

## A NEW ANTHROPOLOGICAL PROJECT: POLES OF SUCCESS – BETWEEN EMIGRATION AND TRANSNATIONALITY: NEW ASPECTS OF THE POLISH DIASPORA IN WESTERN EUROPE<sup>1</sup>

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This article presents new anthropological research undertaken by a team of five fieldwork experienced ethnologists. The aim of this project is to understand the mechanisms and circumstances of the success achieved by Polish migrants living in selected EU countries (England, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, and Germany). “Poles of success” have not been the object of any in-depth studies on migration yet. Therefore, the aspiration of the research team concentrated on 3 aspects:

1. Analysing how “success” was achieved. The principal investigator and his team assumed that the strategies involved in migrants achieving success are dependent on: the time of migration, push & pull factors, cultural and social capital and contact networks (in the country of origin and in the host country). Another assumption is that success is more often achieved in isolation from the Polish community, in so-called scattered communities. The category of success is presented not only in terms of economic success, but first of all in social and cultural contexts, recognizing the success of those who perceive themselves as successful people and those who are regarded as such.
2. Identifying factors that contribute to achieving success outside the home country. Researchers assume that the most important of these are: professional, material and family stabilization, and their relationship with the processes of adaptation and integration in the country of settlement.
3. Identifying the transnational context of ‘the migrants of success’ in relation to their cultural competence acquired abroad. We believe that many Poles achieve success thanks to being able to function smoothly in two (or more) societies. The intercultural context reinforces the sense of accomplishment and, successful adaptation strategies affect the development of a transnational lifestyle.

The final result of this 3-year project will be presented in publications, describing the most significant findings compared to the general migration processes taking place in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> Project No. UMO-2014/13/B/HS3/04927 is conducted by Prof. Aleksander Posern-Zieliński, and financed by the National Centre of Science [Narodowe Centrum Nauki]. It started on March 2015 and will be continued until February 2018. There are 5 anthropologists from Poznań, working as a team on the project: Prof. A. Posern-Zieliński, A. Szczepaniak-Kroll Ph.D., A. Szymoszyn Ph.D., Rafał Beszterda Ph.D. and Łukasz Kaczmarek Ph.D. The host institution is the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology Polish Academy of Sciences. This article is written on the basis of a project presentation prepared by the whole team for NCS.

Artykuł przedstawia nowe badania antropologiczne podjęte przez zespół pięciu etnologów posiadających długoletnie doświadczenie terenowe. Celem projektu jest poznanie mechanizmów i okoliczności osiągnięcia sukcesu w warunkach migracji w środowisku Polaków zamieszkających w wybranych krajach Unii Europejskiej (Anglii, Irlandii, Szwecji, Norwegii i Niemczech). „Polacy sukcesu” nie byli dotychczas obiektem pogłębionych badań migracyjnych. Dlatego dążeniem zespołu badawczego jest skoncentrowanie się w studiach na trzech aspektach:

1. Przeanalizowanie sposobów osiągnięcia „sukcesu”. Kierownik projektu i jego zespół zakładają, że strategie migrantów zależne są od: momentu migracji, czynników wypychających i przyciągających, kapitału społeczno-kulturowego oraz sieci powiązań (w kraju pochodzenia i przyjmującym). Kolejnym założeniem jest to, iż sukces coraz częściej osiągany jest w oderwaniu od środowiska polonijnego, w tzw. społeczności rozproszonej. Kategoria sukcesu ujmowana jest nie tylko w wymiarach ekonomicznych, ale przede wszystkim społecznych i kulturowych, uznając za ludzi sukcesu tych, którzy sami tak się postrzegają, jak i tych, którzy za takich są uważani.
2. Określenie czynników sprzyjających osiągnięciu sukcesu poza krajem macierzystym. Badacze zakładają, że do najważniejszych z nich należą: stabilizacja zawodowa, materialna, rodzinna i ich związek z procesami adaptacji i integracji w kraju osiedlenia.
3. Rozpoznanie transnarodowego kontekstu „migrantów sukcesu” w odniesieniu do kompetencji kulturowych nabywanych za granicą. Naukowcy wychodzą z założenia, że wielu Polaków osiąga sukces dzięki płynnemu funkcjonowaniu w dwóch (lub więcej). Kontekst interkulturowy wzmacnia poczucie odniesionego sukcesu, a z drugiej strony, pomyslnie strategie adaptacyjne wpływają na rozwój transnarodowego stylu życia.

Efektem końcowym 3-letniego projektu będą publikacje prezentujące wyniki badań antropologicznych na tle ogólnych procesów migracyjnych zachodzących w Europie.

**K e y w o r d s:** Poles, success, migration, transnationalism, transmigration, European Union, agglomeration, identity, integration, adaptation, diaspora, scattered community.

This project involves innovative research on contemporary Polish emigration in Western Europe. It focuses on Poles who have achieved success abroad. In order to broaden knowledge of the subject area, researchers have undertaken an extensive ethnological research programme, implementing the qualitative methods and techniques specific to cultural anthropology. Our research is conducted in the Western European states, particularly in those which have been the target countries of Polish emigrants for a long time (Germany, Norway and Sweden) and countries currently attracting high numbers of Polish emigrants (England and Ireland). The project's findings are a result of field studies, which are essential for obtaining the necessary empirical data. Ethnographical fieldwork is conducted every year during the running of the entire project (2015–2018), because – from our experience – work continued over a period of time with in-built intervals, allowing us to evaluate the gathered materials from the first visit, directs further research, improves the tools used, and verifies the validity of the results.

The main objective of this project is to comprehend the mechanisms involved in achieving success in emigration and the determinants behind it resulting from the specificity of the host country and the socio-cultural capital of the migrants.

## THE GROUP UNDER RESEARCH – PEOPLE OF SUCCESS

Polish emigrants who have achieved substantial success are rarely portrayed in migration studies. In this project success is defined very broadly, not only in terms of economic, but predominantly in social and cultural categories. In this regard, successful people are both those who perceive themselves as such (the emic category), and those who are defined this way by their host society members (the etic category). Living abroad, they have achieved personal, professional and material stabilization, and have harmoniously adapted to and integrated into the host society. They have managed to fulfil their aspirations, and to achieve their goals, even of the ambitious kind. As a result, today they can lead lives on a par with their native counterparts, and sometimes even higher than average.

Current literature devotes much space to migrants who are excluded from their new society, who have trouble in finding themselves in a different reality, and who have experienced negative phenomena that migration is often accompanied by, such as: exploitation, unemployment, homelessness, alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual abuse, dependence on social care systems, etc. Attention is very rarely paid to people who are satisfied with their country of destination. Contemporary social studies focus only on highly qualified migrants and the economic aspects of all migrants' lives. In this particular group of migrants we can distinguish those who achieve notable success abroad and this attention is very valuable, but at the same time, it must be noted that the cultural and social aspects of these highly qualified migrants are neglected. Also neglected are the upwardly mobile who did not belong to this specific group of specialists at the beginning of their settlement in the new country, but have often achieved greater success than the majority of their host country's population (through their hard work, their skills, education, chosen strategies) in different socio-politico-economic circumstances.

The 'successful Poles' category is noticeably growing, and this is a trend particularly visible among migrants from recent years. There are a rising number of people who go abroad in order to achieve their career aspirations and this phenomenon is occurring more often than it used to in the twentieth century. New migrants are not only highly skilled workers leaving as part of a 'brain drain' strategy conducted by host countries. In this group there are also people who have decided to emigrate under the pressure of individual push & pull factors. Some of them had ideas how to achieve success abroad before leaving Poland, whilst for others the ideas came to them only after reaching their host country.

The study is conducted among those who left in the late twentieth century (from the 80s) and those leaving nowadays. This allows the project to be able to employ a comparative perspective as it will find out how success was understood before Poland's accession to the EU and Schengen Zone, and the loosening of border controls as well as labour market regulations, and what it means today. We assume that contemporary

migrants, mostly voluntary, are so called economic migrants who employ a variety of strategies on their way to achieving success.

The target group of this research is both those who specifically seek to manifest their Polish identity on migrating, such as through participation in Polish diaspora organizations, as well as people showing their national identity in a non-institutionalized manner, usually in the private sphere. The latter might not engage in the activities of ethnic associations and therefore are often overlooked in current scientific inquiries. They can be classified as belonging to the so-called scattered community (in contrast to those immigrants concentrated in neighbourhoods, institutions, and other Polish diasporas). They quickly assimilate into the culture of the host country and integrate more easily. The team believes that this has a significant impact on the success they have achieved. These migrants are members of the host society and often strongly identify themselves with it but at the same time this does not interfere with their Polish identity. This is now becoming an increasingly common phenomenon, revealing new forms of identity, related to transnationality and transculturalism. It has been insufficiently studied but this project's findings hope to fill the gap.

Today, living abroad, and even outside the diaspora, does not prevent migrants from preserving their Polish identity. Many of them maintain an interest in events taking place in their homeland, and participate in them (such as elections). Thanks to modern means of communication and transport, these people are in positions to keep in contact with their Polish culture. The opening up of European Union borders and the opportunity this provides to operate freely in a network of transnational connections, have greatly assisted Poles on their way to achieving personal success. The next goal of this project is thus to investigate transnational practices among those who could be regarded as typical immigrants. These include, for example, migrants from the 1980s, who are nowadays involved in a transnational way of life. Ethnologists want to examine how their achievement of success abroad affects their relationship with the country of origin, family, social and professional ties and also how it is perceived abroad and in Poland. A further aim of this research is to also determine the extent to which open borders have played their part in achieving success on the basis of transnational contacts. This project endeavours to enrich current research on transnationalism – the phenomenon which is on the rise and affects Poles.

#### THE SUBJECT OF RESEARCH – SUCCESS IN A MIGRATION SITUATION

Within the framework of our research on Poles – successful people and their transnational contacts – the following purposes are predicted:

Researchers assume that this community in order to achieve success has to be actively involved in the society of their host country. The strategies immigrants employ

in the host country, their adaptation and integration, and also the degree and ways they use to ‘infiltrate’ into the new society – these phenomenon are analysed during the whole project. There is also another aim involved, which is to trace the process of acculturation, to determine how the socio-cultural capital brought from Poland affects the speed and quality of learning, and affects the acquisition of cultural competences in the host country.

As a result, the strategies of immigrants, which have resulted in their development, promotion and pursuit of various career paths, will be reconstructed. This will give us a better understanding of the mechanisms that enable emigrants to achieve success. It is assumed that important factors in this process are: cultural and social capital, political and social conditions, individual management strategies and the situation in the host country. Our analysis will also cover another important issue involved in achieving success; whether it is the result of relationships with the local Polish diaspora or is the result of separation from this community.

Through in-depth research and multi-dimensional analysis, including, amongst others, causes, frequency and the form of communication with Poland as well as the gradual development of relations with the new country, the team will refer reflexively to the theory of national trans-identity, which is part of a wider phenomenon – transnationalism. Transnationalism is defined as the process by which migrants through their everyday practices and social, economic and political relations construct abroad new spheres of life (Basch *et al.* 1994). This leads to the formation of a kind of ‘suspension’ for participants of this process – transnational migrants are involved in two (or more) political and socio-cultural spaces (Pries 2008). This phenomenon is heightened by the processes of globalisation, which – as Steven Vertovec wrote – “mixes identities, ignoring boundaries and orders” (2012, 95). This can lead to the breakdown in ‘the identity of solidarity’ of migrants. However, previous observations of team members question the universality of this view. Therefore, this issue also will be the subject of detailed investigations.

The final part of the project will be the evaluation of the research findings. They will be disseminated in articles and a monograph prepared for publishing. The articles and monograph will present our research findings in the broad context of general migration processes occurring in Europe.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

This proposed project involves basic research of an innovative nature; innovative in the sense that our research on successful Poles who emigrated is presented from the perspective of cultural anthropology, which has been absent in the studies of Polish migrants in Western Europe.

In studies on Polish emigration there is a lack of qualitative ethnological research. Most recent studies have focused mainly on economic migration, often related to different kinds of work below the educational level of the migrants. What is more, they have included tightly integrated Poles enclosed in the Polish diaspora and not immigrants who have integrated successfully into the host society, and quickly gained local cultural competence. Research on the contemporary Polish diaspora focuses on the most numerous group, usually those poorly coping with life in their country of residence. Partly, this is due to the fact that the so-called successful people are dispersed in terms of communication with the institutionalized Polish diaspora. Meanwhile, studies of this group form an interesting subject for reflection on the individual strategies migrants adopt to build their careers, achieve economic success and social stability in their new surroundings.

The authors of this project are of the opinion that this community is a very important part of the Polish diaspora. They have entered deeply into the fabric of the structure of their new countries of residence but have not cut loose their ties with Poland/Polish culture and the Polish diaspora, maintaining identity with both. The mechanisms involved in such life choices and career paths have not received much investigation, hence there is the need for in-depth anthropological studies on this community, from an ethnological perspective and this can be achieved by entering into close contact with respondents, to reconstruct their way of life and their strategies of behaviour. This approach reflects the innovative character of this project, which involves choosing a poorly recognized research group and examining it with in-depth field research.

The phenomenon of emigration from Poland as well as immigration to Poland has been a very popular area of research among Polish scientists for several years. Research studies on foreigners coming to our country clearly outnumber those focusing on Poles going abroad. Publications that have appeared in recent years, mainly articles in collective works, deal with a variety of socio-cultural issues affecting foreigners coming to Poland, such as problems related to their adaptation, integration, identity, the perception of foreigners by Poles and mixed marriages, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Poles migrating abroad have been the subject of research studies especially by scientists from The Centre for Migration Research in the Institute of Social Studies, The Institute of Social Policy, The Central European Forum for Migration Research and The Institute of Public Affairs. Studies conducted by scholars<sup>3</sup> from those institutions

<sup>2</sup> There are many publications on the subject of migration into Poland – see for example the articles of Grzymała-Kazłowska (<http://www.migracje.uw.edu.pl/publikacja/osoba/50/>), Iglicka-Okólska ([https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krystyna\\_Iglicka-Ok%C3%B3lska](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krystyna_Iglicka-Ok%C3%B3lska)), Łotocki (<http://ips.uw.edu.pl/o-ips/pracownicy/strony-www/dr-lukasz-lotocki/>), Halik (<http://www.migracje.uw.edu.pl/osoba/53/>), also Halik and Nowicka 2002, Nowicka and Łodziński 2006, Grzymała-Moszczyńska and Nowicka-Rusek 1998, Lalak 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Among others: Aleksandra Grzymała-Kazłowska, Krystyna Iglicka-Okólska, Ewa Jaźwińska-Motyłska, Izabela Grabowska-Lusińska, Magdalena Lesińska, Marek Okólski, Paweł Kaczmarczyk, Ewa Kępińska,

refer to the most recent migratory phenomena such as the mechanisms and conditions of migration, discrimination against migrants, their integration, tolerance and multiculturalism. Most of these works deserve to be given due recognition, however, they are based on quantitative sources (surveys). What they reveal are the dynamics of migration in European countries, migrants presence in the local labour market, the educational level of the migrants and their transfer of financial resources. Some of these studies are based on an analysis of existing sources (mainly demographic materials, government documents and archives), which represent 'an outsider' view of migrants, not allowing them to speak for themselves. Therefore, the few studies that are based on a bottom-up perspective should be considered as unique and special, such as monographs by Dariusz Niedźwiedzki (2010), Jacek Schmidt (2009) and books edited by Małgorzata Budyta-Budzyńska (2013), Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Anna Kwiatkowska and Joanna Roszak (eds. 2010).

The scheduled ethnological research undertaken on this project will prove invaluable. The bottom-up perspective employed in the study is a novelty that generally does not occur in sociological studies.

The publications mentioned above do not relate in any way to those Polish migrants, who could be regarded as successful people. On the contrary, they mainly focus on those who can be considered 'migrants of survival' rather than 'migrants of well-being'. However, the latter are clearly a group which is increasing, using the open borders of Europe to build their future by using transnational networks, their cultural knowledge and the socio-political realities in at least two countries: the host country and the country of origin. In the context of previous research, studies looking at the ethnic and social environment of successful Poles, are definitely innovative. In this way, they complement the existing picture of Polish migrants and will broaden the knowledge associated with the phenomenon of transnationalism and its Polish specifics.

The presented studies are pioneering in Polish ethnology and cultural anthropology, in two significant respects: both in terms of the studied group – middle class and more affluent people, and in terms of the purpose of research, which can broadly be defined as migration success. We hope that they will become the start of a cycle of research on migrants, who are not always discriminated against, but who have been the most successful in adapting and integrating.

These studies are conducted in countries where Poles form large groups, especially in urban areas, thereby entering the so-called mainstream of urban anthropology. Such a choice arises from the fact that in these environments the best conditions for achieving success exist. The ethnological fieldwork takes place in Berlin, London, Dublin, Oslo and Stockholm. The majority of migrants are educated, and are increasingly managing to take advantage of their high professional competence.

For comparative purposes, the study is conducted in three different regions of Europe. The first target area is Germany, which traditionally has been an attractive destination for many Polish immigrants since the late nineteenth century, and retains its popularity to the present day. The second area is the Scandinavian countries (Norway and Sweden) characterized by a high percentage of educated migrants, who are often employed in jobs in line with their qualifications, which is a contributing factor to their achievement of high social status. The third area is the United Kingdom and Ireland, the most popular Polish migration destinations of recent years. Among those migrants there is a large group of young, well-educated people, whose potential is used on the site and deciding on their success.

An analysis of the literature on the Poles **in Germany** shows that they are more often the subject of studies of German scientists (or second generation immigrants) rather than of Polish researchers. Cases in point being studies by Norbert Cyrus<sup>4</sup>, Christoph Pallaske (2001), Frauke Miera (2007), Katarzyna Blumberg-Stankiewicz (2007), Magdalena Nowicka (2007, 2012) and Birgit Glorius (2007). Most of these have a slight qualitative element involved, however, the respondents' answers are rarely used in them. None of these studies are applicable to Poles who have succeeded. These publications reconfirm the image of immigrants as passive participants of political events, who take low-paid and menial jobs in order to barely make ends meet.

Meanwhile in Germany – one of the most popular destination countries for migrants – and especially in Berlin, the group of adventurous Poles is growing. Many of them have been living in the city for a long time, using their life savings and the possibility of free movement across the border in order to take up transnational activities. More and more are being hired by German employers, who are starting up businesses in Poland. The bilingualism and biculturalism of these Berlin Poles along with their professional competence is very advantageous. There are an increasing number of new immigrants, going abroad in order to achieve success, and not, as before, to barely manage to reach subsistence level. These groups provide the perfect base for the study of successful people in migration and transnational situations.

Similar to the migration literature in Germany, literature on Poles settling **in the UK and Ireland** is more the subject of studies of scientists (including those of Polish descent) from universities and centres in the UK and Ireland (mainly the Centre for Research on Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism – CRONEM at the University of Surrey, the Centre on Migration, Policy & Society – COMPAS at the University of Oxford, also Bath University, Manchester University, Queen's University of Belfast), who, however, work closely with researchers from Poland, dealing with issues of migration including migration to Great Britain. These are mainly analysis in economics, demography, social policy, law, sociology and geography (mostly the Centre

<sup>4</sup> See list of his publications on: <http://www.politis-europe.uni-oldenburg.de/9893.html>.





Polish companies in west London, photo by A. Szymoszyn, 2015.

of Migration Research, Warsaw University, and the Institute of Public Affairs). So far, there have been a number of publications dealing with Polish migrants in the UK, mainly in London, but few of them are characterized by qualitative studies that apply in-depth ethnographic research methods, directly reflecting the views of their subjects. This is partly due to the fact that among researchers on migrants there are few ethnologists. This project has come into being in an attempt to fill, even partially, this gap.

It does not mean that recent studies and publications have not proved valuable. On the contrary, thanks to the extensive literature on migration to the UK in the post-accession period, which has been published, we have gained a valuable, multi-dimensional context (economic, sociological, demographic, legal and political) which provides an essential background and basis for further research in the field of cultural anthropology. Noteworthy publications are Anderson *et al.* (2006), Burrell (2006, 2007, 2009), Triandafyllidou (2006 ed.), Eade *et al.* (2006, 2009), Garapich (2005, 2006, 2007), Okólski (2010 ed), White (2010), White and Ryan (2008), Kaczmarczyk and Okólski (2005), Milewski and Ruszczak-Żbikowska (2008), Kempny (2010, 2012), Krings *et al.* (2009), Komito and Bates (2009), Grabowska-Lusińska (2007, 2008), Ryan (2008, 2011), Gontarczyk (2012), Matykowski and Dominik (2010), Bobek (2010), Düvell (2007).

Among the rich literature available there are only a small number of economic analyses (e.g. Kaczmarczyk and Okólski 2005, Düvell 2007) partly referring to successful

Poles. An overview of the studies published on Poles in Great Britain and Ireland shows that no one before has thoroughly dealt with successful migrants in their host country.

What differentiates contemporary Polish migration **to the Scandinavian countries** from other streams of migration is the professional structure of the people who go abroad. Among the Polish migrants of these countries there are many highly educated people, representing well-defined groups of professionals (the IT industry, engineers, doctors, and medical support staff). The Scandinavian countries make every effort to facilitate the integration of contract workers offering them language courses. Polish people usually take up specific and well-defined job vacancies, under conditions strictly defined in the agreement. Also for individuals or families who wish to extend their contract or start temporary work for an indefinite period, naturalization procedures are simplified. The good working conditions and standards of living available mean that Sweden and Norway are becoming the permanent place of living for many Polish migrants, including those from a large group of migrants who are planning to achieve success abroad. The anthropological literature on Polish migrants to Norway and Sweden is threadbare, and the team hopes to develop, at least partly, this field of studies.

#### Detailed Aims of the Project

1. Recognizing the specific features of Polish migrants succeeding in selected European countries.
2. Identifying the cultural, social and educational-professional capital of migrants.
3. Reconstructing the adaptation, integration and acculturation of this group.
4. Determining what successful migration is from several perspectives: personal (individual), the local community in the host country, friends and relatives from Poland who have also emigrated.
5. Identifying the sources of success and life strategies leading to it with regards to social and cultural capital.
6. Analysing relations with the Polish diaspora and religious organizations and the scope and nature of these contacts or their lack of.
7. Identifying individual motivations influencing their choice of life beyond their own national group (in the so-called scattered community).
8. Determining the causes and effects of social and civic participation in the local community and in the host country.
9. Establishing transnational networks: family, business, social and economic ones.
10. Studying the strategies involved in the construction of their own and their offspring's identity (the way they raise and educate their children and build their ties with the country of origin).
11. Answering the questions: what is migration success, what are the ways to achieve it, and who are the successful people who live outside their country of origin?

## METHODS OF RESEARCH

The investigators of this project use the ethnographic method; therefore the research undertaken is mainly of a qualitative nature. Techniques involving the holding of semi-structured, in-depth interviews and family interviews, which is a transitional form of interview between structured and narrative ones, are used. These techniques have proven their worth in previously conducted research revealing notable results. The team has chosen the above mentioned types of interview because the traditional narrative as well as structured interviews, which have been frequently applied in studies on migration, have usually proved inefficient in their former ethnographical research. In the structured interview many topics raised by respondents are omitted, eliminating the emotional aspect of the conversation, which sometimes highlights the context and can notably affect the analysis of the material. This technique resembles an interrogation and thus discourages respondents who expect an interaction with the researcher; a discussion and an exchange of ideas rather than to simply answer the questions. Narrative interviews provide a lot of redundant information on the history of individuals who are not the subject of research. This extensive knowledge sought often turns out to be incomplete when it is used as the basis to describe an exile group, or when someone is trying to understand and explain the logic of individual and group behaviour. In addition, the widely differing issues raised in narrative interviews make it difficult to compare findings and verify the assumptions made at the beginning of the research. Therefore, scientists use transitional forms which reduce the limitations of the structured and narrative interviews mentioned above, while maintaining their benefits.

The purpose of our structured in-depth interviews is to collect information on the living conditions pertaining in the home and host countries, and the activities undertaken by the migrants. This technique allows us to note down both the emotions and opinions expressed by the respondents which often complement the facts. The structured in-depth interview in script form is recorded and stored. It is similar to an ordinary conversation, but at each meeting the respondent is asked the same most important questions, which are crucial in helping the researcher broaden his/her knowledge.

The family interview technique is the most effective way to collect information on immigrant households and family networks. It enables richer material to be gathered than in the case of individual in-depth interviews, because the utterances of not one, but several people can be obtained. The members of a family feel more confident and more inclined to start and open conversations in an intimate group setting rather than being studied individually. They often initiate new discussion threads which significantly extend the final response. In the case of migration research, conducting this type of interview enables the interviewers to better understand, for example, the migration activities of family members. It provides opportunities to observe the ways in which different kinds of decisions are reached, the processes involved in the

creation of adaptation strategies and how family members interact with each other. This technique is particularly useful in the study of mixed marriages. In its application different interview scenarios can be employed, varying the degree of detail and structure as required. Questions should be included to each of the respondents, which can be supplemented by other family members. It is recommended that these type of interviews be conducted at the interlocutor's house. This allows the interviewer to figure out the financial and social situation of the respondents. It is important for the interviewer to describe these circumstances and processes, because these elements have an impact on the analysis of individual cases.

Contact with the informants is made through local professional, business, social, cultural, and religious organizations through the medium of the local press (trade advertisements, job offers and other adverts), as well as migrant networks, webpages and community forums. On the basis of previous studies carried out by team members, the 'snowball' method<sup>5</sup> is very effective. Public data obtained from Polish companies which have their branches and employees abroad also are used.

In addition to the sources mentioned above, the project also uses existing sources, in particular data obtained in Polish and foreign offices which are responsible for dealing with foreigners, in non-governmental organizations, archives, schools and universities. Within this project we intend to work in close cooperation with people from these institutions.

For the most comprehensive implementation of the project cooperation with many other European institutions dealing with issues of migration will be undertaken.

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The authors of the project hope to create a very interesting multilevel analysis of 'successful Poles' residing in Western Europe, which will be useful for further studies and as a basis for recommendations for social institutions.

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<sup>5</sup> Snowball method or technique begins from a core of known people and are then increased by adding others, given by members of the original group. It is so called on the analogy of the increasing size of a rolled snowball.

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