Between different countries and identities: the case of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands

A Research Paper presented by:

Ewa Brand
(Poland/the Netherlands)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Governance of Migration and Diversity
(GMD)

Members of the Examining Committee:

Dr. Zeynep Kasli
Dr. Jeff Handmaker

The Hague, The Netherlands
December 2020

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the International Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

Inquiries:

International Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

t: +31 70 426 0460
e: info@iss.nl
w: www.iss.nl
fb: http://www.facebook.com/iss.nl
twitter: @issnl

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

Contents

List of Appendices

List of Acronyms

CBOS	Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej (Centre for Public Opinion Research)
CBS	Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe(an)
EU	European Union
GUS	Glowny Urzad Statystczny (The Central Statistical Office)
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
PiS	Prawo I Sprawiedliwosc (Law and Justice)
UK	United Kingdom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Abstract

Since 2004, many Polish migrants have moved to the Netherlands looking for work and financial stability. Among them are also lesbian women, a long forgotten and ignored group in social research. This paper tries to overcome this shortcoming by looking into the experiences of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands and in the transnational space between Poland and the Netherlands. I first examine how the life of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands is affected by the current political and religious discourse in Poland. I then explore how these women experience being a part of a transnational family. Finally I look how these women evaluate their life in the Netherlands.

To understand the experiences of lesbian women, qualitative interviews were conducted. To understand and analyse how their lives are shaped by migration and by their position as homosexual migrant women of different socioeconomic backgrounds, I have used intersectionality as the core conceptual framework. Additionally, I used the concepts of transnationalism, othering and sexual citizenship to analyse the implications of their peculiar identity on their experiences as migrants. This paper also engages with literature on migration, sexuality and gender (in)equality. The study reveals that the lives of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands are influenced by the political situation in their country of origin, but also by the connectedness with their families. Furthermore, the intersections between their different identities are often a source of challenge, but can also become a source of opportunities.

Relevance to Development Studies

The protection of the human rights of sexual minorities, and their inclusion in society, are very important. In the context of the inter-EU migration of Polish lesbian women and the homophobic political situation in Poland, it is important to understand the experiences of these women. As migrants are often seen through the lens of gender, but seldom through the lens of sexuality, it is important showcase the existence of Polish lesbian migrants and the challenges they face. Once these have been brought to light, we can determine what is necessary to stop discrimination, to work towards an equal society and to empower the lesbian women. Migration is also relevant to development studies, since migrants can contribute to social changes in their country of origin as well as in the host country. Additionally, connecting the concepts of transnationalism, intersectionality, othering and sexual citizenship as the framework for this study adds to the scarce information on the complex process of migration and the causes of marginalisation for these women. Therefore, this study is important to shed light on the often-invisible lives of Polish lesbian women.

Keywords

Lesbian migration, East-West migration, Sexuality, Intersectionality, Transnationalism

Chapter 1
Introduction

After becoming a member of the European Union in 2004, Poland has become a sending migration country. According to the Polish Central Statistical Office (GUS, 2018) more than 2.5 million people left Poland between 2004-2017 to start a new life abroad. Many of them moved to the Netherlands. According to CBS (2020) Polish migrants constitute the 6th biggest migrant group in the Netherlands, with around 205,000 migrants. Among them are men, women and children of different ages, socio-economic backgrounds and migration trajectories. For many Polish people, the lack of work opportunities and the difficult financial situation in Poland are the main reasons to migrate (Osipovic, 2010; Pollard, Latorre, & Sriskandarajah, 2008; Nijhoff, 2017: 637). Nevertheless, many Polish migrants report that they left the country for other reasons, both positive aspects of the other Western countries (pull factors), such as work, education opportunities, tourism and gaining a broader perspective, and negative factors in Poland (push factors), such as economic situation, divorce and cultural reasons. Some Polish people ended up in the Netherlands by chance (Isanski, Mleczko & Eid, 2014:9; Nijhoff, 2017: 637; Pollard, Latorre, & Sriskandarajah, 2008: 41).

As to the migration of Polish homosexuals "there has been conflict over how to represent the emigration of LGBTQ people from Poland, and whether it could be explained in terms of flight from homophobic persecution or from poor economic opportunities", as Binnie & Klesse (2013: 1114) explain. Research on Central and East European (CEE) homosexual (non-heterosexual) people (including Polish respondents) reveals that their reasons to migrate are often similar to those of heterosexuals (Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, 2018: 33; Stella et al., 2017). But in their decisions to extend the stay sexuality played a role; the better legal status and the possibility to be themselves in the migration countries motivated them to not return. However, many homosexual people in Poland report stress due to discrimination, stigma and violence (Wycisk, 2015: 596) and feelings of alienation because they are considered second-class citizens. As noticed by Gruszczynska (2006:43): "Within the prevailing Polish nationalist discourse, gays and lesbians, if acknowledged at all, can only be citizens if they remain invisible, as "good" citizens, and do not claim "special privileges"".

There is no statistical information on how many homosexual people have left Poland because of the current political situation, which is unfriendly towards non-heterosexual people (Associated Press, August 6, 2020). Bart Staszewski (2020), a well-known Polish LGBTQ activist, reported that he asked on Facebook whether non-heterosexual people were considering to move away from Poland. He received many replies from people who had already left Poland or were thinking about it because of the hostile situation in Poland. Szulc (2019: 16) reported that for 25% of Polish non-heterosexual respondents, their sexual orientation was one of the main (but not most important- economy was most important) reasons to migrate.

Since 2004, many studies have described the lives and experiences of Polish migrants abroad (mostly in the UK and Norway). Many studies have focused on migrating families and transnational migration (Brannen et al., 2014; Kawecki et al., 2012; Kilkey, Plomien & Perrons, 2014; Moskal & Tyrrell, 2016; Pustułka & Ślusarczyk, 2016; Pustułka, Struzik & Ślusarczyk, 2015; Ryan, 2011; White, 2010). Some studies have considered gender issues (Batnisky et al., 2009; Datta 2009; Siara 2009). Yet, as Fiałkowska (2019: 113) states, "Poland was a latecomer in applying the gender lens to migration studies". It seems also that Poland was late in applying another lens: the sexual one. Already in 2009, Mai and King (2009: 296) advocated for a "sexual turn" in migration studies, whereby migrants would be seen as 'sexual

beings" and not only as work forces. However, until now there is almost no literature on Polish migration and sexuality, as almost all authors focus on heterosexual migrants, ignoring the experiences of LGBTQ migrants (Binnie & Klesse, 2013).

There is as yet no research focusing exclusively on the experiences of Polish lesbian migrants. But they did leave Poland; and some moved to the Netherlands. One of them is my friend, whose experience inspired me to take on this study.

I posted a wedding picture of my Polish friend's wedding on Facebook. The wedding took place in The Hague (the Netherlands). It was a typical wedding picture: me in a long pastel colour dress, make-up and high heels; she in a large white wedding dress, flowers, smiles, red cheeks. The denoting detail: next to my best friend there is no handsome guy in a black suit, but another girl in a white dress, with the same happy smile and a bouquet of flowers. The first reactions under the pictures are from some friends and acquaintances: emoji with hearts in the place of eyes, flowers, fireworks and bottles of champagne. But then another messages in Polish appear, hostile ones: "dirty lesbian", "I will find you in The Hague!" "I know where you live", "don't think you can hide". My friend and her wife stay calm; they are used to hostile reactions. I am angry, sad, but also curious; what is it like to be a Polish lesbian in the Netherlands?

1.1 Problem definition and justification for the study

Although there is a steadily growing body of literature on Polish migrants, academic literature rarely addresses Polish lesbian women abroad; they are invisible as Lesbian, as Polish, as women, and as belonging to certain social classes.

This research contributes to the limited body of existing research on Polish non-heterosexual migrants, in this specific case Polish lesbian migrants. The existing research on exclusively Polish non-heterosexual migrants concentrates on gay men only (Izienicki 2009; 2020), or on a broader non-heterosexual group including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (Szulc, 2019), or includes not only Polish non-heterosexual migrants but a broader group of CEE migrants (Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, 2018; Stella, Flynn & Gawlewicz, 2018). Furthermore, none of the above-mentioned studies includes the lens of intersectionality or considers the transnational character of the migrations and the influence of the current homophobic discourse of the Polish political and church elites. It seems this group is easily forgotten, as there is no official statistical information about the number of non-heterosexuals who left Poland. Additionally, Polish people are often unwilling to reveal their sexual orientation, since homosexuality (especially during the Covid-19 pandemic) is seen as threat to national cohesion (Golec de Zavala et al., 2020: 7). As a result, there is no specific literature on Polish lesbian women abroad.

Furthermore, the current, few pieces of research on Polish migrant lesbian women are limited in some respects. Firstly, there is the assumption that migration to a Western country is mainly set in the light of "gains" for Polish LGBTQ people. When we think about non-heterosexual people, we often assume that homophobia is "the most predominant form of oppression confronting LGBT people" (Meyer, 2012: 869). This ignores the possibility that their other "old" identities such as gender and social class, or "new" identities such as being migrant, Polish or East European play also a significant role in their lives in the host country. In this study I attempt to avoid this assumption by employing an intersectional approach, which can help to reveal how different intersections may contribute to the oppression of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands. But as Nasser-Eddin and Abu-Assab (2020: 193) state: "The problem with intersectionality nowadays, and the way it has been used, is that it

singles out experiences – we put the refugee woman who comes from a specific place in one box, and we put the gay person in another box – rather than looking at how, regardless of our sexualities or colour or race or gender identities, we, as people, share the same struggles, and how the same structures of oppression are affecting us". So paradoxically, while highlighting Polish lesbian migrants as a separate group, I will try to show the intersecting systems of oppressions that they share with other migrants (without losing sight of the role of sexuality in their lives). The second problem is that that intersections by marginalised groups are only seen from the point of oppression (Lutz, 2015: 42). I want to show that it can be seen also in the lights of opportunities, even by people who are usually seen as marginalised, as in the case of Polish lesbians in the Netherlands. The third problem is that in the abovementioned studies the act of migration is seen without shading light on the transnational character of the current migrations. Moving to another country, such as Scotland (Stella, Flynn & Gawlewicz, 2018) or the UK (Szulc, 2019), is seen as starting new life, without paying attention (or just slightly, as Szulc (2019: 20) does, by mentioning the role of social media) to transnational space in form of politics, internet, visits and transnational communities. To escape this pitfall, I will try to show how transnational space influences the lives of these women.

To overcome the above-mentioned limitations, this study will adopt the theories of othering, intersectionality and sexual citizenship to study the relations between migration, sexuality and transnational families, in order to explain how Polish lesbian women situated in the transnational space between Poland and the Netherlands experience their migration in terms of intersecting systems of oppressions and opportunities. Polish lesbians who migrate are caught between the new reality in the Netherlands where much more sexual freedom is possible, but where they are also part of two minorities – sexual and ethnical – and the old reality as expressed through Polish politics, their Polish families and contacts with other Polish migrants.

This study addresses the above-mentioned gaps in the literature by exploring the experiences of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands through examining the narratives of seven women who have lived at least one year in the Netherlands. The purpose of this study was to explore their experiences in order to understand their position as Polish, as lesbian and as women in the transnational space between Poland and the Netherlands, and to give them voice.

1.2 Research objectives

The objective of this research is to examine how the lives of Polish lesbian women are influenced by their intersecting identities and the fact that their lives are situated in the transnational space between Poland and the Netherlands. I want to analyse the ways in which cultural inequalities experienced in the host country and homophobic discourse in the home country shape lesbians' experiences in host country. The narrative of Polish lesbian women and the role of different actors including politics, the church, their Polish families and the Dutch workplace are analysed. The research aims to explore how they navigate their lives in this transnational space and which opportunities and obstacles they encounter. Overall, the objectives are as follows:

- Examine the influence of the political and religious homophobic discourse in Poland on the quality of their lives in the Netherlands
- Examine the influences of being part of a transnational family
- Examine how they evaluate their life in the Netherlands
- Study the above in the light of the intersection of different identities: being

Polish, East European, lesbian, female and belonging to a certain social class as expressed by educational level

- Contribute to the existing literature on Polish lesbian migrants.

1.3 Research questions

In order to address the abovementioned shortcomings in the literature and to understand the experiences of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands, this study answers the following question:

How do Polish lesbian women situated in the transnational space between Poland and the Netherlands experience their migration in terms of intersecting systems of oppressions and opportunities?

This study will attempt to answer the following subquestions:

1. How is the life of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands affected by the current political and religious discourse in Poland?
2. How do these women experience being a part of a transnational family?
3. How do these women evaluate their life in the Netherlands?

To answer the question a qualitative study was conducted: a literature research took place, 7 Polish lesbian women were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, the data was closely examined and coded around themes indicated by (main and sub) questions. The specific themes and topics were then analysed within a theoretical context.

1.4 Relevance of the study

My interest in the lives of Polish lesbian migrants dates back to 2010, when my Polish lesbian cousin arrived in the Netherlands and came to live with me. Since then, I have learnt a lot from her individual experiences of lived reality. This study is an attempt to contribute towards the social inclusion of Polish lesbian women in Poland and in the Polish diaspora by showing that their lives as migrants in many cases resemble the lives of other Polish migrants, with the same struggles and joys caused by different intersecting identities. Additionally, it is important to show how this group is influenced by the existing homophobia in the Polish political and religious climate. In the last few years, the Polish right-wing government has embraced a highly homophobic rhetoric (ILGA-Europe:2020: para. Poland). Their precarious position in the Netherlands is often caused by the homophobia of the Polish elite, which travels through the media, family ties and other migrants to the Netherlands. Furthermore, not only their sexuality and their gender makes them vulnerable to discrimination, but also their socio-economic class. Once we understand these complex intersecting factors that make them vulnerable, steps might be taken to improve their position.

1.5 Research outline

This paper is organized in six chapters. The first chapter introduced the research, the problem it seeks to address and the research questions. The contextual background (literature review) of the problem and the challenges faced by Polish homosexual migrants has been elaborated in Chapter two. Chapter three provides the conceptual framework used to analyse

the data. The concepts of othering, intersectionality, transnationalism and sexual citizenship are introduced there. Chapter four elaborates the methodology employed for this study and the data collection methods, sampling process and ethical aspects. Chapter five presents the analysis of the research findings. Chapter six is the concluding chapter, in which I discuss what the findings mean for the lives and position of Polish lesbian immigrants in the Netherlands.

Chapter 2 Contextual background

2.1 Historical and social roots of Polish homophobia

Homosexuality is legal in Poland since 1932, but same-sex couples cannot marry or register their relationship. Regarding anti-discriminatory laws, Article 32 of the constitution provides that says "no one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever" (Konstytucja Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej 1997), but this does not mention homosexuals specifically (as described by Gruszczynska, 2006: 32). In practice, homosexuals suffer from discrimination and prejudice. The literature describes many causes of the conservative and often antagonistic attitudes towards homosexuality in Poland.

Firstly, ethnically and religiously, Poland is a homogeneous country; more than 90% of Polish people describe themselves as Roman Catholic (Mizielińska, 2020: 4). In Catholic countries the church often strongly influences public opinion (Lasio et al., 2019: 501). After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Catholic religion and its values were explicitly used to bind the nation together (Binnie, 2014: 40). One of these values is family, understood in heteronormative way as a marriage between man and woman, as promoted by Catholic Church (Mizielińska, 2020). Since the Polish Catholic church disapproves of homosexuality and promotes "natural", heterosexual family values, most citizens follow its stance. Additionally, Mole et al. (2017: 207) suggest that many countries defend heteronormative and patriarchal family values to ensure "the ethnic continuity of the nation".

Secondly, homosexuality is seen as a Western value, so that right-wing politicians use homosexuality in their campaigns to gain the votes of the anti-Western part of the voters (Mole et al., 2017: 207). Additionally, Binnie (2013: 253) argues that in Poland "the politicisation of homophobia has also served to reproduce classed distinctions between the winners and losers of neoliberal transition", where homosexuality is presented as luxury afforded by well-educated residents of bigger cities and "marchers for gay equality are framed as symbolic of neoliberal consumerism" (Binnie, 2013: 249). In this way, homophobia is presented as a choice based on a person's economic situation and social class, with better-educated people from big cities being liberal, while poorer people from smaller towns being more homophobic. This division between "a metropolitan, cosmopolitan elite and an uneducated, provincial, rural Other" can be seen as a colonial mentality of economic winners towards the losers (Binnie, 2013: 253). The losers of capitalism are depicted as incompetent, lower-educated people from small cities and villages, without good habits such as self-discipline and high-work standards; these people can be marked by the liberal, socio-economic elite as homophobic "others" (Binnie & Klesse, 2013: 1119; Owczarzak, 2009: 6).

Furthermore, the political elites use a new kind of homonegativity (Górska, Bilewicz, Winiewski & Waszkiewicz, 2017: 14). The traditional homophobia proclaimed that homosexuals should be avoided and their relations were considered sinful, unnatural, pathologic and related to paedophilia. In the modern form of homonegativity, discrimination against homosexuals is denied and any marginalisation of sexual minorities is seen as their own fault, since they are accused of overemphasising their sexuality. Thus, the social changes claimed necessary by homosexuals are denied as unnecessary (Morrison & Morrison, 2003:16).

But who are the people who discriminate; how can we characterise them? Golebiowska, (2017: 612) found that religiosity played a mediating role in homophobia: people who were more religious tended to be less pro-European, have more traditional family beliefs and less positive attitudes towards homosexuality. She also found that Polish people who support gay and lesbian equality hold fewer traditional ideas of what constitutes family and the gender

roles within traditional family and are more pro-European, supporting Polish membership in EU.

2.2 Being homosexual in Poland

Poland is not alone in its homophobia; as Alessi (2016: 203) reports, there is an increase in homophobia around the globe. Recently, according to the ILGA-Europe ranking for the year 2019, the most important European ranking examining the level of LGBT quality of living in Europe, Poland belongs to the ten least LGBTIQ-friendly countries in Europe (ILGA-Europe:2020: para. Poland). The ranking is based on an analysis of national legislation and the practice of applying the law in six categories, including hate crimes, hate speech, equality and non-discrimination. Already in 2010 O'Dwyer & Schwartz (2010: 220) characterized Polish governance as illiberal versus minorities on three grounds: failure to protect equal rights for minorities, the inclusion of illiberal elites in politics and the use by political elites of antigay rhetoric. In the last few years, the situation has worsened.

The inclusion of illiberal elites in politics (including parliament and government), embracing antigay policies, causes a failure of institutional protections, including freedom of speech and equal rights to participate. One of the examples is that marches for equality have been banned in many Polish cities (ILGA-Europe, 2020). On the national level, Polish president Andrzej Duda, member of a Catholic conservative right-wing party, signed the Family Charter, which calls to defend the institution of marriage, and against acceptance for same-sex marriages and adoption of children by same-sex couples, and for protection from so-called "LGBT ideology" (ILGA-Europe, 2020). He is not the only Polish president referring in this way to the rights of sexual minorities. The former president Lech Walesa said in an interview in March 2013, referring to homosexuals' political demands: "a minority should not impose itself on the majority. They should sit behind the wall" (Górska et al., 2017: 256). Former president and leader of the ruling Law and Justice party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, in short PiS) Jarosław Kaczyński argued that if homosexuality "were to be promoted on a grand scale, the human race would disappear" (Mole et al., 2017). The current illiberal political elites collaborate with the church elites in their anti-LGBTQ stance. Recently, Poland's Catholic episcopate adopted an official position on the question of LGBT+, which includes calls for the creation of "clinics to help people who want to regain their … natural sexual orientation" (ILGA-Europe, 2020). During the presidential election campaign in May and June this year, President Duda said in one of his speeches that: "The LGBT community are not people, they are ideologies" (Zapotoczny, 2020). And Kaczyński said that "no homosexual marriages will occur; we will wait peacefully for the European Union countries to sober up" (ILGA-Europe, 2020).

As pointed out by Foucault (1998: 100) knowledge is produced via discourse; power systems use and produce discourses which are then embraced by the masses. The use of homophobic words in the mainstream discourse by the representatives of the power system (e.g. the Polish government) leads to the reproduction of the same opinion about homosexuality and attitudes towards sexual minorities by the masses (Mizielinska, 2020). So, the words of the Polish president and government give meaning to how the LGBTQ community is seen by many. It produces knowledge and, in this way, holds power over this community. Such words have the power of dehumanising LGBTQ people by denying homosexual, bisexual and transgender people's right to exist. That's how homophobia works: it is a result of stigmatisation and othering; the differences are labelled and the sexual identity is linked to adverse beliefs. LGBTQ people are associated with those beliefs and stereotypes and as a result are marginalised (Link & Phelan, 2001:370). As a result of this discourse, in 2019 and 2020 a third of Polish municipalities has declared themselves "LGBT-free zones", adopting pro-family resolutions (Euronews, 29-07-2020).

Chapter 3 Conceptual framework

As this study focuses on the Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands, this chapter presents an overview of the conceptual framework which I used to analyse their experiences. Two concepts were intertwined in my research: intersectionality and othering. The concepts of intersectionality and othering are interdependent and play a role in the construction of life upon migration. I believe that othering and an intersectional approach can help to identify sociocultural categories and to understand how specific interactions influence the lives of Polish lesbian women upon migration to the Netherlands, how they construct their identity and the place they take in the host society and in their co-ethnic group. This helped to analyse their often precarious positions as migrants, women and non-heterosexuals. Additionally, to understand the position of Polish lesbian migrants between two different countries I used the concept of transnationality. Finally, to understand how they are seen and treated by other Polish people (in Poland and in the Netherlands) I used the concept of sexual citizenship.

3.1 Othering

Jensen (2011: 63) states that "identities are in some sense always social", which means that we cannot see someone's identity separate from social context in which they operate. The collective idea of an ethnicity of sexual minority influences how those minorities construct their identity (Pawlak: 2015: 24). To understand how this process of influencing works, social sciences use the concept of "othering" (Jensen, 2011: 63; Pawlak, 2015: 24). The other is different from an "I", while the "I" is often depicted as Western, heterosexual, masculine, metropolitan elites (Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou, 2015: 638).

The concept of "othering" was first described by Spivak Spivak (1985: 252) in the context of colonisation and power relations between colonizer and the colonised "other" (as described by Jensen, 2011: 64-65; Pawlak, 2015: 25). She identifies three strategies of othering. The first strategy is to make clear what the power relations are; who is the powerless and who holds the power. The second strategy is to construct "the other as pathological and morally inferior" (Jensen: 2011: 65) and the last strategy is to acknowledge the cultural superiority of the powerful. In the historical, colonial context, "this dimension of othering implies that knowledge and technology is the property of the powerful empirical self, not the colonial other" (Jensen, 2011: 65). In a society, one group excludes the other through the identification of the members of the group as "other" (Debnah, 2017: 89).

The concept of othering can be also applied to study the relationship between migrants and the inhabitants of the host society, where migrants are in the position of the powerless and seen as (culturally) inferior. For example, Gozdziak and Pawlak (2016: 122) state that Eastern-Central Europeans are treated as "others" or outsiders when migrating to Western Europe. Their migration is perceived as something negative rather than a sign of flexibility and mobility. Migrants are seen as others by the host society, but they also actively other themselves from their co-nationals, as Pawlak (2015: 37) found. The better educated and more cosmopolitan Polish migrants in Norway often felt superior and more powerful than Polish migrants, whom they "other" as less developed. The distinction was made not only along economic axis but also among the way leisure time was spent: "Sunday hiking into the woods or attending cultural events like concerts and theatrical plays also provide a strong sense of distinction" (Pawlak, 2015: 33). On the other hand, I think that such a generalisation of migrants as a uniform group neglects the differences which exist within the whole group of migrants. The gender and sociocultural differences within the group can create a separation

between the majority and minority in a given society, but also within the ethnic migrant group itself (Pawlak, 2015: 26). I also believe that to the division among economic, ethnical and cultural lines we can also add division among sexuality: "The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community can be regarded as "other" of the male-female binary" (Debnath, 2017:89).

This brings us to intersectionality. I agree with Jensen (2011: 65) when she states that the concept of othering is described by Spivak as a "multidimensional process, in the sense that it touches upon several different forms of social differentiation, and that othering as a concept can therefore be combined with (…) intersectionality". After all, othering and/or discrimination occur when multiple identifications, such as ethnicity, sexuality, culture or class, intersect (Kuhar, 2009; Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, 2018).

3.2 Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that has emerged out of critical race theory and saw oppression against black women as a sum of different factors, such as gender, race and class, which simultaneously disadvantage them and cannot be seen in isolation (Bilage, 2010: 58; Crenshaw, 1990). As Bastia (2014: 239) puts it: "the various categories of oppression are understood as interconnected and interdependent, rather than as separate essentialist categories".

This approach is also used to study the lives of migrants: "more recently intersectionality has been taken up by those studying migration, particularly in Northern European contexts. There are clear parallels between the experiences of 'minority' and 'migrant' women" (Bastia, 2014: 240). Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou (2015) advocate for use of intersectionality in migratory studies, adding that in the case of Eastern European migrants the term racism should be replaced by "cultural racism" (p. 645) and should be situated within the "old imperial colonial and neocolonial relations with Eastern Europe and Poland in particular" (p. 643). Amelina and Lutz (2019: 9) recognise that in Europe not only race but especially ethnicity and culture are used to discriminate people.

Additionally, several authors add that not only race, gender and class are involved in discrimination, but also factors such as sexuality (Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, 2018: 32). Stambolis-Ruhstorfer (2017: 51) states that it is important to include sexuality in studies on the identity of immigrants, as sexuality intersects with other social identities (ethnicity, nationality) and the degree of homophobia can influence the lived experience of migration. Sexuality after all defines us as belonging to a certain group and influences our social life (Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2017: 45). In the case of Polish lesbian migrants in the Netherlands it is important to keep in mind that "norms and codes about sexual behaviours and identities are important (…) parts of the ways racial, ethnic, and national groups construct narratives about who belongs" (Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2017: 53). Additionally, sexuality contributes to decision-making about migration and has an effect on how we experience migration (Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2013:321). As to intersection between sexuality and other factors, McDermott (2006: 206) studied the intersection between social class and sexual identity. He found that less-educated women more often work in settings where heterosexuality is the norm. This can cause pressure, stress and health problems. So "social class has yet to be taken seriously (…) as a contemporary site of disadvantage and advantage that positions lesbians unequally and that may shape their psychological experiences differently" (McDermott, 2006: 198). This also applies especially to Polish immigrants in the Netherlands, who often do lower-skilled work.

On the other hand, it is also recognised that "gender, class and race are not just constitutive of disadvantage, oppression and subordination but also the means through which some people acquire and maintain positions of privilege" (Bastia, 2014: 244). Therefore, intersections can be also studied in the light of advantages.

Some researchers have used the intersectionality to study the lives of Polish migrants (Botterill, 2015; Pawlak, 2015; Fijalkowska, 2019) but as yet, none studied lesbian migrant women and the intersections which influence their lives.

There is a connection between intersectionality and the next concept, transnationalism. Amelina and Lutz (2019: 11) add to gender, race/ethnicity and class also sexuality (with heterosexuals as dominating and homosexuals as dominated), religion (secular/religious), language (dominant/inferior), "culture" (civilized/uncivilized), and some dimensions of space (among other things national/transnational). They notice (Amelina & Lutz, 2019: 37) that "transnationalized inequalities cannot be regarded as cumulates of national inequality patterns, but instead must be considered as stratifications in which acts of crossing a border are essential". To illustrate this, they give an example of a female Polish migrant who "in Germany can simultaneously have different marginalized positions in the receiving context, whereas in Poland she might be defined as a respectable member of the middle class" (p. 37). Therefore, it is important to study the issue of social class not only in the light of the myth that Central and Eastern Europeans constitute a homogenous group (Binnie, 2013; Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, 2018), but also in the light of transnational context, as will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 Transnationalism

When studying the lives of migrants and the intersections which influence their positions within society, it is important to situate the migrants in a transnational space, as "individuals occupy different gender, racial, and class positions within different states at the same time" (Levitt & Schiller, 2004: 1015). The idea of transnational (social) space was developed in opposition to what Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002: 301) call methodological nationalism: "the assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world", and that social analysis should always take place within the boundaries of the state. Of course, migrants live physically in one state, but their "social life is not confined by nation-state boundaries" (Levitt & Schiller, 2004: 1007). They rather live in transnational social spaces: "combinations of ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that reach across the borders of multiple states" (Faist, 200: 191). And as Fouron & Schiller (2001: 543) state: "transmigrants maintain familial, social, economic, religious, and political ties with their country of origin even though they (…) become incorporated into a new society".

But not all migrants are transmigrants. To be a transmigrant means that the social relationships and the social practises of the migrants take place in at least two countries, that the ties are strong and stable and the exchange of material and nonmaterial goods takes place on almost daily basis. Migrants send home not only material goods (money and items) but also immaterial concepts, such as ideas, behaviours and norms and social capital, or, as Levitt (1998: 926) calls it, "social remittances". Grabowska and Engbersen (2016: 111) sum up different types of social remittances in Poland. They differentiate between individual and collective level and between three different types of remittances: norms, practices and social capital. There is much evidence for the transnational transfer of language, ideas and attitudes concerning race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality by Polish migrants. Gawlewicz (2015A; 2015C) shows how Polish migrants in the UK "produce the language of difference" (p. 25)

when talking about people of different race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and gender and how they transfer this language (of stigma and also of respect) and the attitudes to their families and friends in Poland. Nowicka (2018: 825) found that the racial discourses which are present in British society are incorporated by Polish migrants and often reproduced, but also transferred through transnational social networks back to Poland.

This transnational perspective is necessary to fully understand what happens when Polish lesbian women live in the Netherlands, but are still closely connected to their Polish family and to Polish co-migrants. Transnational families are "families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, i.e. 'familyhood', even across national borders" (Bryceson &and Vuorela 2002: 1). Ryan (2011) uses the concept of transnationalism focuses on Polish migrants' families and their transnational relations with family remaining in Poland. Nijhoff (2017: 636) suggests that many Polish migrants in the Netherlands build their lives here and are strongly oriented towards the Netherlands, but still have strong ties with Poland. Those ties are confirmed not only through contact with family and friends via Skype and Facebook, but also through ownership of a house or land in Poland.

It is thus largely recognised that Polish migrants live their lives in transnational space. They form a transnational community which "has been formed recently" and was "produced by globalisation and result from socioeconomic inequalities" (Bauböck & Faist, 2010: 47).

3.4 Sexual citizenship

To fully understand the roots of Polish homophobia and the oppressed position of Polish lesbian women in transnational space, it is important to investigate the concept of sexual citizenship. According to Richardson (2000: 107) the status of a person's citizenship depends upon sexuality of the person. The concept which explains the interconnection between citizenship and sexuality is sexual citizenship. To understand the concept of sexual citizenship it is important to fully understand the connection between sexuality, reproduction and nationality. The idea of national identity is based on the reproduction of the nation, which only takes place in heterosexual relations, which automatically excludes sexual minorities (Amelina & Lutz, 2019: 95). Through heterosexual relations, people produce children who belong to the nation. Heterosexual couples are the norm; they ensure that the nation can survive. Heterosexuality is seen as morally superior and is embedded in public life through schools and education; in this way it becomes powerful and dominant (Loutzenheiser & MacIntosh, 2004; Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2017: 47).

Homosexuality is seen as deviant and sexual minorities are often framed by politicians, churches, the press and schools "as infiltrated foreigners who threaten social cohesion from within" (Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2017: 47). In mainly heterosexual society, men are seen as reasonable, while women are seen through the lens of emotions and sexuality. The heterosexual man with his reason stands above the heterosexual woman, who is "naturally" associated with sexual reproduction. She stands above "unnatural" sexual minorities, who are not able to reproduce. Both heterosexual women and homosexuals are seen as "others" from the perspective of the heterosexual male (Lister, 2002: 194). This way of thinking is clearly visible in the Polish society in Poland, and also abroad. In Poland the social position of women is defined by being wives and mothers; the heterosexual nuclear family is seen as the best place for children to be raised. As lesbians do not marry men and rarely have children, they are considered by the church and society as useless for the nation (Kosnick: 2016:6;

Kowalska, 2011) and excluded from the "morally wholesome and 'natural' community of fellow nationals" (Kosnick, 2016:18).

Polish opinion polls show that for Polish people family is the most important value in life; 80% of the respondents consider happy family life as the core value. 99% of the respondents defined family as a married heterosexual couple with children. A relationship of a gay couple with children is defined by 23% of the respondents as a family, and a gay couple without children is defined by 13% of the respondents as a family. This percentage has not changed since 2013 (CBOS, 2019). Additionally, when asked about the definition of Polishness, Polish migrants in UK named as the most important values Poland's clear gender roles and relationships. They also admitted that certain values (such as family and being Catholic) became more important for them after their migration to UK (Gawlewicz, 2015 B: 204-206). This is in line with previous research on the development of migrants' identities (Christou & King, 2010).

Chapter 4 Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach, as this kind of approach is compatible with intersectional theory through methods such as interviews. Interviews can clearly illustrate "the complexities of individual and collective identities and social dynamics" (Hunting, 2014:1). Additionally, interviews are effective in examining the lives of non-heterosexuals, as the create the possibility for the interviewer to listen to their stories and explore their experiences (Fournier et al., 2017:340).

The study was based on seven in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Polish lesbian women who have lived for at least one year in the Netherlands. A semi-structured interview allows the researcher to discuss a list of topics (which I prepared on the basis of the literature review), but still leaves space to discuss other themes introduced by participants (Dhoest & Szulc, 2016: 3). The interviews were conducted in the summer of 2020 and due to the Covid-19 pandemic all the interviews were conducted through Skype and/or Messenger.

The specific strategies used for the fieldwork - sampling, data collection and analysis - and the ethical considerations and the researcher's dilemmas regarding positionality are described below.

4. 1 Sampling

I selected participants purposively, aiming to find Polish lesbian women who have migrated to the Netherlands and have lived here for at least one year. I assumed that this timeframe was necessary for them to gain experience in their new country. To recruit the participants, I used different channels, as Polish lesbian women are often not prone to share their experiences. Firstly, I contacted my lesbian niece, who gave me the names of several Facebook groups exclusively aimed at Polish lesbians. One of these focused specifically at Polish lesbians in the Netherlands. In the lives of Polish lesbian women, the internet seems to be a place where they can safely contact each other, especially for those from small towns and villages (Gruszczynska, 2006: 41). It is also "a medium of self-discovery, self-expression, and of defining and embracing sexual identity. It is also a place of coming out for Polish lesbians" (Kowalska, 2011: 332). For this reason, it seemed the best place to look for participants.

I was invited to join one group (Lesbijki), but the second group (PLPolish lesbians in the NetherlandsNL, never responded to my request. The Lesbijki group is characterised by its transnational character, as it is meant for Polish lesbian women in Poland and abroad. In the group Lesbijki I posted a message that I was looking for participants. Four women responded to my message. I asked them to ask their friends if any of them would be interested in talking to me (snowball sampling). This resulted in one more participant. Additionally, my niece agreed to participate in my study; she also recommended me to a friend, who also agreed to participate. Thus, I managed to speak to seven Polish lesbian women. As the aim of qualitative research is to conduct an in-depth study, it is normal to focus on a few cases without aiming for generalisation (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 4).

4.1.1 Profile participants

All seven participants define themselves as lesbian women and are or were in a same-sex relationship. The age range for the participants was 26-46. All participants were full-time employed; four through an employment agency, one owns a business, one works in a shop and one works in an international company as an expat. All of them have lived in the Netherlands for more than one year (range 1,5-10 years). All of them completed at least high school; three had a university education. Some of them are "out of the closet" to their families. The list of participants and their characteristics can be found in Appendix 2.

4.2 Data collection instruments

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic I decided to interview the participants through Skype or Messenger. I have "met" every participant twice. The first meeting was meant to introduce myself, the study, what was expected from them and to agree upon a time for the actual interview. Additionally, I asked the participants to prepare a picture which best represents the way they think about themselves as a Polish lesbian woman migrant. In this way I hoped that the interview would become more a conversation and I directly introduced some of the intersecting categories.

I chose semi-structured interviews, with a list of topics which I wanted to address. The list of topics and the interview guide are included at the end of this paper as Appendix 1. When possible, I recorded the interviews after receiving the participant's consent; however, four participants did not allow recording of the interview. I was able to make notes and write down the most important quotes. All participant gave oral consent for using these quotations. All the participant also chose the option of using pseudonyms instead of their real names. The interviews lasted between 70 minutes and 2 hours. Additionally, I also received consent from my good friend to use the story of her marriage (see Introduction). My niece gave also consent to referred to her as "my niece" throughout the paper, but asked to use a pseudonym while citing her.

4.3 Data analysis

I recorded and transcribed three interviews and made extensive notes of four others. All the interviews were conducted in Polish and all the transcriptions were also made in Polish, as well as all the notes of the other four interviews. I only translated the quotations used in this paper in English. The next step was to identify the intersections brought up by the respondents and to look at disadvantages the women experienced, but also considering advantages of some intersections. As advised by Hunting (2014: 15) I analysed the data "using multi-stage intersectionality-informed analysis called 'two-step hybrid approach'". This is a combination of inductive thematic analysis with a deductive template approach. Firstly, I coded the data via open and axial coding. In the next, deductive stage, I made "connections between individual participant accounts, social categories, and broader social relations" (Hunting, 2014: 15). Additionally, a thematic analysis was conducted as to determine to guiding topics. The theoretical context was used to analyse the data.

4.4 Ethical considerations, positionality and reflexivity

To maintain a high ethical standard at all times, especially given the sensitivity of the topic, verbal consent was sought from all the participants after explaining the purpose of the study (see Appendix 3). Consent was also asked to use the quotations. Participants were made aware of the possibility to end the interview at any point. Additionally, pseudonyms were used in this thesis and personal data was anonymised (age/educational status/work). The three recorded interviews were stored using a pseudonym in the file name. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the choice was made to not expose the participants to face-to-face interviews and instead hold the interviews through Skype or Messenger.

As Hunting (2014: 2) states "to be reflexive involves examining how research processes and knowledge production are shaped by the preconceptions, values, social positions, and interests of the researcher". It means to assume and accept that the researcher, with his experiences and believes, is part of the research. I am Polish, a woman and a migrant, so I share ethnicity (and nationality), gender and experience of living abroad with the participants. The danger was that my personal experiences as a migrant woman of a certain educational background could potentially influence the questions I asked. To prevent that, I prepared a list of topics that was based on the literature.

On the other hand, the fact that I spoke the same language as the participants made it possible to go into depth in the interview. One of the participants said explicitly that she agreed to talk to me because she wanted to help "a Polish migrant woman". I think that me being a woman and a mother also helped me ask questions about motherhood. On the other hand, the fact that I am female also influenced the participants in the other way. One of them kept making sexual remarks, even when I explicitly said that I was heterosexual. Interestingly, when posting the first message on Facebook I did not even consider it necessary to say that I was heterosexual. I think that belonging to the heterosexual majority influences the way I think and not think about sexuality, and this is an important issue to mention. It also shows that I am, just as the participants, situated in multiple intersecting categories.

Two important issues while working with participants are credibility and approachability. As stated by Adu-Ampong and Adams (2019: 3): "credibility and approachability are characterizations of how a researcher intentionally behaves in the fieldwork encounter, as well as how the researched perceives the behaviour of the researcher". As to credibility, I showed the participants that I studied at ISS. Additionally, me being Polish and a woman not only increased my credibility, but also increased my approachability, by being "nonthreatening and safe" (Adu-Ampong &Adams, 2019: 6). At the same time, it caused a problem, because participants sometimes assumed that I "knew" things because I am Polish, a migrant and/or a woman and they did not think it necessary to explain it. Often, I had to ask for an explanation.

4.5 Limitations

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic I was not able to conduct the ethnographic part of the research as I had planned to. The original plan was to meet with the participants several times in places that in some way are important to them, and to observe their lives and their experiences of discrimination. Instead I was limited to virtual interviews. This certainly narrowed down my data, as I was not able to observe the participants. Furthermore, the lack of personal contact made the interviews more distant and did not create the same degree of connectivity which would be possible when seeing the participants "live". Additionally, four out of seven participants did not give permission to record the interviews, which has certainly limited the data collection.

Chapter 5 Results

5.1 The long arm of Polish political homophobia

The relation between human rights and the populist regime of PiS, in power since since 2015, deserves attention. On the one hand, social human rights are strengthened by the populistic government through extensive social policy available for all citizens. On the other hand, the human rights of immigrants, women and sexual minorities are limited. This happens not only through legislation, but mainly through stigmatisation and marginalisation of these groups (Kocemba & Stambulski, 2020: 153). The national identity of being Polish goes hand in hand with statements and actions against the reproductive rights of women and against the LGBTQ community. In the eyes of populists, it's not the individual that has human rights, but the nation as a whole, represented by family units, is the subject of rights (Kocemba & Stambulski, 2020: 153). These ideas are distributed by the government in Poland and shape the attitudes of Polish people towards marginalised groups.

But these ideas do not stay in Poland. They travel abroad with migrants, through internet and social media, as well as through Polish television. Donaldson, Handren and Lac (2017: 14) show that the attitudes towards homosexuality depend on both individual level predictors as well as country level predictors. This means that attitudes of migrants towards LGBTQ persons are shaped by the ideas that are prevalent in their country of origin.

Of course it's important to remember that migrants from the same country do not form a homogenous group, as Nowicka and Krzyżowski (2017: 367) show for the attitude of Polish migrants in the UK towards minorities. Many Polish migrants in UK distance themselves from other minorities (ethnical and sexual), but still individual factors such as "education of parents, language proficiency and intimate relationships with a person of another ethnic group all influence social distancing" (p. 372). Migrants can become more tolerant as the clash between the socialisation they have undergone in their country of origin and the social practises and expectations about sexuality in the migration country start the process of change of attitudes (Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2017: 50). However, it is important to notice that migrants can become more tolerant after migration only if they encounter less homophobic discourse from the media and church from the country of origin (Mole, Gerry, Parutis & Burns, 2017: 213-214). In the case op Polish migrants, this is not always possible, as populistic ideas don't stop at the borders. And as Anthias (2002: 500) reminds us: "the homeland is an important point of reference for migrants".

The Polish lesbians to whom I spoke often recognised populist ideas that are prevalent in Poland in the comments they heard from other Polish migrants.

> "I feel a kind of frustration. I am here in a free country and still a guy from work feels free to say to me that I shouldn't be so proud of being lesbian, as I am not a normal woman, and that I should be treated by a psychiatrist and that hopefully I will not get pregnant to produce more "sick" people. He treats me as a degenerate!" (Ina, 32 years).

Stella, Gawlewicz and Flynn (2016) also described that their Central and Eastern European LGBT respondents reported some forms of marginalisation from their co-nationals at work and in the private sphere. But in my respondents, we also see the intersection between being a lesbian and being a woman. Firstly, we see the attitude of Ina's work colleague towards LGBTQ people; the idea of them being not normal, as well as the expectation that LGBTQ

persons should be "invisible". Curiously, this is an example of two different kinds of homophobia at the same time: the traditional and the modern. Traditional homophobia proclaimed that homosexuals should be avoided and their relations were considered sinful, unnatural, pathologic and related to paedophilia. Ina is called "sick" and referred to a psychiatrist. Religiosity plays a mediating role in this kind of homophobia, as people who were more religious tended to have more traditional family beliefs and less positive attitudes towards homosexuality (Golebiowska, 2017: 612).

Now the political elites use a new kind of homophobia (Górska, Bilewicz, Winiewski & Waszkiewicz, 2017:14). The social changes claimed by homosexuals are denied as unnecessary (Morrison & Morrison, 2003:16) as the occurring marginalisation of sexual minorities is seen as their own fault; they are accused of overemphasising their sexuality – as in Ina's example, showing that she is "proud" to be a lesbian. Secondly, the expectation of being a "normal woman" is based on the ideology of the Polish Catholic Church, which sees women mainly in the roles of wives and mothers (Siara, 2013: 106). Not being able or not wanting to perform gender-normative roles causes often marginalisation. Of course, not the whole of Polish society agrees with this role of women, but especially in the traditional populistic spheres it is still a very popular idea. Populists see feminist women as a threat to the traditional, patriarchal family model and as a deviation from religious norms (Żuk & Żuk, 2019).

One of the interviewed women feels marginalised, furthermore, because of the attitude of the government towards gender equality.

> "One day I would like to have a child, in a normal legal way; but in Poland it is not possible. As a lesbian woman I cannot opt for IVF because some old man in the government [referring to Kaczynski – leader of PiS] thinks he can be the boss of my uterus. I feel like being unworthy of having a baby – and I hate this feeling, even though I have enough money and opportunities to do it abroad" (Kasia, 31 years).

Kasia is angry and frustrated; she feels "unworthy" having a baby as if a right to have a baby was reserved only for real citizens – straight women. In Poland, detailed issues related to the treatment of infertility are regulated by the Act of June 25, 2015 on the treatment of infertility. Polish law allows the procedure to be carried out only for married couples or couples living legally together. A single woman (hetero- or homosexual) has no chance of in vitro fertilization. Since the election in 2015 the PiS government has tried to restrict the reproductive rights of women by using strong anti-gender-equality rhetoric and attacking women's rights groups (Roggeband & Krizsan, 2018: 11). These campaigns target mainly heterosexual women, as Poland has one of the most repressive anti-abortion laws in Europe. But the anti-gender-equality rhetoric influences also lives of lesbian women, as illustrated by the case above. But interestingly, in their accounts of marginalisation there was also hope, as they experienced not only attacks but also support from the Polish community. Especially when the government attacked the rights of all women, they experience a kind of sisterhood:

> "A few women at work were discussing the abortion rights of women here and in Poland and the role of the church. I joined them and it felt like being one of them; just a woman. And although they knew I am lesbian, we were just women together" (Ina, 32).

In her account gender issues united all the women. For a moment there was no othering; she felt a part of the group, she was seen through her gender; being a woman meant being one of the rest. It gave her a good feeling even though the group as a whole was discriminated against. On the one hand in 2018 Poland adopted the Polish National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) (2018), based on four pillars, meant to increase the participation of women in peacemaking and conflict prevention. The four pillars of WPS are based on gender equality, but on the other hand in the current political climate in Poland, gender rights are under threat (Dutra Santo, 2020: 6). The institutionalisation of homophobia

and gender inequality in Poland (through LGBT-free zones or Family Charters as described in 2.2) undermines the rights of women and at the same time the ability of Poland to fulfil the WPS obligations.

Often it is not easy to be a homosexual in your own country, which can be a reason to migrate (Koko, Monro & Smith, 2018) or to stay in the country of destination. Stella, Flynn and Gawlewicz (2018) found that Eastern European homosexuals often gave as a reason for their prolonged stay in Scotland the "normal life" they could live there. Although they didn't leave Poland due to prosecution for their sexuality, they decided to stay in Scotland because of their sexuality. The legal recognition of their rights in Scotland, the positive attitude of Scottish people and fear about the animosity towards LGBTQ persons in Poland, made them decide to stay in Scotland (Stella, Gawlewicz, & Flynn: 2016). Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir (2018: 33) similarly found in her research on queer Central and East European migrants in Iceland that sexuality was never an obvious reason to migrate, but played a role in the decision to stay in Iceland for longer. My findings are comparable to the findings of these authors.

> "I come from a small town, there were no jobs there. My sexual orientation didn't really play a role [in migration]. Maybe subconsciously… but I just needed money and work. Now I am afraid to go back to Poland, [LGBTQ] people get brutally arrested there, the whole political situation there is sick. They [politicians] make people hate us. I wanted to go back, but now I am afraid" (Ola, 29 years).

Ola did not migrate because of her sexual orientation, it was economy which made her leave Poland. She was not planning to stay forever abroad but the situation in Poland; the feeling of insecurity which it causes and the fact that LGBTQ people are demonised there, makes her reconsider her return plans. My respondents refer often to feeling afraid. Asia (36 years) says:

> "I would like to marry one day, I am in a very good relationship, it is legal in the Netherlands to marry, so it seems easy. But I am afraid. My parents are very open-minded; they live here and accept my girlfriend. But what would my colleagues here think, and my friends in Poland? They continuously hear that it's not normal, a marriage between two women."

Indeed, the idea that same-sex marriages would cause the devaluation of traditional marriage (Mos, 2020: 408) is very strongly represented by traditional political parties, with strong religious traditions (Mos, 2020: 398). The governmental campaign against same-sex marriages made an impression on Asia, even though she left Poland 10 years ago. It illustrates well how hate campaigns do their work in Poland and even travel across borders. She is afraid of the opinion of her friends and colleagues in Poland and in the Netherlands. On the one hand she is free to marry as it is legal in the Netherlands on the other hand she feels constrained by the social norms which, in her opinion Polish people "continuously hear".

Additionally, it seems that some women I talked to are influenced by this right-wing ideology, without being aware of it. One of the examples is what Binnie (2013: 253) calls reproduction of "classed distinctions between the winners and losers of neoliberal transition", where homosexuality is presented as a luxury afforded to well-educated residents of bigger cities and "marchers for gay equality are framed as symbolic of neoliberal consumerism" (Binnie, 2013: 249). Some of my respondents, when asked about the Pride Parades, responded that they didn't like this kind of show.

> "They look like idiots, wearing stupid outfits and drinking a lot. Those are not lesbian women like me or some of my friends. They live in Amsterdam and don't understand what normal life is" (Marta, 26).

Here we see again the idea of a fancy, big-city homosexual, just like in the ideology of the populistic government. Further on in the conversation, Marta adds that she wants to show to the Polish community that she is "a good, normal lesbian", so she helps organise assistance for children in Polish orphanages. By "othering" lesbians who take part in Pride Parades, she follows the steps of the populistic politicians. She seems to reproduce (unconsciously) the idea posed by right-wing politicians, who place homosexuals on the side of the winners of neoliberal transition; well-educated, rich inhabitants of big cities, who are different from "women like me", as Marta says. Additionally, it seems as if the idea of the Pride Parades and the people taking part in them represent in her eyes something foreign and imposed, incompatible with the Polish way of being lesbian. This idea of 'foreign rules' that do not apply in the context of homosexuals' rights and Poland has been discussed in other studies. The imposition of new rules by the EU regarding the rights of sexual minorities is often seen as the cause of strict anti-LGBTQ polices in East European countries. Various authors argue that these countries feel too much pressure from the EU to recognise same-sex unions and, in reaction to this pressure, take precautionary measures by adopting anti-LGBTQ laws (O'Dwyer, 2012: 348; Mos, 2020: 397). Furthermore, the presentation in Western Europe of Polish homophobia as exceptional and the Polish state being "constructed as less European and less advanced in its treatment of sexual dissidents" (Binnie & Klesse, 2013: 1115) can be seen in the light of cultural racism.

5.2 Being a part of transnational family

The members of transnational families are separated from each other by the national borders but still are connected to each other "by relational ties that aim at welfare and mutual support and provide a source of identity" (Bryceson & Vuorela 2002: 4). Such families can create a supportive environment for migrants by motivating and assisting them during difficult years abroad. But being part of a transnational family for my respondents often means to live in fear and to continuously shift between their different identities, as well as to feel barely tolerated.

5.2.1 Multiple identities and fear of disclosure

Most of my respondents pointed out that it seems as in Polish family, their main identity is that of a woman, while in Dutch reality they have more freedom to represent themselves as lesbian women. Depending on circumstances, they shift between their identities. Ina (32, years) says:

> "I am a butch lesbian; I buy almost all my clothing in men's stores. But when I go to Poland, I give up my butch look to meet the expectations of my mother and grandma. I wear dresses and make-up. And even here, when I get a new tattoo, I always think twice; looking for a strategic place on my body where the tattoo can be easily covered when I am in Poland."

Ina feels pressure to fulfil the expectations about femininity from her (female) family members. Even though she usually doesn`t wear feminism cloths, she feels the pressure to do it when travelling to Poland. But it is worth noticing that the role and expectations towards women in Poland seem to be located in between to spectrums. On the one hand we see the process of re-traditionalisation of the role of women under the influence of the Polish Catholic Church (Siara, 2013: 107). On the other hand, Polish women (especially from big cities), after the accession of Poland to EU in 2004, became more emancipated and more Western; other Eastern European women find them worth copying (Dolińska, 2019: 138).

But the double identity is not only limited to being homo- or heterosexual. One of my respondents found it confusing to shift between being a woman, a lesbian and a Polish migrant.

> "In the Netherlands I am a Polish migrant and a lesbian. Those are the two "me" with which I am confronted most often. In Poland I am never lesbian, as my Catholic family would never survive this. But funnily enough, my Polishness is unimportant, as everyone is Polish. But there I am mostly a woman. The expectations of my family about what I should wear, the questions about becoming a mother, getting married. It's all about being a woman. Sometimes it is so confusing" (Beata, 41 years).

Here it seems that she is confronted with three different identities, all of them adding to the feeling of being at a disadvantage. As a Polish migrant in the Netherlands, she is confronted with being "other" than main Dutch society. As lesbian she has to hide her real identity from her family. And as woman she is confronted with expectations of her Polish family regarding what it means being a woman. For gender egalitarianism Poland is just two places behind the Netherlands (respectively on 40th and 38th place) in the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum 2020). However, attitudes of gender non-conformism are much less tolerated in Poland. Under the influence of the Polish Catholic Church, gender roles in Poland are very traditional: women should get married and have children (Golebiowska, 2017). This emphasis on traditional values seems to be caused by the historical position of Poland as an ex-communist society, which had to survive as a nation and as Catholics. According to Inglehart and Baker (2000) survival-oriented nations find economic security more important than gender equality or sexual tolerance.

The lack of tolerance in their families and the accompanying fear of disclosure is well visible in the accounts of my respondents. Ina (32 years) relates:

> "It was very stressful when my parents decided to visit me. I was living with my girlfriend, but when my parents came to visit, we had to pretend that we were just friends renting a house together. I was so afraid that some of my Polish friends here would make a slip of the tong and reveal that we are a couple. I was extremely relieved when they left after almost two weeks. I don't want them to visit me here anymore".

Being a Polish migrant is already stressful and can lead to anxiety, depression and suicide attempts (Orlik & Shevlin, 2016; Smolen, 2013). Additionally, being a Polish homosexual migrant can add extra stress, as the example given by Ina illustrates. But not only family visits are stressful. Also in daily life, my respondents are anxious that their sexual identity is disclosed to their families in Poland.

> "I have a Facebook page because it is easy to contact people. But I never post pictures which could give some clue that I am lesbian. I am very cautious, but also afraid that in some way, someone in my family will find out that I am not straight" (Beata, 41 years).

Research confirms (Gruszczynska, 2006: 39) that the internet plays an important role in the lives of Polish lesbian women. On the one hand, it is considered a safe place to contact each other. On the other hand, it is also a place where homophobes can easily express their hatred (Gruszczynska, 2006: 41). Additionally, it's a place of "self-discovery, self-expression, and of defining and embracing sexual identity" (Kowalska, 2011: 332). Not being able to use the internet it in this way, because of the fear of being discovered by their family, can be seen as a major loss of freedom.

But Beata is not alone in her fear: 20% of the LGBTQ migrant respondents of Dhoest and Szulc (2016: 22) admitted that they made it impossible for others to figure out from their Facebook pages that they are LGBTQ. Furthermore, 5% had more than two accounts to protect their LGBTQ identity. The study of Świder and Winiewski (2017: 48) confirm that because of fear threat of "loss of loved ones or deterioration of relationships" can cause

LGBTQ people to "hide one's sexual orientation or gender identity". The idea of hiding or being invisible is not new. Rojas-Wiesner and Devargas (2014: 203) describe different strategies that Guatemalan women migrants used to stay unnoticed to avoid problems. The price of invisibility is, however, a solitary position and lack of friendly supportive networks.

5.2.2 At the edge of being tolerated

For lesbian women, it is problematic being part of a transnational family. The problem is homophobia in the society, on the level of the country (as seen in last presidential campaign in Poland), but this also finds its way into families. The pressure of neighbours, school or church tries to keep girls quiet. From the point of view of feminist theories (Adam, 2008: 391, it is all about the domination over the lives of women, and men who are afraid to lose their patriarchal position and power. It is also part of feelings of hate against women (misogyny), as the life of the lesbian woman opposes the life of a "normal' woman as wife, mother and carer (Adam, 2008: 391). But regardless of the reasons, being barely tolerated can be painful.

> "My father is dead, I have a stepfather. He and my mother were the first to know, and also my grandmother, because she lives with us. My aunts and family also know about it. The family of my father doesn't accept it. We don't have contact anymore. But we never really had good contact anyway. The rest of the family kind of accepts it. I can come home, and visit my town. People there know it, but do not talk about it. My mother asked me to not take my girlfriend with me. She said it is for my own good, but I am not sure about that. My mother is a teacher in a small school. I think she is afraid to lose her job. My mother and grandma pray to god to change me" (Ola, 29 years).

Maybe we shouldn't be surprised that Polish families are not really tolerant and afraid of the impact that the homosexuality of their children can have on their lives. They are influenced by the representation of "gender" and homosexuality in the Polish media, which frightens people by saying that homosexuals will destroy the traditional family, causing divorces and abortions (Odrowąż-Coates, 2015: 32).

Ola is not alone in her account. Inaa (32 years) says that her parents don't know about her sexuality, but she has told her brothers. They accepted her, but she sees that they don't want to get to know her life as lesbian, since they don't want to meet her girlfriend. Even Kasia (31 years), who comes from a very tolerant family, says that she sees some limits to this tolerance:

> "My parents really accept me; I feel free to talk to them about my lesbian friends. But I feel that there are some things which seem unacceptable. Which one? Marriage with a woman and children. I don't know what they find worse."

Although tolerance towards the same-sex partnerships and the parenthood increases in Poland (CBOS, 2019), still it is very difficult and challenging to be a same-sex parent. Ukleja (2019: 45) shows that lesbian mothers in Poland use many different strategies to protect their families from the consequences of the prevailing social norms, such as stigmatisation.

Although most of my respondents had difficult relationships with their family in Poland, some respondents also revealed that they were hopeful. Kasia (31 years) said that her family, but also almost all her Polish highly-educated friends, were very tolerant and expressed their aversion towards the position of the church. Ola (29 years) related how last year, her aunt, who lives in Poland, came out to the family as a lesbian. Ola hopes that it was her example which helped her aunt to disclose her sexuality. This development is in accordance with what Dolińska (2019: 129) reports. According to her, several opinion polls in Poland show that

"the current assessment of priests and clergymen is the worst since 1997" and that "priests are at the bottom of the ranking (…) among the professions which lost the most prestige". Hopefully this trend against the traditional church teachings will continue.

5.3 Opportunities and limitations – life in the Netherlands

Being a homosexual migrant can be difficult. In their review about the experiences of lesbian and gay immigrants post-migration, Fournier et al. (2018) found that homosexual migrants encounter many challenges. They experience discrimination (homophobia and racism), economic challenges due to work conditions, and feelings of deprivation. Although the review didn't include any East European migrants, I found that the Polish lesbians I talked to experienced similar problems, but that the intersection of their different identities makes their situation especially challenging. This because the situation of Eastern European migrants in Western Europe is complicated. Already in 1995, Bakić-Hayden (1995: 917) introduced the notion of "nesting orientalism" which explains the pattern in which the West is seen as the "civilised world" and the further east as more "other": "eastern Europe has been commonly associated with "backwardness," the Balkans with "violence," India with "idealism" or "mysticism" "(p. 917). And as Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou (2015: 645) explain, a transformation took place from "biological racist discourses to cultural racist discourses. By avoiding the word 'race', cultural racism claims to be non-racist". It is not race, but "inadequate" culture which makes East Europeans standing lower in the hierarchy. So, Polish immigrants in the West are still seen as outsiders, "others" and work migrants, and less as mobile citizens of the EU, who make economic choices (Gozdziak & Pawlak, 2016: 122).

5.3.1 Discrimination

When it comes to discrimination against homosexuals, a law was passed in the Netherlands in 1994 that makes various forms of discrimination against homosexuals legally punishable. Since 2001, it has been possible for homosexual couples to marry (Pierik & Felten, 2013: 9). It appears that in the Netherlands homosexuals experience more discrimination than heterosexuals, but the differences are not great (Andriessen et al., 2020: 43). Still, LGBTQ people feel less safe than heterosexual people (Beusekom & Kuyper, 2018: 93) and they have more health problems due to stress (p. 94). With regard to the acceptance of homosexuality in the Netherlands, it appears that 92 percent of people accepts the rights of homosexuals to live as they wish. 73 percent agree that homosexual couples should have the same rights as heterosexual couples in adopting children. According to the annual ILGA-Europe ranking over the year 2019, the level of LGBTQ equality in the Netherlands is in 12th place out of 49 countries; this means a drop of two places from the top 10. For comparison, Poland is in 42nd place in the ranking (ILGA-Europe: 2020: para. Netherlands & Poland).

All of my respondents, regardless of social class, admitted that they felt safe being lesbian within Dutch society and they were not afraid of showing it.

> "Here I am not afraid to walk on the street hand in hand with a girl. I feel free to do it, to kiss her, to show that we are together. I never ever experienced any negative comment from Dutch people, or when I said that I was lesbian. I don't know if it is the law they are abiding or just the way there are. I don't care; I appreciate the freedom of being myself" (Ina, 32 years).

This was also the case for East European homosexual migrants in Scotland (Stella, Gawlewicz, & Flynn: 2016) who reported perceiving positive attitudes towards LGBTQ per-

sons in everyday social interactions at work and privately. The legal framework that recognises LGBTQ is very important, as it gave them the freedom be open about their sexual orientation. In general in the Netherlands, people seem to have more trouble with homosexual men than with lesbian women (Kuyper, 2018: 10). It therefore seems plausible that Polish lesbian women don't experience sexual discrimination.

Despite this positive experience with Dutch community, almost all participants experienced prejudice or discrimination because of their sexual orientation. However, the people guilty of discrimination are other Polish migrants, not Dutch people. Many studies show that the native ethnical community can be homophobic. Izienicki (as cited in Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, 2017: 51) found that Polish gays who migrated to the United States found it easier to be openly gay when away from the Polish neighbourhood. Indeed, my respondents reported the conflict that migrants can experience between their ethnic and sexual identities and the diaspora.

> "A lot of times I can see glances or I hear stupid comments at work. Those are other Polish ladies who behave in this way. They say that the girls who talk with me a lot are probably lesbians. Or: "don't hang out with her, because she will probably want something more from you than friendship." At my work I once admitted I was lesbian. It was at a party, I was bit drunk and I said it. Today I know it's too early ... They despise me ... Unfortunately ... I am a mentally ill person for them" (Agata, 46 years).

Fournier et al. (2018: 345) recognise this "ambivalent relationship with (…) ethnic community". Most of the respondents stated that such discriminatory comments were usually made by older people, although it was not exclusively determined by age or gender, but also by education:

> "Those people are simple; those who make stupid comments are often really stupid, don't speak any language, have lived in Poland in some small village or town where PiS governs, with the church as a most important cultural centre" (Asia, 36).

There seems to be some truth in this comment, as the research of Donaldson, Handren and Lac (2017: 14) show that attitudes towards homosexuality depend not only on country level predictors (as described earlier) but also on individual level predictors. It means that attitudes of a migrant towards gays and lesbians are shaped by individual characteristics such as gender, age, religiosity, education and political preferences. They found that being an older, religious and conservative male immigrant from a conservative country correlated with higher levels of homonegativity. On the contrary, my respondents reported that they experienced discriminatory comments mostly from women. Negative comments from younger men were often connected to my respondents being lesbian women.

> "I heard it so often: "such a waste, you are such beautiful woman but you don't do it with men. Maybe you should try!" I hate those men saying such things; they treat me like their toy, like I would be there only for their physical pleasure. Sometimes I wish I was less girlish" (Marta, 26 years)

There is, however, some hope, as in the case of migrants from Eastern Europe Fitzgerald, Winstone and Prestage (2014: 338) found that, according to the acculturation theory which states that migrants' behaviours and attitudes change under influence of the destination country culture. Therefore, people from Eastern Europe who moved to Western Europe became more tolerant towards homosexuality than those who did not migrate. But they also found that this acculturation process took a long time, as the changes in behaviour were most visible 20 years after migration occurred. As to Polish migrants in Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK, Röder and Lubbers (2016: 277) found that more social contacts within the host society, more positive attitudes towards the host country and the intention

to settle permanently were positively correlated to acculturation and positive attitudes toward homosexuality. Greater religiosity correlated with more homonegativity.

Additionally, Mole, Gerry, Parutis and Burns (2017: 201) found that migration itself changes the attitudes of Eastern European migrants to the UK towards homosexuality. They became more tolerant (p. 216-217), but often towards homosexual people they knew and not towards homosexuality itself. Their level of tolerance remained lower than that of the British population (p. 213). In any case, the migrants they spoke to were young, well-educated and lived in London, so they were part of a group which already is more tolerant (p. 204). Additionally, the authors found that "some migrants learn not to adopt more tolerant attitudes towards gays and lesbians but to perform tolerance of gays and lesbians", as they understand that being homonegative is not accepted in UK (p. 216-217). Similarly, Gawlewicz (2016: 8) found very diverse results: some Polish migrants changed their attitude to become more positive towards homosexuality, while some became even more prejudiced, and others had complicated attitudes: being tolerant to homosexuals they know personally but not to homosexuality in itself.

Finally, various studies have shown that discriminatory behaviour is not necessarily permanent. Pettigrew (2009: 62) determined the existence of a secondary transfer effect. When people who discriminate come into contact with a representative of the discriminated group and empathize with that person, the prejudice against that person, as well as the entire group that this person represents, diminishes. Moreover, people start to show less discriminatory behaviour (i.e. adjust their behaviour) when they think that others in their environment (privately but also in organizations) oppose discrimination (Tankard & Paluck, 2016: 186). This also applies to countries: when a country changes its laws to become less discriminatory, people in that country also express less discrimination (Tankard & Paluck, 2016: 193). A good example of such a country is the Netherlands.

As to intersectional discrimination, Polish lesbians are often singled out because of their sexual orientation, gender and ethnicity. One of my respondents owns a building company which she promotes on Facebook in Polish and in Dutch; she often gets comments about being a woman.

> "You wouldn't believe how much effort people make to place a comment. They would say: "You are too beautiful to get dirty hands", "What do you know about building". Another in Dutch was: "I didn't know Polish builders wore dresses". I have seen so many stupid things. But also, on my profile picture I am with my girlfriend, so some comments are like "now I get why she is a builder!" I don't care as long as I see many comments; it means that I am interesting and in this way I have a good, flourishing company" (Ola, 29 years).

Thus, although those comments are not really welcome, she also recognises that it gives her some opportunity to profile her company. Interestingly, when directly asked about ethnic discrimination, almost all the women initially said that they never experienced it. They would eventually make a very general comment like:

> "Ethnic discrimination occurs here and in all Scandinavian countries ... They pretend that they accept other nationalities and nations ... But it is all pretend ... if you are Polish, a Polish woman, they think they can have you for a beer. They treat us Slavic humans as subhuman" (Beata, 41 years).

Research confirms that East Europeans are often victims of different types of discrimination (Fox, Moroşanu & Szilassy, 2015: 734) and that discrimination of Eastern Europeans in Western European countries is nowadays less premised upon race and more upon class, culture, language and religion, in other words, cultural racism (Fox, Moroşanu & Szilassy, 2015: 731). As an example, Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou (2015: 643) describe the way Polish

female domestic workers in Berlin and "Polish plumbers" in France are discriminated. Although their "whiteness" and being European distinguishes them from non-white non-Europeans, they are still seen as inferior by West-European elites. Those elites deny racial discrimination, since East Europeans are the same "race", but a "categorization of Europe into a fully European core and not-yet-fully European Eastern Europe" is taking place (Kuus, 2004: 473).

Also in the UK, Polish migrants, as shown by Rzepnikowska (2019: 74) in the case of Polish migrant women, experience racism and xenophobia. Although they belong to the white race, and racism is often described as a problem of non-white ethnic minorities, they still experience being "othered" by the hosting majority by "the visible and audible markers of difference, such as Polish registration plates, Polish satellite dish or Polish language". Janta et al. (2011:1) also found that Polish workers in the UK hospitality sector experience discrimination. Interestingly, Eastern European migrants often deny being discriminated (Fox, Moroşanu & Szilassy, 2015: 742-743) as a strategy to claim a higher status in comparison to other minorities and by emphasising their status as Europeans. But according to research about discrimination against ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, Dutch people with a migration background experience more discrimination than Dutch people without a migration background. In fact, 60 percent of people from Central and Eastern Europe say they have experienced discrimination (Andriessen et al., 2020: 43). For example, people with a non-Dutch-sounding surname were less often invited for job interviews (Blommaert, Coenders & Van Tubergen, 2013: 971).

Thus, although there is a high tolerance towards homosexuality in the Netherlands, the respondents reported being discriminated because of the sexual orientation. However, no one reported being discriminated by Dutch people; all discrimination on sexual grounds was carried out by Polish co-migrants. Just being a woman meant being the target of discriminatory, sexist remarks. Additionally, being part of an ethnical minority can cause problems for Polish migrants in the Netherlands, although my respondents don't admit this easily. It seem also that Western homosexuals are enjoying more power, rights, wealth and resources than Eastern European or non-European migrants (Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou, 2015: 640). Gender and ethnical discrimination come to the fore especially during discussions about economic and working conditions, as will be discussed next.

5.3.2 Economic and working conditions

Research shows that Polish migrants in the Netherlands perceive more discrimination and a greater increase in discrimination over time than Polish migrants in Germany, the UK or Ireland (McGinnity & Gijsberts, 2016: 290; McGinnity & Gijsberts, 2018: 932). The authors suggest that "perceptions of ethnic competition, negative public debate and ensuing stereotypes about East European migrants are contributing to a more negative experience for Polish migrants in the Netherlands" (McGinnity & Gijsberts, 2018: 932).

As stated earlier, my respondents were not eager to share their experiences with ethnical discrimination, but this problem became obvious when we discussed the practicalities of their working and living conditions. Marta (26 years) admitted that she never thought about it, but:

> "Now that you ask; at my work all the better, managerial positions are given to Dutch men! Even Polish men who don't speak any languages get better jobs more easily. And all the drivers are male! I can also drive but no one ever asked me!"

Her friend Asia (36) added:

> "I would like to do a course to become a forklift operator; but they always take men…"

Here the intersections between gender and ethnicity become very obvious, but also the fact that their homosexuality doesn't play any role. In some way gender (being a man) and ethnicity (being Dutch) are linked to structures of power and domination. Even being only a man (without being Dutch) places a person higher in the hierarchy.

As Polish women my respondents experience less opportunities to get a better job. But still they appreciate the financial independence they enjoy here, which wouldn't be possible in Poland. This matches the study of Stella, Gawlewicz and Flynn (2016), where respondents were generally satisfied with their living standards. But the above citations illustrate not only the intersection between gender and ethnicity, but also intersection with socio-economical class. These two women work in relatively low-paid, low-skilled jobs; they also reported that they fear losing their jobs, and therefore agree to any working conditions: working long hours, paying high housing costs, having no free time and no motivation to learn the language. They are seen as "migrants" in contrast to "expats" (Bonjour & Chauvin, 2018: 3), who are considered better educated and highly skilled. The experiences of expats are different, as illustrated by one of my other respondents:

> "I work in an international company with people from around the world, but also many Dutch. I have an excellent salary and good living and working conditions. It is a highly inclusive surrounding, it doesn't matter that I am Polish or even lesbian. I even get the idea that in the eyes of my Western or Dutch colleagues I am even more "cool" because of me being Polish and lesbian. So I don't have any experience with discrimination or racism, I am just one of them" (Kasia, 31 years).

In her case, being Polish and lesbian and from a higher socio-economical class creates more opportunities. She is seen as a person who shares the values of the host society. Interestingly, this host society is represented as being middle class; as Bonjour and Duyvendak (2018: 894) say: "Native Dutch lower-class people are made invisible". And in this way some imaginary, homogeneous middle-class society arises. In such a society it is more difficult for a lower-class migrant to be seen as equal or as equally skilled, never mind their qualifications. One of my respondents recalls:

> "When I was looking for a job, I was mostly proposed jobs in "Polish" industries like cleaning or flowers. If I asked for an different job, they looked at me like: you will not get our good jobs, we keep them for ourselves, just stick to 'your people' jobs" (Ola, 29 years).

I seems that being a woman and an migrant narrows her job possibilities to industries which are mostly considered a good place for migrant women: cleaning and flower industry. So the intersection of gender and ethnicity limits her possibilities to get a different job that the one which is considered good enough for her group: Polish women. Additionally he existing Polish qualifications of many migrants are unrecognised and in this way they experience professional downgrading. They feel they have to start their professional life from scratch, without making use of their work experience in their country of origin (Fournier et al., 2018: 342). One of my respondents explains this in poignant terms:

> "In Poland I studied to be a midwife, but I have never learnt the Dutch language well, so I can't do my job here. So every day I get up and go planting flowers and somewhere I feel pity for myself. And then I think about going back; but I am not openly lesbian, my family doesn't know about my condition. And here at least I can have a girlfriend. So, I cry and stick to the flowers" (Agata, 46 years).

The respondents of Stella, Gawlewicz and Flynn (2016) also reported that, although they were happy with having a job and earning more than in the country of origin, they were not

always happy with the low-skilled, low-paid jobs they were able to find, as in this way they experienced a loss of social status, self-worth and de-skilling.

In the last few years, the position of Polish migrants in Western society seems to have changed. At first, they were seen as skilful EU migrants, but lately it seems they are more often portrayed as people who come to benefit from good social conditions or who "steal" jobs from locals (Lafleur & Mescoli, 2018: 493). This way of thinking has negative influences on the possibilities of Polish migrants. The report of Gijsberts et al. (2018: 123) shows that Polish migrants experience more discrimination and feel less at home in the Netherlands than a few years ago. The authors state that the negative image of Poland, caused by its recent anti-LGBTQ policies, may play a role in this.

5.3.3 Social life in the Netherlands

Migrants can experience feelings of not-belonging (Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, 2018: 33) as well as anxiety, depression and stress related to the migration process, as in the case of homosexual migrants in US (Alessi, 2010: 210). It can be difficult to create new social networks, also because the intersection between social class, ethnicity and sexuality can make it difficult to find new friends.

> "I do feel lonely; my family is in Poland. I have some, mainly Polish, colleagues, but I keep away from them as they have some comment about me being lesbian. I don't really speak English or Dutch, so I stick to Polish people. You can find me mostly online, in the lesbian groups; it's my social life. I am even afraid to go to lesbian bars, as I don't want Polish people to spot me there. So, I am here, behind the screen…" (Ina, 32 years)

Ina is not highly educated and she admits that foreign languages are difficult for her. In her case, not speaking Dutch and fear of exposure, so the combination of lower social class and sexual orientation, make it difficult to establish a social life. The Polish homosexual participants in the study of Stella, Gawlewicz and Flynn (2016) admitted that social isolation was a problem, due to lack of language skills and lack of shared cultural background. Support from friends and community is important for every migrant in becoming resilient to challenges caused by migration, but especially essential for homosexual migrants (Alessi, 2010: 210). Some of them can feel really lonely:

> "I don't know many people here. Some colleagues, but otherwise I am alone. It's not nice, but I just don't know where to go. I don't speak Dutch or English. And Polish people – I suppose I am afraid of the questions about my boyfriend et cetera. And often they want to go out and I am really short on money" (Beata, 41 years).

Beata, just as Ina, followed only secondary education; again, the combination of lower social class (lack of language skills and money) and fear of disclosure of her sexual orientation leads to loneliness. According to research, migrants in general feel more lonely than non-migrants due to financial difficulties (Visser & El Fakiri, 2016: 977), lower socioeconomic status and poorer health (Fokkema & Naderi, 2013: 289). Specifically working-age Polish migrants in the Netherlands are on average more lonely than Dutch citizens (Van den Broek & Grundy, 2017: 736).

Not all of the women I have spoken to felt lonely, but the contacts they have are often limited to Polish people.

> "I was trying to date Dutch women, but even though I speak Dutch, language is a barrier. When you try to be intimate, you don't want to think about how to say things. And secondly, I didn't have the same connection with them as I have with Polish women. We just weren't on the same wavelength" (Asia, 36 years).

Just as respondents of Stella, Gawlewicz and Flynn (2016), my respondents tended to stick to co-nationals, as a shared language and culture seem important in any social relationship. Additionally, many respondents in this study (Stella, Gawlewicz & Flynn, 2016) admitted that they had mainly homosexual friends, because this allowed them to be themselves. This seems to be true for some of my respondents too. Marta (26 years) explained:

> "I have only lesbian friends. I don't know how this happened, but it's relaxed. When we are together with the group, I feel free to kiss my girlfriend, I can be myself".

The only person who had very diverse group of friends was Kasia (31 years). Because of her international education and well-paid job, she had high socioeconomic status; she belongs to an expat community. She reported to choose her friends on the ground of shared interests and not only shared language or culture.

In some cases, nevertheless, experiencing isolation and negativity can change life in a positive way.

> "So I was unhappy, lonely and depressed. I had money, I had a good prospering company and still I felt so bad. And then I thought, it's impossible that I am the only one, so I went online I looked for a group for lesbian Polish women abroad. And I couldn't find it so…. I started one myself. And it turned out to be a real success" (Ola, 29 years)

Here we see someone who used her lesbian identity to create new possibilities. Instead of being lonely she looked for possibilities. It could be that in this case the stronger sexual identity was reinforced (or stimulated) by her good socio-economic situation, as Fournier et al. (2018: 342) suggest can be the case in some migrants. Ola is successful in her job, she is higher educated and her family knows about her being lesbian. It gives her probably the feeling of strength and independence necessary to live a more free life.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

In this study, I have tried to shed light on the way Polish lesbian women situated in the transnational space between Poland and the Netherlands experience their migration in terms of intersecting systems of oppressions and opportunities.

I used the intersectional approach, as well as the concepts of othering, transnationalism and sexual citizenship to understand how the life of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands is affected by the current political and religious discourse in Poland and by being part of a transnational family, and how this affects their evaluation of life at work and in social aspects.

The research findings show that gender, sexuality, ethnicity and socioeconomic status impact the lives of these women, usually in a negative way. Although they experience life in Dutch society as free from discrimination as lesbians, the other space - the transnational one - is not free from this form of discrimination. The homophobic discourse in Poland finds its way through borders and reaches them even in the Netherlands. It often manifests itself through Polish co-migrants who discriminate and 'other' them. In this transnational space they feel marginalised as women and lesbians and feel under pressure to fulfil the roles of 'proper' women by following the rules, which prescribe for example female clothing or what a family should look like (a married man and woman with children). For many of them, this means moving between multiple identities, which can cause stress. On the other hand, some respondents seem to be receptive to Polish homophobic discourse, as they 'other' Dutch homosexuals who join Pride Parades.

At the same time, pressure comes not only from co-migrants but also from their families in Poland, who often are not aware of that these women are lesbians or barely accept them. Their sexuality collides with the expectations that come with being a woman and earning one's rightful place in society. This means that, for Polish lesbians, living in a country that is tolerant towards sexual minorities doesn't translate into feeling free to be and act as a lesbian. Additionally, their position as migrants also adds to the feeling of being discriminated and marginalised, especially at work. There all the four identities intersect: being Polish, a migrant, lesbian and a woman, as well as having often lower socioeconomic status, adds up to cause feelings of being discriminated and having fewer career possibilities. Furthermore, being a Polish lesbian of a lower socioeconomic status often causes loneliness and a limited social life.

This process of intersecting identities, othering and the influence of transnational space and the concept of sexual citizenship are very complex and dynamic. First, various studies show that Polish migrants, despite being members of EU, experience discrimination and othering and that this can be linked to the idea of power relations and orientalism, where Central and Eastern European countries and their inhabitants are seen as backward. Secondly, the position of women and lesbians is quite vulnerable in Poland and this vulnerability seems to jump across borders and influence the quality of these women's lives also in the Netherlands. Finally, the culmination of all these problems comes when a lower socioeconomic status is added to this equation. Most of the Polish migrants in the Netherlands work in lower-paid jobs. Lack of financial resources and language skills make their social life poor and their career possibilities limited.

But despite these problems, some of them experience positivity in their lives and see positive aspects of intersecting identities. They use their position as Polish lesbian migrants to promote their business, for example. Even the negative discourse of the Polish government can have a positive influence, as the intersecting identity of ethnicity and gender (being a Polish woman) can cause a feeling of sisterhood with other Polish women in the Netherlands. And

even though some women have a lower socioeconomic status and lack of language skills, which can limit their social relations, the fact that they are migrants means that they are financially independent and have the possibility of having a lot of lesbian friends, which for many of them wouldn't be possible in Poland.

Overall, experiences of Polish migrant lesbians in the Netherlands alerts us to the fact that living in a free country doesn't mean that one is free from dominant discourses from abroad, and that intersecting identities can add to that vulnerability. These women's positionality as migrant lesbian women in the Netherlands is situated in an ambiguity between opportunities and oppression.

Appendices

Appendix 1

List of interview topics/ interview guide

Date:
Start time:
End Time:
Name:
Age:
Years in the Netherlands:
Educational level:

Introduction:

My name is Ewa Brand and I am currently doing my Master's in migration studies in The Hague. I want to interview you to understand how it is to be a Polish migrant woman in the Netherlands. I want to hear how you evaluate your life here and what positive and negative experiences you have here (explain more).

- ✓ Introduce myself and explain that I am Polish migrant myself
- ✓ Go through Informed consent form

Background information participant:

- Ask the participant to introduction herself

- ✓ Region in Poland
- ✓ Age/education/familiar situation
- ✓ Reason migration
- ✓ How long ago migrated

Life before migration:

- How was your life in Poland before migration

- ✓ School
- ✓ Work

- ✓ Social life
- ✓ Family
- ✓ Political climate
- ✓ Disclosure
- ✓ Experiences being woman
- ✓ And experiences being lesbian woman

Life after migration:

- Aspects in which the life is better in NL than in PL
- Tell me about you experiences here
  - ✓ Contact with family: disclosure/pressures/expectations
  - ✓ Contact with other migrants
  - ✓ Work/leisure/friends
  - ✓ Do you follow political situation in Poland?/ Does it affect your life? How?
  - ✓ I what way does it affect you?
- What are the challenges you face due to your identity?
  - ✓ As woman: with family contacts/work/political situation in Poland
  - ✓ As lesbian: with family contacts/work/political situation in Poland/Dutch society
  - ✓ As Polish: with family contacts/work/political situation in Poland/ Dutch society
  - ✓ Due to working conditions/education/language skills
- Inclusion in Polish diaspora: as Polish/lesbian/woman/working class/higher class
- Inclusion in Dutch society as Polish/lesbian/woman/working class/higher class
- Discrimination: different identities
- How do you cope with problems due to discrimination/marginalization?
- Is there any other information you may want to add?

NOTE:

- Ask for examples
- Ask: why/why not/could you explain/
- Use silences

Appendix 2

Detailed list of respondents

Note: all interviews took place via Skype or Messenger

No	Pseudonym	Age	Education level	Years in NL	Interview date
1	Agata	46	Higher education	5	5th July 2020
2	Marta	26	Secondary education	6	27th August 2020
3	Ola	29	Higher education	4	23th July 2020
4	Beata	41	Secondary education	2	2nd August 2020
5	Ina	32	Secondary education	11	25th August 2020
6	Asia	36	Secondary education	10	27th August 2020
7	Kasia	31	Higher education	3	4th September 2020

Appendix 3

Informed consent form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Note: Provided in Polish to participants

Purpose study	The purpose of this study is to explore how Polish lesbian women experience their migration to the Netherlands and what problems and opportunities they experience. I want further to explore: 1. How is the life of Polish lesbian women in the Netherlands affected by the current political and religious discourse in Poland? 2. How do these women experience being a part of a transnational family? 3. How do these women evaluate their life in the NL? The data will be used for the fulfilment of Master's in Development Studies degree.
Name interviewer	Ewa Brand
Affiliated University	Institute of Social Science, Erasmus Rotterdam University, The Hague, Netherlands
Procedure	o The interview will last between forty five minutes to two hours and will be conducted at a time that is convenient to the participant. o The participant must be at least 18 years old. o Participation is completely voluntary and the participant may express the desire to stop interview at any point during the research. o The participant may also choose to have audio data deleted at any point.
Confidentiality	o Your privacy will be respected and any information you provide will be treated with confidentiality. o Pseudonyms for the participants will be used and any detail which might reveal participant identity will be also anonymized o Recordings and hard copies of interviews will only be used for academic purposes and will be stored in a secure location
Audio recording	I give permission to audio record my interview ☐ yes ☐ no
Use data	I give permission to use the anonymized data for the purpose of this research ☐ yes ☐ no
Participant name	
Date	

References

Adam, B. D. (1998). Theorizing Homophobia. Sexualities, 1(4), 387–404. https://doi.org/10.1177/136346098001004001

Adu-Ampong, E. A., & Adams, E. A. (2020). "But You Are Also Ghanaian, You Should Know": Negotiating the Insider–Outsider Research Positionality in the Fieldwork Encounter. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *26*(6), 583-592.

Alessi, E. J. (2016). Resilience in sexual and gender minority forced migrants: A qualitative exploration. *Traumatology*, *22*(3), 203.

Amelina, A., & Lutz, H. (2019). *Gender and migration : transnational and intersectional prospects* (Ser. Routledge research in gender and society, 73). Routledge. https://doi-org.eur.idm.oclc.org/10.4324/9781351066303

Andriessen, I., Hoegen Dijkhof, J., van der Torre, A., van den Berg E., Pulles, I., Iedema, J., de Voogd-Hamelink, M. (2020) Ervaren discriminatie in Nederland II. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau. Retrieved on 28.08.2020 from https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2020/04/02/ervaren-discriminatie-in-nederland-ii

Anthias F. (2002). 'Where Do I Belong?' Narrating Collective Identity and Translocational Positionality. Ethnicities 2(4): 491–514.)

Associated Press, (August 6, 2020). *Polish LGBTQ people leaving as post-vote mood grows hostile.* Retrieved on 18-08-2020 from https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/polish-lgbtq-people-leaving-post-vote-mood-grows-hostile-n1236004

Bakić-Hayden, M. (1995). Nesting orientalisms: the case of former Yugoslavia. *Slavic review*, *54*(4), 917-931. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/2501399

Bastia, T. (2014). Intersectionality, migration and development. *Progress in Development Studies*, *14*(3), 237-248.

Bauböck, R., & Faist, T. (2010). *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods* (p. 360). Amsterdam University Press.

Beusekom, G., & Kuyper, L. (2018). LHBT-monitor 2018. *De leefsituatie van lesbische, homoseksuele, biseksuele en transgender personen in Nederland. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau*. Retrieved on 28.08.2020 from https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/monitors/2018/11/21/lhbt-monitor-2018

Binnie, J. (2014). Neoliberalism, class, gender and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer politics in Poland. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, *27*(2), 241-257.

Binnie, J., & Klesse, C. (2013). 'Like a bomb in the gasoline station': East–West migration and transnational activism around lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer politics in Poland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *39*(7), 1107-1124.

Blommaert, L., Coenders, M., & Van Tubergen, F. (2013). Discrimination of Arabic-named applicants in the Netherlands: An internetbased field experiment examining different phases in online recruitment procedures. Social forces, 92(3), 957-982. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sot124

Bonjour, S., & Chauvin, S. (2018). Social class, migration policy and migrant strategies: An introduction. International Migration, 56(4), 5-18.

Bonjour, S., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2018). The "migrant with poor prospects": racialized intersections of class and culture in Dutch civic integration debates. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 41(5), 882-900.

Botterill, K. (2015). "We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are": Questioning the "outsider" in Polish migration research. In *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 16, No. 2). Institute for Qualitative Research.

Brannen, J., Mooney, A., Wigfall, V., & Parutis, V. (2014). Fatherhood and transmission in the context of migration: An Irish and a Polish case. *International Migration*, *52*(1), 165-177. Retrieved on 22 March 2020 from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/imig.12067

Bryceson, D., & Vuorela, U. (Eds). (2002). *The transnational family: New European frontiers and global networks*. Oxford: Berg Press

CBOS (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej [Centre for Public Opinion Research]) 2019. Rodzina – jej znaczenie i rozumienie (Family – its signifcance and understanding). Retrieved on 18.08.2020 from https://cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2019/K_022_19.PDF

CBS (Het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek) 2020. Hoeveel mensen met een migratieachtergrond wonen in Nederland? Retrieved on 18.08.2020 from https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/dossier/dossier-asiel-migratie-en-integratie/hoeveel-mensen-met-een-migratieachtergrond-wonen-in-nederland-#:~:text=Van%20de%20totale%20Nederlandse%20bevolking,daarmee%20tot%20de%20tweede%20generatie

Christou, A., & King, R. (2010). Imagining 'home': diasporic landscapes of the Greek-German second generation. *Geoforum*, *41*(4), 638-646.

Crenshaw, K. (1990). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stan. L. Rev.*, *43*, 1241.

Datta, A. (2009). 'This is special humour': visual narratives of Polish masculinities in London's building sites.

Debnath, K. (2017). LGBT Identity: The Illustration of "Othering" in India. *Sexuality, Gender & Policy*, *1*(1), 89-100.

Dhoest, A. & Szulc, L. (2016) Navigating online selves: Social, cultural, and material contexts of social media use by diasporic gay men. Social Media + Society, 2:4, 1-10. Available at: https://journals.sagepub. com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305116672485

Dolińska, A. (2019). The Gender-Related Lifestyle Changes and Choices of Female White-Collar Migrants from Ukraine, Belarus and Russia in Poland. Central and Eastern European Migration Review, 8(2), 123-144.

Donaldson, C. D., Handren, L. M., & Lac, A. (2017). Applying multilevel modeling to understand individual and cross-cultural variations in attitudes toward homosexual people across 28 European countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *48*(1), 93-112.

Dutra Santo, A. F. (2020). No peace without rights: discrimination against LGBTQ persons as a barrier to the implementation of WPS commitments in Poland. Women, Peace and Security.

Euronews, (July 27, 2020). EU funding withheld from six Polish towns over 'LGBT-free' zones. Retrieved on 28-08-2020 from https://www.euronews.com/2020/07/29/eu-funding-withheld-from-six-polish-towns-over-lgbtq-free-zones

Foucault, M. (1998). The history of sexuality: The will to knowledge. London: Penguin)

Faist, T. (2000). Transnationalization in international migration: implications for the study of citizenship and culture. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *23*(2), 189-222.

Fialkowska, K. (2019). Negotiating masculinities: Polish male migrants in the UK–insights from an intersectional perspective. *NORMA*, *14*(2), 112-127.

Fitzgerald, R., Winstone, L., & Prestage, Y. (2014). Searching for evidence of acculturation: Attitudes toward homosexuality among migrants moving from Eastern to Western Europe. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *26*(3), 323-341.

Fokkema, T. and Naderi, R. (2013). Differences in late-life loneliness: A comparison between Turkish and native-born older adults in Germany. *European Journal of Ageing* 10(4): 289–300. doi:10.1007/s10433-013-0267-7.

Fournier, C., Hamelin Brabant, L., Dupéré, S., & Chamberland, L. (2018). Lesbian and gay immigrants' post-migration experiences: An integrative literature review. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, *16*(3), 331-350.

Fouron, G., & Schiller, N. G. (2001). All in the family: gender, transnational migration, and the nation-state. *Identities Global Studies in Culture and Power*, *7*(4), 539-582.

Fox, J. E., Moroşanu, L., & Szilassy, E. (2015). Denying discrimination: Status,'race', and the whitening of Britain's new Europeans. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *41*(5), 729-748.

Gawlewicz, A. (2015A). 'We inspire each other, subconsciously': the circulation of attitudes towards difference between Polish migrants in the UK and their significant others in the sending society. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *41*(13), 2215-2234.

Gawlewicz, A. (2015 B). Beyond'us' and'them': migrant encounters with difference and redefining the national. *Fennia*, *193*(2), 198-211.

Gawlewicz, A. (2015C). Production and Transnational Transfer of the Language of Difference: The Effects of Polish Migrants' Encounters with Superdiversity. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, *4*(2), 25-42.

Gawlewicz, A. (2016). Beyond openness and prejudice: The consequences of migrant encounters with difference. *Environment and Planning A*, *48*(2), 256-272.

Gijsberts, M. I. L., Andriessen, I., Nicolaas, J. M. M., & Huijnk, W. J. J. (2018). Bouwend aan een toekomst in Nederland: De leefsituatie van Poolse migranten die zich na 2004 hebben ingeschreven. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

Golebiowska, E. (2017). The links between gender role beliefs, conceptions of the family, attitudes toward Poland's membership in the European Union, religiosity, and polish support for gay and lesbian rights. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, *5*(4), 599-617. https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2016.1146151.

Golec de Zavala, A., Bierwiaczonek, K., Baran, T., Keenan, O., & Hase, A. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, authoritarianism, and rejection of sexual dissenters in Poland. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*.

Górska, P., Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., & Waszkiewicz, A. (2017). On old-fashioned versus modern homonegativity distinction: Evidence from Poland. *Journal of homosexuality*, *64*(2), 256-272.

Grabowska, I., & Engbersen, G. (2016). Social remittances and the impact of temporary migration on an EU sending country: The case of Poland. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, *5*(2), 99-117.

Grosfoguel, R., Oso, L., & Christou, A. (2015). 'Racism', intersectionality and migration studies: framing some theoretical reflections. *Identities*, *22*(6), 635-652.

Gruszczynska, A. (2006). Living La Vida Internet. Some Notes on the Cyberization of Polish LGBT Community. *BEYOND THE PINK CURTAIN: EVERYDAY LIFE OF LGBT PEOPLE IN EASTERN EUROPE, Roman Kuhar and Judit Takacs, eds., Peace Institute-Politike Symposion*.

GUS. (2018). Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach czasowej emigracji z Polski w latach 2004-2017. Retrieved on 25 March 2020 from https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/migracje-zagraniczne-ludnosci/informacja-o-rozmiarach-i-kierunkach-czasowej-emigracji-z-polski-w-latach-2004-2017,2,11.html

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). What is ethnography? In M. Hammersley & P. Atkinson (Eds) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (pp. 1-19). Taylor & Francis e-Library

Hunting, G. (2014). Intersectionality-informed Qualitative Research: A Primer. Vancouver: The Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Simon Fraser University.

ILGA Europe: Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe and Central Asia 2020. Brussels: ILGA-Europe. Retrieved

at 06 July 2020 from https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/Annual%20Review%202020.pdf

ILGA Europe (2020). Poland Anti-LGBTI hate timeline. Retrieved at 20 October 2020 from https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/Poland-Anti-LGBT-Timeline.pdf

Inglehart, R., & Baker, W. E. (2000). Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of traditional values. American Sociological Review, 65(1), 19–51. https://doi.org/10.2307/2657288.

Isański, J., Mleczko, A., & Eid, R. S. A. (2014). Polish Contemporary Migration: From Co-migrants to Project ME. *International Migration*, *52*(1), 4-21.

Izienicki, H. (2009). Not there: The Ostensible absence of same-sex desire in the polish immigrant community in Chicago. In *American Sociological Association Annual Meeting: San Francisco, CA* (Vol. 7).

Izienicki, H. (2020). When Does Sexuality Matter? Cross-cultural Analysis of Gay Identity. Sociological Perspectives, 0731121420950842.

Janta, H., Ladkin, A., Brown, L., & Lugosi, P. (2011). Employment experiences of Polish migrant workers in the UK hospitality sector. *Tourism Management*, *32*(5), 1006-1019

Jensen, S. Q. (2011). Othering, identity formation and agency. *Qualitative studies*, *2*(2), 63-78.

Kawecki, I., Kwatera, A., Majerek, B., & Trusz, S. (2012). The social and educational situation of circular migrants' children in Poland. *Agales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia Sociologica*, *4*(2), 147-161. Retrieved on 22 March 2020 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325023082_Migration_Etnicity_Identity

Kilkey, M., Plomien, A., & Perrons, D. (2014). Migrant men's fathering narratives, practices and projects in national and transnational spaces: recent Polish male migrants to London. *International Migration*, *52*(1), 178-191. Retrieved on 22 March 2020 from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/imig.12046

Kocemba, K., & Stambulski, M. (2020). Populizm a polityka praw człowieka. In K. Kocemba and M. Stambulski (Eds.) Studenckie Prace Prawnicze, Administratywistyczne i Ekonomiczne Tom 31 (pp. 135-156). Wroclaw, Poland: Wydawnictwo Uniwerytetu Wroclawskiego DOI: https://doi.org/10.19195/1733-5779.31.8 (153)

Koko, G., Monro, S., & Smith, K. (2018). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) forced migrants and asylum seekers: Multiple discriminations. In *Queer in Africa: LGBTQI Identities, Citizenship, and Activism*. Routledge.

Kosnick, K. (2016). Sexual citizenship and migration in a transnational perspective. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *39*(4), 687-703.

Kowalska, A. (2011). Polish queer lesbianism: Sexual identity without a lesbian community. *Journal of Lesbian studies*, *15*(3), 324-336.

Kuhar, R. (2009). (Intersectional) Discrimination as a Practice of Inequality. *Roma Rights Quarterly*, (2), 25-32.

Kuus, M. (2004) 'Europe's eastern expansion and the reinscription of otherness in East-Central Europe', Progress in Human Geography, 28(4): 472!89.

Kuyper, L. (2018) Opvattingen over seksuele en genderdiversiteit in Nederland en Europa. Een schets van een actueel beeld en de ontwikkelingen in de tijd. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau. Retrieved on 28.08.2020 from https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2018/05/17/opvattingen-over-seksuele-en-genderdiversiteit-in-nederland-en-europa

Lafleur, J. M., & Mescoli, E. (2018). Creating undocumented EU migrants through welfare: A conceptualization of undeserving and precarious citizenship. Sociology, 52(3), 480-496.

Lasio, D., Congiargiu, N., De Simone, S., & Serri, F. (2019). Gender fundamentalism and heteronormativity in the political discussion about lesbian and gay parenthood. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, *16*(4), 501-512.

Levitt, P. (1998). Social remittances: Migration driven local-level forms of cultural diffusion. *International migration review*, *32*(4), 926-948.

Levitt, P., & Schiller, N. G. (2004). Conceptualizing simultaneity: a transnational social field perspective on society 1. *International migration review*, *38*(3), 1002-1039.

Link, B. G., & Phelan, J. C. (2001). Conceptualizing stigma. *Annual review of Sociology*, *27*(1), 363-385. Retrieved at 06 July 2020 from https://www.montefiore.org/documents/Original-Article-Conceptulalizing-Stigma.pdf

Lister, R. (2002). Sexual citizenship. *Handbook of citizenship studies*, 191-208.

Loutzenheiser, L. W., & MacIntosh, L. B. (2004). Citizenships, sexualities, and education. *Theory into practice*, *43*(2), 151-158.

Lutz, H. (2015). Intersectionality as Method. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies, 2(1-2), 39-44.

Mai, N., & King, R. (2009). Love, sexuality and migration: mapping the issue (s). *Mobilities*, *4*(3), 295-307.

McDermott, E. (2006). Surviving in dangerous places: Lesbian identity performances in the workplace, social class and psychological health. *Feminism & Psychology*, *16*(2), 193-211.)

McGinnity, F., & Gijsberts, M. (2016). A threat in the air? Perceptions of group discrimination in the first years after migration: Comparing Polish Migrants in Germany, the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland. *Ethnicities*, *16*(2), 290-315.

McGinnity, F., & Gijsberts, M. (2018). The experience of discrimination among newly arrived Poles in Ireland and the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *41*(5), 919-937

Meyer, D. (2012). An intersectional analysis of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people's evaluations of anti-queer violence. *Gender & Society*, *26*(6), 849-873.

Mizielińska, J. (2020). "Is She Still a Family or Rather Some Stranger?"–Relative Strangers and Kinship Plasticity in Families of Choice in Poland. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 1-24.

Mole, R. C., Gerry, C. J., Parutis, V., & Burns, F. M. (2017). Migration and sexual resocialisation: the case of Central and East Europeans in London. *East European Politics and Societies*, *31*(1), 201-222.

Morrison, M. A., & Morrison, T. G. (2003). Development and validation of a scale measuring modern prejudice toward gay men and lesbian women. *Journal of homosexuality*, *43*(2), 15-37.

Mos, M. (2020). The anticipatory politics of homophobia: explaining constitutional bans on same-sex marriage in post-communist Europe. East European Politics, 1-22.

Moskal, M., & Tyrrell, N. (2016). Family migration decision-making, step-migration and separation: children's experiences in European migrant worker families. *Children's Geographies*, *14*(4), 453-467. Retrieved on 22 March 2020 from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14733285.2015.1116683?needAccess=true

Nasser-Eddin, N., & Abu-Assab, N. (2020). Decolonial Approaches to Refugee Migration: Nof Nasser-Eddin and Nour Abu-Assab in Conversation. *Migration and Society*, *3*(1), 190-202.

Nowicka, M. (2018). "I don't mean to sound racist but…" Transforming racism in transnational Europe. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *41*(5), 824-841.

Nijhoff, K. G. (2017). Polish Migrants in The Hague: Stories of Integration and Attachment. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, *18*(2), 623-640.

Nowicka, M., & Krzyżowski, Ł. (2017). The social distance of Poles to other minorities: a study of four cities in Germany and Britain. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *43*(3), 359-378.

Odrowąż-Coates, A. (2015). Gender crisis in Poland, Catholic ideology and the media. Sociology Mind, 5, 27–34. https://doi.org/10.4236/sm.2015.51004

O'Dwyer, C. (2010). From conditionality to persuasion? Europeanization and the rights of sexual minorities in post-accession Poland. *European Integration*, *32*(3), 229-247.

O'Dwyer, C. (2012). Does the EU help or hinder gay-rights movements in post-communist Europe? The case of Poland. East European Politics, 28(4), 332-352. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/ref/10.1080/21599165.2012.721094?scroll=top

O'Dwyer, C., & Schwartz, K. Z. (2010). Minority rights after EU enlargement: A comparison of antigay politics in Poland and Latvia. *Comparative European Politics*, *8*(2), 220-243.

Orlik, W., & Shevlin, M. (2016). Psychological Status and Well-Being of a large Sample of Polish Migrants in Ireland. *Irish journal of Psychology*.

Osipovic, D. (2010). *Social citizenship of Polish migrants in London: engagement and non-engagement with the British welfare state* (Doctoral dissertation, UCL (University College London)).

Owczarzak, J. (2009). Introduction: Postcolonial studies and postsocialism in Eastern Europe. *Focaal*, *2009*(53), 3-19.

Pawlak, M. (2015). Othering the Self: National Identity and Social Class in Mobile Lives. In *Rethinking ethnography in central Europe* (pp. 23-40). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Pettigrew, T. F. (2009). Secondary transfer effect of contact: Do intergroup contact effects spread to noncontacted outgroups? Social Psychology, 40(2), 55-65. DOI 10.1027/1864-9335.40.2.55

Pierik, C., & Felten, H. (2013). *Regenboog onder de loep: een verkenning van interventies voor LHBT-emancipatie*. Movisie.

Polish National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018-2021. (2018). https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Polish%20NAP%20WPS%202018-2021.pdf which focuses on increasing the participation of women in peace processes (https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Polish%20NAP%20WPS%202018-2021.pdf)

Pollard, N., Latorre, M., & Sriskandarajah, D. (2008). Floodgates or turnstiles. *Post-EU Enlargement Migration Flows to (and from) the UK.*

Pustułka, P., & Ślusarczyk, M. (2016). Work-life balance in the Polish migrant families settled in Norway. *Miscellanea Anthropologica et Sociologica*, *17*(3).

Pustułka, P., Struzik, J., & Ślusarczyk, M. (2015). Caught between breadwinning and emotional provisions: The case of Polish migrant fathers in Norway. *Studia Humanistyczne AGH*, *14*(2).

Richardson, D. (2000: 107). Constructing sexual citizenship: theorizing sexual rights. *Critical social policy*, *20*(1), 105-135.

Röder, A., & Lubbers, M. (2016). After migration: Acculturation of attitudes towards homosexuality among Polish immigrants in Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK. *Ethnicities*, *16*(2), 261-289.

Roggeband, C., & Krizsan, A. (2018). Reversing gender policy progress: patterns of backsliding in Central and Eastern European new democracies. European Journal of Politics and Gender, 1(3), 367-385.

Rzepnikowska, A. (2019). Racism and xenophobia experienced by Polish migrants in the UK before and after Brexit vote. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *45*(1), 61-77.

Ryan, L. (2011). Transnational relations: Family migration among recent Polish migrants in London. *International migration*, *49*(2), 80-103. Retrieved on 22 March 2020 from https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00618.x?casa_token=vP3N_ASwWAkAAAAA:VO9HXkByJP9wcu7SU1W25yde60kmqBURH3GFSDHefXhlztsxM1ZgqxnYpSkAJQGxZYWnHcZw-Aj0Bw

Siara, B. (2013). The construction of gender in the migration space: Polish women in the UK. GENDER-Zeitschrift für Geschlecht, Kultur und Gesellschaft, 5(1), 104-119.

Siara, B. (2016). UK Poles and the negotiation of gender and ethnic identity in cyberspace. In *Polish migration to the UK in the'new'European Union* (pp. 167-188). Routledge.

Smolen, A. L. (2013). Migration-related stress and risk of suicidal behaviour among 'new' Polish immigrants in the United Kingdom. Krakow: Młoda polska emigracja w UE jako przedmiot badań psychologicznych, socjologicznych i kulturowych EuroEmigranciPL.

Sólveigar-Guðmundsdóttir, L. (2018). Exclusionary moments: Queer desires and migrants' sense of (un) belonging. *Emotion, Space and Society*, *28*, 32-38.

Spivak, G. C. (1985). The Rani of Sirmur: An essay in reading the archives. History and theory, 24(3), 247-272.

Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, M. (2013). Labels of love: How migrants negotiate (or not) the culture of sexual identity. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, *1*(3), 321-345.

Stambolis-Ruhstorfer, M. (2017). The importance of sexuality for research on ethnicity and nationalism. *Studies in ethnicity and nationalism*, *17*(1), 44-56.

Staszewski, B. (2020, 6 August). Mój komentarz dla Associated Press [Facebook]. Retrieved at 11.09.2020 from https://www.facebook.com/bartstaszewski

Stella, F., Gawlewicz, A., & Flynn, M. (2016). Intimate migrations: Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender migrants in Scotland.)

Stella, F., Flynn, M., & Gawlewicz, A. (2018). Unpacking the Meanings of a 'Normal Life'Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Eastern European Migrants in Scotland. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, *17*(1), 55-72.

Swider, M., Winiewski, M. (2017). Sytuacja społeczna osób LGBTA w Polsce. Raport za lata 2015–2016. Warszawa: Kampania Przeciw Homofobii.

Szulc, L. (2019). Queer# PolesinUK: identity, migration and social media. Retrieved at 11.09.2020 from http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/151289/1/Szulc%20-%20Queer%20%23PolesinUK.pdf

Tankard, M. E., & Paluck, E. L. (2016). Norm perception as a vehicle for social change. Social Issues and Policy Review, 10(1), 181-211. https://spssi.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/sipr.12022?casa_token=Y7oFWihGPmkAAAAA:oaL9OkBmIuIyd5wYNFWtSnI0_1wwMycBRw-RUY-bqjcoosV8n557ct3uOyTdn2cAjLW3yKdWBN2wbCA

Ukleja, M. (2019). Niewidzialne matki–adaptacyjne strategie zabezpieczania przed stygmatyzacją członków rodzin tworzonych przez lesbijki.

Van den Broek, T., & Grundy, E. (2017). Loneliness among Polish migrants in the Netherlands: The impact of presence and location of partners and offspring. Demographic Research, 37, 727-742.

Visser, M.A. and El Fakiri, F. (2016). The prevalence and impact of risk factors for ethnic differences in loneliness. European Journal of Public Health 26(6): 977– 983. doi:10.1093/eurpub/ckw115.

White, A. (2010). Young people and migration from contemporary Poland. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *13*(5), 565-580. Retrieved on 22 March 2020 from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13676261.2010.487520?needAccess=true

Wimmer, A., & Glick Schiller, N. (2002). Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation–state building, migration and the social sciences. *Global networks*, *2*(4), 301-334.

World Economic Forum. (2018). The Global Gender Gap Report. Retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf. Accessed 4 Nov 2020

Wycisk, J. (2015). The minority stress of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents. Specificity of Polish context. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*.

Zapotoczny, P. (2020, 13 juni). Wybory prezydenckie 2020. Andrzej Duda na Opolszczyźnie: LGBT to nie ludzie, to ideologia. Tusk to największy kłamca III RP. Gazeta Wyborcza. https://opole.wyborcza.pl/opole/7,35086,26027897,wybory-prezydenckie-2020-andrzej-duda-na-opolszczyznie-trzy.html

Żuk, P., & Żuk, P. (2019). 'Murderers of the unborn'and 'sexual degenerates': analysis of the 'anti-gender'discourse of the Catholic Church and the nationalist right in Poland. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1-23. doi/full/10.1080/17405904.2019.1676808