

## **Gender and parenthood in shaping circulation patterns: the case of temporary migrants from Ukraine to Poland**

### **Extended Abstract**

**Topic and theoretical focus.** Migration and family trajectories are unquestionably linked contributing to the complexities of individual life course paths spanning regional and national borders. Research in this field usually focuses on the family trajectories of migrants in the destination country (Barbiano di Belgiojoso & Terzera 2018) and on the impact of migration on family formation and dissolution (Caarls & de Valk 2017; Kraus 2019). Such studies are mainly devoted to long-term and permanent migration and focus on the perspective of the host country. Therefore their natural and silent assumption is that it is rather migration that shapes family patterns that the other way round. Little is, however, known about interrelations between migratory and familial trajectories in the case of temporary and circular migration. At the same time, previous research suggests that permanent and temporary migration tend to proceed in different contexts defined not only by policy regulations but also social and economic structural factors (Constant & Massey, 2002). Moreover, individual characteristics of permanent and temporary migrants differ systematically according to the earlier studies (Constant et al., 2013).

The goal of the proposed paper is to contribute to the research on interrelations between migratory and familial trajectories of migrants in the context of temporary and circular migration. Namely, it aims at evaluating the role of the migrants' family situation on duration of stays in the destination country and intervals between them, attending to differences between male and female migrants in this regard. In other words, the article is to evaluate the impact of family situation on migration patterns, which is a different, if not reverse, approach than in most studies devoted to settled migration. Such an approach is inspired by the economic conceptual frameworks according to which duration of cycles of circular migration is shaped by migrants' strive to maximise economic gains from the migration, while minimising separation costs with the sending society, mainly with the family (Dustman & Görlach 2016, Stark & Fan 2007). This approach fits also into the literature on transnational families (e.g. Caarls et al. 2018) (as circular migrants are usually temporary separated from their families) and more importantly in a newly proposed concept of economics of transnational living (Carling & Erdal 2020).

As regards family situation, we focus on parenthood, but take into account also partnership-related status. We concentrate on the family situation at the beginning of a migration project (i.e. before the first trip initiating usually a series of consecutive moves) but control also for childbirths during the migration project. While we are aware that interrelations between familial and migratory trajectories are not static, we suppose that, as in the case of occupational paths (Fuller, 2015), the starting point of migration (i.e. the first trip), and familial context at that point, influences the development of the migrants' trajectories decisively.

Research questions to be addressed include:

- How temporary migrants that started their migration projects as parents and childless differ with regard to frequency and duration of their migratory trajectories (migration spells in Poland, intervals between consecutive migratory trips to Poland)?
- What is the difference between men and women, fathers and mothers in this respect?

The case to be analysed in the paper is Ukrainian migration to Poland characteristic of prevalence of temporary and circular labour migration (Górny 2017). Its temporariness is governed by the Polish temporary migration regime (easy access to seasonal work permits next to relative restrictive access to residence permits) and geographical proximity of Poland and Ukraine enabling low-cost shuttle movements. Beginnings of Poland-to-Ukraine migration date back to the late 1980s with some migrants having over 20-year experience of circulation between the two countries. All these contextual factors, make the case of Ukrainian migration a fascinating example to interrogate patterns of transnational living via lenses of familial and migratory trajectories.

The planned research is to contribute to the two important fields of demographic research: studies on family and migration. Its results will enrich scholarship on interrelations between familial and migratory trajectories by adding the perspective of temporary migration. Moreover, given increasing instability of an institution of family and growth in volume and flexibility of international migration, the proposed analyses address a timely topic and a problem of social relevance. Last but not least, the research is devoted to still understudied context of Central and Eastern Europe and to the dynamically developing migratory stream from Ukraine to Europe (Fedyuk & Kindler 2016).

**Data and methods.** Data analysed in the paper derive from the survey on Ukrainian migrants in Warsaw agglomeration (main migrants' destination area in Poland) conducted using the method of Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) (Heckathorn 1997) in 2019 (N=1319). Analytical strategy involves multi-episode (for recurring events) survival models estimated for two dependent variables: time to leaving Poland (while in Poland) and time to leaving Ukraine (while in Ukraine). The main independent variables are : gender, family situation prior to the first trip to Poland (with the focus on parenthood) and an interaction term relating to them. Moreover, variables relating to individual socio-economic characteristics of migrants are to be controlled for (such as: age, education, professional situation in Ukraine prior to the first trip to Poland, sector of employment), as well as changes in a parental status (childbirths) in the course of the migration project.

**Expected findings.** On the basis of the literature (Carling & Erdal 2020; Dustman & Görlach 2016; Stark & Fan 2007), it can be assumed that the lengths of spells relating to stays in the destination and home countries are an outcome of interplay between maximisation of economic gains from the migration and minimisation of separation costs. The more a migrant values economic gains the longer he/she is ready to stay in the destination country (Poland) during a single stay, and the shorter in the country of origin (Ukraine). However, the more he/she suffers due to separation costs, the shorter are the stays in the destination country (Poland). Consequently, we expect differences between parents (relatively high economic needs (family-related expenses), comparatively high separation costs) and childless persons (relatively low economic needs, comparatively low separation costs) in duration of stays in Poland and Ukraine. We also expect differences between males and females, especially fathers and mothers, assuming, on average, higher separation costs for females (especially mothers) due to their carrying duties in the home country.

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