets in the initial period or find new attractive opportunities during their stay. Instead of settling permanently in Norway many however choose to engage in open-ended commuting. It is a longer lasting division of work in Norway and family life in Poland. New and affordable communication technologies and the low cost, frequent and fast transport and open borders between Poland and Norway allow to maintain close relationships. However constant movement can also lead to emotional stress, migrants are unable to fully enjoy their family life nor are they able to fully integrate and build relations in Norway. Thus, the stage of transnational commuting is often followed by either return or the decision to settle and reunite the family in Norway, which is the third stage, a phase in which the primary household has moved from Poland to Norway. Such a rather long term or permanent move and settlement leads to a “reorientation towards Norway in terms of both economic and social investments” (Friberg 2012). Migrants social ties and interaction at the destination place increase, i.e. children go to school, migrants spend their leisure time locally and change their consumption and spending patterns i.e. invest in own accommodation. Thus, Friberg (2012) associated different patterns of migration to different stages of settlement in Norway.

Indeed, the attitudes of my informants towards return to Poland or settlement in Norway relate in many ways to the different conceptualizations described above. The context and backdrop of my informants’ consideration about stay and return or remigration was the perception that migration to third countries or return to Poland was always possible and in easy reach. Doors were never closed since costs of migration were extremely low. Moving across borders does not require any considerable investment, neither in time nor in financially. Migrants don’t have to go through almost any formal procedures such as visa applications etc. and transport within the EU is neither time consuming nor

expensive and does not require any early booking in advance. Given such considerations it is not surprising that most of my informants perceived future mobility as in reach and did not exclude the option of return to Poland or remigration to a third country. Furthermore, the uncertainties of globalized and liberalized labor markets with its up and downs fed into a sense of unpredictability of the future of my informants. In this regard, notions of liquid, fluid and transient migration apply to my informants' experience of uncertainty and discourse of unplanned and open-ended future.

However, the analysis of the actual practices of mobility and settlement of my informants reveal a more differentiated picture. My younger informants, who were in their late twenties and early thirties and single and without children, Eva, Paula and Justina indeed engaged in open ended cross border mobility between Norway and Poland and sometimes even third countries. For them costs and risks of mobility were very low: they had no investment in housing or work in Norway and they could return to their parents' places in Poland were they also did not have to make any investment for their stay. Furthermore, they were independent movers who did not have to consider partners or children's' needs. For them the future was open, their current state temporary and transient. Settlement, return and remigration were realistic options and in Eva's case aspired.

Izabela and Marta, both in their early thirties and living with a permanent partner in Stavanger considered future mobility an option, had however not engaged in any cross-border movements during the past years and had no concrete plans for further mobility. Izabela expressed great appreciation for a mobile live style, yet she had not been very mobile since she had married. She said that she would always go for another migration if there was an opportunity. However, it had to be an arrangement that would accommodate also her husband's needs. Marta was very undecided about the place where she wanted to spend her future. She considered to set up a family with her boyfriend in Poland. Yet this was rather a long term option. She saw her immediate future rather in Stavanger. Izabela had bought an apartment in Stavanger, Martalen was considering doing so in the near future. Thus both were actively taking steps in settling down and building a future in Norway.

Katarzyna also did not exclude to return to Poland one day and expressed concerns about the stability of her husband's work, which she perceived as somewhat unpredictable. Yet she did not consider nor aspire to return to Poland in the near future, despite being unemployed. The family was settled in Norway, they had bought a house, her husband had work and her children went to school and kindergarten. Katarzynat would not want to disruption her children's education nor their friendships. Thus, even though all informants participated in discourses of open-ended migration, only the three youngest and single informants actually engaged in such open ended mobilities while the others were engaging in processes of settlement in Norway.

Furthermore, one can observe that my informants' migration trajectories relate to some extend to Friberg's (2012) hypothesis of three stages of settlement. Paula for example started as target earner

during the summer season. After three years of temporary work and return her stay became more permanent and open ended. She was not determined to return to Poland anymore, yet she kept close ties back home. Justina had also come to Norway with a temporary perspective of a one year au pair. Yet she had kept the option of prolonging the stay from the beginning open. She had also kept close ties to Poland and even returned a couple of times undecided about return abroad during the past years. However, recently her stay had become more long term, she thought about eventually settling down in Norway. At the time of the interview Eva considered her stay in Stavanger as temporary and transient. She engaged in social relationships in Poland and spoke of two homes. She described how she spend all her free time in Poland with her family and friends and had had a Boyfriend in Poland during several months. She was in the state of commuting between Stavanger and Poland. Marta, Izabela and Katarzyna did not retain such close links with Poland and Stavanger was the primary home and center of their social relations. For them settlement in Norway was more likely than return or remigration. Their situation related well to what Friberg (2012) describes as settlement phase. The progression from the open ended transnational commuter phase to the permanent settlement phase seemed to be closely related to the life cycle phase of my informants. Those informants who were in their twenties and without partner, thus according to Achenbach's (2016) life cycle approach in the "phase of early adulthood" engaged in open ended liquid or fluid migration. They retained close links to their relatives and friends in Poland through frequent visits and sometimes longer stays at their parents which relates to the idea of "transnational commuting". Those who were in the "family phase" did not show features of liquid migration, they had built various ties to Norway and invested in their stays. Nevertheless, they engaged in discourses of unpredictability and open options. None of my informants was in the consolidation phase.

4 Conclusion

The observation of a relatively one-sided and homogenous representation of Poles and their migrations to western Europe in general and to Norway in particular in much of the scientific literature of the past decade was the impetus for this study. It was observed that Polish migration to Norway is often presented as labor migration of low skilled workers of particular industries and explicitly or implicitly viewed as primarily economically motivated. In order to contribute to a greater diversity of representations of Poles in the scientific literature about Polish migration to Norway the study I adopted a twofold approach: Firstly, in order to challenge the narrative of a purely economic migration the study explored the migration motivations of Polish migrants in Norway. Secondly, to challenge the image of Poles as low skilled workers and address the lack of representation of and research on highly educated Poles in Norway the study focused on six university graduates from Poland living in Stavanger. The study has documented the existence of both, the experience of those highly educated migrants who work in their professions, in jobs that correspond to their skills as well as those migrants who work in low skilled professions that are below their level of education and thus highlighted that there is diversity within the group of highly skilled migrants.

4.1 Part 1

In the first part of this study I explored reasons behind my informants' migration to Norway.

First, I described and discussed attitudes towards migration in my informants' social environment. I enquired the migration experiences of immediate relatives and friends of my informants and found little experience on the side of parents but rich experience on the side of peers, siblings and friends. Nevertheless, both parents and peers held mostly positive attitudes towards migration and actively encouraged and supported my informants to engage in migration as well. Siblings were also cited as inspiration for own migration aspirations.

Four out of five informants had engaged in earlier migrations after finishing school or during studies. This experience was cited as rewarding and motivated informants to engage in further migrations later during their lives. My informants claimed that migration was very popular among young people in their social environment in Poland. The accounts of siblings' migrations and their own stays abroad during their studies strongly support such claims and suggest that migration of young people is seen as normal and desirable.

Following the analysis of attitudes towards migration in my informants' social environment I explored their concrete aspirations and motivations for migration to Stavanger. I discussed these reasons and goals of migration in the framework of values and expectancies proposed by De Jong and Fawcett's (1981). My informants' motivations heavily related to the category of *stimulation, autonomy, wealth* and to some extent *affinity*. Other categories of values were almost not represented. My informants aspired for change, to see new places, to go on an adventure, and to work in an exiting environment. Motivations relating to wealth often overlapped with other values i.e. stimulation and autonomy. For example, my informants complained that they could not afford stimulating activities due to low salaries and long working hours. Others aspired independence from family influences and financial support. Most informants prioritized values of stimulation and wealth over stability and status. Instead of advancement in their professional careers in Poland, often associated with low pay and long working hours, they favored better salaries and getting to know new places. Three informants were thus willing to work in unskilled jobs that were not related to their university education. In two case values of affiliation also played a role in my informants' migration decision. One informant aspired to improve the family live which was hindered by difficult working conditions of the husband in Poland, another informant reunited with her family in Stavanger. These results challenge concepts of intra-European east-west migration as purely economically motivated labor migrations as well as models of explanations that focus exclusively on economic factors.

However, the values and goals my informants held were often not enough to fully explain why my informants choose to leave Poland and move to a particular place at a particular time. In most cases

my informants had been dissatisfied with certain conditions in Poland had held certain aspirations over a period of time but had not considered migration. In all except one case my informants began to consider moving abroad in response to what they described as an *opportunity*. The opportunity was in most cases either an invitation to stay with an already established migrant abroad or a job offer. My informants attributed great importance to such an invitation or job offer. Some informants conceptualized the opportunity as a calling and thought of their move to Norway in terms of predestination. Informants also highlighted the importance to have somewhere to go to. It can be said that most probably in the majority of cases migration to Norway had not occurred without the invitation from someone living already there.

Yet informants did not automatically respond to invitations abroad. It appeared that the concrete situation in Poland at the time of the invitation mattered. The idea that one could return to his life in Poland at any time without facing a loss of status was a particularly important and frequently mentioned consideration of my informants. Migrants were willing to go abroad and *try it out* when they had the perception that they did not risk too much and the decision was correctable if things turned out as unfavorable. Migration was seen as experimental and the decision to move to Norway as preliminary and open ended and never as final.

Since migration considerations and decisions occurred mostly in response to a concrete invitation or job offer my informants mostly did not *choose* Norway as a destination. From their perspective, it was rather *fate, predestination or coincidences* that had brought them to Norway. Thus, it is not surprising that my informants knew rather little about Norway when they arrived. They had not undertaken in-depth research about conditions in Norway but relied mostly on popular knowledge about the country and the assumption that life in western Europe in general is easier than in Poland and thus migration to Norway should be favorable.

The importance of an invitation abroad as trigger for migration considerations and for the choice of the migration destinations to some extent contradicts the *value-expectancy model* of De Jong and Fawcett (1981). The model is based on the assumption that a rational evaluation of opportunities in various places takes place and a choice is made based on expectations about individual chances to attain certain values and goals in different places. In my informants' cases, the consideration of various different potential destination places mostly did not happen. If opportunities to attain values were considered and compared than only for Stavanger and their home town in Poland. The process of finding the most suitable migration destination was severely shortened by only considering the place to where one has been invited. By attributing crucial importance to an invitation abroad migrants reduced the cost of having to compare their opportunities in various places. Yet the assumption that the presence of a social contact at the destination place is of irreplaceable value for any migration project is somewhat irrational and an overrating of the value a network can represent for new migrant.

4.2 Part 2

In this part of the study I explored my informants experience of living and working in Stavanger and their considerations about staying in Norway, returning to Poland or re-migrating to a third country. The exploration of my informants' employment trajectories in Norway revealed a diverse range of occupations my informants had perused in Norway. Informants had worked in different sectors in highly skilled as well as low skilled positions. Some informants had been able to keep their job throughout their stay while most of them had changed their employer several times. Some informants had worked throughout their stay in jobs not related to their university educations, others had worked in both unskilled and skilled positions while others again had only worked in their profession in Norway.

My informants were mostly satisfied with their situation in Norway. They felt that they had been able to fulfill their aspirations and attained various values for which they had moved to Norway. They were particularly satisfied with their new lifestyle that included various forms of stimulation. This new lifestyle was partly facilitated by their higher earnings in Norway, i.e. all mentioned that they were able to afford to go regularly on holidays which had been impossible in Poland. However, informants also explicitly praised the opportunities for recreation and sportive activities at their places of residence and in Norway in general. The value of stability had not been considered as motivation for moving to Norway, yet all informants agreed that their stay in Norway had made their lives more stable and save, i.e. in terms of employment and income, which they valued highly. They were also able to support themselves on a steady base and compared to Poland at a high standard. Thus, they had also attained autonomy related values. Informants who worked in jobs that did not correspond to their university education did not seem particularly dissatisfied or concerned about their loss in status. The benefits in terms of wealth, stimulation, autonomy and stability clearly outweighed the loss. Nevertheless, those who worked in jobs below their skills hoped to change their status in the future. Some had taken steps to address what they perceived as greatest barrier to their labor marked mobility, their limited Norwegian language skills. Others viewed their current situation as transient, a step to something next and were confident that their situation would change in the future.

When informants thought about their future and whether they would remain in Norway, return to Poland or move to a third country, considerations about affinity and the wellbeing of others were expressed. Those who had a permanent partner and or children felt that their choice would depended on how mobility would affect partner or children. My informants perceived Norway as a very safe and favorable environment for raising children. They praised the quality of social services and the safety of the environment. Some respondents expressed concerns about cultural differences in the education

of children and the role of the child protection agency in Norway. For those who did not have a partner and children such considerations were significantly less important, even though some were aware that they were at an age when issues about childrearing might quickly become very relevant. Even though some informants highlighted the importance of close family relations, they did not feel obliged to all to return to Poland in order to take care of aging parents or property.

Despite the overall satisfaction of my informants about their move to Norway all perceived the future as uncertain and refused to make detailed plans and commit themselves to either staying in Norway, returning to Poland or migrating to a third country. Instead they perused a strategy of keeping options open, at least in their discourse about the future. The history of returns to Poland and double returns to Norway of several of my informants illustrated how fragile the balance of factors was that held them in Norway and how quickly situations could change so that return became the preferred option. These narratives about the back and forth between Poland and Norway of some individuals clearly challenge the settlement migration paradigm as well as notions of emigration and immigration. They show that migration decision making does not end once a migrant has reached a place abroad. It is a continuous process, of reconsideration and reevaluation of previous decisions.

A comparison between informants mobility since their arrival in Norway however revealed that only younger and single informants had engaged in such liquid migration. They had few ties and responsibilities in Norway and could return to Poland without great costs and risks. Those who were in permanent relationships and had children had not moved. Potential mobility had to be carefully considered since it would affect their partner and children. Even though these informants did not exclude mobility they appeared to be much more settled, i.e. they had bought apartments or were considering doing so. In a way, the discourse of open-endedness, uncertainty and liquid migration can be seen as a continuation of the strategy that has brought my informants to Norway: a strategy of adapting to circumstances and responding to opportunities as they arise instead of perusing a priority defined goals and plans. The impact of such an approach to migration and life in general has far-reaching consequences. On the one hand, it enables individuals to remain flexible which allows them to make the best of a given situation. On the other hand, there might be a lack of continuity and goal orientees which is necessary to aims that require long term commitment.

4.3 Evaluation of theoretical approaches

The present study has explored the migration histories of six female university graduates from Poland living in Stavanger. The aim of this study was to explore the migration motivations behind past decision to move from Poland to Norway as well as current considerations about staying in Norway, returning to Poland or re-migrating to a third country. Thus, the study combined retrospective reconstruction of earlier migration decisions and prospective considerations about future immobility and mobility. Migration and migration decision making has been addressed not as a one-time event that ends with settlement but as a process of evaluating and reconsidering the initial migration decision that continuous throughout a migrants' life.

The study focused on the individual perspective of migrants and explored the ways in which migrants make sense of their mobility between Poland and Norway. Even though a full understanding of why migration occurs requires also an analysis of structural conditions and other factors on the macro and meso level the micro level analysis of migration motivations is important. It allows to understand how individuals perceive of structural conditions and opportunities and what motivates them to make certain choices.

To get a comprehensive understanding of individuals migration decision making the study employed a narrative interview technique for data collection. The informants were asked to recount their live stories, with focus on migration related events. Thus, migration decisions could be understood in the context of informants' personal circumstances and previous experiences. The analysis of informants' accounts was conducted as grounded analysis. The results were presented and discussed in the light of various theoretical approaches.

An important point of reference for the analysis was the value expectancy model proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981). The study explored migration motivations along the seven value categories of *wealth, status, affiliation, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, and morality*. Informants accounts revealed a great diversity of qualitatively different values and aspirations underlying each migration decision and consideration. Values from all categories except morality were mentioned by the informants as factors in their considerations about international mobility. The value categories, *stability* and *wellbeing of others* were developed by the researcher to capture some additional considerations that appeared to be qualitatively different from the values described by De Jong and Fawcett (1981). Distinguishing between values according to the categories proposed by De Jong and Fawcett (1981) was found to be particularly useful in order to juxtapose and compare diverse motives and their importance for the migration decision. The grouping of migration motivations into qualitatively distinct groups of values and aspirations allowed to discuss the complexity of migration considerations and highlight the variety of motives behind informants' mobility choices. My informants accounts revealed

that a number of distinct and simultaneous considerations informed their migration decisions. Thus, monocausal explanations and concepts of intra-European east-west migration as solely economically motivated labor migration could be challenged. However, the findings from this study do not cast economic models wrong. The results show that all informants improved their economic situation through migration and migration to economically unprosperous places did not occur. Yet the juxtaposition of the aspirations and motivations for migration to Norway revealed that economic considerations are only one factor among many and non-economic factors play an important role in migration decision making.

Even though the model proposed by de Jong and Fawcett (1981) is useful to highlight the diversity of motivations behind migration of Poles to Norway, it remains very vague about the relationship between individual actors' values and broader structural conditions, factors on the macro and meso level. In order to explain how individuals' values develop and how they are informed by social, cultural and economic contexts the study thus employed several other concepts from migration theory. The framework of *migration cultures* (Massey et al. 1993; White 2011) which highlights the role of social norms and values in migration decision making was found to be very useful in explaining a number of mobility choices informants made. Furthermore, applying a life course perspective to migration decision making (Achenbach 2016) offered a useful framework to explain mobility choices in relation to individual and household demographic characteristics of informants. The Neoclassical approach and the New Economics of Labor Migration Theory conceptualize migration decisions in relation to economic structures and opportunity differentials. As discussed above they are limited to economic factors and thus fail to account for non-economic factors such as i.e. safety of the environment, leisure activity opportunities and climate. Finally, social networks theory was crucial in explaining the timing and choice of destination of my informants' migration. Even though fragmented, these approaches offer explanations and insights into why certain individuals hold particular values and make certain choices.

4.4 Generalization

The study described the experience of migrants from an hitherto in the Norwegian context underexplored group, Poles with university education. With the specific focus on this group the study aimed to challenge a dominant representation of Poles in Norway as low skilled manual workers and contributed to a more divers image of Polish migrants.

Yet, due to the small size and specific composition of the sample the findings of this study should not be generalized to the whole group of highly educated Poles in Norway. Firstly, the sample is gender specific. It reflects exclusively the experience of female migrants. Migration theory and empirical studies suggest that migration experiences of male and female migrants can differ significantly, thus results should be seen as potentially gender specific. Further research is needed to determine the extent to which these findings are also applicable for male highly educated Poles in Norway. Secondly, the study was conducted in one particular location in Norway, in Stavanger. Stavanger is a city with a particularly large and diverse foreign population due to a large petroleum industry in the city. This industry attracts migrants with very specific skills. My sample reflected this local specificity of Stavanger. Two informants were geophysicists and had worked in the petroleum industry in Stavanger. The experience of highly educated Poles in other parts of the county might differ significantly.

Despite the above described limitations of the sample the results of this study correspond in many ways to the findings of earlier studies from other contexts. Comparison of my findings with results from other studies with Polish university graduates in western EU countries show important similarities. For example, other studies found equally diverse non-economic migration motivations and aspirations among highly educated Poles abroad. Furthermore, studies also observed attitudes of open-endedness, transience and repeated mobility. Such similarities suggest that the present study succeeded to capture some experiences that are shared by many migrants with similar characteristics. Even though the findings might represent some values and experiences shared by greater numbers of highly educated Poles in Norway and even other migration destinations, one should be careful not to assume that these values and experiences specific for highly educated migrants and distinct from other groups. In fact, my informants accounts suggest that there is an overlap between the experience of highly educated and less educated Poles in Norway. Several patterns described in this study seem to be rather life phase specific then education related, i.e. there is evidence that open ended, liquid mobility occurs also among young Poles of any level of education. Similarly, it remains largely unclear to what extend migration motivations might differ between migrants with higher and lower education. Further research and systematic comparison is needed to gain a better understanding of the specifics of the migrations of highly educated Poles.

4.5 Suggestions for further research

Even though only indirectly related to the research topic of this study, the issue of downward social mobility after migration emerged during the research and seems to be of particular relevance for highly educated Poles abroad. Several of my informants worked in jobs below their skills at the time of the interview and findings from other studies suggest that it is a widespread phenomenon among highly educated Poles in Norway. Studies with university graduates from Poland in the UK suggest that deskilling can become a major concern for migrants' wellbeing at the destination place.

The study explored the motivations of highly skilled migrants to take up unskilled jobs in Norway and how working below their skills affected their plans for the future. However, it was beyond the scope of this study to further explore the issue. Yet there is an urgent need for further research about the topic. More detailed information about the levels of education and specific qualifications Poles bring with them to Norway is needed. Furthermore, it should be explored whether deskilling affects all university degrees equally or whether there are subject specific differences and which groups of migrants are particularly vulnerable to deskilling.

Researchers should aim to understand the scale of the phenomenon and further explore the implications of downward social mobility for migrants' wellbeing. Analysis should include successful cases of skill transfer as well as cases of deskilling in order to derive lessons learned. Polish migrants should be encouraged and assisted to find work that relates to their skills. A first and important step is to share knowledge about successful cases of skill transfer with them in order to encourage more people to aspire and work towards a satisfying position and not fall into the belief that it is impossible to transfer their skills to Norway. This study hopes to contribute to this aim. Research and concrete recommendations are needed on how to address the issue and make better use of the available human capital. It is crucial to understand what skills migrants bring with them to Norway in order to address deskilling and avoid potentially harmful implications for migrants. Furthermore, understanding motivations, aspirations and future plans of migrants is important to design policy that is able to address migrants' needs and increase the synergies of the presence of Poles in Norway. It is hoped that the present study will contribute to draw attention to the issue and stimulate further inquiries.

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