

# **How do economic, political and social factors play a role in Ukraine-Poland migration**

Filip Jankowski  
Faculty of Spatial Sciences  
Bachelor Thesis  
Supervisor: Stephen Adaawen

## **Abstract**

The aim of this research is to investigate the reasons for migration from Ukraine to Poland, analyzing them with existing theories. A mixed-methods approach of questionnaires, interviews, secondary data and GIS analysis was used to properly collect and analyse data to answer the research question.

As a result, findings show that migration to Poland from Ukraine is influenced by multiple factors such as: better economic and educational opportunities, social and political stability. Moreover, it can be observed that the general migration trend from Ukraine to Poland is increasing throughout the years. Additionally, Poland in general is becoming the final destination for migrants from Eastern Europe.

*Keywords: Job opportunity, Migration, Education, Poland, Ukraine, factors*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

In the modern world migration is a highly relevant topic both in social and academic terms. The European Union is one of the most prominent destinations for migrants and refugees from all over the world. More specifically, the North-Western area of the EU is particularly popular among migrants for various reasons such as escaping poverty or armed conflicts (European Commission, 2021). As such, it is this area (along with South-East Europe) that takes the spotlight for news coverage and research regarding migration, particularly after the migration crisis of 2015 (Evans, 2020). However, one of the most overlooked destinations for migrants is Poland, which for the past few years has increased in popularity. Despite its “anti-immigration” stance and reputation, Poland issued one of the highest numbers of work permits in the EU in 2017 (Kucharska, 2019). The most likely reason why Poland grants these permits is because the Polish economy currently suffers from a lack of workers and skilled employees (Musiyevzov, 2019). This in turn is partly due to high emigration of Poles (a brain drain) to Western European countries such as the United Kingdom or Germany since the 2000’s, which accelerated after joining the European Union. Moreover, according to the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) the unemployment level in December 2020 in Poland was only 6,2% which may cause employers difficulties in searching for new employees. In the end, with the Polish economy growing and with a significant shortage of workers in the market (Kucharska, 2019), the number of work permits issued to foreigners especially from Eastern Europe is expected only to increase.

For years migrants from Ukraine played an important role in the Polish economy and have been regular participants of the labor market. They are most prominent in large urban areas such as Warsaw, Krakow or Lodz which attract migrants from all over the world with their developed services and job market. Specialized agriculture regions which need skillful workers (NBP, 2018) also attract foreign migrants. According to the National Bank of Poland (NBP) more than 48% of agriculture farms currently hire or largely hired Ukrainian workers in the past. Moreover, due to the Euromaidan revolution (also known as Revolution of Dignity), the eruption of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea by Russia, both Ukraine and Russia experienced economic difficulties and deterioration (World Bank, 2021). The cumulation of these events made Poland even more attractive for migrants from Eastern Europe which already had a booming economy for more than a few decades (NBP, 2018). According to estimates produced by the National Bank of Poland, in 2017, there were more than 900,000 Ukrainian citizens in Poland (NBP, 2018). Most of them are working, studying or doing both (NBP, 2018). This large number of migrants could help and encourage future migrants to migrate to Poland which already has developed networks and other social and work webs (Iglicka & Weinar, 2008). This only shows how popular Poland is becoming in terms of education and job opportunities for people coming from Eastern Europe, and how migrants that already moved to Poland magnify its attractiveness.

Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the migration procedure from former USSR countries has not always been so simple and easy as it is now. In the 1990’s migration between Ukraine and Poland was based on the non-visa agreement which was signed between the Polish and Ukrainian governments in 1996 (Iglicka & Weinar, 2008). However, when Poland was applying for EU membership it had to introduce visa requirements for non-EU nationals. This drastic change resulted in a decline of migrants to Poland from countries such as Belorussia, Russia and Ukraine. In spite of this, in 2005, the trend of incoming migration returned to levels

seen before the introduction of visas and has been growing ever since (Iglicka & Weinar, 2008), which shows how popular Poland has become for migrants from Eastern Europe. This is one of many reasons and motivations for this research, which aims to take a closer look at this topic to understand the main reasons for this migration. As a result the research will have both academic and societal relevance. Answers found during this research can be used as a tool to clarify, inform and explain to the readers and future policy makers, changes that are currently taking place in the European Union regarding migration to the member states that might be not well known.

## 1.2 Research problem

The main aim of this research is to find out and understand the main factors and reasons behind migration from Ukraine to Poland. Factors such as education, age, political stability, economic development, and social security play an important role in deciding to migrate from one country to the other (Ramos & Surinach, 2016). Therefore, the central question, along with additional sub-questions, are formulated. Additionally, a hypothesis for each research question are also provided to gain better perspective and understanding on the topic:

*What are the main factors and reasons that play a role in the migration from Ukraine to Poland?*  
It is expected that the main factors behind migration from Ukraine to Poland are as follows: better quality of education, general stability, more job opportunities and raising wages in Poland, difficult economic and political situation in Ukraine. It should be remembered that migrants also move with the intention of gaining better education or continuing their university studies so they may not stay in Poland forever.

### *1. What is the demography of the immigrants that move from Ukraine to Poland?*

Most people moving from Ukraine to Poland are expected to be in their productive age (aged 15 to 64). Furthermore, it is anticipated that migrants moving to Poland are skilled in various trades and well educated which help them to assimilate into the host society and find work (Musiyevdov, 2019).

### *2. What are the experiences of these migrants when they moved to Poland?*

When it comes to experiences, it is expected that migrants will have familiar living experiences in Poland and their country of origin. The reason for this is that both Poland and Ukraine share a similar culture, geography and history, such as a communist past (Kusek W. A.). Furthermore, the question will try to answer what were the main and most common obstacles encountered by the migrants when moving to Poland.

### *3. Why do migrants want to stay/settle in Poland?*

It is expected that a large portion of migrants will stay in Poland for an extended time for various reasons such as work, social and political stability or education (Musiyevdov 2019). Moreover, geographical proximity and cultural similarities would also play a role in the decision to settle in Poland. This means that migrants can move between two countries with relative ease and avoid major logistical complications. It can be observed that external and internal factors are present in decision making. Nevertheless, a large group of migrants will stay for a shorter period of time such as 2-3 years. They will use Poland as a stepping stone to move further to Western Europe or go back to their home country.

The research paper will focus on answering the research questions using theories and concepts which were developed by academic researchers. Furthermore, this research will focus on urban areas located in Poland such as Warsaw, Krakow, Katowice. The main reason for this is that these urban areas have the biggest clusters of migrants in Poland which will help in data collection. The thesis will also include data from questionnaires which asks migrants in their productive age (aged 15 to 64), their level of education, sex, location where they are currently living and coming from. These factors should narrow the data collection which will lead to more clear answers for the research problems.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

The theory and concepts that will be used in this research paper will be based on the Gravity Model, four dimensions connected to migration proposed by Esser (2001) and a Theory of Migration written by Lee (1966). Initially the Gravity Model was based on Newton's gravity law, and how things that are closer to each other influence one another to a greater or lesser extent. This theory has been expanded upon by Ramos and Surinach, who in their paper from 2016 integrated the gravity model with the patterns observed in migration to EU countries. Furthermore, the authors also mention the push and pull theory that influences decision making of migrants. Ramos and Surinach (2016) distinguished five push and pull factors that later are further divided into other sub-factors. The main factors that are mentioned are as follows: demographic, geographic, social, historical and cultural, economic and political. These factors can make specific locations and destinations more attractive for certain groups of migrants which will increase or decrease the desire to move to another destination.

In a paper written by Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas (2016), authors used four dimensions connected to migration proposed by Esser (2001): cultururation, placement, interaction and identification. Cultururation can be explained as the extent to which migrants socialize and integrate with the members of the host society. Placement can be seen as a position that given migrants have in the society and how they are treated by the host society. At the same time, interaction can be seen as a network that migrants have in a given location (web of friends and communities that they are involved in). Identification can be understood as how migrants belong and identify to the new environment (Esser, 2001). It is important to look at these dimensions as complementary things that affect each other in a greater or lesser way. In the end, the four dimensions proposed by Esser will help to answer the main research question as well as the questions connected with the experiences of migrants and if they want to stay/settle in Poland. Moreover, these four dimensions proposed by Esser are, to some extent, similar to and also could work alongside the Gravity Model by Ramos and Surinach (2016) to create a better perspective and understanding of migration patterns in this part of Europe.

According to the Theory of Migration written by Lee (1966), each location possesses a set of positive and negative factors. This set of factors attracts or repels people from moving in or out of a given country respectively. Furthermore, Lee in his paper proposed four factors that are connected to migration. (1) Factors associated with the place of origin (e.g. what are the reasons why people leave their current location), (2) factors associated with the place of destination (e.g. how the quality of life will improve after the move), (3) intervening obstacles (are intervening obstacles worth change of location of living) and (4) personal factors such as family reasons or improving standard of living.

Based on all those factors migrants decide whether, when and where to move to improve their life conditions. It should be remembered that the ultimate decision to move does not depend only on positive factors outweighing the negative ones. Lee states that positive factors need to overcome the negative ones but also they need to overcome any obstacles that the migrants will encounter during their relocation to new areas. This is the reason why the theory proposed by Lee will help to answer the main research question, the sub questions and look at the reasons that make certain regions more popular among migrants than others.

Theories and concepts such as Ramos and Surinach’s (2016) version of the Gravity Model, the four dimensions are connected to migration of Esser (2001, 16) and the A Theory of Migration written by Lee (1966), complement each other and conceptualise the push and pull factors in different ways. Ramos and Surinach talk about the main factors that play a role in decision making of migrants to move from one country to the other. “The determinants of migration are related to demographic, geographic, social, cultural, economic, and political characteristics of both origin and destination countries” (2016) and how it influences the Gravity Model. At the same time, Esser focuses on how immigrants find themselves and integrate into the host society. This correlates to the theory written by Lee, where he writes about factors that are associated with the place of origin and place of destination. As well as obstacles that can intervene in the decision making of individual migrants. To some extent similarly as in Ramos and Surinach’s paper, which talks about factors of migration that are associated with the place of origin and place of destination. It shouldn't be forgotten that internal factors such as education, personal connections, past experiences also play a role in decision making. In the end to properly answer the research question, a holistic approach that takes into consideration all of these mentioned concepts and theories is used.

2.1 Conceptual model

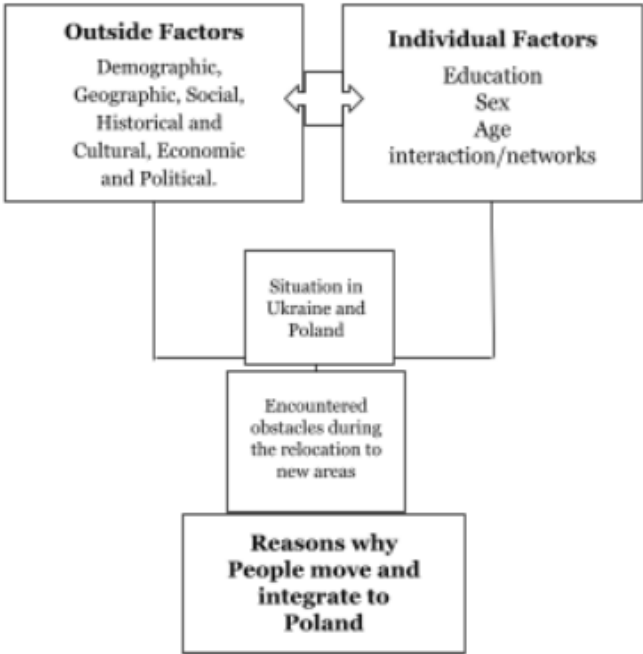


Figure 1. Conceptual model showing factors that influence the migration and integration to Poland

The conceptual model shows how the main factors behind Ukraine-Poland migration are distributed and developed. The factors are divided into two categories, *Outside* and *Individual factors*, for both countries. Outside factors are factors that are out of the respondents control, such as political structure, economy of a given country and so on. In this case, the pull factor that attracts people to Poland is that it has a well-developed economy with strong political and social security compared to the rest of Eastern Europe (Iglicka & Weinar 2008). The push factors that are the most prominent in Ukraine are its economic deterioration caused by armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and the overall poor economic performance, difficult political situation and general instability (NBP, 2018). Thus, the mentioned push and pull factors, magnify and attract migrants from Ukraine to come and settle in Poland. At the same time, individual factors are personal traits that influence people's lives and decision making, but some of these can be changed or modified to some extent by individuals themselves. Moreover, networks and interactions between migrants and host society also plays a role (Esser, 2001). The same situation applies to geographical proximity where migrants from Ukraine can move between Poland and Ukraine with relative ease and enjoy both countries' proximity to each other, avoiding complications connected to commuting. Both outside and individual factors are related to each other and together determine whether and why people want to move from one location to the other and the extent to which they integrate to the host society. Additionally, the theory of migration by Lee (1966) also considers the encountered obstacles during the relocation to new areas. This is to show what barriers and logistical problems migrants can face during their move to different countries. In the end, the main role of the conceptual model is to help to visualize the influencing factors that create reason to move and integrate to the given location.

### **3. Methodology**

To properly investigate and answer the research questions information has been drawn from secondary data, questionnaires and to a smaller extent, interviews. The questionnaires allowed researcher to collect large quantities of data and personal information from the respondents in a relatively short period of time. Information such as age, sex, education, how long respondents are in Poland, the specific location that migrants are coming from and where they are heading to was collected. Furthermore, what challenges they encountered during their move, also was considered and examined. The questionnaires (Appendix C) were posted and uploaded to various social media groups (such as Reddit and Facebook) that bring together immigrants from Eastern Europe that migrated to Poland. The main reason why questionnaires were uploaded on various social media is due to the convenience, problems connected to distance and relative speed of acquiring data. Such a distribution of questionnaires makes it a stratified convenience sampling strategy. Additionally, respondents could tick and select more than one answer for a given question this allowed them to present a more accurate answer. Furthermore, secondary data regarding migration to Poland which is accessible for the public was used and can be found on [migracje.gov.pl](http://migracje.gov.pl), a website supported by the Swiss Contribution and EU. The main aim of this data is to sketch the background of the research and broaden our perspective on the topic of migration to Poland. Moreover, it could be used to show how migration changed over the years, and to which regions exactly.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews (Punch, 2014) were conducted in the course of the research, with participants that provided their contact details in questionnaires and through other means of communications (various social media sites). The information gathered from interviews

(Appendix A) provide a more detailed view on the topic and help to analyze experiences of migrants that came to Poland. Moreover, respondents were asked to develop their answers that were previously asked in questionnaires in more detail. This resulted in more in depth information which further explains the push and pull factors.

### 3.1 Ethical considerations

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other limiting factors such as distance between respondents and researcher, the relations between respondents and investigator was limited which can impact conducting interviews. This resulted in a very clear relation, so no major problems or conflicts appeared in this part of the research. Such a relation also resulted in smooth and efficient data collection which helped to describe and analyze research questions. Moreover, this also resulted in higher safety connected to COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that such a relation might also affect the process of collecting and analysing the respondents so additional caution is necessary.

When it comes to the positionality of this research, the thesis takes a more of an outsider perspective on the topic, and sees how migrants are affected by moving from one location to the other. Nevertheless, due to past experience that the researcher had when moving and changing the place of living, he could more easily understand and communicate with respondents and discuss their situation in a more efficient way. This approach to some extent could help to properly investigate the situation of Ukrainian migrants in Poland and receive more in depth information to answer research questions.

Before the interviews the respondents were asked for their consent (Appendix B) by the interviewer to minimize any harm and problems that may accrue in the future. Furthermore, the names of these respondents were not fully presented or they were censored to keep their anonymity and privacy intact. This way both respondents and researcher felt more comfortable during and after the research process, knowing that their anonymity was secured.

The impact of this research on things such as social stereotypes would be very minimal. This thesis tries to keep a neutral stance on migration and not take sides with any major views or perspectives to ensure this paper's objectivity. Moreover, only a selective group of people read this research paper, so the impact on things such as stereotypes was very limited. Nevertheless, if there would be an impact on society it would be more as a tool to clarify and inform the readers on current changes that are taking place in the European Union.

### 3.2 Limitations

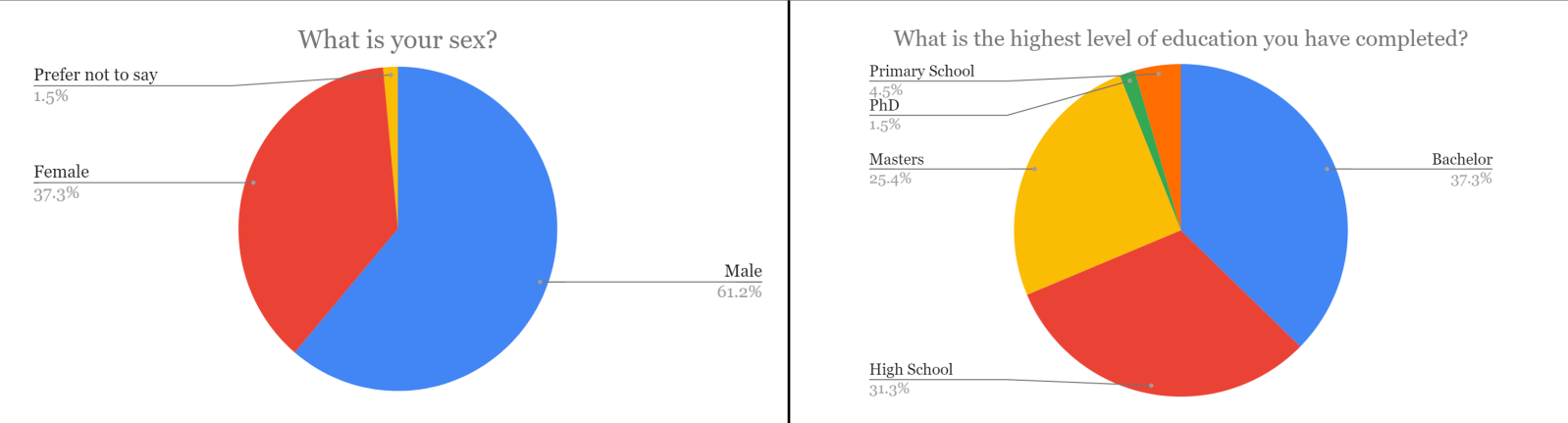
There were few limitations connected to data collection regarding the migration to Poland from Ukraine that should be mentioned. Due to restrictions connected to COVID-19 and geographical distance, gathering data in person on the location was impossible. Thus, the questionnaires were posed on various Social Media (Facebook and Reddit) groups dedicated to the studied communities; additionally this was a stratified convenience strategy of collecting data. This could, to some extent, lead to a respondent bias in the data collection process. Furthermore, certain groups of the studied population could be over or under-represented. A good example of this is the sex of the respondents. Up to 60% indicated that they are males which does not accurately represent the entire population that migrated to Poland between 2014-2020. Time

limitation also played a role in data collection. The number of responses that were received was much lower than expected, which made some parts of research harder to analyse. Moreover, a number of the respondents did not fully complete the questionnaire which further complicated the process of acquiring data and analyzing it. A similar situation occurred with conducting the interviews as there were not as many volunteers for the interview as hoped. Additionally, more diverse questions could be asked during the interviews to gain a better and more accurate view on the topic of migration. Likewise more interviews with different people that have more diverse backgrounds could be conducted. It shouldn't be forgotten that the language barrier also played a small role in collecting information. Some respondents only wanted to use their native language due to the fact their knowledge of Polish or English was limited. However this group was a minority.

**4. Results**

**4.1 Data from Questionnaire and Secondary data**

The frequency charts presented in figure 2 show the characteristics of respondents of the questionnaire. Overall 67 people answered the questionnaire, it should be remembered that respondents could select more than one answer in most of the questions. 61.2% of respondents were males, 37.3% were females and the rest (1.5%) preferred not to say. Most of the respondents were well educated. 1.5% had a Phd degree, 25% of them had a master degree, 33% had a Bachelor degree and 31.3% finished high school. When it comes to the main reasons why respondents moved to Poland, collectively they pointed to (40) the economic factors, (22) geographic proximity to home, (18) education, (17) social security, (15) political stability and culture. At the same time, main reasons why respondents leave their home are as follows: (40) of them identify economic factors as a primary reason why they left their home, (32) political stability, (25) social security, (15) education and (13) culture. Here we can see four factors that influence migration patterns proposed by Lee (1966) in his paper, factors associated with the place of destination and origin, intervening obstacles and personal factors. Additionally, when it comes to locations where respondents moved, the vast majority responded with one of the biggest cities in Poland. 34.8% of respondents moved to Warsaw, the second most popular destination was Krakow with 22.7%, third was Łódź with 10% and Poznan attracted 7.6% of people who answered the questionnaire. Almost 60% of respondents pointed out that they want to stay or settle in Poland for longer. At the same time 24.2% of people do not want to stay and they want to use Poland as a stepping stone to move somewhere else, the rest of the respondents didn't know the answer for this question.





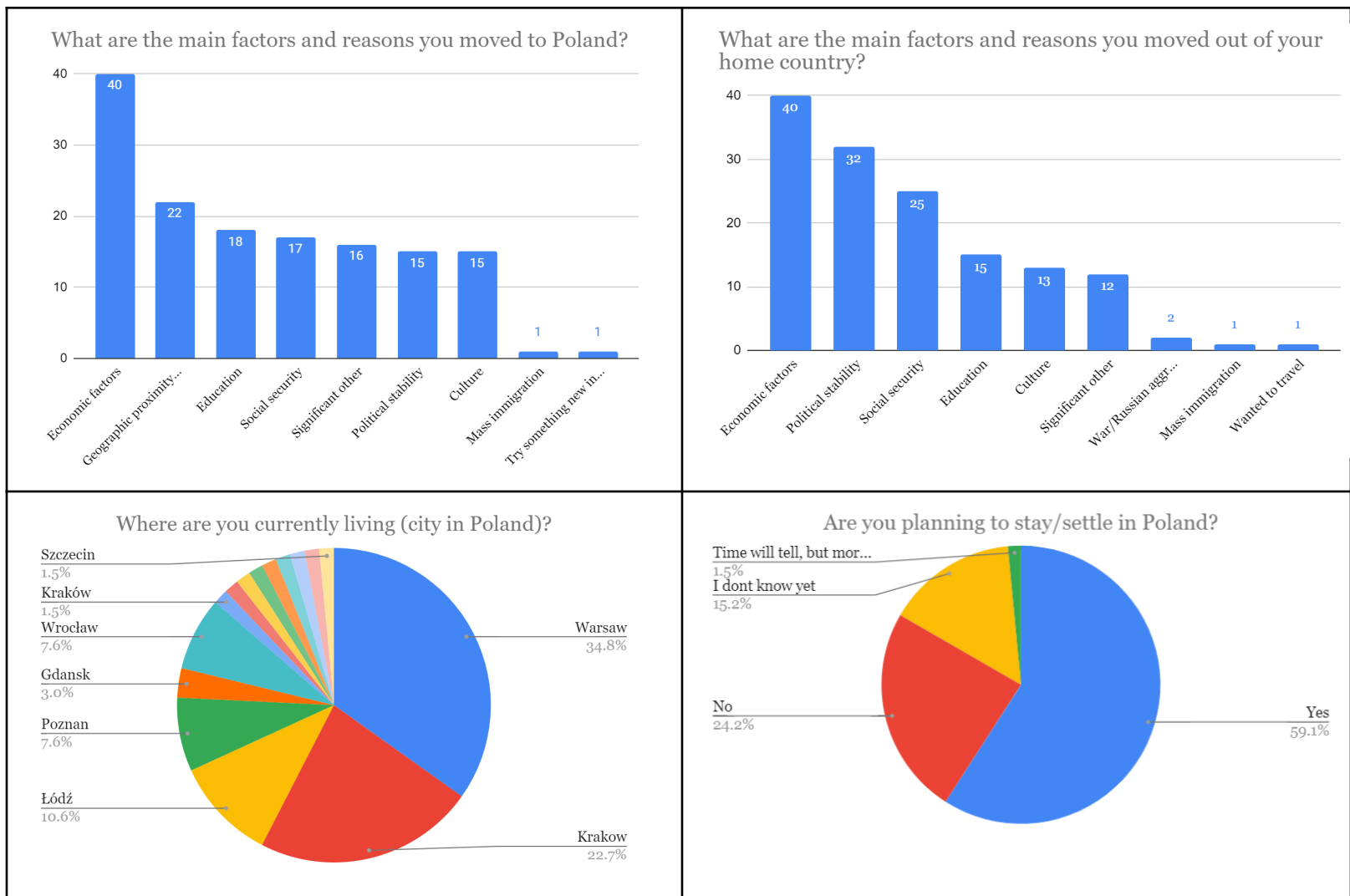


Figure 2. Frequency charts from data gathered from questionnaires

Figures 3 and 4 show that there is a constant increase in migration from Ukraine to Poland in all voivodeships (highest-level of administrative area in Poland). The voivodeships of Masovia, Silesia, Greater and Lesser Poland saw the greatest (almost three or even a fourfold) increase in migration in just a span of only 6 years. These regions contain the biggest urban areas in Poland, with Warsaw, Katowice, Poznan and Krakow respectively, which attract migrants with their services, job opportunities and on average higher wages. This can be explained as one of the pull factors (economic) described by Ramos and Surinach (2016). Nevertheless, other regions such as Lodz or West Pomerania also see an increase in migration levels but their rate is lower than the previously mentioned voivodeships. One of the reasons why this is the case is that Lodz voivodeship is placed between the voivodeships of Masovia and Greater Poland which attract more migrants with their well developed markets and main cities (World Bank, 2017). In the case of West Pomeranian voivodeship its geographic location could play a role in receiving less migrants due to the fact its located in north-western part of Poland which is the furthest from the Ukrainian border. A similar situation also takes place with the Warmia-Masuria voivodeship located in north-eastern part of Poland. Where the growth of migrants is much lower than in the case of Masovia due to various reasons such as limited economic opportunities.

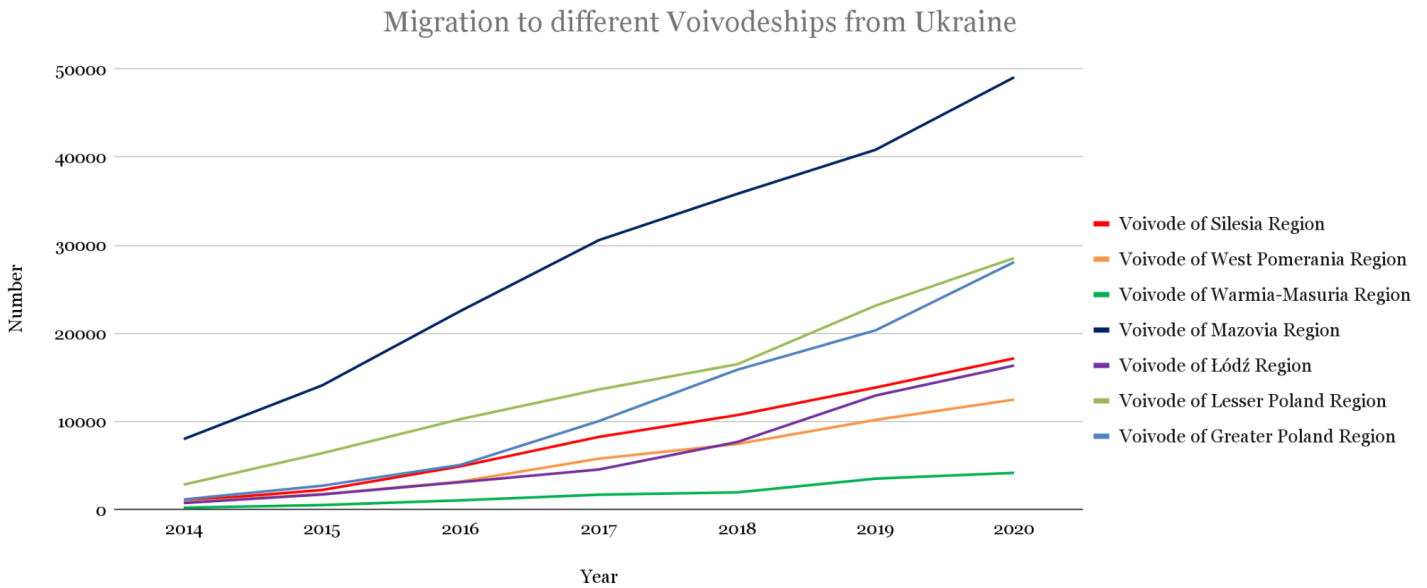


Figure 3 Migration from Ukraine to selected voivodeships in Poland between 2014-2020 (Source: migracje.gov.pl)

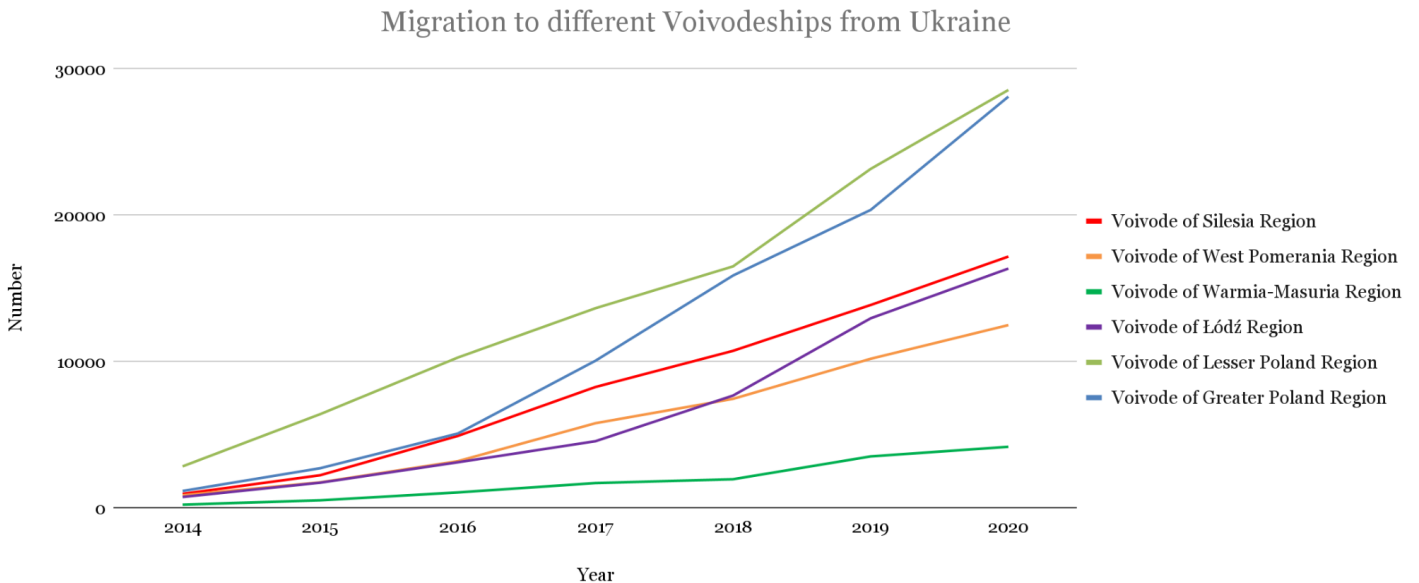


Figure 4. Migration from Ukraine to selected voivodeships in Poland between 2014-2020 except Masovian region (Source: migracje.gov.pl)

It can be clearly seen that the rate of migration from Ukraine to Poland overall is growing (figures 5). The data provided by migracje.gov and a report written by Chmielewska, Dobroczyk and Panuciak (NBP, 2018) correlate with each other and clearly show that each year the number of migrants from Ukraine increases. Furthermore, it can be seen that the rate of migration is slowly becoming exponential and each year there are more migrants receiving permits to enter Poland.

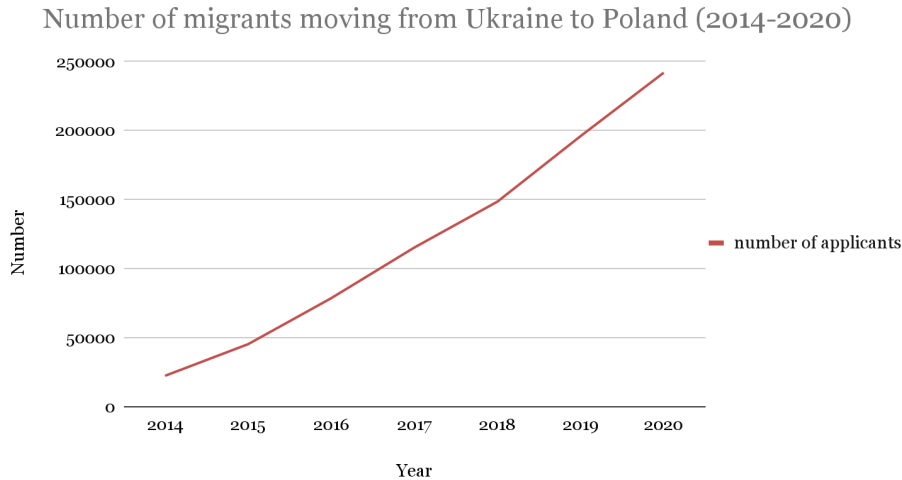


Figure 5. Migration from Ukraine to Poland between 2014-2020 (Source: migracje.gov.pl)

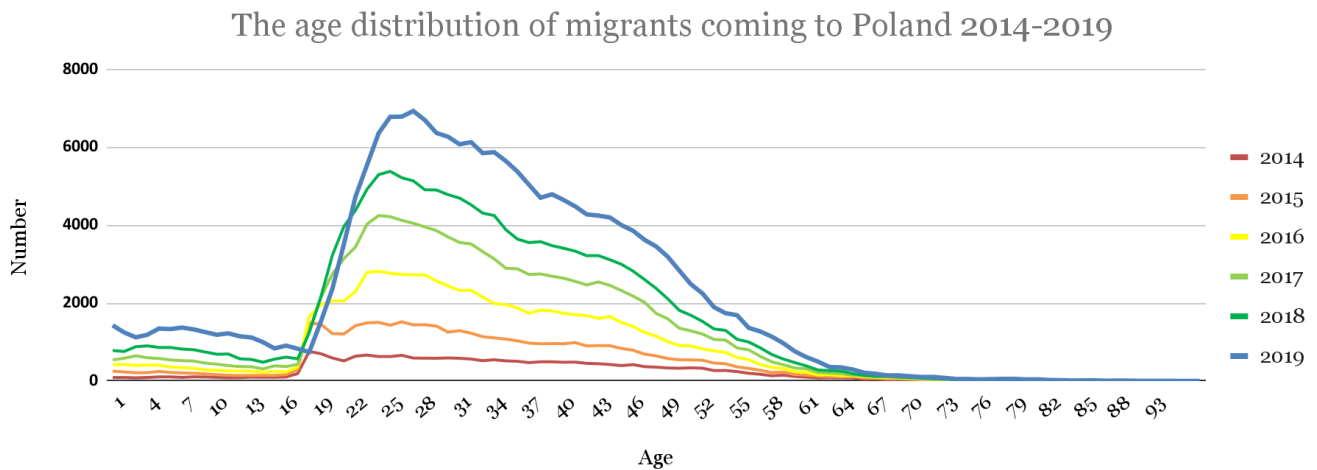


Figure 6. The age distribution of migrants coming from Ukraine to Poland 2014-2019 (Source: migracje.gov.pl)

Figure 6 clearly shows the distribution of age of migrants coming to Poland. The vast majority of migrants are in their early twenties, and with the increasing age of migrants, their number entering Poland is slowly decreasing. One of the reasons for such a distribution in the age of newcomers is that the majority of younger migrants come to Poland to gain a better education which is regarded to be at the same level as from other European educational institutions. This agrees with the NBP report (2018) where it states that education plays an important role in the decision to move to Poland. Answers from the questionnaire show that almost 30% of respondents point to education as a main reason why they moved to Poland, they want to start or continue their education at a university on Bachelor or Master level. Another pull factor is the economic opportunity. Up to 60% of respondents in the questionnaire selected this factor as a main reason why they wanted to move to Poland (figure 2). These factors also correlate with the information from a paper written by Kucharska (2019) and the report created by NBP, where they mention that economic factors are one of the primary reasons for migration.

### 4.1.1 GIS Map

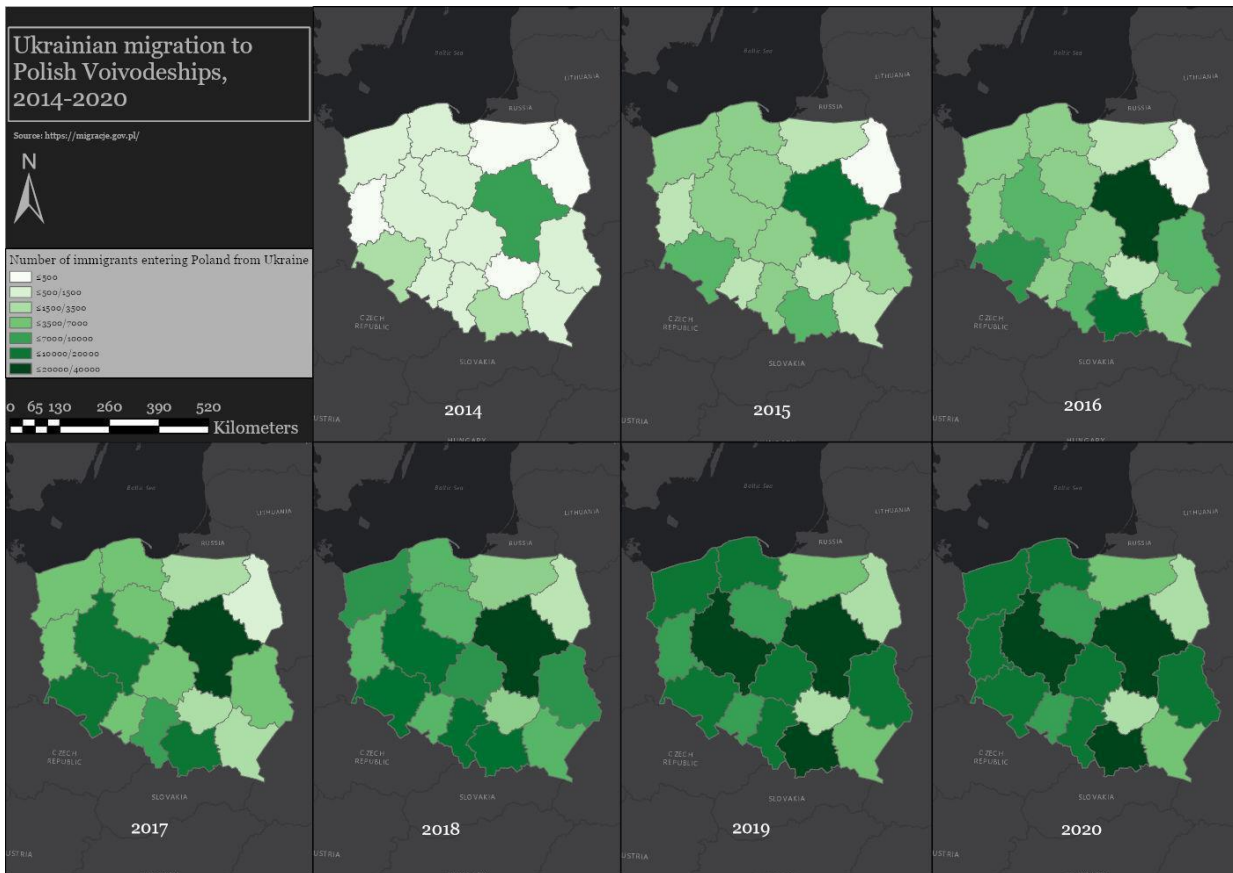


Figure 7. Ukrainian migration to Polish Voivodeships, 2014-2020, (Source: migracje.gov.pl)

Figure 7 depicts migration patterns to different voivodeships between 2014-2020. It can be clearly seen that the general trend in regards to migration from Ukraine in all regions is rapidly increasing and each year more people want to move to Poland. The biggest change in the number of migrants can be observed in the voivodeships of Silesia (Southern region, and most urbanized province in Poland, Katowice is located there), Greater Poland (Central-Western region, Poznan is located there) and Lesser Poland (Southern region, Krakow is located there). The Voivodeship of Masovia in central Poland was always the primary destination. The main reason for this is that Warsaw (the capital of Poland) is located there which is the biggest city with the biggest economic, social and educational opportunities for newcomers (Warszawa.pl, 2018). This migration pattern to different voivodeships correlates with the information gathered from questionnaires (figures 2) where the respondents also pointed out the same regions and cities (figure 8) located in those regions as their main and final destination.

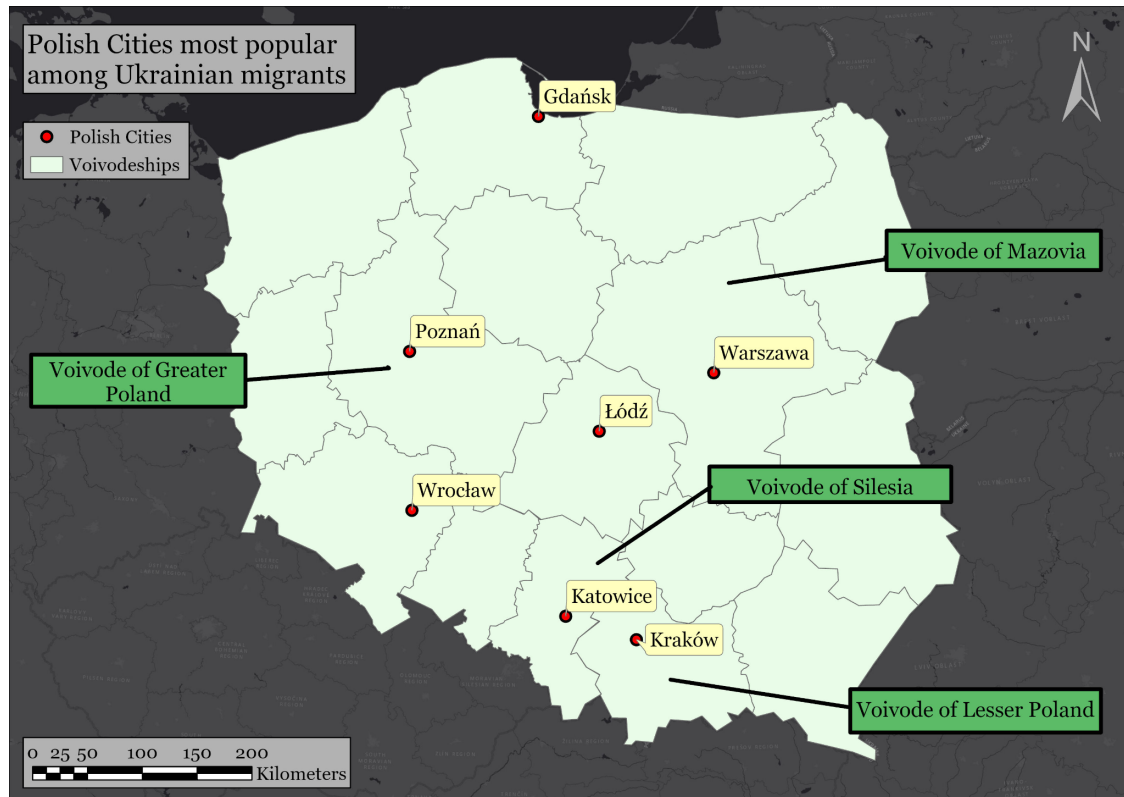


Figure 8. Polish cities popular among Ukrainian migrants (Source: migracje.gov.pl)

The map presented in figure 8 shows the most popular cities for migrants coming from Ukraine according to data collected from questionnaires. The selected cities are the largest urban areas in Poland with well developed markets such as job opportunities, services, or even entertainment centers. This opinion is also shared by OECD (2019) where in their report they stated that Polish regions and cities “in terms of GDP per capita have increased over the last sixteen years”. Furthermore, the map (figure 7) correlates with figure 8 where the highlighted cities are also capitals of various voivodeships (Silesia, Lodz, Greater and Lesser Poland).

#### 4.2 Data from Interviews

In total three interviews were conducted with migrants currently living in Poland. These interviews were semi-structured with the questions already developed beforehand. The interviewees were asked to develop and explain more in detail their situation in Poland. Information gathered this way is a valuable tool to understand and define reasons and factors why migrants move to Poland, and how they feel and assimilate in it. The theory proposed by Esser (2001) with its four dimensions could help analyze and check information from interviews.

##### 4.2.1 Culturation

The first dimension culturation talks about how a given migrant socializes and integrates with the host society. The first interviewee says that she does not “*speak Polish nor does my friend(s)*” and this is one of the main reasons why they “*stick more to international people rather than Polish*”. A similar response was received by the second respondent “*I don't really interact with the Polish people*” and “*most of my friends were from my region [of] Ukraine, Russia or Belarus*”. Based on gathered information there is limited integration between interviewees and the host society.

#### 4.2.2 Placement and Interaction

When it comes to placement, interviewees did not mention that aspect, to some extent they were neutral about how host society is positioning/ treating them. All they said was that they are foreign students studying or working in Poland. Interaction which can be defined as a web of friends in a given location is very similar to what interviewees said in cultururation part. That the integration between host society and the interviewees is limited; and that interviewees interact more with international people.

#### 4.2.3 Identification

The last dimension mentioned by Esser (2001) is identification. Some interviewees (such as the second respondent) see Poland as a step before moving somewhere else *“I was always thinking to move somewhere else, Poland as you said [is] a stepping stone, head start basically [to] do something else basically, get European degree is always good”*, a similar opinion is shared by the third respondent *“after my master's degree, I would like to go to another country”*. At the same time, the first interviewee said that *“I am not considering moving back”* and *“I would like to stay for longer, maybe doing a masters here. So for now I am not considering moving back [to Ukraine]”*, the same interviewee also said *“it depends very much on first of all on my family situation”*.

#### 4.2.4 Encountered Obstacles

Moreover, interviewees also pointed out that paperwork and administrative duties caused them difficulties: *“there were new stuff done differently even dealing with the paperwork”*, *“it was difficult to get the apartment actually”* or *“doing taxes was pretty scary (...) Like official, like serious kinda stuff, like adult stuff”*. To conclude Esser's dimensions such as cultururation, interaction and identification are clearly seen in information gathered from interviews, and there are few ways how migrants perceive and integrate to Polish society.

### **5. Discussion/Conclusion**

The aim of this thesis is to draw our attention to migration and answer the following main research question: *“What are the main factors and reasons that play a role in the migration from Ukraine to Poland?”* the in depth analysis of gathered data from questionnaires, secondary data and interviews was done. The questionnaire was posted on various websites such as Reddit and Facebook dedicated to people that migrated and live in Poland from Eastern Europe. The main reason for that was to better understand factors that influence immigrants to move to Poland. Furthermore, respondents were also asked to point out the biggest obstacles that they encountered while moving to Poland, and how they socialize with the local community. Moreover, secondary data was also analysed to create a wider picture of the research and understand the general trend of migration to Poland. A similar situation is with qualitative data, where interviewed migrants living in Poland could explain more in depth, their reasons why they moved to Poland and what are their plans for the future.

The quantitative data showed that there are various factors and reasons why people migrated from Ukraine to Poland. According to the questionnaire the primary reasons that pull migrants to Poland are economic factors, followed by social security and political stability. At the same time, a significant part of respondents pointed out education as a main reason for migration. What is

surprising is that geographic proximity between Poland and Ukraine also plays an important role in why migrants chose Poland to move to. These results correlate with a paper written by Ramos and Surinach (2016) where they distinguished various push and pull factors such as geographic, social, economic and political reasons that make people decide to move or not. Additionally, from information provided by migrants, they seem to favour large urban areas such as Warsaw, Lodz, Katowice, Poznan and Krakow. This is due to the fact that those cities attract newcomers with their well developed infrastructure and better opportunities in education and job market. Those benefits and opportunities outweigh the encountered obstacles which influence migrants' decision to move.

Furthermore, people that move from Ukraine to Poland are mostly in their early 20s, and a significant part of them are males. Additionally, they are highly educated individuals. One fourth of them have a master degree, one third have a Bachelor degree and a big part of them finish their highschool. Such conditions are making them very qualified for the growing economy of Poland, and to some extent this helps them assimilate to the society much easier, similarly how Musiyezdov (2019) stated in his paper. Additionally, these are also personal factors mentioned in the theory of migration design by Lee (1966) and four dimensions proposed by Esser (2001).

Findings indicate that the experience of people when they moved to Poland varies from person to person. Some individuals have more positive experiences, others have more negative ones, and it depends on external and individual factors. The biggest obstacles that the migrants experienced and pointed out during the research are as follows: language barrier, quarantine, obtaining all documents for visa, lots of bureaucracy and administration connected to it, paper work and lack of information. This shows that intervening obstacles described in the theory of migration written by Lee (1966) is present in the case of migration from Ukraine to Poland. This shows that even with geographic proximity, similar cultures and languages that Poland and Ukraine share, migrants still encounter several major obstacles. Furthermore, information gathered from interviews also points out similar experiences and obstacles such as language barrier and limited interaction with local residents. The first and second interviewee stated that they don't speak Polish language fluently or at all and that they interact more with the international people. Additionally, respondents said that they had problems with the administrative duties and paperwork.

When migrants were asked in a questionnaire if they want to stay/settle in Poland, the majority of them answered that they want to do that. Almost one fourth of them answered that after their current activity (e.g. work, education) they want to move somewhere else. Rest of respondents didn't know if they would move or not and it depends on the future events. Interviewees also stated that there are many factors that influence their decision to settle in Poland such as: education, family ties or not wanting to move back to Ukraine. At the same time, some respondents stated that they are thinking about moving out and using Poland as a stepping stone before migrating to another European country.

In the end, gravity model described by Ramos and Surinach (2016), four dimensions proposed by Esser (2001) and theory of migration written by Lee (1966) with its factors associated with the place of origin and destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors, can be clearly seen in collected data from questionnaires, interviews and secondary data. Furthermore, mentioned theories help to understand the direction of migration and decision making of potential emigrants, who might be most interested in working in Poland, (Bogdan, Boniecki et. al., 2015).

## **6. Reflection**

Based on the results and limitations during the research few recommendations are proposed to answer future research questions. Firstly, more time for data collection and analysis is needed to provide more comprehensive and in depth answers to the research questions. Gathering data in person on site could help this and it is recommended. Secondly, having more responses from questionnaires and conducted interviews would also increase both quality and quantity of data. It is suggested to post questionnaires on more social media websites and maybe contact public and private institutions that work with migrants to use their platform to collect a satisfactory amount of data. Thirdly, more diverse questions could be asked or give options for more in depth answers in both interviews and questionnaires. For example, give the respondents more opportunities to write, expand and explain their thoughts regarding migration to Poland. Lastly, the number of interviews with interviewees that have more diverse backgrounds could be more sizable. This to some extent would result in more diverse answers and different perspectives which would lead to more equitable results of the research.



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## **Appendix A: Interview Guide**

General questions for all interviewees:

- Introductions: informed consent,
- What level of anonymity do you want, can we record this interview for listening back later, we will store safely and delete later etc (Consent Form)
  
- Can you tell me your background (e.g. age, sex, nationality, where are you from...)?
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- Where are you currently living in Poland?
- For how long are you in Poland?
- Can you tell me a little about your social life? how do you interact with “locals” (host society)?
  
- What are the main factors and reasons you moved to Poland?
  - What are the main factors and reasons you moved out of your home country?
- To what extent do you socialize with the members of the host society?
- To what extent do you belong and identify with the new environment in Poland?

- What are/were your experiences when you moved to Poland?
- Do you want to stay/settle in Poland? why?

## **Appendix B: Agreement to participate**

In Bachelorproject HGP: Bachelor Thesis

Title: How does economic, political and social factors play a role in Ukraine- Poland migration

*The purpose of the research is to explore the main factors that influence migration to Poland from Eastern Europe.. Your interview will be used amongst others to create a complete understanding on the migration between Ukraine- Poland.*

- I understand the motivation behind this present research project.
- I understand how my interview information will be used: as part of a written and/or multimedia presentation, shared with other students and teachers at the University of Groningen.
- I have had the opportunity to discuss this study. I am satisfied with the answers I have been given.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the study up to three weeks after the interview, and to decline to answer any individual questions in the study.
- I understand that my participation in this study is confidential, unless indicated differently in the section below. Without my prior consent, no material, which could identify me, will be used in any reports generated from this study.

Please respond YES or NO to each of the following:

I consent to my interview being audio-recorded YES / NO

I wish to remain anonymous for this research YES / NO

**If NO**

My name can be used for this research YES / NO

**OR**

A pseudonym of my own choosing can be used in this research YES / NO

## **Appendix C: Migration Questionnaire**

What is your sex? / Jaka jest twoja płeć?

- Female / Kobieta
- Male / Mężczyzna
- Prefer not to say / Wolę nie mówić

What is your age? / W jakim jesteś wieku?

What is your nationality? / Jaka jest twoja narodowość?

What is the highest level of education you have completed? / Jaki jest najwyższy ukończony przez ciebie poziom wykształcenia?

- Primary School / Szkoła Podstawowa
- Middle School / Gimnazjum
- High School / Liceum
- Bachelor / Licencjat
- Masters / Stopień Magistra
- PhD / Stopień Doktora
- Prefer not to say / Wolę nie mówić

Select your Voivodeship of residence / Wybierz województwo zamieszkania

- Greater Poland / Wielkopolskie
- Holy Cross / Świętokrzyskie
- Kuyavian-Pomeranian / Kujawsko-pomorskie
- Lesser Poland / Małopolskie

- Łódź / Łódzkie
- Lower Silesian / Dolnośląskie
- Lublin / Lubelskie
- Lubusz / Lubuskie
- Masovian / Mazowieckie
- Opole / Opolskie
- Podlaskie / Podlaskie
- Pomeranian / Pomorskie
- Silesian / Śląskie
- Subcarpathian / Podkarpackie
- Warmian-Masurian / Warmińsko-mazurskie
- West Pomeranian / Zachodniopomorskie

Where are you currently living (city in Poland)? / Gdzie obecnie mieszkasz (miasto w Polsce)?

Where are you originally from (city)? / Skąd pochodzisz (miasto)?

For how long are you in Poland (number of years)? / Jak długo jesteś w Polsce (ile lat)?

What are the main factors and reasons you moved to Poland? / Jakie są główne czynniki i powody, dla których przeprowadziłaś/eś się do Polski?

- Education / Edukacja
- Social security / Bezpieczeństwo
- Political stability / Stabilność polityczna
- Economic factors / Czynniki ekonomiczne
- Culture / Kultura
- Significant other / Osoba znacząca
- Geographic proximity to home / Bliskość geograficzna do domu
- Other:

What are the main factors and reasons you moved out of your home country? / Jakie są główne czynniki i powody, dla których wyprowadziłaś/eś się z kraju?

- Education / Edukacja
- Social security / Bezpieczeństwo
- Political stability / Stabilność polityczna
- Economic factors / Czynniki ekonomiczne
- Culture / Kultura
- Significant other / Osoba znacząca
- Other:

What were the biggest obstacles that you encountered during your move to Poland? / Jakie były największe przeszkody, które napotkałaś/eś podczas przeprowadzki do Polski?

To what extent do you socialize with the members of the host society? / W jakim stopniu utrzymujesz kontakty towarzyskie z członkami społeczeństwa przyjmującego? (1 is No interaction at all, 10 is High interaction) (Scale from 1-10)

What's your interaction, network (e.g. web of friends) in Poland? / Jaka jest Twoja interakcja, sieć (np. Sieć znajomych) w Polsce? (1 is Very low, 10 is Very High) (Scale from 1-10)

To what extent do you belong and identify with the new environment in Poland? / W jakim stopniu należysz i identyfikujesz się z nowym środowiskiem w Polsce? (1 is Very poorly, 10 is Very Strongly) (Scale from 1-10)

Are you planning to stay/settle in Poland? / Planujesz zostać / osiedlić się w Polsce?

- Yes / Tak
- No / Nie
- Other: