

Brexit and Polonia

Challenges facing the Polish
Community during the process of
Britain leaving the European Union

Edited by Michael Fleming



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during the process of Britain leaving the European Union**

Edited by
Michael Fleming
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Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
Notes on Contributors / Speakers at the 2017 Conference	ix
Introduction	1
<i>Michael Fleming</i>	
Part 1: The socio-cultural contours of Brexit	25
The fundamental factors behind the Brexit vote	27
<i>Sascha O. Becker, Thiemann Fetzer and Dennis Novy</i>	
Migration in EU referendum campaign ephemera	35
<i>Alexandra Bulat</i>	
The origins of the Polish Diaspora in the UK after the Second World War: Poles in the UK	45
<i>Agata Błaszczyk</i>	
Part 2: Brexit in relation to Britain's Polish community	61
Experiences of Polish-born adolescents in Britain during the run-up to Brexit	63
<i>Sara Young</i>	
Should we stay or should we go? Poles in the UK during Brexit	83
<i>Grażyna Czubińska, Magdalena Łużniak-Piecha, Agnieszka Golińska and Justyna Kulczyk</i>	
Brexit Mobilities: Anticipating a new Polish mobility regime in the UK	105
<i>Kathy Burrell</i>	

Part 3: Brexit as seen by (representatives of) the Polish community in the UK	119
EU citizens' rights – two realities <i>Wiktor Moszczyński</i>	121
Brexit concerns as seen by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain and how they can be addressed <i>Włodzimierz Mier-Jędrzejowicz</i>	130
The impact of Brexit on inclusion and integration of Poles in the UK <i>Barbara Drozdowicz</i>	134
Implications of Brexit for Polish business in the United Kingdom and abroad <i>Katarzyna Bogusławska</i>	139
Brexit and Polish children in the UK <i>Adriana Górką</i>	143
Part 4: A view from parliament	145
European Citizens <i>Sally Hamwee</i>	147
Appendix: Conference Programme (16 December 2017)	150
Index	152

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Magdalena Lužniak-Piecha holds a PhD in psychology and specialises in social and organisational psychology. Her research is focused on Organisational Performance and Diversity Management. Her current research includes cross cultural studies on psychopathic

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Włodzimierz Mier-Jędrzejowicz was born in London to Polish parents who felt unable to return to Poland after World War II. He was educated in English schools and by Polish youth organisations. He studied at Imperial College, London, where he obtained a PhD in Physics. He is active in numerous Polish organisations, and is a former Chairman of the Federation of Poles in Great Britain, and is currently its Vice-Chairman.

Wiktor Moszczyński is a Polish-born campaigner, columnist, a former City trader, and is now employed by the London Chamber of Commerce. He was born in London in 1946 of Polish political refugees. He holds a BA in International Relations (Sussex). Between 1979 and 1980, he served as a councillor in Ipswich. From 1982 to 1983 he was the Chair of the Polish Solidarity Campaign; in 1983 he was the Labour Parliamentary candidate in Bury St Edmunds. In 1984 he was Labour Euro-Parliamentary candidate in Suffolk; from 1986-1990 he served as an Ealing Borough Councillor and from 1990-1992 he was Chair, North Circular Road (Ealing) Action Group. From 1990-1993 he was the vice-Chairman, Federation of Poles in Great Britain. He was the editor of the 'Orzeł Biały' monthly from 1994-2001. From 2004-2008 he was the spokesman of the Federation of Poles in Great Britain who successfully challenged the anti-Polish campaign in the 'Daily Mail'. Since 2012 he has been the Chairman of the Friends of Polish Veterans Association and he is also currently Senior Adviser to the 3million group. He is the author of 'Hello, I'm Your Polish Neighbour' and 'Polak Londynczyk'. He was awarded the Commander Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland in 2014. Since 1972 Wiktor has been married to Albina Drabik, with one son.

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Andy Slaughter is a British Labour Party politician and has been the Member of Parliament for Hammersmith since 2010. He had previously been MP for Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush from 2005 to 2010 and before that, Leader of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Council. He is a former Shadow Minister for Housing and Shadow Minister for London, and has served on the Labour Party's frontbench.

Sara Young is a PhD candidate at UCL Institute of Education, University College London. Sara's doctoral research examines identity negotiation by Polish adolescent migrants in the UK, focusing on Polish teenagers currently attending mainstream state secondary schools. While much work on language and identity has been conducted in urban areas, Sara is interested in the experiences of adolescent Poles in more isolated communities. Her research explores how narrative may be used as a means to construct identity, both for the individual and for a country. Sara is also investigating the role played by language and a country's literature in formulating a national identity, with particular reference to the UK and Poland.

Introduction

Michael Fleming

This book brings together papers that were presented at a conference held at The Polish University Abroad, London on 16 December 2017. That conference sought to explore the ways in which the British decision to leave the European Union affects European Union nationals and the Polish community in particular in the United Kingdom. The conference brought together new and established scholars, representatives of the Polish community, representatives of non-government organisations and politicians in order to share perspectives and experiences, and to draw wider public attention to the challenges that Brexit poses for EU nationals.

In the week prior to the conference, the British government, after further conversations with the Democratic Unionist Party, was able to secure the agreement of the European Union to proceed to the second phase of talks. A loose agreement on key issues such as the border with Ireland, citizens' rights and a financial settlement was deemed by the European Union sufficient to allow negotiations to move to the next stage. However, a final and binding agreement on these issues has yet to be reached and, as a number of chapters in this book highlight, defending the rights of European Union citizens in the United Kingdom remains a pressing concern.

At the same time that the British government achieved its limited objective of moving the negotiations forward, the High Court in London ruled that the Home Office's practice of seeking to deport homeless European Union nationals was unlawful, and found that the policy was discriminatory.¹ This practice, part of the 'hostile environment' policy instituted by the then Home Secretary, now Prime Minister, Theresa May, to bear down on illegal immigration, has expanded to include those legally entitled to be in the United Kingdom, but who may not have the capital – human, financial, social – to satisfy Home Office defined norms, or to defend themselves.² As Baroness

¹ Diane Taylor (2017) 'Home Office policy to deport rough sleepers ruled unlawful' in *The Guardian*, 14 December 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/dec/14/home-office-policy-deport-eu-rough-sleepers-ruled-unlawful>

² David Jones (2017) 'Homeless EU migrants have already borne the brunt of Brexit Britain' in *The Guardian*, 20 December 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2017/dec/20/brexit-bonfire-legal-protection-homeless-eu-migrants>

Sally Hamwee (this volume) points out, ‘It is one thing to seek to establish a controlled immigration system, but quite another to set up a system which is widely perceived as xenophobic’. In the year ending June 2017, 5031 EU citizens had been deported – a figure 20% higher than the previous year.³

While most European Union nationals in the United Kingdom do not fear summary deportation, there is a growing sense of unease regarding their post-Brexit status. Practitioners working with East European EU nationals, for example, highlight how immigration rules (e.g. related to residency status), limited access to legal advice on immigration issues and a wariness of the Home Office are having an adverse impact on their clients. Civil issues such as having received a traffic fine have been cited as reasons by some EU nationals, resident in the United Kingdom, for not seeking to formalise their status (as permanent resident / settled). These kinds of fears, as Drozdowicz (this volume) highlights, are likely to result in significant harms in a post-Brexit context, including encouraging people to go ‘underground’, and thereby expose themselves to super-exploitation.

This book aims to give readers a sense of the challenges facing EU nationals and Poles in particular in Brexit Britain.⁴ Poles currently constitute the largest group of EU nationals in Britain.⁵ The book has three main sections which broadly follow the structure of the December 2017 conference. First, contextual papers offer a framework for examining the impact of Brexit on EU nationals. Second, analyses of

³Adrienne Yong (2017) *When Britain can deport EU citizens – according to the law*. Available at: <https://www.city.ac.uk/news/2017/november/when-britain-can-deport-eu-citizens-according-to-the-law>

⁴ In 2015 Poland became the most common non-UK country of birth for people living in Britain. Office of National Statistics ‘Population of the UK by Country of Birth and Nationality: 2015’ (Released August 2016). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/ukpopulationbycountryofbirthandnationality/august2016#1-in-8-of-the-uk-population-was-born-abroad-and-1-in-12-has-non-british-nationality>

⁵ Data released by the Office of National Statistics in November 2017 indicated that there were one million Poles resident in the United Kingdom. Office of National Statistics ‘Table D: Population resident in the United Kingdom, excluding some residents in communal establishments, by individual nationality (L to Z)’ (Released November 2017). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationalityunderlyingdatasheets>

selected issues which impact on, or will impact on, Poles in the United Kingdom are provided. Third, the views of Poles representing a range of organisations are presented. The volume closes with a short essay on Brexit and EU citizens by Baroness Sally Hamwee, a Liberal Democrat peer and spokesperson on Home Affairs.

In the first section Sascha Becker, Thiemo Fetzer and Dennis Novy provide an analysis of who voted for Brexit on 23 June 2016. These scholars highlight the significance of economic experience (marginalisation) and education and, in his talk on 16 December, Dennis Novy reminded us that even in areas generally understood as Remain strongholds, such as London, there were concentrations of Leave voters.⁶ Alexandra Bulat extends our understanding of the referendum campaign through her insightful analysis of ephemera such as leaflets that were distributed during the referendum campaign.⁷

⁶ There is a growing literature on the characteristics of those who voted for Brexit. Recently, Liberini et al. have argued that unhappy feelings contributed to Brexit, particularly feelings about one's financial situation. See Federica Liberini, Andrew J. Oswald, Eugenio Proto and Michela Redoano (2017) 'Was Brexit Caused by the Unhappy and the Old?' *Working Paper No.342*, Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy, Department of Economics, University of Warwick. Available at: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/research/centres/cage/manage/publications/342-2017_oswald_proto_redoano.pdf. Also see: Harold Clarke, Matthew Goodwin, & Paul Whiteley (2017) 'Why Britain voted for Brexit: An individual level analysis of the 2016 referendum vote'. *Parliamentary Affairs* 70: 439-464. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/pa/article/70/3/439/3109029>; Danny Dorling (2016) 'Brexit: The decision of a divided country'. *British Medical Journal* 354: No 3697; Matthew Goodwin & Oliver Heath (2016) *Brexit vote explained: poverty, low skills, and lack of opportunities. Report*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/brexit-vote-explained-poverty-low-skills-and-lack-opportunities>; Duncan Shaw, Chris Smith and Judy Scully (2017) 'Why did Brexit happen? Using causal mapping to analyse secondary, longitudinal data'. *European Journal of Operational Research* 263: 1019-1032. Mike Savage and Niall Cunningham use the Great British Class Survey to explain the Brexit vote. Using this data, they argue that 'exclusive social capital is the single best predictor of the "remain" vote'. See: Mike Savage and Niall Cunningham (2016) 'Why Inequality Matters: The Lessons of Brexit' in *Items: Insights from the Social Sciences* 20 September 2016. Available at: <http://items.ssrc.org/why-inequality-matters-the-lessons-of-brexit/>

⁷ For an analysis of all articles published about the EU referendum by major UK national news organisations during the referendum campaign, see Martin Moore and Gordon Ramsay (2017) *UK media coverage of the 2016 EU Referendum campaign*, Centre for the Study of Media, Communication and Power, Policy Institute, King's College, London. Available at: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/CMCP/UK-media-coverage-of-the-2016-EU-Referendum-campaign.pdf>

Agata Błaszczyk's contribution provides a timely reminder that migration from East Central Europe to Britain did not start in 2004. Błaszczyk discusses how significant numbers of Poles who had fought for the Allied cause in the Second World War and were unable to return to Poland in the 1940s due to the communist takeover, or because their homes were now in the Soviet Union following the post-war territorial reconfiguration, settled in a wide range of places in the United Kingdom. Much of this history has not entered the British national consciousness. Retrieving this history, and situating it within the British post-war story, is important as it undermines the nativist xenophobic narrative and highlights the long-term Polish contribution to British society, culture and economy.

In the second section of the book Sara Young provides a case study on experiences of Polish adolescents who attend British schools, focusing on the period just prior to the EU referendum. Young shows how young Poles try to make sense of Brexit, as well as their own identities, in a socio-cultural context in which negative discourses about migrants circulate. Young persuasively argues that the voice of young people needs to be heard in discussions on Brexit. The following chapter by Grażyna Czubińska, Magdalena Łużniak-Piecha, Agnieszka Golińska and Justyna Kulczyk reports on a survey conducted between March and June 2017 among Poles resident in the United Kingdom. The authors, working in different fields of psychology, make use of the Relative Acculturation Extended Model to frame Brexit as the expression of an acculturation crisis. Czubińska et al. note that groups mutually influence each other and that individuals may pursue different acculturation strategies in different spheres of life. Their analysis sheds light on the concerns that Poles in Britain have about Brexit, including whether to stay in the United Kingdom. The chapter also discusses Poles' expectations of the British government and the Polish government. Czubińska et al. demonstrate that worries about the impact of Brexit are unevenly distributed within the Polish community in Britain. Women and those without tertiary-level education are generally more uneasy about the broad effects of Brexit on their lives. This may suggest that targeted interventions to mitigate the stresses that Brexit is causing members of the Polish community could be particularly helpful.

Kathy Burrell shifts the chronological frame and reflects on what Brexit may mean for mobilities in the future. Much of the infrastructure

of mobility – regional airports, ports, cheap tickets – is taken for granted. The arrangements that underpin this infrastructure are European in nature, including the European Aviation Safety Agency and the European Common Aviation Area – which allows any member state airline to provide domestic flights in another EU country. Exiting the ECAA, for example, may reconfigure this arrangement, with significant impact on the mobilities of EU nationals including Poles. It may no longer be so easy to travel from a regional airport in Poland to a regional airport in the United Kingdom. Burrell argues that ‘EU migrants, post Brexit, are likely to be regularly reminded, in a variety of explicit and implicit ways, that as they enter the UK they are indeed simultaneously entering this ‘hostile environment’’.

In the third section of the volume the views of Poles representing a range of organisations are presented. Wiktor Moszczyński, campaigner and adviser to the 3million group, provides an important overview of the Brexit process, and highlights some of the harms that have already impacted on EU nationals, and Poles in particular. These include the rise in hate crimes, suicides in deportation centres, the manner in which some EU nationals have been incarcerated and deported, the hostility faced by East Europeans when engaging with civic institutions such as job centres, government offices and health trusts. In these places, Moszczyński notes that ‘Poles have been told to consider returning to their own country’. Moszczyński points out that the Home Office has promised to change its culture, a recognition by the Home Office that there is a problem, but as yet there is little sign of progress. Moszczyński also navigates some of the critically important issues regarding residency status (permanent resident / settled) and suggests some steps that should be taken to ensure that the rights of EU nationals in Britain are secured. Given the ongoing problems in this area and the possibility that aspects of a withdrawal agreement could be revoked by a future, hostile government, Moszczyński suggests that it would be wise to consider a role for a European institution to monitor how Britain treats EU citizens post-Brexit.

Włodzimierz Mier-Jędrzejowicz from the Federation of Poles in Great Britain notes that there were diverse opinions within the Polish community regarding Brexit. Consequently, the Federation simply encouraged those Poles entitled to participate in the referendum to do so. Mier-Jędrzejowicz notes the attacks on Poles and Polish

organisations following the referendum, and sketches some of the actions that central and local government can take to reassure EU citizens in Britain.

Barbara Drozdowicz, from the East European Resource Centre, an organisation that provides rights-based advice to East Europeans in Britain, draws attention to the problems of immigration law, to issues of access to appropriate advice and to the difficulties some sections of the Polish community will face in filling in online forms without appropriate assistance. Katarzyna Bogusławska, a partner at Carter Lemon Camerons LLP, points to the lack of clarity of the current situation and its implication for Polish business operating in or trading with the United Kingdom. There remains concern about possible increased friction at the borders and imposition of different regulations which may undermine some firms' operational profitability. Adriana Górká briefly notes the disruption that Brexit may cause Polish families in Britain and how the decisions that these families make now may impact on their children.

In the final section of the volume, Baroness Sally Hamwee highlights numerous issues of concern. These include problems with accuracy in the Home Office, complicated immigration rules and the inadequacy of settled status in relation to the 'aggregation of pensions, healthcare or benefits from EU countries'. Hamwee rightly notes that 'many families in our global world are international, [and this is] not a fact that our government seems to acknowledge'.

Over forty years of EU membership has not only embedded European law into British law, integrated production processes at the European level and so on, but has, for many Europeans, including Britons, helped to further internationalise their families, friendship networks and geographies of obligation. One response to Brexit taken by some Britons has been to apply for citizenship in another EU country.⁸ Similarly, applications for British citizenship from EU nationals in Britain have risen since the Brexit vote.⁹ In short, many individuals who are able to, have been taking action to preserve their rights within the EU and Britain. The lives of grandparents have been

⁸ Peter Walker (2017) 'Number of Britons seeking Irish passports rises by two-thirds' in *The Guardian*, 15 April 2017. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/apr/15/number-of-britons-seeking-irish-passports-rises-by-two-thirds>

⁹ BBC News 'EU applications for UK citizenship up 80% since Brexit', *BBC*, 25 August 2017. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41053684>

rediscovered and, for some, painful pasts have been engaged with in new ways.¹⁰ But the option to gain new/dual citizenship is not available to everyone and this inequality may have an impact on post-Brexit politics in Britain, as well as the opportunities which individuals across Europe will have access to.

Many of the contributors to this volume express concern about how Brexit is proceeding and the post-Brexit future. Significant harms to individuals and communities have already been recorded and these cannot be ignored or ‘rationalised’ as collateral damage as Britain pivots to a new and, as leading Brexiteers seem to argue, ‘glorious’ future. Rather, these harms form a key part of the Brexit project – the (re)configuration of inclusion/exclusion in Britain. The remaining parts of this short introduction offer some reflections on the current juncture, highlighting the problem of referenda in the United Kingdom, the guiding of social anger and the ways in which the negative synergy between the state, society and dominant discourses during Brexit may be anticipatory of a less liberal post-Brexit future.

Referenda in the United Kingdom

The referendum of 23 June 2016 on Britain’s membership of the European Union resulted in a victory for the Leave campaign. 51.9% of the 72.2% of the electorate who turned out to participate in the referendum favoured leaving the European Union. This result was generally unexpected and, as subsequent months demonstrated, unprepared for. Few images capture the general shock of the result better than those from the subdued press conference of the victorious Leave campaigners, Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, on Friday 24 June. That same day, Prime Minister David Cameron resigned. Cameron had agreed to the EU referendum, at least in part, as a method to quell anti-Europe sentiment in the Conservative party and to see off any potential threat from the right posed by the United Kingdom Independence Party. He misjudged the mood in parts of the country, the

¹⁰ Kate Connolly (2016) ‘Descendants of Jewish refugees seek German citizenship after Brexit vote’ in *The Guardian*, 30 October 2016, Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/30/uk-descendants-of-jewish-refugees-seek-german-citizenship-after-brexit-vote>

vigour of the Leave campaign and their allies in the press and elsewhere, and the volatility of referenda.¹¹

The history of referenda in the United Kingdom is short. ‘Contracting out’ decision-making to the general public from parliament has not, historically, found much favour. There have only been three nationwide referenda – in 1975 on membership of the European Community, in 2011 on alternative voting, and in 2016 on membership of the European Union. Constitutionally, Britain is a representative democracy. Parliament is sovereign. Referenda are advisory rather than legally binding, though ignoring the results of a referendum may be politically untenable, at least for a time. Referenda simplify multifaceted issues and frequently internally divide political parties. In a first-past-the-post electoral system, divided parties face severe sanctions at the ballot box. Referenda may also engender significant swings in public opinion, destabilising the political landscape.¹²

In the first national referendum (1975) the electorate was asked the question ‘Do you think that the United Kingdom should stay in the European Community (the Common Market)?’ 67% of those who turned out (64% of the electorate) chose to remain in the European Community which Britain had joined on 1 January 1973. The results of the 1975 referendum were accepted on the basis of a simple majority. There were no provisos regarding turnout or an enhanced margin of victory. This practice was repeated in the EU Referendum of June 2016, despite the significant difference in context – in 1975, the British people were voting on membership of a community of which they had been a part for a year and half; by 2016 43 years of embedded legislation and co-operation were at stake. In short, disentangling from the European Community in 1975 and from the European Union in 2016 were very different prospects.

¹¹ For a discussion of referenda, see Donatella Della Porta et al. (2017) *Social Movements and Referendums from Below: Direct Democracy in the Neoliberal Crisis*, Bristol: Policy Press. Also see Matt Qvortrup (2005) *A comparative study of referendums: Government by the people*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

¹² In 1973, the first referendum in the entire United Kingdom took place in Northern Ireland to decide whether it should stay within the United Kingdom. Referenda on devolution occurred in Wales and Scotland in 1979. Since the mid 1990s several referenda have taken place in the constituent parts of the United Kingdom, as well as referenda at the local level.

Parliamentarians seem to have accepted the 1975 referendum as a model for the 2016 referendum, but during the 2016 referendum campaign the legitimacy of a narrow victory was questioned. UKIP leader Nigel Farage told the *Daily Mirror* on 16 May 2016 that if the Remain side won narrowly, he would fight for a second referendum. Farage argued that ‘in a 52-48 referendum this would be unfinished business by a long way’.¹³ If the Remain side were to win Farage would only accept the result if they were to secure two-thirds of the vote. Farage may have thought that a marginal result would not carry legitimacy to settle the issue of Britain’s membership of the European Union, regardless of the majority of those citizens who cast their vote in the referendum, or he was simply preparing to continue his struggle in the event of a narrow defeat.

The balance of voters swung to the Leave side in June 2016 and Farage may have initially regretted his earlier comments. For a career Brexiteer like Farage, if the Remain side won, it had to be by a super majority. Since then, Farage, in January 2018, has spoken in favour of a second referendum in order to settle the issue for a generation.¹⁴ Although Farage thinks such a second referendum would produce an enhanced majority for the Leave side, in offering qualified support for a second referendum Farage, at least implicitly, recognises that the basis (the narrow referendum victory) for the Brexit project is problematic.

Putting Farage’s political manoeuvrings to one side, questioning the technical framework of referenda is actually useful. For instance, scrutiny can expose false equivalents – for example, between 1975 and 2016, and encourage reflection not only on the benefits and harms of the potential outcomes of a referendum, but also on the means of achieving those outcomes.¹⁵ The demand for a super majority to enact

¹³ Kevin Maguire (2016) ‘Nigel Farage wants a second referendum if Remain campaign scrapes a narrow victory’ in *The Daily Mirror*, 16 May 2016. Available at: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/nigel-farage-wants-second-referendum-7985017>

¹⁴ Jack Maidment (2018) ‘Nigel Farage suggests UK may need second Brexit referendum to settle question of EU membership ‘for a generation’’ in *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 January 2018, Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2018/01/11/nigel-farage-suggests-uk-may-need-second-brexit-referendum-settle/>

¹⁵ Former Prime Minister John Major has argued that ‘tolerance was missing from the EU Referendum Campaign, when honest and thoughtful political debate was abandoned in favour of exaggeration, half-truths and untruths. No-one seemed ashamed or embarrassed by this. Indeed, some revelled in it, which suggests that mendacity is acceptable if it panders to a popular prejudice. Then, it is sanctioned by many who know it to be untrue, and welcomed by others whose prejudices are supported by it. And, if delivered with wit

radical change, for instance, has the benefit of enhancing the legitimacy of the result and mitigating the instability concomitant to a close result. The British political class did not have to look far for a British alternative to a simple majority in referenda.

The legislation that facilitated the 1979 Scottish Devolution Referendum (The Scotland Act, 1978) required the pro-devolutionists to gain the support of 40% of the electorate. The referendum was a consequence, in part, of James Callaghan's Labour Government dependence on smaller parties in parliament. Turnout was 64%. 51.62% of those participating voted for a devolved deliberative assembly, but this constituted only 32.9% of the registered electorate. The 40% requirement allowed citizens who were content with the constitutional status quo and those who were passive or apolitical to remain at home, whereas devolutionists had to work hard to get out the vote. In short, political change required citizens to do more. This bias required devolutionists to clearly articulate their arguments and to persuade their co-citizens to go to the polling stations. They failed to do this sufficiently well and constitutional continuity was maintained.¹⁶ Highlighting the proportion of the total registered electorate who voted for change informed the public of the level of active support for devolution. It also indicated the proportion of the electorate who, through their active or passive actions, acquiesced with the status quo.

The simplification of complex issues into an often oversimplified yes/no question is a technical requirement of referenda to get a result which, in theory, can be responded to by the political class through subsequent action.¹⁷ Simplification concomitant to referenda may lead

and panache, it may even be believed. Some of the media reported what was said – even when they must have known it to be improbable (at best) or untrue (at worst). In this way, the Referendum showcased a deterioration in both the conduct and reporting of our politics.' See John Major (2017) 'Responsibilities of Democracy'. Speech given at Westminster Abbey, 6 November 2017. Available at: <http://www.ukpol.co.uk/sir-john-major-2017-speech-on-the-responsibilities-of-democracy/>.

¹⁶ The political forces which, in part, brought about the 1979 referendum turned against the Labour Government. Following the failure of the pro-devolution campaign, the Scottish Nationalist Party tabled a vote of no confidence in the Labour Government, resulting in a general election being called. The geography of the neo-liberal revolution launched by Margaret Thatcher is reflected to some extent in the geography of the 2016 EU referendum results.

¹⁷ In practice, responding to a result which seeks to change the status quo may prove somewhat more difficult if the form of the ultimate objective is unknown, not clear or contested.

to politicians and sections of the media adopting particularly reductionist and/or emotive strategies to persuade the electorate to vote this way or that, especially if only a simple majority of voters is required. In the 2016 campaign, the attention given by some of the press and parts of the Leave campaign to the alleged threats of immigration would be one such example. In addition, it has long been known that voters may swing one way or another due to issues not directly related to the referendum issue.¹⁸

A higher threshold for change may have advantages, such as potentially limiting the impact, and perhaps even the articulation, of reductive and emotive arguments, on the final, accepted result of a referendum. Such a higher threshold may at the same time provide added legitimacy to the result. Given that only 37.4% of the electorate voted for Leave in the 2016 EU Referendum, the momentous decision to exit the European Union can only be said to be the will of British people on the perceived technical grounds of the referendum itself – that is, on the simple majority of those who bothered to turn up at the polling booths. The majority of the electorate – those passively accepting of the status quo, the disengaged and those who voted remain, face uncalled-for change.

Unlike other changes which may also be uncalled-for by the majority of the electorate, the opportunity to reverse a referendum decision is, in practice, somewhat more difficult than electing a new government at the next general election. This perhaps explains, in part, the strident and repeated defence of the ‘will of the people’ by Brexiteers, but it would be more accurate to state ‘the will of *some* people’ or the ‘will of a minority of the electorate’.¹⁹

¹⁸ Della Porta et al. (2017: 16).

¹⁹ *The Times* journalist David Aaronovitch has recently argued, drawing on calculations by the pollster Peter Kellner, that the Brexit ‘majority’ (i.e. the simple majority) could be reduced to zero ‘by that most natural of wastages’ – people dying (of old age) by 2020. If one accepts John Major’s contention that ‘democratic government must govern for the future as well as the present’, then a recognition that the Brexit generation may be dying out could provide space for greater dialogue between Remainers and Brexiteers, encourage critical reflection on the legitimacy of exiting the European Union on the basis of a narrow, simple majority, and provoke a desire to deal with the wider underlying issues which encouraged people from a range of demographic cohorts to vote for Brexit. See David Aaronovitch ‘The Brexit generation is dying out’, *Viewsnight*, BBC 2, 4 January 2018, Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-42574540/viewsnight-the-brexit-generation-is-dying-out>. Also see Major, *ibid*.

The rules of referenda often determine the final accepted result. It is odd that parliamentarians did not choose to explicitly specify and underline how the result of the 2016 referendum was to be interpreted. The 2011 Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act, for example, included a clause relating to the acceptability of a simple majority.²⁰ The 2011 Act, an outcome of the coalition agreement between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, was framed to enhance the possibility of electoral reform. An unintended consequence of that Act seems to have been to foster uncritical acceptance by parliamentarians of the legitimacy of simple majorities in referenda. Together with the precedent of the 1975 referendum, the principle of a simple majority, simply became ‘common-sense’ for many and was not subjected to appropriate scrutiny.²¹ It is worth noting that, had the rules of the 1979 Scottish Devolution Referendum been in force (or seen to be in force), the Remain side would have won in 2016. The first victory for the Brexiteers (beyond securing an EU referendum) was not in June 2016, but earlier, with parliamentarians’ failure to effectively challenge simple majorities in referenda and with the passing of the 2015 European Union Referendum Act which did not include specific clauses relating to a supermajority.

It is also worth noting that the holding of the devolution, voting system and EU referenda was the result of specific political challenges faced by the party governing at the time, rather than the expression of a principled desire to involve the electorate directly in decision-making. In 1979, the referendum was held to help maintain the Labour government; in 2011, the referendum was part of the coalition agreement – the Liberal Democrats sought electoral reform; and in 2016, David Cameron gambled the country’s future in an attempt to placate the Euro-sceptic right of his party, and to remove the issue of leaving the European Union from political discourse for a generation.

²⁰ Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act, 2011. Part 1, 8. *Result of the Referendum*. Available at:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/1/pdfs/ukpga_2011001_en.pdf

²¹ In May 2016 a Leave supporter set up an online petition which demanded that the referendum result should only be accepted if one side or another won a supermajority. After the referendum, this petition gathered over 4 million signatures. See Harley Tamplin (2017) ‘Man behind 2nd referendum petition was actually a leave supporter’ in Metro 26 June 2016, Available at: <http://metro.co.uk/2016/06/26/the-petition-for-a-second-eu-referendum-was-started-by-a-right-wing-activist-5967021/> Also see <https://petition.parliament.uk/archived/petitions/131215>

The nature of national referenda in the United Kingdom, contingent rather than principled, is probably an additional reason for the lack of critique of simple majorities – parliamentarians have had little experience of scrutinising the technicalities of referenda.²²

Following the June 2016 referendum, subsequent opinion polls by YouGov have generally recorded marginal majorities for those believing Britain was right to vote to leave the European Union. But since August 2017 YouGov polls have generally shown marginal majorities for those who take the view that Britain was wrong to vote to leave the European Union.²³ This shift may be connected to the belated education that the British people are receiving on what leaving the European Union actually means as the Brexit negotiations stumble forward and semantic elisions cover substantive differences.²⁴ Other polls also point in the direction of pro-remain sentiment. In December 2017, polling company BMG recorded that 51% of respondents favoured remaining in the EU, contrasting with 41% favouring leaving. The last time BMG put leave ahead was in February 2017.²⁵

Both the democratic legitimacy and the costs/benefits of Brexit are part of the national conversation. Former British Prime Minister

²² In Switzerland, where referenda are a fundamental part of the political process, a double majority is required – a majority of the electorate and a majority of cantons – to revise the constitution. Such a system, if used in Britain, would ensure that the voice of each constituent part of the United Kingdom was valued and that the will of the majority of the electorate in the United Kingdom was noted, though not necessarily followed.

²³ Indicatively, see the YouGov/The Times Survey Results, 10-11 December 2017 https://d25d2506sf94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/5tu7ahw6z/TimesResults_171211_VI_Trackers_w.pdf. Also see Chris Curtis (2017) *There has been a shift against Brexit, but the public still think we should go ahead with it*. Available at: <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2017/10/27/there-has-been-shift-against-brexit-public-still-t/>

²⁴ Civil servants at the Department for Exiting the EU, in a leaked report (EU Exit Analysis – Cross Whitehall Briefing), concluded that in the three scenarios that they modelled – a comprehensive free trade agreement; a trade agreement regulated by World Trade Organisation rules; access to the single market through membership of the European Economic Area – Britain would be worse off outside the European Union. See Alberto Nardelli (2018) ‘This Leaked Government Brexit Analysis Says The UK Will Be Worse Off In Every Scenario’ *Buzzfeed* 29 January 2018. Available at: https://www.buzzfeed.com/albertonardelli/the-governments-own-brexit-analysis-says-the-uk-will-be?utm_term=.pqv0YV1Zep#.valIKLnPB0

²⁵ <http://www.bmgresearch.co.uk/independent-poll-shift-toward-remain-at-height-of-brexit-negotiation-tensions/>

John Major has recently described Brexit as ‘an historic blunder’.²⁶ British citizens, as yet, have had little input into shaping the substance of Brexit. Neither Prime Minister May’s assertion that ‘Brexit means Brexit’ nor the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, David Davis’ appearances in parliament have provided much clarity.²⁷ As Setälä has rightly noted, ‘referendums may weaken accountability understood in the deliberative sense because the representatives may evade responsibility of giving public justifications for decisions by going along with the results of a referendum’.²⁸

The Brexit Referendum: A British expression of transnational social anger?

The referendum of June 2016 may be seen as an example of British conformity with more global and transnational trends. Just as the neo-liberal project accentuated unequal geographies, concentrated wealth and reconfigured precarity through, for example, zero hour contracts, in the United Kingdom, similar outcomes have been seen throughout the West and elsewhere. Mapping the geography of economic and educational marginalisation, for instance, as Sascha Becker, Thiemo Fetzer and Dennis Novy show (this volume), correlates well with Leave voting. Using the same indices also helps to predict the support for *Front National* in France and may also help in identifying supporters of Trump in the United States and the *Alternative für Deutschland* in Germany. Looking at the result of the 2016 referendum in a broader international perspective suggests that the vote against Britain’s membership of the European Union was, at least in part and for some, a protest against economic dislocation which has undermined the life experience of so many and not just in deprived communities.

²⁶ John Major (2017) ‘Responsibilities of Democracy’. Speech given at Westminster Abbey, 6 November 2017. Available at: <http://www.ukpol.co.uk/sir-john-major-2017-speech-on-the-responsibilities-of-democracy/>

²⁷ See Jack Maidment ‘David Davis accused of ‘total dereliction of duty’ after he reveals that Brexit impact assessments don’t exist’ in *The Daily Telegraph* 6 December 2017. Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/12/06/david-davis-accused-total-dereliction-duty-reveals-brexit-impact/>

²⁸ Maija Setälä (2009) ‘Popular self-government in a modern society’ in Maija Setälä and Theo Schiller (eds.) *Referendums and Representative Democracy. Responsiveness, Accountability and Deliberation*, London: Routledge.

Over a decade ago David Ost, in a seminal book on anger and politics in postcommunist Europe, argued that ‘all social systems generate popular anger, but they do so in different ways and with different results’, and noted that the structural nature of the political and economic system influences how and against whom the population can express their anger.²⁹ The Brexit referendum provided space for the articulation of reductive and essentialising narratives. Britain’s problems were due, apparently, to some people being in the wrong place; the wrong people in the wrong place were making decisions about people in the right place. Unravelling this would, according to this narrative, set Britain and Britons free.

Social anger in Britain among some communities has been effectively marshalled under the banners of ‘sovereignty’, ‘taking back control’ and a stirring of xenophobic sentiment.³⁰ It is no coincidence that the number of hate crimes in June 2016 was 44% higher than it had been in June 2015 as some citizens expressed *their* Britishness in acts against those they deemed to be Other. Much of the Leave campaign played on fears of the Other. This included references to Turkey joining the EU, the threat of EU citizens taking ‘British’ jobs, and the infamous poster of refugees revealed by Nigel Farage in mid-June 2016 which was described by Dave Prentis of Unison as a ‘blatant attempt to incite racial hatred’.³¹ Alexandra Bulat (this volume) highlights similar tactics in ephemera such as leaflets which were delivered to people’s doors. This ‘project fear’ gained traction with sections of the British public, including among those who have endured economic and educational marginalisation.

Britain exiting the European Union is unlikely to assuage the social anger resulting from decades of under investment (and perceived under investment), increasing precarity and the continued assault on social security. The displacement of social anger from the unbalanced economic structure and its apologists to migrants seeking a better life is

²⁹ David Ost *The Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*, London: Cornell University Press, p. 21.

³⁰ In his important Westminster Abbey speech on the responsibilities of democracy, John Major was scathing of ‘spin’ and ‘soundbites’, describing the phrase ‘take back control’ as an example of ‘pitch-perfect absurdity’ that explained nothing.

³¹ Heather Stewart and Rowena Mason ‘Nigel Farage’s anti-migrant poster reported to the police’ *The Guardian*, 16 June 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/nigel-farage-defends-ukip-breaking-point-poster-queue-of-migrants>

hardly a new phenomenon. The Brexit referendum provided a way for this displaced social anger to be forcefully expressed. At stake, as the Brexit process evolves, are not just Britain's new relations with Europe and the rest of the world, critically important though they are, but the way in which social anger can be legitimately expressed in Britain and the politics that can accommodate it.

A solution to Britain's Brexit problem means finding a language to inhibit the displacement of social anger. European nationals, especially those from countries which joined the European Union during or after 2004, are currently targets (more on this below), but the framework to redirect social anger is already well developed. Many stereotypes differentiate Britons (consider the use of 'chav', 'benefit scrounger'; racial stereotypes that continue to exclude and marginalise, etc.) and it is likely that in post-Brexit Britain such stereotypes will be increasingly promulgated to 'justify' the distribution of wealth and poverty, opportunities, life experiences and expectations, and so on.³²

State, society, discursive environment

During the referendum campaign and in the 18 months since, negative synergies between state practices, society and the discursive environment have exposed EU nationals in the United Kingdom to a range of stresses. Elaborating how the state, society and discourses interrelate in the creation of Brexit Britain can highlight specific injustices and offer fruitful avenues to analyse the way inclusion and exclusion is being produced. For example, the Home Office's 'hostile environment' policy has constructed migrants as potentially being problematic and has reconfigured the practice of bordering.³³ Landlords, bankers and others have been compelled, under the threat of sanction, to police peoples' identity and immigration status. This subcontracting out and shifting territorialisation of important state activities has profound implications, especially if employees take the logic of the

³² See Owen Jones (2011) *Chavs: The Demonization of the working class*, London: Verso.

³³ Nira Yuval-Davis, Georgie Wemyss, Kathryn Cassidy (2017) 'Everyday Bordering, Belonging and the Reorientation of British Immigration Legislation' in *Sociology*. Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0038038517702599>

workplace (identifying those the Home Office deems to be Other) into their lives outside work.

The increase in hate crimes around the EU referendum cannot be disconnected from the tone and substance of the campaign.³⁴ Part of this campaign is highlighted by Bulat, and its impact on Polish adolescents and children is discussed by Young (this volume).³⁵ It is clear that rather than being a civilising debate which helped young people think about the responsibilities of citizenship, the campaign provoked a great deal of fear and uncertainty, and exposed young Poles to various forms of violence. Young notes the experiences of bullying of young Poles in British schools – to the extent that one of her interviewees had to move school. It is a matter of priority that the harms that are currently impacting on young EU nationals in Britain are addressed.

It is also important to recognise that the way many EU nationals understand their changing situation in Britain is connected with their specific engagement with their country of origin. Transnational connections and cultural hybridity provide EU nationals with a range of frameworks with which to interpret what is happening in Britain. For many Poles, for example, understanding discourses on migration in Britain may be filtered not only by their day to day experiences in the United Kingdom, but also through their exposure to debates within Poland on the same issue. Recognising this can contribute to our understanding of the reasons why some Poles in Britain supported Brexit (see Mier-Jędrzejowicz, this volume) and why a tiny minority has found common ground with far right organisations in Britain.³⁶

³⁴ The Home Office report on hate crimes during 2015-2016 contends that the increase reflects improved recording and a real rise. See O'Neil, A. 2017 *Hate Crimes, England and Wales, 2016/2017 Statistical Bulletin 17/17*, London: Home Office, p. 1. Available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652136/hate-crime-1617-hosb1717.pdf

³⁵ Hate crimes have increased in or around schools over the last two years. See Eleanor Busby 'School hate crimes spike following Brexit and Trump' in *TES*, 5 May 2017. Available at: <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/exclusive-school-hate-crimes-spike-following-brexit-and-trump-votes>. Also see TES Reporter 'Hate crimes in schools up by 62% in a year' in *TES*, 29 January 2018. Available at: <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/hate-crime-schools-62-a-year>

³⁶ See Neil Docking 'Far right Polish hooligans recruited by neo-Nazis to fight anti-fascists in Liverpool' in *The Liverpool Echo*, 28 November 2017. Available at: <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/far-right-polish-hooligans-recruited-13962683>. Also see Kayleen Devlin, 'The anti-immigration party trying to

Negative discourses on migration which circulate in Poland (and to be clear, there are positive discourses in circulation as well) entangle with British discourses on migration in particular ways. Some Poles in Britain comprehend this entanglement as ‘evidence’ of migrants being ordered hierarchically. This ordering process privileges ideas about work ethic, culture, race, and status (migrant/asylum seeker). Assessing the impact of Brexit on Poles in the United Kingdom, and on EU nationals more broadly, should take the issues of transnationalism and the ways in which ‘knowledge’ travels very seriously.

There are numerous ways in which the negative synergies between state practices, (parts of) society and discourse, which are currently producing Brexit Britain, can be contested. For example, legal challenges to the conduct of the state (here the Home Office) have had some success, but there remains much work to be done. The ‘hostile environment’ policy is having a chilling effect on many EU nationals and may be discouraging many from seeking redress for the harms that they are currently enduring. A policy change at the Home Office could play an important role in weakening the impact of the vicious cycle (state, discourse, society) on EU nationals, and might provide space for further contestation of negative discourses (i.e. the way some media, including social media, portray EU nationals, especially those from the eastern part of the EU) and the actions of parts of society (across the spectrum, from hate crimes to everyday discriminatory practices).

The immediate rationale for such a challenge is clearly to stem the harms being inflicted on EU nationals in Britain – from negative stereotyping, bullying at schools, unfair treatment by public and private bodies, various forms of violence, insecurity and so on. Dealing with the symptoms of the organisation of social anger in Brexit Britain may not only benefit those currently being harmed, but could help reset the organisation of social anger itself. Successfully contesting the essentialising logic that underpins many pro-Brexit arguments may help limit the impact of logically similar arguments that are likely to be used to marginalise and exclude those categorised as Other in a post-Brexit Britain.

This book offers insight into the challenges currently facing Britain's largest minority community (by nationality) and sheds light on the symbolic, subjective and structural violences that are concomitant to realising the Brexit vision in practice. The book also poses questions about the longer term organisation of social anger in the United Kingdom. The old Polish cry of 'For your Freedom and Ours' is particular apposite in Brexit Britain. Curtailing the displacement of social anger to those deemed 'Other' has real benefits not only for Poles and other EU nationals in Britain, but for British citizens who wish to live in a more tolerant and just society.

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Part 1: The socio-cultural contours of Brexit

The fundamental factors behind the Brexit vote¹

Sascha O. Becker, Thiemo Fetzer and Dennis Novy,²

In the Brexit referendum on 23 June 2016, the British electorate voted to leave the European Union. The vote is widely seen as a watershed moment in British history and European integration. Why did some areas vote to leave the EU, and others voted to remain?

The UK referendum on European Union membership on 23 June 2016 is a key moment for European (dis)integration. Even though the outcome had been expected to be tight, in the days running up to the referendum bookmakers and pollsters predicted the Remain side to win. Many observers were left puzzled and keen to understand who voted for Leave. Various newspapers and blogs quickly reported plots that relate the referendum vote to key characteristics such as the age profile of the population.³ It was also pointed out that the Brexit vote relates to class identification and social attitudes more generally.⁴

In our paper we follow these early contributions and analyse the Brexit referendum vote in more detail.⁵ We study the EU referendum result in England, Wales and Scotland in a disaggregated way across 380 local authorities (and across 107 wards in four English cities). We relate the vote to fundamental socio-economic features of these areas. Figure 1 plots the Vote Leave shares across the local authority areas (excluding Northern Ireland and Gibraltar).

¹ This article was previously published at VoxEU.org here. Also see http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/research/centres/cage/manage/publications/305-2016_becker_fetzer_novy.pdf

² Dennis Novy, Sascha O. Becker and Thiemo Fetzer are all based at the University of Warwick.

³ John Burn-Murdoch (2016). ‘Brexit: Voter Turnout by Age’ in *Financial Times*, 24 June 2016. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/1ce1a720-ce94-3c32-a689-8d2356388a1f>

⁴ Eric Kaufmann (2016). ‘It’s NOT the Economy, Stupid: Brexit as a Story of Personal Values’ in *British Politics and Policy Blog*, London School of Economics and Political Science, July 2016. Available at: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/personal-values-brexit-vote/>

⁵ Sascha Becker, Thiemo Fetzer and Dennis Novy (2016). ‘Who Voted for Brexit? A Comprehensive District-Level Analysis’, *CAGE Working Paper 305* (October); Sascha Becker, Thiemo Fetzer and Dennis Novy (2017). ‘Who Voted for Brexit? A Comprehensive District-Level Analysis’ in *Economic Policy* 32(92), pp. 601-650. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/economicpolicy/article/32/92/601/4459491>

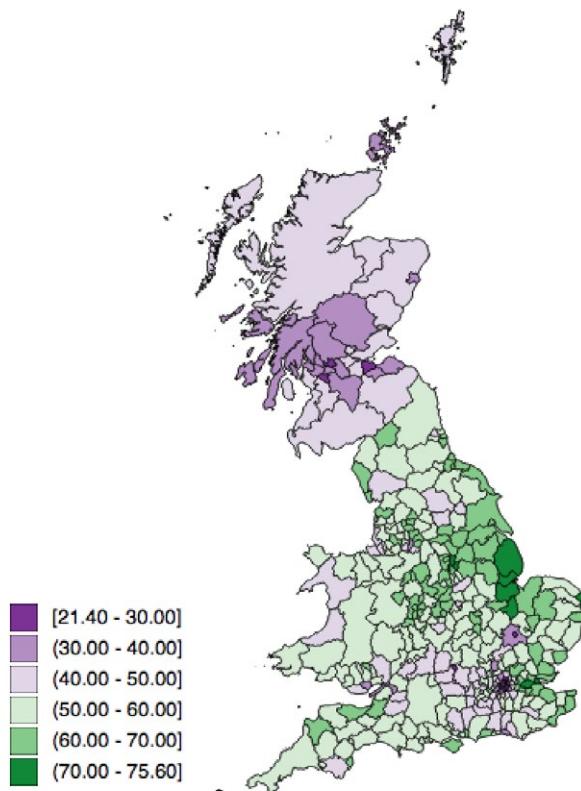


Figure 1: Map of the Leave share (in percent) across local authority areas in the 2016 EU referendum.

We adopt a simple machine-learning method to capture different subsets of socio-economic variables that best ‘predict’ the actual referendum result. We cannot possibly give a causal explanation of the referendum result because the election outcome is obviously multi-causal and multi-faceted. In other words, our results reflect a broad range of correlation patterns. Nevertheless, our systematic analysis across an exhaustive range of socio-economic characteristics can be helpful to direct future research efforts that aim at identifying specific causal mechanisms.

UKIP and Brexit support are tightly linked

Our results indicate that electoral preferences as measured by the 2014 European Parliamentary elections explain almost 92 percent of the variation in the support for Leave across local authority areas. As Figure 2 shows, the UKIP vote share is particularly important.

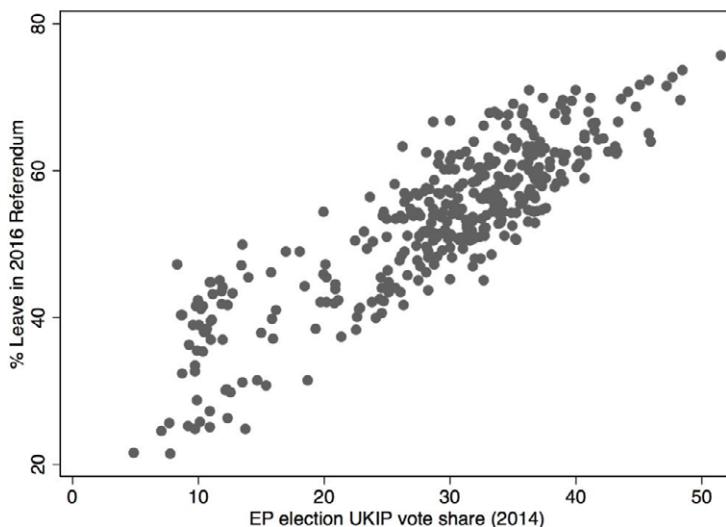


Figure 2: UKIP vote shares (in percent) across local authority areas in the 2014 European Parliament elections plotted against the Leave shares in the 2016 EU referendum.

Understanding the UKIP vote share therefore seems crucial for understanding the Brexit vote. Only founded in 1991 and taking on its current name in 1993, UKIP is a fairly new contestant on the British political scene. It has traditionally been seen as pushing the single issue of Britain leaving the European Union. In the 2014 European Parliament elections it won the largest vote share, beating the Labour Party and the Conservative Party into second and third place. UKIP therefore has the ability to mobilize a large number of voters. But due to Britain's first-past-the-post voting system UKIP is otherwise hardly represented in national UK politics. UKIP only has one Member of Parliament in the House of Commons and three representatives in the

House of Lords. Understanding the drivers behind UKIP's ascent in recent years thus seems important.⁶

Socio-economic characteristics

Figure 3 reports the goodness of fit in regressions that use different sets of explanatory variables. This helps to shed light on the relative explanatory power of different salient “issues.” For example, we find that demography and education (i.e., the age and qualification profile of the population across voting areas) explain just under 80 percent of the Vote Leave share. The economic structure explains just under 70 percent. Variables in this group include the employment share of manufacturing, unemployment and wages.

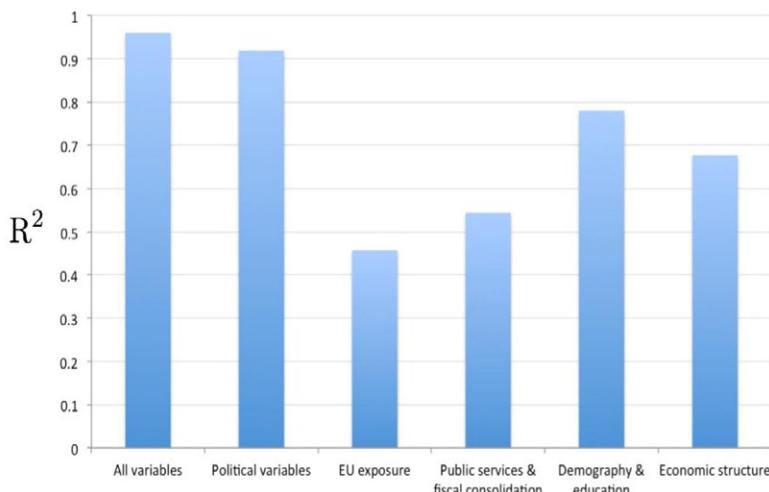


Figure 3: Goodness of fit (measured as R-squared) in separate regressions explaining the Vote Leave share at the local authority area level using only regressors from the respective group of variables.

⁶ See Robert Ford and Matthew Goodwin (2014). *Revolt on the Right: Explaining Support for the Radical Right in Britain*. Abingdon: Routledge.

EU exposure and immigration

Surprisingly, and contrary to much of the political debate in the run-up to the election, we find that relatively little variation (under 50 percent) in the Vote Leave share can be explained by measures of a local authority area's exposure to the European Union. These measures include a local authority's trade exposure to the EU (albeit measured at a coarser spatial resolution), its receipts of EU structural funds, and importantly, the extent of immigration. We find evidence that the growth rate of immigrants from the 12 EU accession countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 is linked to the Vote Leave share. This stands in contrast to migrant growth from the EU 15 countries or elsewhere in the world. It suggests that migration from predominantly Eastern European countries has had an effect on voters. However, we cannot identify the precise mechanism – whether the effect on voters is mainly economic through competition in the labour and housing markets, or rather in terms of changing social conditions. Becker and Fetzer provide a first attempt to study the causal impact of migration on the evolution of anti-EU voter preferences, which in turn correlate with support for Vote Leave.⁷ Using a difference-in-difference setup, they find – consistent with the present paper – a relatively modest but statistically significant association between immigration from Eastern Europe and growing anti-EU sentiment proxied by support for UKIP across European Parliament elections between 1999 and 2014.

Fiscal consolidation

In the wake of the global financial crisis, the UK coalition government brought in wide-ranging austerity measures to reduce government spending and the fiscal deficit. At the level of local authorities, spending per person fell by 23.4 percent in real terms, on average, from 2009/10 until 2014/15. But the extent of total fiscal cuts varied dramatically across local authorities, ranging from 46.3 percent

⁷ Sascha Becker and Thiemann Fetzer (2016). ‘Does Migration Cause Extreme Voting’, *CAGE Working Paper 306* (October). Available at: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/research/centres/cage/manage/publications/306-2016_becker_fetzer.pdf

to 6.2 percent.⁸ It is important to note, though, that fiscal cuts were mainly implemented as de-facto proportionate reductions in grants across all local authorities. This setup implies that reliance on central government grants is a proxy variable for deprivation, with the poorest local authorities being more likely to be hit by the cuts. This makes it impossible in the cross-section (and challenging in a panel) to distinguish the effects of poor fundamentals from the effects of fiscal cuts. With this caveat on the interpretation in mind, our results suggest that local authorities experiencing more fiscal cuts were more likely to vote in favour of leaving the EU. Given the nexus between fiscal cuts and local deprivation, we think that this pattern largely reflects pre-existing deprivation.

Short-run factors: Rainfall and train cancellations

We also explore the role of some short-run factors such as heavy rainfall and flooding on the referendum day as well as train cancellations in the South East of England. While we document that these did have a reducing effect on turnout, the reduction does not seem to have affected the overall result: the Remain campaign would still have lost on a sunny day.

Which factors explain more of the variation in the Vote Leave share?

Demography, education and economic structure, i.e., fundamental, slow-moving factors, explain more of the variation in the Vote Leave share than measures of EU exposure, fiscal consolidation and public services, which are arguably comparatively easier to influence.

We further study the role of fundamental factors by looking at ward-level referendum results within four English cities (Birmingham, Bristol, Nottingham and Greenwich/London). We find that indices of deprivation, available at the highly disaggregated level of wards,

⁸ See David Innes and Gemma Tetlow (2015). ‘Delivering Fiscal Squeeze by Cutting Local Government Spending’ in *Fiscal Studies* 36(3), pp. 303–325.

correlate with the Vote Leave share within cities. These fundamentals seem to have received less attention in the media than they should have.

First-past-the-post and lack of democratic representation

Our results are consistent with the notion that the voting outcome of the referendum was largely driven by long-standing fundamental determinants, most importantly those that make it harder to deal with the challenges of economic and social change. These fundamentals include a population that is older, less educated and confronted with below-average public services. We therefore doubt that a different style of short-run campaigning would have made a meaningful difference to vote shares. Instead, a more complex picture arises about the challenges of adapting to social and economic change.

It is clear that a majority of politicians and the media were caught off guard by the referendum result. This suggests that the needs of under-privileged areas of the country may be under-represented in the political decision process and the corresponding media attention. This is sometimes referred to as the “Westminster bubble.” In fact, as a result of the first-past-the-post voting system, a mismatch arises. Despite strong electoral support in European Parliament elections, which follow a proportional voting system, UKIP currently only has one Member of Parliament in the House of Commons out of over 600. It may be appropriate to consider ways of introducing more proportional representation into British politics to allow more diverse views to be represented in Parliament and to subject them to public scrutiny in the parliamentary debate.

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Becker, S. O., Fetzer, F. and Novy, D. (2017). ‘Who Voted for Brexit? A Comprehensive District-Level Analysis’, *Economic Policy* 32(92), pp. 601-650. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/economicpolicy/article/32/92/601/4459491>

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Migration in EU referendum campaign ephemera¹

Alexandra Bulat

Who speaks about EU migration?

During *The Spectator's* Brexit debate, Nigel Farage, a central political figure during the EU referendum campaign, commented:

And those of you over the age of fifty-eight, who voted for that Common Market, undoubtedly feel that you were lied to. And forty years on, we are fighting a referendum where the Remain side – or, the ‘Remainians’, as I think they’re now known...but I’ll...I’ll come onto immigration later.²

Many in the audience laughed when hearing the term ‘Remainians’, but Farage’s comment goes beyond an inspired pun. It illustrates how the debate on migration has often been focused on particular migrant nationalities (such as Romanian or Polish) or regions of origin (such as ‘Eastern Europeans’). In previous media appearances, even before a referendum was announced, Farage became well known for comments on EU migration, including his infamous appearance on James O’Brien’s radio show, where he suggested that there are more reasons to be afraid to live next to Romanians than to Germans, when prompted by the presenter.³

¹ Note about the text: This short essay is based on my oral presentation given at the *Brexit and Polonia: Challenges facing the Polish Community during the process of Britain leaving the European Union* conference on 16 December 2017. It is written in an accessible language to non-academic readers, aiming to emphasise the importance of migration arguments in the EU referendum campaign and the relevance of ephemera as a means of distributing those messages about migration. The brief findings presented in this essay are currently being incorporated in a longer paper, to be presented in discipline-specific conferences and submitted to academic journals. Therefore, the complete, detailed findings are not presented here. A summary of the preliminary results (based on only two out of three ephemera collections) was also previously published on the LSE Brexit blog. See <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2017/09/15/the-brightest-and-best-us-and-the-rest-desirable-and-undesirable-migration-in-eu-referendum-leaflets/>

² *The Spectator*, (2016) ‘The Spectator Debate: Should Britain leave the EU?’ YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uYTJGBBjkGo>

³ LBC, (2014) ‘Nigel Farage v James O’Brien’ *Live On LBC*. YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pyYoL9ngtE>

While politicians such as Farage and many British voices from both official campaigns advanced their arguments about EU migrants, freedom of movement, or immigration in general, the EU migrants in question were rarely given a voice. The frustration of EU migrants who felt they did not have a say in a debate about them is reflected in many of the heartfelt testimonies collected by Remigi et al. following the Brexit vote.⁴ One such contributor speaks the minds of many EU migrants when asking:

Why did no one run a campaign introducing some of the different scenarios of EU nationals who had come to the UK and contribute to this country? Making it personal, introducing mixed EU families, explaining their stories.⁵

Although EU migration was a relevant, and some would say, central issue in the campaign, a positive case for EU migrants living in the UK (and a positive case for EU freedom of movement as a two-way street) was absent. Even more important was the lack of a ‘human face’ of migration during the campaign, the invisibility of stories from ‘mixed EU families’, as mentioned in the testimony. This impersonal debate meant that migration was mostly presented in terms of numbers and arbitrary Home Office targets, rather than speaking about people whose lives have been embedded within UK society, in many cases for many decades.

An emerging ‘Brexit literature’

Since the result of the UK’s referendum on EU membership was announced on the 24th of June 2016, a wide range of analyses on the vote, reflecting on causes but also possible consequences, have been published in a number of countries. It seems as if ‘Brexit books’ have become a genre in their own right, covering a wide selection of themes from a variety of perspectives – academic collections of essays, academic single authored books, books written by journalists, former and current politicians, and other commentators. From the *The Bad*

⁴ Elena Remigi, Véronique Martin & Tim Sykes (eds.) (2017) *In Limbo: Brexit Testimonies from EU Citizens in the UK* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform).

⁵ Ibid, p. 133

Boys of Brexit, a catchy title by the British businessman and UKIP donor Aaron Banks, to *Brexit: What the hell happens now?*, written by the political journalist Ian Dunt, one can find a diversity of perspectives in ‘Brexit books’ on the bookshop shelves.⁶

Well-known academic accounts such as those of Clarke et al. and Glencross centre their arguments around a ‘why’ question, mainly concerned with the causes of the Brexit vote.⁷ Arguments about migration have been thus considered in the context of how they influenced voter behaviour. In other words, academics asked whether migration was a key issue in persuading people to vote Leave, resulting in mixed conclusions. Comparatively less effort has been put into analysing the nature of arguments about migration that circulated during the campaign: who spoke about migration, what type of migration, and how.

Another strand of literature on Brexit is concerned with the types of media used to promote campaign messages and their actual use. In a collection of essays from leading academics, Jackson et al address a range of media forms, including analysing the EU referendum through e-newsletters and radio programmes.⁸ However, on the whole, news and television media received the most attention, with comprehensive analyses on issue salience in television news by Cushion and Lewis, for instance, showing how immigration and the economy were the top two topics in terms of amount of coverage.⁹ Researchers agree that the referendum arguments in general were not comprehensive by far and even ill-informed on various aspects, immigration being one of them.

One common type of political communication that seems to be overlooked in this context is campaign ephemera. The millions of

⁶ Aaron Bank, (2016) *The Bad Boys of Brexit: Tales of Mischief, Mayhem & Guerrilla Warfare in the EU Referendum Campaign*. London: Biteback Publishing; Ian Dunt (2016) *Brexit: What the hell happens now?* London: Canbury Press.

⁷ Harold Clarke, Matthew Goodwin & Paul Whiteley (2017) *Brexit: Why Britain voted to leave the European Union*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Andrew Glencross (2017) *Why the UK voted for Brexit: David Cameron's great miscalculation*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

⁸ Daniel Jackson, Elinor Thorsen, & Dominic Wring (eds.) (2016) *EU Referendum Analysis 2016: Media, Voters and the Campaign: Early reflections from leading UK academics*, Poole: The Centre for the Study of Journalism, Culture and Community, Bournemouth University.

⁹ Stephen Cushion and Justin Lewis, (2017) ‘Impartiality, statistical tit-for-tats and the construction of balance: UK television news reporting of the 2016 EU referendum campaign’, *European Journal of Communication*, 32(3), 208-223.

leaflets distributed during the campaign period across the country, on streets, at train stations and bus stops, by post, or other means, played a crucial role in informing (or misinforming, some would argue) the public. Most voters received at least at one (if not dozens) of such ephemera – leaflets in all shapes and sizes, posters, information booklets, newsletters. What is crucial about ephemera, due to their form, is that they tend to summarise key campaign messages, thus offering a snapshot of the relevant issues and the core arguments, a message that is intended to stick in the mind in a short amount of time.

Whereas there have been references to ephemera in research on the EU referendum, those tend to be about the one official leaflet outlining the UK Government's Remain position, which was sent to all households in the country. For example, on its immigration arguments, Glencross comments that 'the only way the Government was actually prepared to mention immigration was in relation to border control', and that the only 'positives' related to migration were the existence of the European Arrest Warrant and the fact the UK is not in the Schengen zone.¹⁰ Nevertheless, except from these brief mentions of the Government's leaflet, the 'Brexit books' do not consider ephemera as a stand-alone medium, specific to campaign time, through which immigration arguments have been articulated.

What is yet to be known about the EU referendum?

Given the lack of in-depth analysis of migration arguments and the under-researched resource of EU referendum ephemera, I explored three collections of such ephemera. My first question is descriptive – what are the types of movements of people mentioned in the EU referendum ephemera? Given it was a debate on EU membership, did the ephemera contain relevant arguments about EU freedom of movement, or were there other types of migration discussed as well? Did the arguments about EU migration focus on particular nationalities, or were EU migrants considered a rather homogenous category? My second question focuses on the ways in which those different types of migrants are framed. I use the term 'framed' in an academic sense, adapted from theories of framing and frame analysis. In simple words, framing asks, in this context, what aspects are more salient when

¹⁰ Glencross, 2017: 35.

speaking about immigration? What arguments are captured in these ephemera and what is potentially missing (deliberately or not)?

The EU referendum ephemera collections

In total I looked at over 300 items distributed during the EU referendum campaign period (defined as 15 April 2016 - 23 June 2016). These ephemera were mainly leaflets, but also a few more detailed newsletters. The materials were hosted at three UK Libraries – LSE Digital Library, University of Cambridge Library, and the John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera at the University of Oxford Bodleian Libraries. I focused my analysis on the ephemera that had content about migration, resulting in a sample of 71 ephemera from the LSE collection I started with, 23 and 29 different ephemera from Cambridge and Oxford respectively. Although those collections are not representative as they rely on donations and they are influenced by the physical location of the libraries (university areas with a strong Remain vote), the ephemera containing arguments about immigration came from a variety of perspectives, from both Leave and Remain official campaigns, grassroots organisations, a range of UK and European political parties, and even businesses and individuals.

Some insights into how migration was portrayed in the ephemera

Although the migration debate on the UK's continuation of EU membership was around limiting the freedom of movement of people from other EU states to the UK, only about two thirds of the ephemera text spoke about migrations that qualify under EU freedom of movement – EU migrants in the UK and British migrants in other EU countries. The rest of the content was about non-EU migrations, such as references to migration from the Commonwealth, but also what I call ‘future EU migrants’ – hypothesising about migration from Turkey or other countries that, according to campaigners, were set to join the EU in the near future. When speaking about migration, there were also a few references to refugees and asylum seekers, and also terrorists.

There are differences in how two broad categories within EU freedom of movement are portrayed. Overall, British migrants in other

EU states are described using much more positive categorisations. British people in the EU27 are ‘holidaymakers’, ‘retired’, ‘students’, ‘workers’ or ‘young people’, whereas the picture is more complex for EU migrants in the UK. There are some binary categories created for EU migrants, most notably Eastern (as opposed to Western) European migration and high (as opposed to low) -skilled migration. Like in the case of British migrants, there are some positive categories such as ‘EU students and researchers’ and medical professionals. Unlike the British, EU migrants are also mentioned in the context of negative categories such as criminals and ‘low skilled East Europeans.’

How are those different categories portrayed in the ephemera arguments? I argue that all those groups can be further merged under three labels: ‘us’ (the British people benefitting from freedom of movement), ‘the brightest and the best’ (migrants who are ‘desirable’) and ‘the rest’ (migrants who are ‘undesirable’).

‘Us’

Remain campaigners across the board emphasise how beneficial EU freedom of movement is for British citizens, enabling them to ‘travel, work, study, and retire in the EU, without visas’, as underlined by Wales Stronger in Europe, amongst others. Remain campaigners also emphasise the multicultural argument for British students abroad, the positive impact that studying in another EU member state has on gaining valuable international experience. Leave campaigners also portray British people abroad in a positive light, but mainly through an economic prosperity lens, underlining the contribution UK migrants bring to other EU economies, as opposed to EU migrants coming to the UK who are believed not to make a similar economic contribution.

‘The brightest and the best’

‘The brightest and the best’ are situated in-between the purely positive depictions of British migrants in other EU states and ‘the rest’, who are the ‘undesirable’ migrants. Very specific categories such as EU students, researchers, NHS workers are depicted within an economic prosperity frame, underlining the contributions those groups make to

the UK economy. In the case of NHS workers, a related argument of the need of migrant workers is also present. Similarly to British students abroad, EU students are seen by Remain campaigners as a positive multicultural influence, enhancing the experience of British students at home, and also the overall environment and culture in the UK's universities. However, unlike the British in other EU states, 'the brightest and the best' are still criticised by some Leave materials, for instance a UKIP leaflet mentioning the unfair advantage EU students have compared to non-EU students regarding tuition fees.

'The rest'

The last category, 'the rest', includes everyone who is not considered 'the brightest and the best' by campaigners. This depends on the author, with some campaigners choosing to focus on refugees, some on low-skilled migration, whereas others are less specific in their approach. One group commonly mentioned in political discourse, and also present in this ephemera sample, is 'low-skilled East Europeans'. These migrants are mentioned within arguments of labour and social security, for instance referring to pressures migrants have on native wages, and on public services such as the NHS, schools, and housing.

A second dominant frame of interpretation is security. Leave campaigners visually associate, through maps, future EU migration from Turkey and other countries with increased refugee movements. For example, a map included in a leaflet by the official campaign Vote Leave, titled 'Countries set to join the EU', lists five countries (Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) and their total populations. Even though not present in the list, Syria and Iraq are also highlighted in a different shade of red on the map, underlining the proximity of Turkey, a potential EU state, with countries from where refugees could come to the UK. A third frame is the number of migrants coming to the UK. After Priti Patel MP first used the phrase 'equivalent to a city the size of Newcastle' to visualise EU migration flows in the eyes of voters, Vote Leave printed this phrase on a range of leaflets, using different city names depending on where the leaflet was distributed and also if it suggested the number of EU migrants coming per year, per three years, or other time-dependent measures.

The argument according to which there are ‘just too many’ EU migrants, without an additional explanation as of why that becomes negative, became mainstream, popularised by Vote Leave themselves and other Leave campaigners. Nevertheless, there are a few positive depictions of ‘the rest’, especially when it comes to Leave campaigners describing ‘Commonwealth friends’ and how they could bring economic prosperity, if priority was not given to ‘uncontrolled EU migration’.

Reflective comments

Keeping those insights from the ephemera in mind, I will end this short essay with two reflective notes, one about the absence of migrant voices in the EU referendum ephemera, and the other about campaign accountability. Different groups of migrants were praised, criticised, described, compared, judged, and generally, spoken about in the ephemera I analysed. Although some leaflets contained ‘vox pops’ from British people, voicing concerns about their freedom of movement or that of their family and friends who lived in other EU states, the EU migrant voice was absent in the debate. Not only were EU migrants denied a vote in a referendum that affected them directly (despite EU migrants being given a formal say in the 2014 Scottish Independence referendum), they were also not represented in the campaign material. Those who received the leaflets and newsletters were faced with a depersonalised debate on migration, making it difficult to create feelings of empathy towards EU migrants.

The Remain campaign missed the chance to show the ‘human face’ of EU migration, choosing to focus on the benefits that freedom of movement has for British people. This meant Remain not only did not engage with the arguments Leave made about EU migrants, but also ended up speaking to a very narrow audience of British people – those who had benefitted from or planned to use their freedom of movement rights – instead of addressing all the British voters, mentioning the impact that EU migration has in their daily lives and personalising the debate.

But it was not only Remain who failed EU migrants by not bringing them into the debate or presenting a positive case for freedom of movement both ways. The Leave camp also failed EU migrants by

promising them rights without a clear plan to deliver on those promises in the eventuality of Brexit. What has been widely forgotten in politics after the 23rd of June, but luckily is documented through these ephemera collections, is the promise regarding the rights of EU migrants in the UK and British people in other EU states. The official Leave campaign, and a few notable UKIP FAQ-style leaflets, claimed that the same rights would be preserved for both groups living on the other side of the English Channel. In a statement issued on the 1st of June 2016, Vote Leave also noted that all EU migrants who are currently living in the UK will be granted automatically the same status as they have now in the eventuality of Brexit.

At the time of writing, Phase 2 has started in Brexit negotiations and the issue of citizens' rights is still high on the agenda, with many outstanding issues being debated. Negotiations are still ongoing about the rights of millions of people, while UK Government representatives often claim the deal on citizens' rights is 'done and dusted'. The current 'settled status' that EU migrants in the UK are told that they will have to apply for falls short of the Leave promise of automatic grants of existing rights post-Brexit. Settled status is not automatically granted as one will have to qualify and pay for it. Despite UK Government assurances that this will be a simplified, streamlined process, many EU migrants in the UK feel uneasy about applying for this change in status and many, particularly in vulnerable communities, could be living 'off the radar' after Brexit happens. The British citizens living in other EU states are in a similar limbo, as they were also promised by Leave campaigners that they will continue to live their lives exactly as they do now, but nothing has yet been agreed on what the process to preserve this status would look like in every country of the EU27.

The legal limbo and unforeseen complications regarding citizens' rights raise the question of campaign accountability. Why did Leave campaigners promise the preservation of the same status for those migrants in question, without a clear plan on how to deliver it? How did a campaign systematically fail to include the voices of EU migrants who will be directly affected by the situation after Brexit? The next months of negotiations will hopefully clarify how far from Vote Leave's promise the deal on citizens' rights will be. Meanwhile, the ephemera collections will act as a constant reminder of those promises, and also of what arguments on migration were made during the campaign and, crucially, by whom.

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The origins of the Polish Diaspora in the UK after the Second World War: Poles in the UK

Agata Błaszczyk

The possible future settlement of Poles within the British Empire

In order to understand the origins of Poles in the UK, we need to look at the resettlement of Polish political refugees in Britain after the Second World War.¹ Post-war Polish immigration to Britain was one consequence of the Second World War. The tragic end for an independent Poland was officially confirmed during the Yalta Conference in February 1945. The Polish Government-in-Exile was bitterly disillusioned by the Yalta agreement. Half of Poland's pre-war territory was incorporated into the Soviet Union. This was followed by the recognition of the pro-Soviet Committee of National Liberation in Poland. Poles felt betrayed and abandoned by their allies.² The Polish military contribution to the Allies' victory was forgotten. Poland lost her independence, and not for the first time in her history.

After Yalta, it became clear that not all Polish forces and refugees abroad would be able to return to their homeland. Eastern Poland, the birthplace of thousands of Poles, was now Soviet territory. Staying in Britain or its dependent territories seemed to many Poles, whether in Britain already or under British command elsewhere, to be the only viable option for their future. It was, however, perceived initially as only a temporary arrangement.³ The British Government found itself faced with responsibility for Polish political refugees. As it transpired,

¹ The term 'refugee' is used here to reflect the fact that it was likely that some of the Poles who settled in Britain could have been exposed to dangers in communist Poland. Some Polish leaders loyal to the Polish Government in Exile (a continuation of the Second Republic) were deprived of their Polish citizenship by the Polish government in Warsaw. The term 'exile' is also used to reflect how Poles in Britain often described themselves.

² The decisions taken at Yalta were called a new partition of Poland. The Polish Government-in-Exile created a special commission (Adam Tarnowski, Zygmunt Berezowski and Adam Pragier, who represented different parties in the Polish Government-in-Exile, were appointed) with responsibility for responding to the Yalta decisions. The Foreign Office refused to broadcast the text of this protest on the wireless. See Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski (1990) *Najnowsza Historia Polityczna Polski. Okres 1939-45*, Gdańsk: Oficyna Wydawnicza "Graf", p. 426.

³ Wojciech Roszkowski (2006) *The Shadow of Yalta: A Report*, Warsaw: Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, p.102.

this challenge was a new experience for the British authorities. In Polish émigré circles, returning to Communist Poland was seen as a betrayal of all the democratic ideas and visions for which Polish soldiers had fought relentlessly. Many Poles ignored all invitations and letters from the authorities inviting them to volunteer for repatriation or simply encouraging them to return home.⁴

A rough estimate of the number of Poles not returning home was provided by the Polish Ambassador, Count Edward Raczyński in July 1945. It indicated that there were about 120,000 Poles exiled from their country, including General Anders' forces,⁵ other Polish troops and a large number of refugees. His estimate suggested that about one half, or 60,000, would not wish to go back to Poland. From that moment, the British side began an investigation into the possibility of finding a new place for Poles within the British Empire. It should be emphasised that all plans acknowledged the important need for potential residents to be permitted, even enabled, to maintain intact their Polish language, traditions and culture.⁶

On 5 July 1945, the British Government formally withdrew its recognition of the exiled Polish Government in London.⁷ At the same time, it accorded recognition to the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity in Warsaw as the only legal authority. The resulting situation placed the Poles in Britain in absolute dependency on their British hosts; it became clear that the Polish Question had to be handled in a very delicate and tactful way.

The autumn months of 1946 had seen the accumulation of compelling evidence that ever more Poles, whether from Communist-

⁴ Michael Hope (2005) *Polish Deportees in the Soviet Union: Origins of the Post-War Settlement in Great Britain*, London: Veritas, p. 66.

⁵ General Władysław Anders was a Polish general who commanded the Polish Second Corps during the fighting in the Western Desert and in Italy. Anders' Army fought with the British as the Polish Second Corps, taking part in the campaigns in North Africa and Italy. Their most famous achievement was the capture of Monte Cassino in May 1944, after three previous assaults had failed with heavy losses. The Second Corps remained in Italy to the end of the war, fighting on the Adriatic coast and in the Po Valley. Anders himself ended the war as acting commander of all Polish forces in the west. Commander General Anders would later become the core of the Polish Diaspora in Great Britain.

⁶ Note by the Secretary of the State for Foreign Affairs, 'Possible future settlement of Poles in the British Empire', dated 12 February 1945, FO371/51177, 1945, National Archives (hereafter, N.A.), Kew, p. 2.

⁷ Edward Raczyński's letter, 5 July 1945, Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum in London, Kol.417/58.

controlled Poland, or from the Middle East and Africa, were arriving in Britain. The movement of Polish forces had commenced a few days after Bevin's announcement of the organisation of the Polish Resettlement Corps, in May 1946.⁸ The Corps was established by the British Government as a holding unit for members of the Polish Armed Forces. Over the years, wives and dependants were brought to Britain to join them, bringing the estimated total to over 249,000.⁹

By the end of September 1946, most of the Second Polish Army Corps had already been transferred to Britain. General Anders left Italy on 31 October 1946 with the last transport of regular soldiers, making an emotional note in his diary that they were not all going home, but into exile.¹⁰ Along with his troops, Anders brought to Britain the entire machinery of well-organised and functioning civilian life with hospitals, schools, a press, canteens, theatres and welfare services. In his eyes it was crucial to preserve these forms of organised life among the soldiers and their dependants. It was clear that these groups of people, along with the Poles already living in the Britain, could not be ignored by the British Government. In fact, a new life for the newly created Polish community had already been born, behind the 'political curtain'.

⁸ On 22 May 1946, after consultations held with General Anders and Prime Minister Attlee, Bevin revealed to the House of Commons his plans for the demobilisation of Polish forces. The new arrangement applied to those serving overseas, starting with the troops in Italy, who were to be brought to Britain. In order to help these soldiers start their life anew on British soil, it had been decided to enrol them in the previously mentioned resettlement corps. The Polish Resettlement Corps was set up specifically to help Polish troops who did not want to return to Poland, wishing instead to stay in Britain and settle into civilian life there. The term of service in the Corps was to be two years. It was agreed with the trade unions that prospective Polish employees could only be recruited from the PRC and would be placed in 'approved' Ministry of Labour jobs. Members of the Corps were still considered to be military personnel and subject to British military discipline and military law. They were accommodated in military camps and paid at the normal British Armed Forces rate for their rank. Service in the Corps was intended to be an opportunity for retraining and education. Naturally, learning the English language and gaining basic training and practical qualifications became important factors in the process of preparing soldiers for a new life, whether in the United Kingdom or abroad.

⁹ Keith Sword, Norman Davies, Jan Ciechanowski (1989) *The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain 1939-50*, London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, p. 446 and Jerzy Zubrzycki (1956) *Polish Immigrants in Britain – A study of adjustment*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, p. 58

¹⁰ Władysław Anders (1949) *An Army in Exile. The Story of the Second Polish Corps*, London: Macmillan, p. 304.

The Polish Resettlement Bill (March 1947) and the setting up of the Committee for the Education of Poles (April 1947)

On 27 March 1947, after several months of preparation and laborious effort by the British parliament, the Polish Resettlement Bill was passed, providing entitlement to employment and to unemployment benefit in Britain. The Act laid out the responsibilities of several government departments for the employment, health and education of Poles. It also involved the Ministries of Labour, National Service and Education in caring for Poles.¹¹

The Polish Resettlement Act 1947 was the first mass migration legislation of its type passed by the United Kingdom's Parliament.¹² It provided a pathway to British citizenship for over 200,000 displaced Polish troops in Britain who had fought against Nazi Germany and could not be expected to place themselves in jeopardy under Soviet rule.¹³ The Polish Resettlement Act was welcomed in the House of Commons and considered to be an 'act of great statesmanship on the part of this country' which changed attitudes to the foreigners then arriving in Britain.¹⁴ The Resettlement Bill enabled Poles to settle in Britain and thus potentially provide the requisite labour force when the British economy was hard hit by the repercussions of the Second World War. They and their descendants continue to make up a significant part of the Polish British community as it exists today.

The exceptional aspects of this legislation in terms of modern British refugee policy lay in its clauses relating to the Polish refugees' entitlement to government support in key areas of social life. Major government departments were assigned special duties linked to the

¹¹ The Polish Resettlement Bill, NA.ED128/143; *Education in Exile*, Ministry of Education, NA.ED128/10, p. 47

¹² The Polish Resettlement Bill, NA.ED128/143. Until 1905, migrants from Europe were accepted by the British government and were not subject to immigration control. In the wake of immigration of Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe, the 1905 Aliens Act was passed. The Aliens Act marked, in general, an end to the liberal acceptance of immigrants. The Act introduced immigration controls and gave the Home Secretary overall responsibility for immigration and nationality matters. However, during the First World War, around 250,000 Belgians found refuge in Britain and the Polish Resettlement Act of 1947 provided considerable support for some 250,000 Polish refugees to settle in the UK.

¹³ K. Sword, N. Davies, J. Ciechanowski (1989), p. 446, and J. Zubrzycki (1956), p. 58

¹⁴ Parliamentary Debates, *Hansard (Commons)*, vol. 433, 424 – 432, p. 404

management, organisation and support of this group of immigrants. Each of them took different responsibilities.

Responsibility for the education of Poles in the United Kingdom was placed with the Ministry of Education and the Secretary of the State for Scotland. All expenses were to be defrayed out of monies provided by Parliament.¹⁵ This was the first time in the history of migration to Great Britain that this kind of legislation had been brought into being, directed uniquely at a single group of refugees. Never before had a major group of immigrants been formally welcomed and given such wide-ranging assistance. On 1 April 1947, the Ministry of Education and the Secretary of the State for Scotland decided to use the powers given them under the Act to delegate their responsibilities for Polish education in Great Britain, and accordingly they set up the Committee for the Education of Poles.

The Committee's principal aim was stressed in its memorandum: 'To fit them (Poles) for absorption into British schools and British careers whilst still maintaining provision for their natural desire for the maintenance of Polish culture and the knowledge of Polish History and Literature.'¹⁶ Bringing the Committee to life was another milestone on the path leading to the stabilisation of the lives of Polish refugees after the war. It was also a significant and decisive step in creating and implementing a migration policy for the Polish community already living in Great Britain.¹⁷

¹⁵ The Polish Resettlement Bill, NA.ED128/143.

¹⁶ Report of the Chairman of the Committee for the Education of Poles in Great Britain March 1948, NA.ED 128/9 p. 2; also Committee for the Education of Poles in Great Britain, Memorandum from the Minister of Education and the Secretary of State for Scotland, NA.ED128/146, pp. 1-2. Also in *Education in exile*. Ministry of Education, NA.ED128/10, 1956, p. 11-12. Report on the Curriculum and Staffing of the Committee's Polish Schools, 13 July 1948, NA.ED128/5, p. 3.

¹⁷ No specific study on the extent of the Committee's work, or the full scope of its achievements, has so far come to light. This is rather surprising, given that expenditure of the order of £9 million (Equivalent to £29 million in 2012) was authorised on education across all levels and that, thanks to this, it proved possible not only to maintain Polish schools and educate many young Poles, but also to achieve the educational goals that the émigré Polish community had set itself at the end of the War.

Polish Displaced Persons Camps - Reports from the camps

By October 1946, some 120,000 Polish troops were quartered in 265 camps throughout Great Britain, mainly in former British, American or Canadian military camps.¹⁸ 160 camps were used specifically for the Second Corps and its dependants scattered all over the country.¹⁹ At the beginning, it was the War Office which took responsibility for these Polish Displaced Persons Camps; later, from 1947, the camps were administered by the Assistance Board.

A crucial part of the resettlement process involved inspections in the camps. They aimed to identify both conditions in the camps and the educational provisions needed for the Polish refugees. Inspections were also meant to ascertain more about the morale and atmosphere among the Poles, particularly the young.²⁰ For the British Government, officials visiting camps became a vital part of the process of creating a settlement policy for the Polish refugees.

Reports from West Chiltington and Petworth camp document some of these visits. The camps at West Chiltington and Petworth were home to several hundred people, including both soldiers and civilians. Among the civilians, there were a few married couples, married women awaiting an opportunity to be housed with their husbands, and women and men waiting to be released from the camp to take up employment. There were also 65 children of all ages up to 18 who had parents, but not always living in the same camp, and about 190 lone boys (at Petworth Camp), and 140 lone girls at West Chiltington Camp aged 8-23, mostly adolescents.

Both camps were of the war-time emergency type and had been previously occupied by Canadian and American troops. They were situated 2–3 miles from the nearest village or town, but were accessible by local bus services. They consisted of Nissen huts, equipped with electric lights, heated by slow combustion stoves, but with poor natural ventilation and light. They were scattered through a wooded area and, apart from a few main paths, were not connected in any way by concrete pavements or covered walkways.

Sanitary facilities were found to be of a crude and primitive type

¹⁸ K. Sword, N. Davies, J. Ciechanowski, (1989) p. 271.

¹⁹ For a list of all camps, see the Assistance Board file NA.AST18/1.

²⁰ Letter to Miss Clayton from 23 December 1946, NA.ED128/141.

and were housed in central huts or blocks which were not, in the inspectors' opinion, suitable for civilians. Hot water was available on one or two days a week. Furthermore, huts like those in the West Chiltington Camp were heated only three or four days a week, which gave the inspectors particular cause for concern:

When it is realised that in both of these camps there was a marked absence of general rooms, recreation space and exercise facilities, it is appreciated that the inhabitants spend most of their time in their own huts and thus they should be adequately warmed.

[...] The proper washing facilities for clothes were non-existent in the Boys' Camp and were of a primitive type in the Girls' camp. The provision of hot water, anyhow on only one or two days of the week, rendered such washing of clothes an almost impossible task.²¹

All the above should be read with the recognition that, as with the majority of resettlement camps, both Petworth and West Chiltington were meant to serve as transit places for their residents and were never prepared or intended to accommodate people for any length of time.²²

From the summary of the inspectors' report it was clear that there were severe shortages in many aspects of everyday life in the camps. There was a disturbing lack of space, privacy and basic housing equipment. It was evident to the inspectors that most of the residents were not prepared to return to Poland. Clearly, life in exile, however

²¹ Polish Camps at West Chiltington and Petworth visited on January 14th and 15th 1947, by Miss Cowper, H.M.I., and Miss Glyn-Jones, Inspector of Children's Branch, H.O., and on January 16th and 17th by Dr Boucher, Ministry of Health, NA.ED128/141, p. 2

²² Petworth Camp existed until 1955 despite the British inspectors' clearly noting, back in January 1947, that such camps were not suitable for long-term accommodation. To go by eye-witness diaries, the winter of 1947 was the most severe of the century. Poor clothing and difficult conditions in the camps aggravated the experience of young Polish refugees who had hoped to start a new life after a long war-torn journey. The new residents in the camps, however, generally would not question the poor living conditions in their commonly named 'laughter barrels' or 'barrels of laughs' with toilets and washing facilities situated outside the barrels, as much as they would question the absence of a Polish school. This thorny issue, which came out of conversations with the British inspectors, was to resurface during their later visits. There was one question that continued to remain unanswered: '*We are in England, but where is the school?*' See: Zofia Halas (Wojtkiewicz) (2000), *Moja droga do Stowell Parku* in: *Drogami Świata do Stowell Park*, London: Kolo Byłyich Wychowanek Gimnazjum I Liceum im. I. Paderewskiego w Stowell Park, p. 30

under-provided for, had become the more attractive option. The refugees hoped that their predicament would soon be resolved and they were ready to accept uncomplainingly the temporary inconveniences in the camp.

In 1953, a considerable number of Poles were still housed in camps and hostels run by the National Assistance Board. Most of them were still just ‘camps’ of Poles stuck in the countryside at some distance from their local communities; this constituted a serious spatial obstacle to integration. In the summer of 1953, it was decided that the provision of council houses for the Poles would be the only effective solution.²³ In fact, most camps were eventually closed in the 1950s and late 1960s.²⁴

A Nissen hut at Northwick Park (Gloucestershire)



Photograph by Agata Błaszczyk (2007)

²³ Note on meeting held 9 June 1953, NA.ED128/148, p. 2.

²⁴ Northwick Park Camp (Gloucestershire) was closed in 1968, though according to local (British) residents the last Polish families only moved out in 1973. Based on interviews with local residents who lived close to the Northwick Park Estates in the 1960s and 1970s. These interviews took place in July 2008. Ashby Folville Camp (Leicestershire) was closed in 1958; Babdown (Gloucestershire) in 1959; Daglingworth (Gloucestershire) in 1961; Melton Mowbray (Leicestershire) in 1962; Kelvedon (Essex) in 1959.

The importance of education as a route to civic integration

The British government attached great importance to the need to integrate the Poles (children and young people were crucial players in the process) into British society as quickly as possible. Education became an eminently useful tool in this process. Acquisition of the English language became the basic step to be taken in pursuit of this ambitious plan. Reports from the secondary school situated in Stowell Park encapsulate the whole range of problems relating to the above issues.

According to these documents, Polish teachers did successfully acquire a knowledge of English sound enough for them to be able to teach their own subjects through the medium of English. English teachers, on the other hand, developed the girls' interests in many other subjects, especially those related to adapting the girls to the British way of life. Visits to the theatre at Stratford-on-Avon and Cheltenham were regular features of their school life. In order to provide the girls with some outside diversion, the Headmaster would invite local young men along to bridge the gap between the school and members of the local British community:

At Christmas, our Headmaster would sometimes invite British people. I remember dancing ‘Zasiali górale owies, owies’ (a traditional Polish dance) with an English partner, who was quite plump and whose round face turned red. He showed great enthusiasm when we were dancing, and he very happily waved his arms and legs about, whispering: “Nice, very nice.” He then confessed that never before had he enjoyed himself so much.²⁵

This girls' tremendous enthusiasm and determination and the teachers' hard work eventually ended with the girls' acquiring a much better knowledge of English. As the years passed, their ability to write and speak in English improved by leaps and bounds, even in the older girls:

²⁵ Zofia Halas (2000) “‘Paderewski’ w Stowell Park”, in *Drogami świata do Stowell Park*, London: Koło Byłych Wychowanek Gimnazjum I Liceum im. I. Paderewskiego w Stowell Park, p. 33. Memories recounted to me after a meeting with Stowell Park pupils in January 2007.

I completed my education when I was 19. I benefited most from Miss W.'s lessons. We had to memorize 20 words a day and be able to explain their meaning and use. Multiplied by five lessons per week, this significantly improved my English. After I graduated from Secretarial College, throughout the subsequent years of my working life, I was able to correct my colleagues' spelling, including that of my managers. One day, one of my bosses screamed: "Bloody foreigners, they come to this country... take our jobs... marry our women... and correct our spelling...!"²⁶

There were many other happier stories, like the one above, illustrating the girls' achievements in their various vocations and professions. Some of them found office work; some were rewarded with university scholarships, and some became teachers or accountants.²⁷ There is no doubt that here the Committee had achieved its object, enabling many Polish adolescents to secure their lives and merge smoothly into their new communities.²⁸

For various reasons, not every Polish émigré who entered Britain in 1946 was quite so fortunate. The first generation's experience of settling down and starting their life from scratch proved to be tougher than expected. Resentment, anger and inimicality were often expressed towards the Poles, particularly in the immediate post-war years.²⁹ However, for the younger generation of Poles, the route of adaptation, integration and perhaps even gradual assimilation was a more natural process, and education provisions helped here enormously:

²⁶ Wanda Gorbun, 'Kręte drogi do "Paderewskiego" w Stowell Park', in: Zofia Halas (2000) *Drogami świata do Stowell Park*, London, p. 71.

²⁷ Interviews with women who had attended the Stowell Park Grammar School took place during an annual reunion ('Oplatek') in January 2006 at POSK, the Polish Cultural and Social Association in Hammersmith, London, and a separate interview with Sister Bożena, who obtained a diploma from the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) – University of London in 1954.

²⁸ Ministry of Education, *Education in exile*, NA.ED128/10, p. 24.

²⁹ This resentment directed at the Poles is emphasised by Peter Stachura in several works. See Peter Stachura (1999) *Poland in the Twentieth Century*, London: Macmillan, pp. 113-34, or Peter Stachura (2004) *The Poles in Britain. 1940–2000*, London: Frank Cass, pp. 53-54. Trade Unions were often suspicious of workers who openly manifested their anti-Communist attitude. At the time, Polish workers could hardly conceal their views. The Transport and General Workers' Union with its own anti-Communist attitude was an exception here.

After all, we needed our school. [...] It allowed us to engage with the alien culture and customs in a less painful way. We were given a chance to stand on our own two feet. We were doing this simultaneously in both languages.³⁰

Whilst with the passing years the Poles gradually acknowledged the need to adapt to a new society, and as their children were being quickly assimilated albeit often to some version of Polonia, they were impelled by the need to keep and cultivate their language, culture, and history. As a consequence, the Poles' response to any implicit or explicit assimilation policy was to reactivate the Polish Educational Society in May 1953 and to launch the Saturday School Movement, which has been a vital part of the Polish community in Great Britain ever since. Along with pre-existing Polish organisations – the Polish Ex-Combatants' Association and the Federation of Poles in Great Britain – the Saturday schools aimed to help the next generation of Polish children to learn their language, history and traditions. It enabled the second and third generation to understand and maintain their evolving identity, however hybridised, and to learn how, even in the diaspora, to remain proud of their Polish roots. There are at present some 100 Polish Saturday Schools in England, engaged in supplementary education which is focussed on maintaining Polishness among an influx of Poles three times that of 1946-1949.³¹

Conclusion

The passing of the Polish Resettlement Bill and setting up of the Committee for the Education of Poles demonstrated that, in providing adequate resources and responding positively to the needs of refugees, the integration process into the host society could be significantly

³⁰ B.M., statement made during the interviews with former Stowell Park Secondary School pupils conducted in January 2007 at POSK, London, during an annual reunion, 'Oplatek'.

³¹ Polish Saturday Schools teach Polish language, History and Geography. Their numbers fluctuate for demographic reasons. The schools are independent units that secure the necessary funds themselves. The costs are usually met by parents; local or central government grants are rare. See Aleksandra Podhorodecka (2013) *Ostatnie dziesięciolecie. Historia Polskiej Macierzy Szkolnej 2003-2013*, London: Polska Macierz Szkolna.

eased. For the British, the Polish Resettlement Act and the creation of the different agencies was an unprecedented response. There was no template to follow, no past precedent. There is no doubt that the activities of the government agencies brought to life by the British not only helped Poles, but contributed to rebuilding the country's economy after the war. The Poles were instrumental in filling labour shortages and laying the foundations of British post-war society.

Eventually, Poles were granted the right to become naturalised as British citizens. The Home Secretary announced that from March 1948 applications for British citizenship³² would be accepted from Polish ex-servicemen.³³ Poles and their dependants won the right to be resettled in Britain. Families and relatives of serving members of the Polish Armed Forces were granted the same right to enter Britain and stay if they wished to do so. In the end, the Poles emerged as dedicated contributors to the rebuilt British economy, and Polish refugees became one of the most prosperous immigrant groups in the UK.³⁴

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³² The group naturalisation of Poles as British citizens is explained in Collection NA.FO371/71587.

³³ Members of the Polish Armed Forces who had been residents in Britain or the Dominions for at least five years and either joined the British armed forces or had been employed for at least a year in useful civilian employment could apply for British citizenship.

³⁴ A. Błaszczyk (2017) 'The resettlement of Polish refugees after the Second World War' in *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 54, February 2017. p. 72.

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Part 2: Brexit in relation to Britain's Polish community

Experiences of Polish-born adolescents in Britain during the run-up to Brexit

Sara Young

Introduction

2004 marked the accession of the so-called A8 countries to the European Union (EU); of these countries, it was Poland which saw the largest migration to the UK.¹ Polish migrants had been coming to the UK prior to this, yet while the post-1989 migratory demographic had mainly been young men, post-2004 saw a rise in the number of families coming to Britain, often with thoughts of settling.² Indeed, by 2008, Polish-speaking children comprised the main group of non-English speaking newly-arrived migrant schoolchildren in England.³ Despite this, relatively little research investigated the experiences of younger migrants and teenagers.⁴ Following the vote for Brexit, however, greater attention has been paid to those under the age of eighteen, particularly as to how they may be affected by Britain leaving the EU. Interest comes from academics, such as the ‘EU families & Eurochildren’ project at the University of Birmingham.⁵ ‘The impact of Brexit on children’, a report produced under the auspices of Coram and the University of Liverpool, amongst others, was also put forward for

¹ Joanna Fomina and Justyna Frelak (2008) *Next Stopski London: Public Perceptions of Labour Migration within the EU. The Case of Polish Labour Migration in the British Press*. Warsaw: Institute of Public Affairs; Emma Gillingham (2010) *Understanding A8 migration to the UK since Accession*. London: Office for National Statistics.

² Louise Ryan, Rosemary Sales, Mary Tilki and Bernadetta Siara (2009) ‘Family Strategies and Transnational Migration: Recent Polish Migrants in London’ in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(1), pp. 61-77.

³ Anne White (2017) *Polish families and migration since EU accession*. Bristol: Polity Press.

⁴ Marta Moskal (2014) ‘Polish Migrant Youth in Scottish Schools: Conflicted Identity and Family Capital’ in *Journal of Youth Studies*, 17(2), pp. 279-291; Krystyna Slany & Stella Strzemecka (2016) ‘Who Are We? Cultural Valence and Children’s Narratives of National Identifications’ in *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 5(1), pp. 13-34. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=422640>

⁵ IRIS Institute for Research into Superdiversity, University of Birmingham ‘EU families & Eurochildren’ website <https://eurochildren.info/>

discussion amongst cross-party parliamentary groups involved with children's rights.⁶

Yet while the reality of Brexit has prompted concern, many of the issues which are now being raised can be seen to have their origins in the period before the Referendum took place. The doctoral study on which this paper is based was conceived and conducted between 2015 and May 2016, with fieldwork completed one month prior to the Referendum. At that time, the climate in Britain appeared to be one of increasing hostility to migrants from member states of the EU;⁷ a Referendum on Britain's place in the EU was also being openly discussed within both Britain and Europe itself.⁸

In the light of this, I began wondering how Polish-born teenagers living in Britain positioned themselves in such an environment, and what challenges they faced. This paper will argue that an examination of these adolescents' experiences during the run-up to the Referendum can contribute to the current discussion concerning the situation of Polish youngsters in post-Brexit Britain. The paper is divided as follows: first, it gives a brief outline of the context in which the research was situated; this will be followed by an overview of the study itself, the methodology used, and those who took part in the project. The findings of the study will then be set out, concluding in a discussion of how these findings may be considered pertinent to the current situation.

Context of the study

2015 saw the evolution of the migration crisis in Europe, caused in part by the numbers of people attempting to escape the conflict in Syria. This coincided with the rise of right-wing and far-right parties

⁶ Chloë Darlington (2017) 'The impact of Brexit on children: Key policy recommendations for the new government' Available at: <https://www.childrenengland.org.uk/the-impact-of-brexit-on-children>

⁷ Ariel Spigelman (2013) 'The depiction of Polish migrants in the United Kingdom by the British press after Poland's accession to the European Union' in *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 33(1/2), pp. 98-113.

⁸ For example, Tim Oliver (2013) *Europe without Britain: assessing the impact on the EU of a British withdrawal*. SWP Research Paper RP 07 18–26. Available at: http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-research-papers/swpresearch-paper-detail/article/europe_without_britain.html

across Europe. Examples include the increased vote for Jobbik in Hungary in April 2014, as well the direction increasingly taken by PiS in Poland, elected in June 2015. The US elections of November 2016 saw Donald Trump elected President. The trend towards the far right has continued into 2017, with Marine Le Pen in the second round of the April-May French presidential elections, the increase in support for the right-wing *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) in the German elections of September 2017, and in December 2017 the inclusion of the Austrian far-right FPÖ (Freedom Party) in government coalition talks. All these groups ran on anti-migrant campaigns, which may be seen to have accounted in part for their popularity.

There has also been mounting opposition to migration in Britain. Even prior to the 2015-2017 period, there was a growing concern in Britain around the issue of migration, which extended to cross-European mobility.⁹ Barbulescu notes that while this debate was not restricted to Britain, it was there that the EU principle of freedom of movement was coming under increasing question.¹⁰ Indeed, immigration was one of the main issues in the UK 2015 General Election campaign. The 2015 Conservative Party Manifesto promised a Referendum on Britain's membership of Europe to be held by the end of 2017, while the right-wing and openly Eurosceptic UK Independence Party (UKIP) ran an aggressively anti-migrant campaign. Posters alluded to migrants taking British jobs, and Britons were exhorted to 'take back control of our country'.¹¹

At the same time, EU migrant communities within Britain had become the focus of media attention, much of it negative.¹² The 2012 Leveson Report into the conduct of the press received evidence from the Polish Federation illustrating the extent to which Poles had been the target of negative articles appearing in British newspapers.¹³ It was

⁹ Robert Ford (2011) 'Acceptable and Unacceptable Immigrants: How Opposition to Immigration in Britain is Affected by Migrants' Region of Origin' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(7), pp. 1017-1037.

¹⁰ Roxana Barbulescu (2014) 'EU freedom of movement is coming under increasing pressure in the UK and other European states' in *LSE European Politics and Policy (EUROPP) blog*. Available at: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2014/02/20/eu-freedom-of-movement-is-coming-under-increasing-pressure-in-the-uk-and-other-european-states/>

¹¹ UKIP national billboard campaign (1993-2017). Available at:
http://www.ukip.org/ukip_national_billboard_campaign

¹² Fomina & Frelak (2008); Spigelman (2013).

¹³ See Wiktor Moszczyński (2008) '80 ways to say "Welcome to Central European Workers" courtesy of the "Daily Mail"', *Submission to Inquiry from the Federation of*

argued that areas of the press were using stories about EU migrants in order to promote their opposition to Britain's membership of the EU, an argument upheld by the inquiry.¹⁴

It may therefore be seen that placing the Brexit vote in a broader context allows for a greater understanding of the present situation. This also underscores the relevance of a study which was conducted prior to the Referendum, and the way that its findings may be seen as pertinent to current discussions.

The design of the study and how it was conducted is set out in the following section.

Research questions and theoretical framework

As noted above, my project purported to investigate the experiences of Polish-born adolescents living in the UK, in the light of the changing social and political climate. As a researcher in applied linguistics, I situated the study in terms of socio and applied linguistics work on identity construction. Such work aims to understand the factors which influence the way an individual is able to display her linguistic identities through the language she speaks, and through this, to construct her ethnic identity. I thus draw on the literature in this area, whilst also alluding to work within the field of migration and human geography.

The theoretical framework of the study draws on the concept of positioning as set out by Davies and Harré¹⁵, whereby subject positions are taken up by individuals according to the way they see themselves; at the same time, individuals are ascribed identity positions by others which may conflict with their own self-positioning. Subject positions are therefore contingent, dependent on space and time, and as such,

Poles in Great Britain: Federation of Poles in Great Britain. Available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140122145147/http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Submission-from-Federation-of-Poles-in-Great-Britain.pdf>

¹⁴ Brian Leveson (2012) *The Leveson Inquiry: An Inquiry into the Culture, Practices and Ethics of the Press*, pp. 671-2. Available at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140122144906/http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/>

¹⁵ Bronwyn Davies and Rom Harré (1990) 'Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves' in *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1), pp. 43-63.

have to be constantly renegotiated in each new setting.¹⁶ Often, limitations may unexpectedly be put on the subject positions which an individual may be allowed to occupy. In the case of migrants, these positions are often seen as inferior, resulting in challenges to the individuals as they attempt to negotiate their new positioning as members of British society.¹⁷

Drawing on the above notions of identity construction and positioning, the research questions which guided this study were formulated as follows:

1. What do the stories of Polish-born adolescents living in the UK suggest about the way these adolescents negotiate and construct their ethnic and linguistic identities?
2. In the light of current anti-immigration and anti-immigrant discourses in the UK:
 - i) how do these adolescents position themselves in the stories they tell?
 - ii) how do the adolescents' stories suggest they are positioned by others?

As well as exploring whether these Polish-born adolescents are able to assert their identity as British and/or Polish, the study also examines the extent to which they are able to position themselves as individuals with a right to live and build their futures in the UK. The 2016 Referendum campaign suggested that such entitlements could be threatened in the post-Brexit situation. The second part of this paper therefore examines how the adolescents perceived the Referendum.

¹⁶ Ron Darvin and Bonny Norton (2014) ‘Social Class, Identity, and Migrant Students’ in *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 13(2), pp. 111-117

¹⁷ Adrian Blackledge (2001) ‘The wrong sort of capital? Bangladeshi women and their children’s schooling in Birmingham, U.K.’ in *The International Journal of Bilingualism*, 5(3), pp. 345-369; Aneta Pavlenko (2001) “In the world of the tradition, I was unimagined”: Negotiation of identities in cross-cultural autobiographies’ in *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 5(3), pp. 317-344.

Fieldwork

Much of the work done in linguistics and migration examines urban populations,¹⁸ and communities situated amongst the ‘super-diversity’ found in cities;¹⁹ however, I was interested in how Polish-born adolescents might be adapting to life in a region with a less diverse demographic, and less accustomed to the arrival of migrants. I therefore recruited participants from two semi-rural towns in South East England, with small Polish communities.²⁰ The first location was Grovesham School, a mainstream state secondary school which provides GCSE Polish lessons. Grovesham is found in Fieldstone, a town of 60,000, whose Polish community developed post-2004. The second setting was St. Ferdinand’s, a Polish complementary Saturday school in Steadton, roughly 15 miles from Fieldstone, with a population of 15,000; the Steadton Polish community dates back to the end of the Second World War. Both towns have a ‘White’ population of over 85%, ‘White’ being taken as ‘English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British’.²¹ Such a high proportion of those identifying as ‘White’ sits in stark contrast to cities such as Birmingham (53.1%), Coventry (66.6%) or Manchester (59.3%). In the 2016 Referendum, Steadton had a Remain majority of 55%, while Fieldstone had a slim Leave majority of 50.5%.

The participants in the study comprised a group of Polish-born adolescents, five girls and six boys aged 11-16, all of whom had come to the UK post-2004. They had various migratory trajectories. Some had left Poland as young children; others had migrated more recently. Several had lived in other countries or UK towns before moving to their current location.

Prior to the research taking place, consent forms available in Polish and English were signed by the participants and their parents. I

¹⁸ Sebastian Rasinger (2012) “And Everything is Polish...”: Narrative Experiences of new Migrants’ in *The European Journal of Applied Linguistics and TEFL*, 1(2), pp. 33-49.

¹⁹ Steven Vertovec (2007) ‘Super-diversity and its implications’ in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), pp. 1024-1054.

²⁰ The names of locations and participants have been anonymised.

²¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2012). *Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales 2011*. London: Office for National Statistics. Available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-ethnicity.html>

also obtained permission from the heads of the schools where the interviews would be conducted, and from Jo Malinowska, the Polish teacher at Grovesham, who also participated in the research. Fieldwork took place between January and May 2016 at Grovesham. An initial session was held, where I observed the first Polish lesson of term (coded as S1). This was followed by five sessions of one hour, consisting of group interviews (S2, S3), interviews in pairs (S4, S5) and also individual interviews (S5, S6). Two 45-minute pair interviews were held with two participants at St Ferdinand's Polish School (S#1, S#2). These were held on consecutive Saturdays in March 2016. I audio-recorded and transcribed all the interviews, while the observation lesson was transcribed by a native Polish speaker, who also verified my translation of the transcript.

Methodology

The research was designed as a qualitative study, comprising group and individual narrative interviews. Group interviews are considered one way of approaching sensitive issues when interviewing children,²² with the possibility of progressing to individual interviews once trust between researcher and participants has been more firmly established.²³ Such a method seemed appropriate for a study addressing potentially upsetting questions concerning anti-Polish sentiment, or the forthcoming Referendum. Discussions were therefore initially held in a larger group and then in pairs; I was also able to interview some of the participants individually.

To analyse the data, I drew on narrative analysis. Narrative inquiry has been described as 'as a way of making sense of the world',²⁴ it has been used in applied linguistics work in identity studies

²² Caroline Heary and Elias Hennessy (2006) 'Focus groups versus individual interviews with children: A comparison of data' in *The Irish Journal of Psychology*, 27(1-2), pp. 58-68.

²³ Donna Eder and Laura Fingerson (2002) 'Interviewing children and adolescents' in Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein (eds.) *Handbook of Interview Research*. London: Sage, pp. 181-202.

²⁴ Alexandra Georgakopoulou (2007). 'Thinking big with small stories in narrative and identity analysis'. In Michael Bamberg (ed.) *Narrative-State of the Art*. pp. 146-154. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 145.

as well as increasingly in migration studies.²⁵ However, in contrast to the ‘longstanding tradition of big stories’,²⁶ younger participants are often unable to construct such lengthy narratives.²⁷ In analysing the participants’ accounts, I therefore drew on Bamberg’s notion of ‘small stories’, defined by Georgakopoulou as ‘snippets of talk’ which can in themselves can be seen to constitute a small story.²⁸

The data was initially analysed using a thematic approach, so as to identify the ‘common thematic elements’ which emerged from the different stories told by the participants.²⁹ A more detailed line-by-line analysis was then made, allowing for closer attention to be paid to how the adolescents were constructing their stories.³⁰

Participants were encouraged to recount stories of their own migration trajectory, their family situation and the languages they used at home and at school, using images and newspaper headlines as prompts.³¹ I also asked whether the adolescents had encountered any anti-Polish sentiment. The initial question was: ‘How do you think people in this country think about Polish people living in the UK?’ This led to questions such as ‘Have you had any experience of this?’ referring to the anti-Polish sentiment expressed in the prompts. Following the official announcement on 20th February 2016 that the EU Referendum would be held at the end of June, I elicited from the adolescents their thoughts on the forthcoming vote.

I also took fieldnotes during the observation lesson and held informal conversations with Jo Malinowska, the Polish teacher at Grovesham. These brief discussions were not always recorded, but I documented them after finishing each session at the school.

²⁵ For example, Justyna Bell (2012) ‘Migration as Multiple Pathways. Narrative Interviews with Polish Migrants in Belfast, Northern Ireland’ in *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis Studia Sociologica*, IV(2), pp. 106-118.

²⁶ Georgakopoulou (2007), p. 146.

²⁷ Michael Bamberg (2004) ‘Form and Functions of “Slut Bashing” in Male Identity Constructions in 15-Year-Olds’ in *Human Development*, 249, pp. 1-23;

²⁸ Bamberg (2004); Georgakopoulou (2007), p. 146.

²⁹ Catherine Riessman (2005). ‘Narrative Analysis’ In Nancy Kelly, Christine Horrocks, Kate Milnes, Brian Roberts & David Robinson (eds.) *Narrative, Memory & Everyday Life*. Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield, pp. 1-7; p. 3. Available at:<http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/4920/>

³⁰ See Bamberg (2004).

³¹ See Colin Robson (2011). *Real World Research: a Resource for Social Scientists and practitioner-researchers*, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 284.

Findings

Discussions on the topic of anti-Polish sentiment revealed that many of the adolescents had encountered such sentiments during their time in the UK. It also appeared that, in several instances, the adolescents confronted this directly and resisted others' attempts to question their right to be in the UK.

Several adolescents report having experienced problems at school. Greg (Grzegorz) is a sixteen-year-old who has lived in the UK since the age of five. He is planning to study sports science at university. In the following extract, Greg describes an incident that had occurred during a geography lesson on the subject of contemporary migration.

Extract 1. S3 Grovesham: group interview with Greg, Beata & Janusz
(G: Greg)

1 G: [...] stealing jobs.
2 I've had that personally. from my Dad. I've heard that from him. had that said
3 to him. that kind of thing. erm. in my geography. we study Polish immigrants
[...]
4 it was like. last week we had it and it's. erm. there was like loads of like we
6 got turned against basically the whole class were against us. like it was so
7 bad/ there's like two of us in the Polish class and er. we just got. er <laughs
8 slightly> bombed. basically. there were like jokes and references. don't steal
9 my jobs. and all those things/ and my friend couldn't hold it in. I mean. he
10 like. just gave them all the facts that it's not really true exactly.
[...]
11 I find it wrong like when people don't understand and I find that I want like
12 them to know. try and tell them the facts. like this is wrong. and like the truth
13 about it!

In this extract, Greg explains how he has heard accusations of 'stealing jobs', both from his father (line 1), and also within the geography class (lines 8-9). He and the other Polish boy in the class attempt to defend themselves by explaining the situation in which Poles find themselves. Greg expresses the wish that others would 'understand' (line 11) their circumstances. A similar sentiment is voiced in the story recounted by fifteen-year-old Beata, who has been in the UK for about eighteen months.

Extract 2. S3 Grovesham: group interview with Greg, Beata & Janusz
 (B: Beata)

1 B: [...] some of them
 2 actually always asking us why we moved here and most of the answers are
 3 because of the job/ because in Poland we've got big unemployment and in
 4 here it's really easy for Polish people to find a work because they are really
 5 hard-working people/ [...]
 6 for example. my Dad/ he moved here to job and he's been really hard-
 7 working [...]

Here, Beata describes the way people are ‘always asking’ her family why they are in the UK (line 2). Like Greg, she tries in response to explain the difficulty of finding employment in Poland. As further justification, Beata also emphasises the ‘hard-working’ nature of Poles (lines 5-7).

The third member of the group interviewed, thirteen-year-old Janusz, who has spent half of his life in the UK, did not relate any specific instances. He nonetheless noted that he was aware of prevalent attitudes around him. Other adolescents spoke of more generalised bullying. Thirteen-year-old Filip has been in the UK for two years; his aim is to become a vet. Filip explained that while he was very happy at Grovesham, things had been more difficult at his first school.

Extract 3. S4 Grovesham: pair interview with Filip & Sylwia (F: Filip;
 SY: Sara)

1 F: um. before I went to this school. I was in a different school
 2 SY: ok
 3 F: and people there were just terrible/ I was getting bullied and –
 [...]
 4 SY: ok. what sort of things were they saying? can you tell me?
 5 F: um. they were telling me to go back to Poland/ like. they don't want me here
 6 SY: um-hm
 7 F: and um. yeah they just bullied me physically

The hesitancy with which Filip recounts his story, suggests that he finds it a difficult subject to broach. In an individual interview during the final session (S6), Filip explains how the ongoing bullying was one of the factors that led to his parents’ decision to move to Fieldstone.

Extract 4. S6 Grovesham: individual interview (SY: Sara; F: Filip)

- 1 SY: ok. so why did your parents move to Fieldstone?
 2 F: er – there are a few reasons/ the first one is because we couldn't find a house
 [...]
 3 F: and. er. the second one is because I was getting bullied a lot

Eleven-year-old Sylwia, who moved to Ireland at the age of two, and then to the UK five years later, was another student who had asked to change schools due to bullying. Like Filip, she was reticent in telling her story.

Extract 5. S6 Grovesham: individual interview (SY: Sara; S: Sylwia)

- 1 SY: you went to two different primary schools. [...] was it [the first school] good.
 2 or –?
 3 S: <speaking more quietly> no. cos um. I don't know exactly. but the people
 4 there weren't so nice and they were annoying me
 5 SY: um-hm
 6 S: <still quietly> and they. they just weren't nice to me/ and then I asked Mum to
 7 move school/ and then we found another school.

Usually a vivacious girl, here Sylwia is more subdued as she speaks of her experience. She appears reluctant to give further details beyond saying that ‘the people there weren’t so nice’ (lines 3-4). Nonetheless, it may be inferred that the situation distressed Sylwia enough for her to broach the subject with her mother. As with Filip, Sylwia changed schools.

Once the date of the Referendum was announced, I asked the adolescents for their reaction. Some of them knew very little about the forthcoming vote, while others had stronger views on the topic. Discussions about the Referendum also took place prior to its date being confirmed. In an interview in early February, Greg recounts a conversation with his father:

Extract 6. S3 Grovesham: group interview with Greg, Beata & Janusz (SY: Sara; G: Greg) [3rd Feb]

- 1 SY: ok. um. do you know anything about what's going on in this country with the
 2 referendum – [...]
 3 G: [...] I had this topic with my Dad this morning and my Dad gave
 4 me a thought that well. the people that've been living here a while. they're not

5 gonna like throw them out. they're not going to do that! like you're living
 6 here. but I think that the people who like come in. who are going to be coming
 7 after. coming in. they might have a bit more trouble getting in here/ but I think
 8 the people that are here already. they won't just like throw 'em out. cos like
 9 that would leave like loads of people with unemployment. like the companies
 10 would just go bankrupt/ and people that have bought houses on credit. they're
 11 not going to throw them out. are they? [...]

It is unclear from Greg's description how the subject of leaving was raised. Nonetheless, his story may be taken as an indication that such worries were already being voiced even before the Referendum date had been announced. Jo Malinowska, the Polish teacher at Grovesham, also told me of concerned acquaintances who were investigating how to acquire British passports in the event of a Leave vote.

In the final session, held one month before the Referendum, twelve-year-old Ryszard, resident in the UK since the age of six, also mentioned the idea of leaving.

Extract 7. S6 Grovesham: individual interview at Grovesham (SY: Sara; R: Ryszard) [25th May]

1 SY: ok. so what do you think about what's going on at the moment with the
 2 referendum?
 3 R: um. oh. it's okay. but if we go out the EU. or if the UK goes out the EU. well.
 4 it depends. er. if they will. because I heard that some people have been
 5 saying that one third of the migrants have to. will have to leave. or something
 6 like that

Here, it is unclear whether Ryszard sees himself as part of those who may be asked to leave. However, an analysis of line 3 suggests the way that he is uncertain about his own position. He begins 'if *we* go out the EU', before pausing, and changing the appellation used: 'or if *the UK* goes out the EU' (my emphasis). Ryszard's shift from 'we' to 'the UK' may indicate that he is here positioning himself as someone who no longer belongs in the UK.

Fourteen-year-old Anna, resident in Britain since she was five, is more confident in her use of 'we' when discussing the Referendum, as shown in the extract below.

Extract 8. S2 St Ferdinand's: pair interview with Anna & Krystyna (A: Anna; SY: Sara) [19 Mar]

1 A: I think we should leave [...]
 2 because all of our – we're getting something like budget cuts right now
 3 because all of the. erm. cos we. um. our country's quite rich/ so we get. we
 4 get a lot of money but then we have to like share it out with other countries/ to
 5 help other countries in the European Union where that money could be used
 6 to help us as well
 7 SY: what us like in Britain?
 8 A: yeah! um. and I think we're just like playing it safe by just staying/ I think one
 9 day we'll just have to like get out by ourselves. like. like just be an indepen-
 10 like not independent but like – just be like our own country [...]

Anna's use of the personal pronoun 'we' throughout her response contrasts with Ryszard's shift from 'we' to 'the UK' (Extract 7). The way that Anna talks about becoming 'our own country' (Extract 8, line 11) suggests she has picked up on the discourses of independence as promoted during the Referendum campaign by many of those on the Leave side who saw the UK as ceding increasing sovereignty to the EU.³² That she has a different approach to the Referendum may also be due to the fact that, unlike the other participants in the study, Anna holds both a Polish and a British passport. The 'us' and 'them' dichotomy implicit in the above extracts was reflected in other conversations held with adolescents; it suggests at their uncertainty as to the extent they can consider themselves at all British.

Discussion

The stories told by the adolescents provide a certain insight into their lives in the UK. Many of those interviewed have experienced anti-Polish sentiment in some form or another. The bullying to which they describe being subjected at school would suggest that other children are echoing the prejudices surrounding EU migration, such as those propagated in the media. These are then repeated to their Polish classmates, be this to Greg in terms of 'stealing jobs' (Extract 1, line 1), or in telling Filip 'to go back to Poland' (Extract 3, line 5). The

³² This is still a key argument of the 'Get Britain Out' group, which echoes the rhetoric of the Leave campaign; one of their stated key aims is 'to restore UK democracy' (Get Britain Out website 2017).

behaviour of such children would chime with a 2015 schools survey which reported that ‘60% of the children questioned believed it was true that “asylum seekers and immigrants are stealing our jobs”’ (*The Guardian* 2015).

In the accounts they give, the adolescents do not however position themselves as victims. Rather, they reinforce a sense of their identity as Poles and as citizens with the right to live in Britain as they attempt to explain their situation to those who appear to be challenging such a position. Greg and his classmate defend themselves to the others in the geography lesson; Beata also endeavours to explain the situation in Poland to those who ask why her family left. While the hesitancy with which Filip and Sylwia recount their experiences of bullying may be illustrative of the emotional difficulty this has caused them, both nonetheless position themselves as agentive individuals in the way they take up the decision to change schools. In her study of Poles in Belfast, Marta Kempny identified a tendency for Polish migrants to ascribe to the notion of victimhood.³³ For Filip and Sylwia, however, as for the others in this study, rather than accept such positioning, they challenge others’ perceptions. Despite their initial negative reception in the country, both express their staunch desire to stay in the UK.

In relation to the Referendum, Greg and Ryszard express concerns about whether people will have to leave. Even if this is not voiced explicitly, there is a sense that each of the boys is concerned about his own future position in the UK. This insecurity contrasts with Anna’s pronouncement that leaving the EU would be better for Britain; her British passport allows her to speak from a place of greater security. Anna’s comments may also be seen to be echoing the arguments promulgated by the Leave campaign, and by UKIP. It is necessary to recognise that there were Poles living in Britain who became members of UKIP,³⁴ although discussion of this lies beyond the remit of this current paper.

It is also important to be wary of making broad generalisations based on a study of eleven participants. There were several adolescents at both Grovesham and St Ferdinand’s who chose not to take part in the

³³ Marta Kempny (2011) ‘Interpretative Repertoire of Victimhood: Narrating Experiences of Discrimination and Ethnic Hatred among Polish Migrants in Belfast’ in *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*, 20(1), pp. 132-151.

³⁴ *The Economist* (2015). ‘Nigel Farage’s Polish friends’ 3 February 2015. Available at: <https://www.economist.com/news/britain/21641989-nigel-farages-polish-friends>

research, and who may not have been as open about wanting to discuss the question of their identity. This would echo findings by Sordyl and Janus whose study of Poles in the London Borough of Lambeth noted the existence of those who prefer to disguise their Polish origins.³⁵

Nonetheless, it appears from the accounts given by those who did participate in this study that many of the adolescents feel themselves to be part of the UK. In their stories, the adolescents present themselves as individuals who are constantly asserting their right to be in the UK, explaining this to those who question that right, simultaneously asserting their identity as Poles but also as valid citizens within British society.

Conclusion

While my study was conducted in the run-up to Brexit, several themes which emerged from the research remain pertinent in the current context. These issues have taken on greater urgency and intensity following the Referendum, but they are not new in themselves. The anti-Polish sentiment that was argued to be a feature of post-Referendum reaction has in fact been part of these adolescents' lives for a number of years. For those in this study, however, such challenges do not appear to have thwarted their desire to remain in the UK or the aspirations they hold for their future. Of greater concern is how the outcome of the Brexit deal will affect these adolescents' ambitions.

As of winter 2017, Brexit negotiations are ongoing, with Britain's official withdrawal from the EU timetabled for March 2019. As noted above, the Referendum was initially planned for the end of 2017. It is a moot point to consider how things may have been different had the then government adhered to that original schedule.

Writing of the Polish community in Britain in earlier times, Sheila Patterson remarked: '[t]he European political situation is so fluid that it would be rash to predict the future of the Polish exile community in Britain'.³⁶ That Patterson was writing at a time when the dominance of

³⁵ Marta Sordyl and Paulina Janus (2013) *Polish Insight Project* Available at: <http://www.stockwell.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Polish-Insight-Project-report.pdf>

³⁶ Sheila Patterson (1961) 'The Polish Exile Community in Britain' in *The Polish Review*, 6(3), pp. 69-97, p. 97.

the Soviet Union appeared unassailable serves to underline the eternally capricious nature of political events. In the maelstrom of the Brexit negotiations and the tumult of uncertainty engendered by the process, what remains paramount is the importance of listening to younger voices about the challenges they have faced and continue to encounter; and how these should be recognised in the ongoing discussions over the impact of Brexit.

Appendix

Transcript conventions adapted from Coates (1996, pp. xii-xiii).

(/) indicates the end of a chunk of talk, where this is not marked by a question mark or exclamation mark.

⟨⟩ non-verbal utterance.

(.) a short pause; (–) a longer pause.

[...] marks an ellipsis in the transcript.

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Should we stay or should we go? Poles in the UK during Brexit

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Introduction

As psychologists we are used to the idea of supporting people in solving problems, especially in times and circumstances when our clients are facing uncertainty and have doubts about their future. A basic rule of counselling is, however, not to consider our own opinions as 'expert'. Usually the psychologist's role is to follow the client and to focus on what is best for the client according to the clients' values and belief system. We ask questions, and we undermine some simplifications. Our expertise is the ability to form tentative and open-ended questions that are supposed to become 'food for thought' for our clients. Very often the client expects an unequivocal response to the question: 'What shall I do now? How to live my life? You are an expert, fix me doctor'. The psychologist's job is to help in building the client's ownership, confidence and will to overcome future obstacles without asking us 'What to do now?' every time a life crisis occurs.

We are asked by members of our community, by those who trust us and by society more broadly, to give our expert opinion about the effects of Britain's decision to leave the EU as a result of the referendum held in the United Kingdom on 23 June 2016. Polish Psychologists practising and conducting scientific research in the UK are also expected to offer an opinion on whether immigrants and their families should leave or remain. In short, 'shall we stay in the UK, leave the country or just prepare ourselves for a general and overwhelming change in our lives that is awaiting us in an uncertain and unstable future?'

The authors of this chapter are experts in different fields of psychology. We are therapists and organisational psychology consultants, researchers as well as practitioners. We focus on interpersonal relations, partnership issues, trust and commitment, organisational conflict management, and cooperation in groups and teams. All of the authors are academic researchers and practitioners in the field of cross-cultural psychology. We analyse the phenomenon of Brexit from the perspective of partnership, trust, relationship building and team work on the scale of individuals and families, as well as in

relation to two large groups in Britain: Polish immigrants and the British host population. As a theoretical framework we use the Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM) developed by Navas, García, Sánchez, Rojas, Pumares and Fernández.¹ Our key questions include the following:

- i) Is Brexit a form of acculturation crisis between the British host who decided to end the relationship with ‘carelessly invited’ guests (i.e. immigrants)?
- ii) Can we perceive this as an extreme form of culture clash?
- iii) Can we look at it from the perspective of group cooperation mechanisms?
- iv) Are some members of the group feeling excluded, unwanted?
- v) What psychological mechanisms stand behind the post-Brexit decisions of the Polish community in the UK?

Theoretical framework: mutual acculturation process

A direct consequence of international migration is the creation of societies consisting of people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. One important question cross-cultural psychologists ask in their research on plural societies is: how do people of different cultural backgrounds deal with the close and daily interactions these societies offer? A psychological approach towards processes of relationship dynamics is based on analysing the point of view of both sides of the relationship. Similarly, in the case of intercultural relations, we should study psychological acculturation, taking into consideration both the host and immigrant populations’ perspectives.² In addition, the social, economic and historical context in which the relationships develop should be analysed.

The psychological acculturation process refers to the process of change (in terms of lifestyle, attitudes, identity, values, etc.) occurring

¹ Marisol Navas, María García, Juan Sánchez, Antonia Rojas, Pablo Pumares, Juan Fernández (2005) ‘Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM): New contributions with regard to the study of acculturation’ in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29, pp. 21-37.

² Ursula Piontkowski, Anette Rohmann, Arnd Florack (2002) ‘Concordance of acculturation attitudes and perceived threat’ in *Group Processes and Interpersonal Relations*, 5, pp. 221– 232.

in the situation of coming into continuous contact with members of a different culture. It refers to ‘changes in an individual who is a participant in a culture contact situation, being influenced both directly by the external culture, and by the changing culture of which the individual is a member’.³ Initially acculturation was conceptualised as an unidimensional and unidirectional process. A central assumption of early approaches was that changes primarily occur among minorities and immigrant groups.⁴ Currently, researchers agree that both groups that remain in contact mutually influence each other. It is therefore not only the process of immigrants changing their lifestyle under the influence of a host society. It also means that the host society changes in the context of immigration. And this very process of mutually influenced changes can be, according to the literature quoted below, a source of economic and social advantage, as well as a cultural clash. Brexit is therefore perceived here as a phenomenon occurring at the very high end of the ‘cross-cultural clash scale’.

Acculturation processes as complex and multidimensional are analysed in different domains and fields in which both cultures change (e.g. political, work, economic, family, social, religion and ways of thinking).⁵ In all these fields it is important to search for solutions that help incorporate immigrants into their new societies and allow effective coexistence between majorities and minorities. If solutions are difficult to find or introduce, a particular emotional climate among members of both groups can appear: the climate of mutual distrust and bias. We propose here that this is the psychological process we can currently observe in the UK.

According to bidimensional models of acculturation as well as more recent contributions, different acculturation preferences may be identified as a combination of two dimensions: the maintenance of one’s own culture, and the adoption of the host culture, for both majority and minority groups.⁶ Crossing these two dimensions (maintenance / adoption) we find four possible acculturation strategies.

³ John Berry (2005) ‘Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures’ *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29, pp. 697-712; p. 701.

⁴ Gabriel Horenczyk, Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti, David Sam, Paul Vedder (2013) ‘Mutuality in Acculturation. Toward an Integration’ in *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, 221, pp. 205-213.

⁵ Navas et al. (2005).

⁶ On bidimensional models see John Berry (1999) ‘Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies’ in *Canadian Psychology*, 40 (1) pp. 12-21. More recent contributions include Richard Bourhis, Lena Moïse, Stephane Perreault, Sacha Senécal (1997) ‘Towards an

1. The strategy of *Integration* builds on maintaining elements of home culture and blending them with adopted elements of the culture of the host society.
2. The strategy of *Assimilation* assumes the adoption of the culture of the host society without maintaining elements of the home culture. This is more frequent among the second or third generation of immigrants. They are aware of their grandparents' origins, but identify with the culture of the country of their birth.
3. The *Separation* strategy means maintaining elements of the home culture without contact/adoption of elements from the host society. This strategy that can lead to the creation of specific *ghetto* communities.
4. The *Marginalisation* strategy means not maintaining or adopting cultural elements from any of the cultures. It refers to living beyond culture. In classical models it is described as cultural exclusion and cultural homelessness. The marginalisation option is probably viable only for a small segment of migrants.⁷ The likelihood that an individual would develop a cultural sense of self without drawing on any of the cultural contexts is very low.⁸ Recent approaches however find this kind of strategy among modern expats calling themselves 'citizens of the world without a cultural anchor'. These people attach themselves to the value system of the organisational culture of a big corporation rather than to the particular traditions of any country.⁹ Another possible explanation is that some individuals reject both host and home culture because

interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach' in *International Journal of Psychology*, 32 (6), pp. 369–386; Pionkowski et al.(2002); Navas et al. (2005).

⁷ John Berry (2006) 'Contexts of acculturation' in D. L. Sam & J. W. Berry (eds.), *Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 27–42.

⁸ Seth Schwartz, Jennifer Unger, Byron Zamboanga, José Szapocznik (2010) 'Rethinking the concept of acculturation' in *American Psychologist*, 4, pp. 237-251.

⁹ Magdalena Łużniak-Piecha and S. Witkowski (2007) 'Styles of Coping with Culture Shock in Global Companies: Methodological Aspects of Cross-Cultural Studies' in *Human Resources Management* 6A, pp. 83-96.

they identify themselves as individuals rather than members of certain national or cultural group.¹⁰

According to Navas and Rojas, acculturation preferences also depend on particular areas.¹¹ On the one hand, we may distinguish more public, or peripheral areas, i.e., political, social well-being, work and economic, on the other hand, private areas, the hard core of the culture, i.e., social, family, religion and value system. In these terms psychologists have highlighted the need to consider the fact that members of either a minority or a majority may have different acculturation preferences depending on the context, that is, the area of life in which this process occurs. For example, a person may prefer assimilation (full adoption of different culture values) in a work context, integration (partially adopting other culture, while maintaining own culture values) in the area of social relations, among friends from different cultures, and separation (maintaining own culture only) in the religious area. The same person may develop all those three preferences simultaneously.¹²

Rojas et al. in their Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM) also proposed that in addition to the preferred acculturation strategy, depending on the area of life (public or private), there are also differences depending on the group analysed (majority or minority).¹³ In public areas (i.e., political, social well-being, work, economic), intergroup contact is more frequent, but focused on relatively basic tasks necessary to survive and manage everyday life in the new society (e.g., work, commuting, going to movies, shopping). So immigrants (minority group) would be expected to prefer adopting elements from the host society culture (i.e., assimilation or integration). In private areas (i.e., social, family, religious, values), tasks and activities are relatively deeper rooted in cultural heritage and system of beliefs.

¹⁰ Fernando Rivera and Giovani Burgos (2010) ‘The Health Status of Puerto Ricans in Florida’ in *Centro Journal*, 22 (1), pp. 199-217.

¹¹ Marisol Navas, María García, Juan Sánchez, Antonia Rojas, Pablo Pumares (2007) ‘Acculturation strategies and attitudes according to the relative acculturation extended model (RAEM): The perspectives of natives versus immigrants’ in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 31, pp. 67-86.

¹² Antonio Rojas, Marisol Navas, Pablo Sayans-Jiménez, Isabel Cuadrado (2014) ‘Acculturation Preference Profiles of Spaniards and Romanian Immigrants: The Role of Prejudice and Public and Private Acculturation Areas’ in *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 154, pp. 339–351.

¹³ Rojas et al. (2014).

Private areas are often more focused on interaction with family and closer friends – in-group members (however, such an in-group may with time become an intercultural circle as well). Immigrants would be expected to try to keep their home culture (e.g. families may keep their home-culture festive traditions; friends may keep their own traditions and cherish them in a smaller circle). Therefore, we may observe preference for integration or separation as a strategy to maintain one's own in-group identity.

From the point of view of the native, majority group, the preference for immigrants to maintain their culture might be weaker, sometimes even perceived as a symbolic threat to majority values, or culture. In the public sphere, the majority group would expect a stronger presence of assimilation among immigrants (e.g. laws forcing students to uncover their faces at most European universities). Private spheres may be perceived as those in which integration of immigrants (partly keeping their own heritage, partly adopting new ways) would be preferred by the majority.¹⁴

Cross-cultural psychology research has shown that acculturation preferences (in majority and minority groups) depend on many variables. One of these is the level of tension between two groups, especially out-group prejudice. The UK studies about acculturation preferences and out-group prejudice suggest that natives who prefer the integration of immigrants are less prejudiced against them and show less in-group bias.¹⁵ Strongly prejudiced people in the host society do not want immigrants to integrate. In this article we propose to consider Brexit as a very strong voice against integration – so strong that a large part of British society preferred to *disintegrate themselves* from the EU.

British host society and the challenge of immigration

Since we propose to analyse the Brexit phenomenon assuming that acculturation is a mutual process, we should consider both sides: the British majority as well as the immigrant minority. The research data

¹⁴ Rojas et al. (2014).

¹⁵ For example, Hanna Zagefka, Linda Tip, Roberto González, Rupert Brown & Marco Cinnirella (2012) ‘Predictors of majority members’ acculturation preferences: Experimental evidence’ in *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48, pp. 654–659.

we present comes from the Polish community. We analyse the problem of Poles in the UK during Brexit later in the chapter. First, we present a brief overview of the literature analysing reasons for British citizens to vote Remain or Leave.

To understand the psychological consequences of the Brexit vote in the UK we need to look at the psychological climate of the UK before and right after the vote. David Coleman noted that:

Most economists warned of the serious negative consequences of leaving. Ten Nobel-prize winning economists reinforced that view, seconded by the formidable Madame Lagarde of the IMF, the OECD, Goldman Sachs, George Soros, and sundry others. The British Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne (now ex-Chancellor) painted a particularly grim picture, warning of the immediate emergency measures needed to fend off economic collapse in the case of a ‘Leave’ vote. All the leaders of the EU countries agreed, as did Prime Minister David Cameron and most of his cabinet, most members of the UK Parliament, all living former UK Prime Ministers, 13 former US Secretaries of State, and the former head of the CIA. Five former heads of NATO and most former security chiefs of the UK warned of weaker European security post-Brexit. Most of the heavyweight press were solidly behind ‘Remain’. Yet the British electorate have voted for Brexit, by a majority of 1.3 million.¹⁶

British voting to Remain supported a standpoint that staying in the EU would benefit the economy, international investments, as well as the UK’s global-player position. Britain’s EU position was something of the best of both worlds: membership of the EU Single Market, without Schengen and the Euro. In general Remain supporters concentrated on the economic and international politics reasons for EU membership maintenance. The undertone of the Remain campaign was more cogitative than emotional. Cogitative and reasonable is certainly a proper state of mind for the consideration of important decisions influencing the future of the modern world, economy and politics, as well as the psychological climate of international relations and global economy.

¹⁶ David Coleman (2016) ‘A Demographic Rationale for Brexit’ in *Population & Development Review*. December 2016, 42 (4), pp. 681-692; p. 681.

However, as much as reason and economy are important, they are not very good selling factors in a political marketing campaign. Emotions, especially strong emotions like fear, e.g. fear of immigrants taking jobs and benefits, are much more ‘interesting’ from a spin doctor’s point of view. A strong economy and investments are not as stimulating for the imagination as ‘immigration waves’ are.¹⁷ Gietel-Basten quite vividly summarised the emotional ‘power’ of the Remain campaign. The leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, stated that his passion for staying in the EU was about “seven, or seven and a half” out of ten. Such statements did not engender EU enthusiasm among the electorate or invigorate the Remain campaign.¹⁸

Sovereignty, autonomy and immigration control were the most important arguments for Leave supporters. Importantly, the Brexit vote was not based only on discussion about the economy and immigration. Deeper reasons were also: rising inequality and insecurity, and a distrust of the political elite.¹⁹ Robert Tombs notes that Europe is now being governed by an intrusive bureaucracy that earns little affection or loyalty.²⁰ The 17.41 million votes for Leave were the largest number ever cast for any cause in any British election.²¹ In circumstances of inequality, insecurity, as well as in a “kick them up the backside” mood, the fear of immigrants stoked the emotional tension.

In 2004 the UK government allowed free entry for work to the eight Eastern European EU accession countries (the A8) as soon as they joined the EU. The Polish-born population in the UK increased from 95,000 before EU accession in 2004 to 643,000 in 2011.²² In 2004 170,000 Eastern Europeans lived in the UK. By 2013 it was 1.24 million people. It is the largest inflow in British history. Forward planning or adequate provision was very often difficult or impossible

¹⁷ See Coleman (2016: 682).

¹⁸ Stuart Gietel-Basten (2016) ‘Why Brexit? The Toxic Mix of Immigration and Austerity’ in *Population & Development Review* December 2016, 42(4), pp. 673-680, p. 674.

¹⁹ See Coleman (2016: 682).

²⁰ Robert Tombs (2016) ‘The English revolt: Brexit, Euroscepticism and the future of the United Kingdom’ in *New Statesman*, 24 July 2016.

Available at: www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2016/07/english-revolt

²¹ John Harris (2016) ‘Britain is in the midst of a working class revolt’, *The Guardian*, 17 June 2016. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jun/17/britain-working-class-revolt-eu-referendum>; Coleman (2016).

²² Coleman (2016: 684).

with such numbers. Hence many of the problems in schools, housing, and the National Health Service – all of them quite prominently presented in the media.²³ Gietel-Basten points out that policymakers know the pros and cons of immigration; populism, however, tends to emphasise the cons.

Once a narrative critical of immigration is created and embedded in a broader narrative on the fragility of infrastructure and public services, the need for belt-tightening, and threatened national identity (...) it becomes very difficult to reshape.²⁴

Goodwin and Milazzo presented findings describing key predictors of the vote for Brexit, contending that the increase in the rate of immigration at the local level and sentiments regarding control over immigration were significant.²⁵ These seem to be important Brexit vote factors, even after accounting for factors stressed by established theories of Eurosceptic voting. Goodwin and Milazzo contend that ‘a large reservoir of support for leaving the EU, and perhaps anti-immigration populism more widely, will remain in Britain, so long as immigration remains a salient issue’.²⁶

The Polish community has contributed to the increase in the UK-born population. Among new mothers coming from outside the UK, Poles now rank first (22,928 live births), more than Pakistanis (17,342) and Indians (13,780).²⁷ These facts are obviously grounds on which a narrative of ‘overpopulation’ in the UK could appear. Gietel-Basten notes that one of the Brexit vote effects was ‘a wave of anti-foreigner violence (chiefly aimed at Poles), the likes of which have not been experienced for decades’. In addition, ‘non-British EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals on the Continent are on tenterhooks, fearing disruption of their lives and careers’.²⁸

²³ See Coleman (2016: 684).

²⁴ Gietel-Basten, (2016: 674).

²⁵ Matthew Goodwin and Caitlin Milazzo (2017) ‘Taking back control? Investigating the role of immigration in the 2016 vote for Brexit’ in *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 19(3), pp. 450-464.

²⁶ Goodwin and Milazzo (2017: 450).

²⁷ Coleman, (2016: 685).

²⁸ Gietel-Basten (2016: 673).

Rapid cultural and ethnic changes in the structure of British society may be causing some Britons discomfort. In addition, British society faces problems in healthcare and in housing. ‘Immigration fatigue’ may have occurred among some UK citizens.

The Present Study

The grim post-Brexit picture of Britain was not enough to stop many voters from choosing the ‘Leave’ option. However it could have a strong psychological influence on those who could not vote, but whose future was strongly dependent on the referendum result – immigrants in the UK. Therefore different kinds of concerns were felt among the Polish community in UK. To analyse those concerns and the psychological climate among Polish immigrants, psychologists from The Polish University Abroad in London designed a research programme: ‘Poles in Britain during Brexit’.

Method

Participants

617 respondents took part in the survey. 63% were women, 37% were men. 56% were people aged 35-49; 63% were people who came to Great Britain in the years 2004-2010. We claim our research group to be representative of the Young Polish Emigration. 69% were people living in the UK with their families. 49% of respondents held university degrees, 51% were people with secondary education. 71% were employed permanently or on a contract.

Variables and Instruments

For the purpose of the survey we created an on-line questionnaire with open-ended and multiple choice questions. We asked about:

- a. The effects of Brexit from the point of view of the Polish Young Emigration.

- b. Poles' decisions to stay or leave after Brexit. Were their future plans to stay in the UK or leave for Poland?
- c. Polish immigrants' expectations from the UK Government – in the event that they stay in the UK.
- d. Polish immigrants' concerns and expectations – in the event that they leave the UK and return to Poland.

We correlated Brexit decisions and concerns with respondents' level of education and gender.

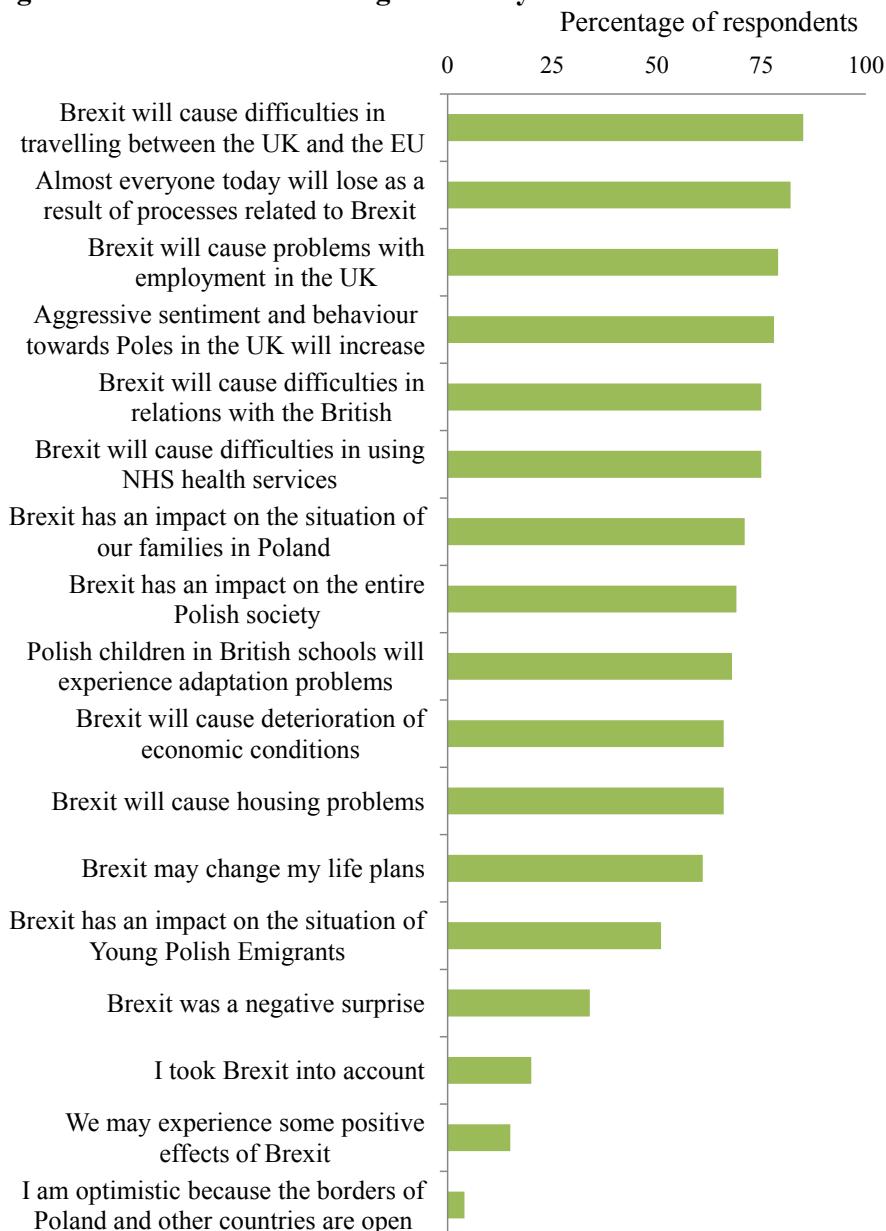
Procedure

An on-line questionnaire was circulated among the Polish community in the UK with the cooperation of students and graduates of The Polish University Abroad in London.

Results

The first part of the study shows Polish immigrants' main concerns about Brexit (Figure 1). The most frequent statements concern difficulties in travelling between the UK and European Union (85%), and a general anticipation of 'everyone has lost' as a result of Brexit (82%). Polish respondents expect employment problems in the UK (79%), aggressive mood and behaviour towards Poles in the UK (78%), general difficulties in relations with British citizens (75%), as well as in using NHS services (75%). Poles in Britain are also worried about the financial situation of their families in Poland who depend on the remittances they receive from those working in the UK (71%).

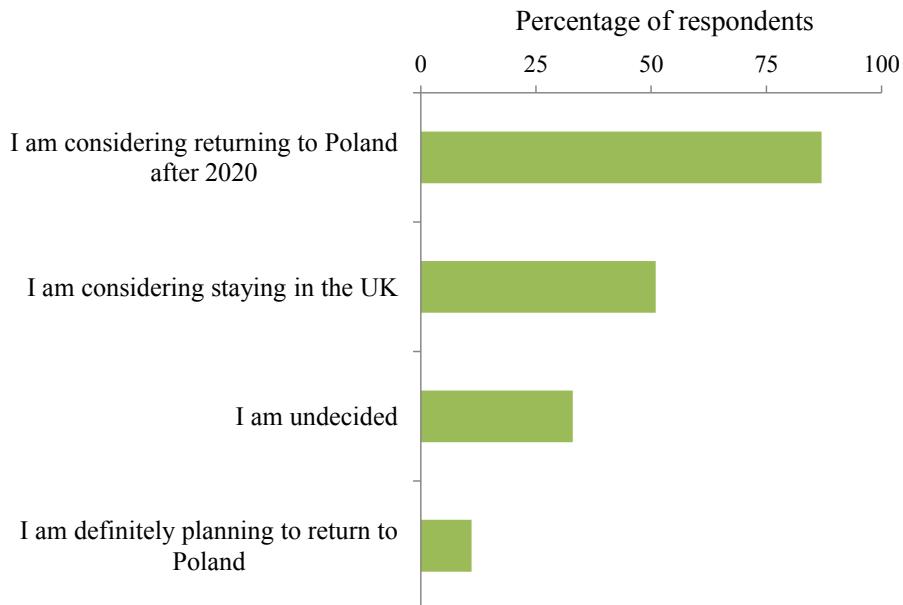
Respondents are concerned by the situation of the entire Polish community in the UK (69%), as well as the situation of Polish children in British schools (68%). Polish immigrants are also afraid that Brexit will cause the deterioration of economic conditions (66%), create housing problems (66%) and precipitate changes in life plans (61%). For 34% of respondents, Brexit was a negative surprise, however 20% took it into account. 15% seem to be optimistic and expect positive changes following Brexit, another 4% sustain optimism because of open borders in other countries.

Figure 1: Brexit viewed through Polish eyes

Source: Czubińska, Lużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study

We asked our respondents about their decisions relating to returning to Poland after the Brexit referendum (Figure 2). A large proportion of Poles are considering returning to Poland after 2020 (87%) and half of the respondents (51%) are considering staying in the UK. There is an overlap here with people weighing their options. In addition, one third of respondents freely admit to being undecided (33%). Firm decisions have not yet been made by the majority of Poles: only 11% of respondents stated that they will definitely return to Poland. The aggregate percentage of answers is higher than 100 since multiple answers were possible.

Figure 2: The Decision to Stay or to Leave

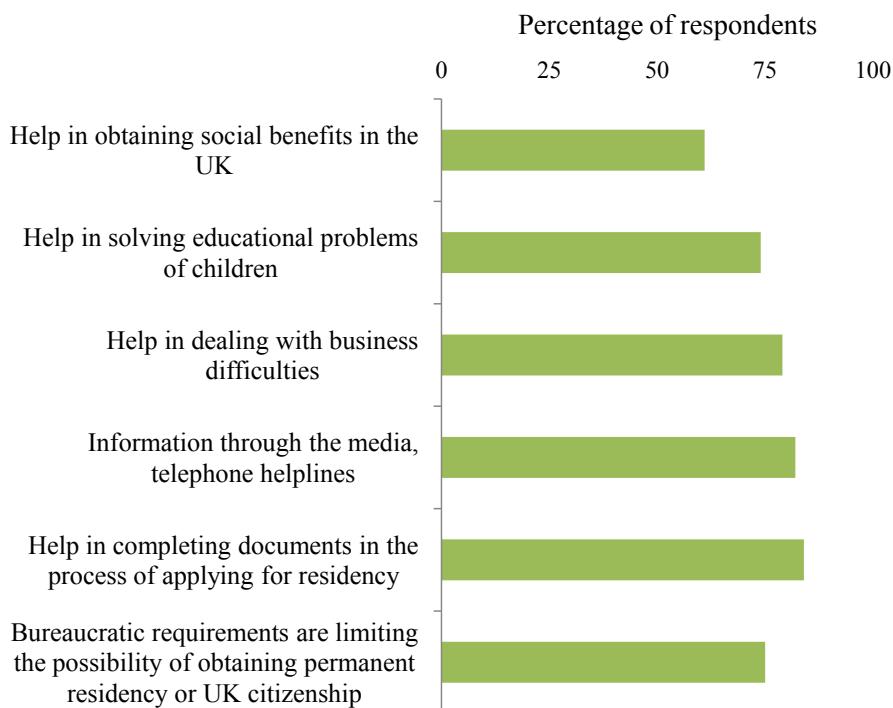


Source: Czubińska, Łużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study

What are the expectations of the Polish community if they stay in the UK? What kind of help would they expect from the British

Government? 75% of our respondents claim that bureaucracy is the main obstacle in trying to obtain permanent residency (Figure 3). Therefore 84% of respondents would appreciate help in the process of applying for residency, 82% mentioned the need for information sources – telephone helplines, media – help to solve business problems would be appreciated by 79%, as well as help in solving children's educational problems (74%), 61% would like to be supported in the process of obtaining social benefits in the UK.

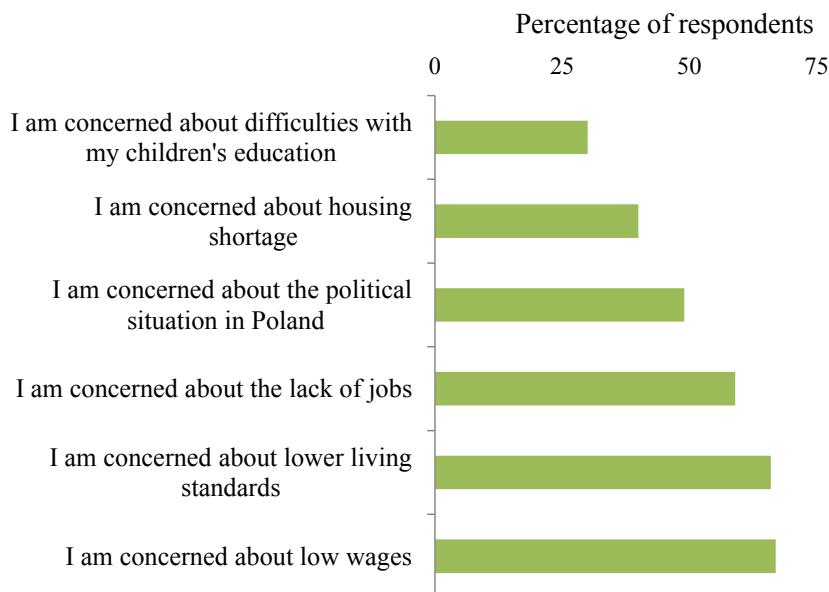
Figure 3: Staying in the UK: Poles' expectations of the British Government



Source: Czubińska, Łużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study

Return to Poland seems to be a very difficult decision (Figure 4). According to 67% of respondents, an important concern is the potential drop in wages. 66% are concerned by the lower living standards, 59% by the lack of employment opportunities, 49% by the political situation in Poland. 40% mentioned housing problems in Poland and 30% pointed to the educational problems facing children.

Figure 4: Concerns about returning to Poland

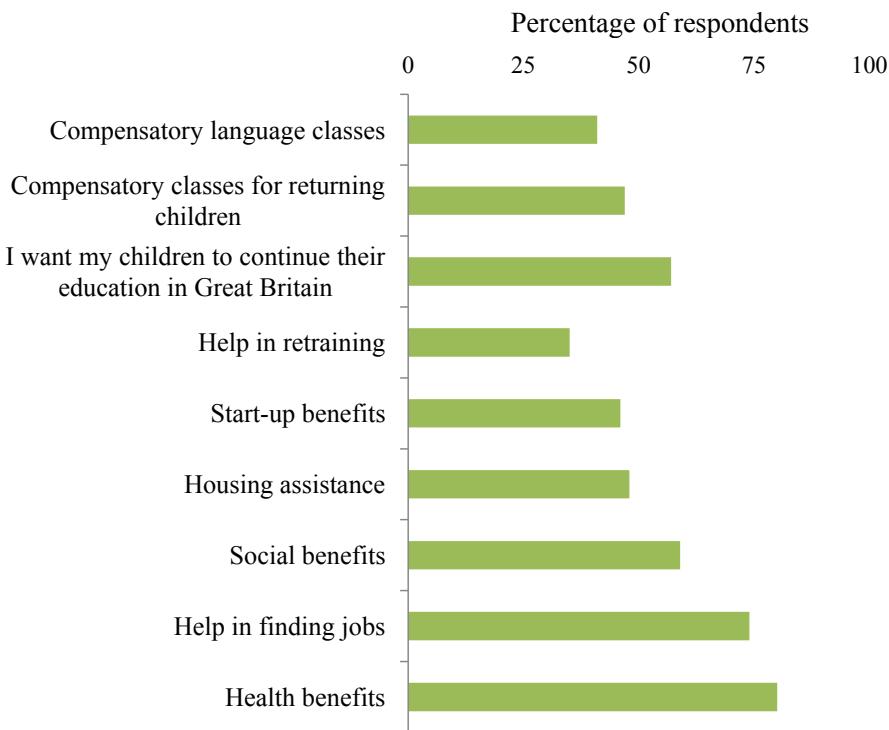


Source: Czubińska, Łużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study

Our respondents seem to have significant expectations about governmental help in case they return to Poland (Figure 5). The Polish Government is expected to deliver support in solving health benefits problems (80%), employment problems (74%), social benefits (59%), housing problems (48%), business start-up problems (46%), retraining problems (35%). 57% of respondents prefer their children to continue education in the UK. 47% mention compensatory classes that seem to

be necessary for children to thrive in Polish schools. 41% mention compensatory Polish language classes for children coming from the UK.

Figure 5: Returning to Poland: Returnees' Expectations of the Polish Government



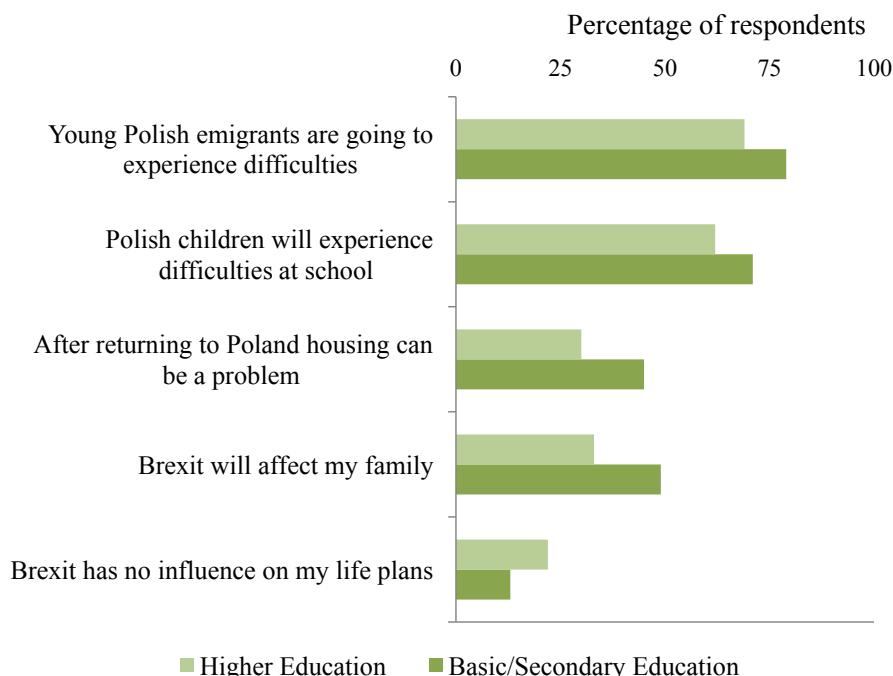
Source: Czubińska, Łużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study

We examined the influence of the respondents' education level on the spectrum of Brexit concerns among Young Polish Emigration in the UK. Our data suggest that respondents with higher education (university degrees) perceive Brexit as affecting their life less compared to Poles with a lower level of education (vocational and secondary education) (Figure 6). 22% of tertiary-level educated Poles claim that

Brexit has no influence on their life, while 13% of secondary education respondents can say the same.

49% of respondents with secondary education are worried that Brexit will affect their families; only 33% of Poles with university degrees expresses the same concern. Housing seems to be a possible problem after returning to Poland for 45% of Poles with secondary education and for 30% of tertiary-level educated Polish immigrants. 71% of Poles with secondary education are concerned with the educational problems of their children after coming back to Poland, compared to 61% of Polish parents with higher education. In general 79% of Poles with secondary education predict problems in the future of the Young Polish Emigration in the UK, while this point of view is shared by 69% of the tertiary-level educated Polish community in the UK.

Figure 6: Brexit Concerns According to Level of Education



Source: Czubińska, Łużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study, p-value < 0.05

We examined the connection between gender and Brexit concerns among Polish immigrants in the UK. Women experience more fear than men in every aspect we asked about (Figure 7). 70% of female respondents are concerned with the deterioration of economic conditions, while 60% of male respondents express concern about the same issue. 72% of women fear housing problems compared with 56% of men. Adaptation difficulties in Poland are bothering 63% of women compared with 52% of men. Educational difficulties of children are troubling 33% of women and only 21% of men.

It also seems significant that 47% of women do not expect retraining help from the government after returning to Poland. 38% of men share this view. 77% of women expect help in solving educational problems of children and 67% of men state the same.

Figure 7: Brexit Concerns According to Gender



Source: Czubińska, Lużniak-Piecha, Golińska, Kulczyk (2017), data from the study, p-value < 0.05

Conclusion

This research, theoretically supported by the RAEM model of mutual acculturation by Rojas et al., is an attempt to analyse the relationship between two different perspectives of Brexit's effect. Brexit is presented as an extreme acculturation strategy based on (part of) British society's decision to reduce the intensiveness and level of contact with other cultures. In the terms of the RAEM model, we may say that the UK has decided to go in the direction of separation rather than integration. In both public and private areas and in two groups – native majority Britons and minority immigrant Poles – we can describe corresponding patterns of concern. Some British people were afraid that the educational system as well as the NHS would not sustain the intensity of immigration. The rapid and salient cultural change was also not warmly welcomed by a significant proportion of Britons. Polish immigrants expressed concern in the area of educational problems of children as well as in areas of healthcare and possible decreases in the standard of life.

Some of the Brexit literature referred to in this chapter suggests that Brexit can be interpreted as a British working class revolt. Representatives of the Polish working class among the respondents to our study expressed greater concerns and fears about the Brexit effects than those Poles from other classes.

This chapter's very brief comparison can suggest that both parties, representatives of both cultures, are probably following more or less the same acculturation strategy. As Rojas and Navas say, acculturation is a mutual process.²⁹ The fact that both sides are experiencing corresponding concerns may obviously intensify tensions. It may, however, make mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue more likely if both sides decide to express their fears and try to find common solutions based on mutual understanding.

As mentioned earlier in this text, complex and multidimensional acculturation processes need to be analysed in the different domains in which both cultures change (public and private; political, work, economic, family, social, religion and ways of thinking...). In all those fields it is important to search for solutions to help the majority and immigrants find common ground. Further research is necessary to establish if such empathetic exchange is possible.

²⁹ Rojas et al. (2014).

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Brexit Mobilities: Anticipating a New Polish Mobility Regime in the UK

Kathy Burrell

Introduction

Brexit, even before it has fully materialised, has already become a significant presence in the lives of Polish, and other EU, nationals in the UK. Most fundamentally it has generated new worries about how easy it is going to be to stay living in the UK afterwards, alongside uncertainties about a wide range of future plans such as family arrangements, work, housing and healthcare access.¹ Poles, like all of the 3 million UK/EU nationals, are now contemplating a future which will have to be negotiated within the ‘hostile environment’, rather than the one which had been anticipated, unfolding from within the relative privileges of the EU. This promise of a change in the legal status of EU citizens has brought with it a wider, and well documented,² sense of not feeling at home anymore in a place you have grown comfortable in, of being stuck ‘in limbo’. All of this uncertainty has also had to be endured against a backdrop of heightened race hate crime and a steady stream of reliably hostile media coverage.

These are the most prominent concerns and the issues likely to impact most seriously on the ability of people to remain in the UK – potential problems and changes which are also expected to be highly stratified in how they affect people across different occupations and positions. However, there are further vulnerabilities on the horizon which are not immediately obvious and which are being talked about much less. What Brexit could do is threaten a whole series of ‘secondary mobilities’ – connections which have been part of the rich and plentiful transnational activities which now feel entrenched, normal and perhaps even mundane, and which have been forged within the wider remit of the politics and governance of the EU mobility regime. This contribution considers three types of secondary mobility which may be at risk for Polish migrants with the advent of the Brexit process.

¹ See Majella Kilkey (2017) ‘Conditioning Family-life at the Intersection of Migration and Welfare: The Implications for ‘Brexit Families’ in *Journal of Social Policy*, pp. 1-18.

² See Elena Remigi, Véronique Martin and Tim Sykes (eds.) (2017) *In Limbo: Brexit Testimonies from EU Citizens in the UK*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Acknowledging the Era of Hypermobility

At the time of writing – 18 months after the Brexit referendum leave result in June 2016 – hindsight has already suggested that the period between 2004 and Brexit may well have been an historical anomaly in terms of the relative freedom of movement of people into the UK it enabled, and certainly in terms of European migration movements more generally. In some senses – high profile deportations of EU citizens for example – this era has already ended, even before Brexit has happened. It is instructive now to remind ourselves of the kinds of mobility contexts which characterised this period. Of course, freedom of movement – and the freedom to stay, and crucially, to move back and forth between the two countries at will – was never as straightforward or universal as is sometimes suggested, was still linked to working status in some way,³ and was always counterbalanced by costs and struggles.⁴

From the viewpoint of Brexit, however, we can see that the emergence of those post-millennial narratives of UK/EU migration – of the ‘hypermobility’ of movers and shakers, of commuters and shuttlers – were picking up on something very significant, and historically distinctive, about this European mobility regime.⁵ Importantly here, this hypermobility extended beyond the right to migrate and stay, and also helped to shape the physical experience of actually moving and of keeping in touch. EU migrants who moved to the UK after 2004 not only did so with a certain amount of automatic legal protections, but also with technological and practical benefits too, aided by highly developed industries and infrastructures designed to make moving back and forth and keeping in touch much easier, and focused on reducing the practical distance between the two countries. So, what is likely to happen to those distances now? How might we anticipate new secondary mobilities regimes post-Brexit for UK Polonia?

³ See Kilkey (2017).

⁴ Magdalena Nowicka (2012) ‘Deskilling in migration in transnational perspective. The case of recent Polish migration to the UK’ *COMCAD* Working Paper, 112; Bridgit Anderson (2010) ‘Migration, immigration controls and the fashioning of precarious workers’ in *Work, Employment and Society*, 24:2, pp. 300-317; Ben Rogaly (2008) ‘Intensification of workplace regimes in British horticulture: the role of migrant workers’ in *Population, Space and Place*, 14(6), pp. 497-510.

⁵ Adrian Favell (2008) ‘The new face of East-West migration in Europe’ in *Journal of ethnic and migration studies*, 34(5), pp. 701-716.

Communications after Brexit

First of all, communication links are important to consider here, as they underpin so much transnational connection. ‘Keeping in touch’ technology has come a long way since Vertovec’s ‘cheap calls’.⁶ Online connections have been shown to be hugely significant in migrants’ lives, especially for shaping and nurturing family relationships, new family and friendship routines and traditions, and of course, while this is not exclusive to EU nationals at all,⁷ Polish migrants have been described as very ‘computer savvy’ (Metykova, 2010).⁸ This imaginative, communicative mobility⁹ – text, WhatsApp, Skype, FaceTime, Facebook – has been foundational for Polish-UK transnational ties.

It seems as if this kind of mobility should stay intact after Brexit. The main risk appears to be leaving the EU mobile phone roaming charge zone – something the UK has only relatively recently joined. Phone calls may therefore become expensive, and perhaps have fewer consumer protections, but those other connections should remain relatively stable; these developments in communications technology and accessibility have largely been happening outside of those kinds of national and supranational frameworks which are now suddenly revealed to be more vulnerable to political changes. In fact, in light of discussions we will be moving to shortly about possible impacts on the physical movements of goods and people between the two countries, virtual mobilities could be set to become even more important than they

⁶ Steven Vertovec (2004) ‘Cheap Calls: the social glue of migrant transnationalism’ in *Global Networks*, 4(2), pp. 219-24.

⁷ Katherine Botterill (2014) ‘Family and mobility in second modernity: Polish migrant narratives of individualization and family life’ in *Sociology*, 48(2), pp. 233-250; Mirca Madianou (2012) ‘Migration and the accentuated ambivalence of motherhood: The role of ICTs in Filipino transnational families’ in *Global Networks*, 12(3), pp. 277-295; Rhacel Parreñas (2005) ‘Long distance intimacy: class, gender and intergenerational relations between mothers and children in Filipino transnational families’ in *Global Networks*, 5(4), pp. 317-336.

⁸ Monika Metykova (2010) ‘Only a mouse click away from home: transnational practices of Eastern European migrants in the United Kingdom’ in *Social Identities*, 16(3), pp. 325-338.

⁹ See John Urry (2000) *Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge.

are now in sustaining close links between friends and families across the two countries.

Borders, Ports and Roads

So, if those imaginative, virtual connections seem likely to emerge from any Brexit scenario unscathed, what about those physical ones, reliant on the material structures of borders, ports and roads? While distance may still be crossed virtually, one of the changes Brexit will almost certainly bring is a new way of configuring those taken for granted journeys people make back and forth. Faced with new border arrangements the qualitative experiences of travelling could become much more uncomfortable and closer to that which current non-EU nationals, and BAME travellers more generally, endure.¹⁰ In terms of Polish migration specifically, this change could see a return to those post-1989 years of being asked personal questions at the border, of feeling that you are in the second class citizen passport queue, of always needing to have certain documents beyond that passport, and a general sense of having to overcome a latent suspicion over motives for entering the UK at all¹¹ – an emotionally charged border performance which would need to be re-enacted every time that journey is made. EU migrants, post Brexit, are likely to be regularly reminded, in a variety of explicit and implicit ways, that as they enter the UK they are indeed simultaneously entering this ‘hostile environment’.

And it is not just the direct physical movement of bodies which is likely to be affected; what are the potential impacts that new, as yet uncertain, border checks and customs deals could have on car, coach and lorry travel? What about all those coach links and ferry connections, and how will ports such as Dover, a key node in inter

¹⁰ See, for example, Leda Blackwood, Nick Hopkins and Steve Reicher (2013) ‘I know who I am, but who do they think I am? Muslim perspectives on encounters with airport authorities’ in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 36(6), pp. 1090-1108. BAME - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic.

¹¹ See Kathy Burrell (2008) ‘Materialising the Border: Spaces of Mobility and Material Culture in Migration from Post-Socialist Poland’ in *Mobilities*, 3(3), pp. 353-373, p. 358; Ginette Verstraete (2003) ‘Technological Frontiers and the Politics of Mobility in the European Union’, in Sara Ahmed, Claudia Casteneda, Anne-Marie Fortier and Mimi Sheller (eds.) *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*, pp. 225-249. Oxford: Berg.

European road and sea travel, cope with increased border security, as they embark on an infrastructural process of ‘rebordering’ after decades of ‘debordering’?¹² Will journey times increase as people queue in their cars, and will coach and ferry travel costs rise too? And what about the pan European ‘cargomobilities’¹³ involved here too – those deliveries to ‘continental shops’ in the UK, the couriers ferrying parcels back and forth between friends and family¹⁴ – all of which have flourished within an EU mobility governance environment. Brexit is likely to have wide reaching implications for lives and livelihoods sustained across European borders, and specifically those reliant on road and transport links. A lot depends on the kind of ‘frictionless’ customs e-borders which are currently being imagined. If these kinds of arrangements prove too difficult to work on the ground then the movement of things, as well as people – all that trade as well as all that travel – will become much more frictioned again. It is also likely that it will be those small businesses – the man in a van driving across Europe, those shops serving local populations – which will be affected most of all.

Polish/UK Airline Links – A Migration Infrastructure under Threat?

Finally, perhaps the transnational connection most under threat is the dense low cost airline infrastructure which has built up between Poland and the UK since the 2006 European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) treaty, a bilateral agreement which established a liberalised single market for European aviation services. Crucially this treaty, known as ‘Open Skies’, allowed airlines from any ECAA member state to fly between any airport based in another member state (the so-called ‘seventh freedom’). In practical terms this meant that so-called ‘foreign’ airlines could provide domestic flights within another member country, and service international flights between any other two

¹² See Kathryn Cassidy, Nira Yuval-Davis and Georgie Wemyss (2017) ‘Debordering and everyday (re) bordering in and of Dover: Post-borderland borderscapes’ in *Political Geography*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.04.005>

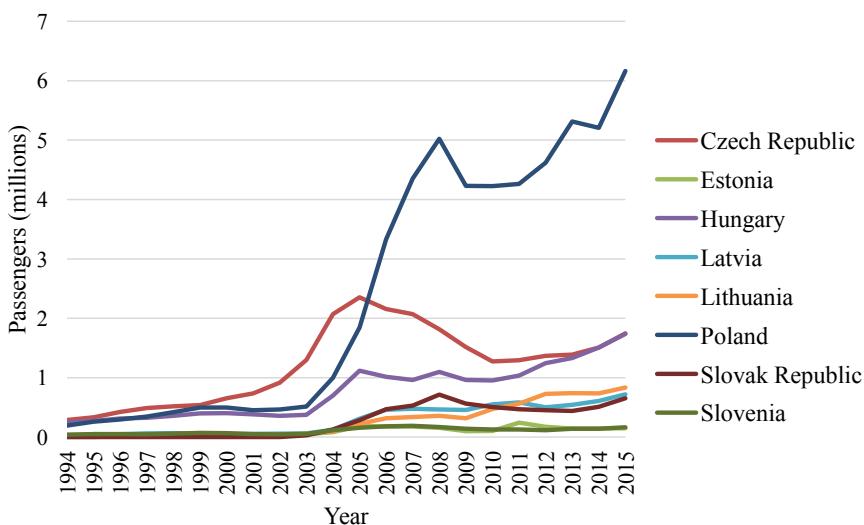
¹³ Thomas Birthrell, Satya Savitzky and John Urry (eds.) (2015) *Cargomobilities: Moving Materials in a Global Age*. Abingdon: Routledge.

¹⁴ Kathy Burrell (2017) ‘The recalcitrance of distance: exploring the infrastructures of sending in migrants’ lives’ in *Mobilities*, 12(6), pp. 813-826.

countries within the treaty zone. It was this development which enabled low cost airlines such as Ryanair, easyJet and Wizz Air to expand, allowing them to break free from national and hub obligations and expenses. There is a clear significance here for Polish/UK migration; most obviously, it is apparent that a large proportion of migrants have travelled to the UK via plane.

Figure 1, for example, shows the increase in air passenger numbers of people travelling from A8 countries to the UK after 2004, demarcated by country of journey origin; the increase in passenger numbers from Poland, the highest number, mirrors the general numerical dominance of Poles among new A8 migrants at the time. Most of this air passenger increase must have been generated by new migrant journeys and subsequent return visits. While coach and car travel have been, and remain, key routes for migration journeys – and face their own post-Brexit challenges, as discussed above – air travel especially has been an integral part of post-accession migration and the act of travelling between Poland and the UK.¹⁵

Figure 1: A8/UK route passenger numbers



Source: Derived from CAA UK Airport Data

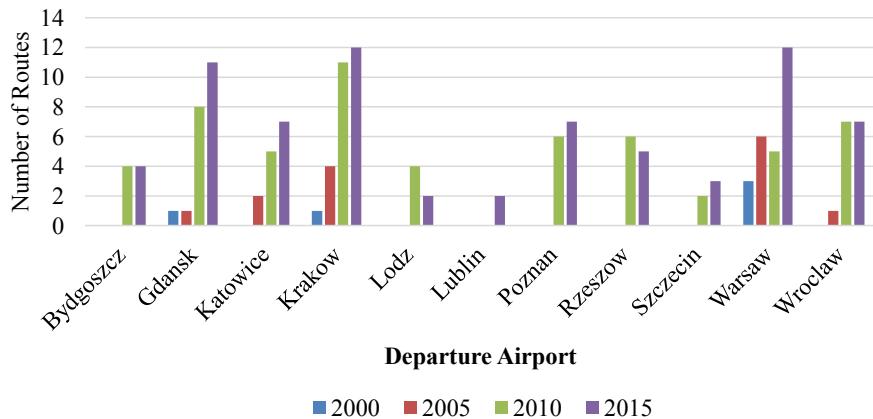
¹⁵ See Kathy Burrell (2011) ‘Going steerage on Ryanair: cultures of migrant air travel between Poland and the UK’ in *Journal of Transport Geography*, 19(5), pp. 1023-1030.

This new liberalisation in 2006 has been incredibly important in shaping the migration infrastructure which has been established for Poland/UK migration. After 2006 there was a period of considerable expansion in airline links, both within Europe generally, but markedly between Poland and the UK. A proliferation of low cost flight links transformed connections between the two countries and has done a lot to reduce the practical, navigable distance that migrants, and other interested travellers, have to cross. Along with cost – greater affordability and accessibility making flying a viable choice for more and more people who are migrating/visiting/returning – it has been the fundamental transformation in airline regional infrastructure which has done the most to shape these transnational links.

Figure 2 shows how regional airports in Poland have been hosting more and more UK routes since 2000. While these figures suggest that there has already been some route contraction since 2010, the sector has been moving towards far less dependency on Warsaw and Krakow for international flights. This has made international air travel immediately more accessible for a much greater number of people, reaching those who lived too far away from an airport before, or who were dissuaded from flying by the extra costs and effort of travelling long distances within Poland. Likewise, flight options from the UK to Poland have seen an increase in regionalisation since 2005 (Figures 3 and 4). While Stansted and Luton have remained key hubs, Gatwick and Heathrow have become much less significant, with airports such as Liverpool and Doncaster taking a greater share; the range of airports carrying routes to Poland has increased considerably.

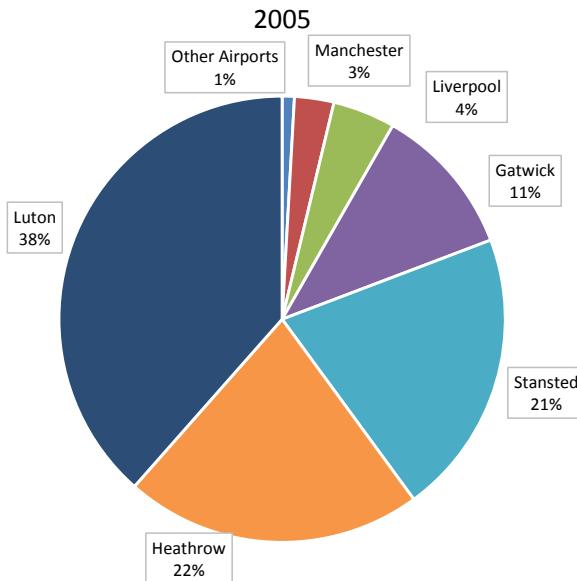
This regional dimension is very important here; these developments in air routes have happened alongside a particularly widespread geographic ‘settlement’ of Poles in the UK (see the Home Office Accession Monitoring Reports on this). This has been quite a historically distinctive geographical distribution in terms of migration to the UK, although also one which does echo post-war movements of Polish migrants. While people have undoubtedly moved to a range of different parts of the UK for jobs – making homes in areas which have not traditionally seen much migration, but which needed new workers – this new regional infrastructure has in turn enabled these kinds of settlement patterns to materialise and endure.

Figure 2: Number of UK destinations from Polish Airports



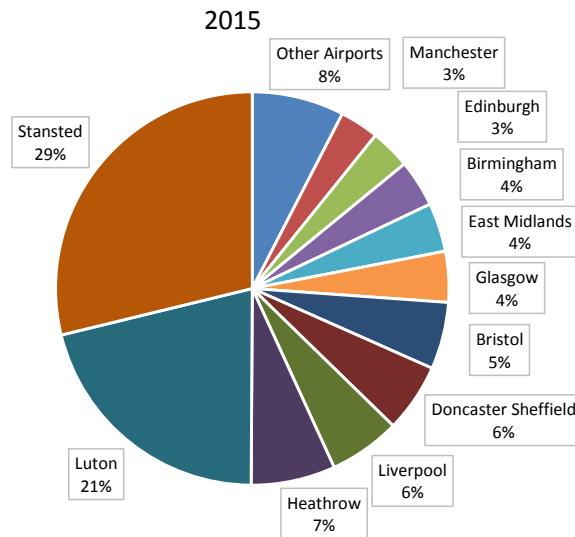
Source: Derived from CAA UK Airport Data

Figure 3: Share of Passengers To/From Poland through UK Airports, 2005



Source: Derived from CAA UK Airport Data

Figure 4: Share of Passengers To/From Poland through UK Airports, 2015



Source: Derived from CAA UK Airport Data

Migrating from Poland to the UK, and going back and forth again after, and inviting friends and family to stay too, has all become quicker, cheaper, and generally more convenient. These low cost routes have undoubtedly created their own tensions, indignities and costs – Ryanair especially has become the subject of many angry internet message board discussions for its very low cost approach to customer service, and its punitive luggage allowance policies, to name just two issues.¹⁶ Translocal lives, however, have now been built with the help of this aviation infrastructure. It has helped shaped some of those decisions about where to head for, where to live and work. It is normal now to be able to fly between Doncaster and Katowice (Wizz Air), Birmingham and Bydgoszcz (Ryanair) – something almost unthinkable fifteen years ago. This means mean that there has been a reduction in the practical distance between towns and cities in Poland and in the UK.

¹⁶ See Burrell (2011).

It is this practical distance, and richness and depth of regional connection, which might be at stake as Brexit unfolds. At the time of writing, December 2017, there is still no real resolution on what European air travel will look like after March 2019. If the UK leaves the EU, and with it the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice, it would mean having to leave the ECAA. A deal with the EU, or even individual treaties with other European countries, would need to be done to allow these flight connections to continue. Right now it is difficult to visualise what a post-Brexit aviation deal would look like, and what the implications would be for these low cost airlines, which have benefitted so much from EU enlargement and which service such a significant part of EU/UK migration travel – not just Polish/UK links.

The Ryanair situation particularly stands out, as an Irish company offering the largest number of links between the UK and Poland, and with its main hub at Stansted. Wizz Air similarly is a Hungarian airline offering several routes between Poland and the UK. The impact here *could* be substantial as these airlines stand to potentially lose their right to serve EU and ECAA countries from the UK – in simple terms, they would no longer be able to fly between the UK and Poland. Ryanair has already been signalling worries about how much capacity it will devote to the UK market in the future because of the continuing uncertainty (see *Flight Global*, 24/4/17; 11/5/17). Although it is difficult to imagine that a solution will not be found, and hard to envisage flights really being grounded after the official Brexit cut-off date, it is also difficult to believe that this will not somehow impact on this highly regionalised infrastructure. Will some of those regional UK/Poland routes look so commercially attractive post-Brexit? If these airlines have to retrench, will they prioritise their higher profile tourist routes, over these kinds of links? The physical closeness that has underpinned the experience of post-accession Polish UK migration suddenly looks very vulnerable in an anticipated post-Brexit mobility landscape.

Real and Imaginative Mobilities and Distance after Brexit

It would perhaps be tempting to argue that the ‘secondary mobilities’ concerns discussed here are indeed of secondary significance in the whole spectrum of Brexit. These potential mobility changes do not in themselves infringe on the fundamental rights of EU

citizens in the UK; if/when faced with the task of navigating what ‘settled status’ means, or thinking about naturalisation, and filling in new employment and health forms – all to secure that right to stay in the UK – the cost or availability of Ryanair flights to Poland may seem trivial. However, something important is at stake here. 2004/6 heralded a new era of general, although still variegated, time-space compression which Polish migrants have been able to benefit from – the physical and emotional distance between towns in Poland and towns in the UK has undeniably shrunk. This matters. Ellegård and Vilhelmsen, for example, have argued that ‘the friction of distance is still of great importance for most people in daily life’.¹⁷ What we can see ahead here is the possibility that this friction of distance will increase again – that a new chapter of time-space expansion is what awaits us. And if the physical costs and effort of transnational/translocal travel grow, that emotional distance could increase too. Cross border family relationships and friendships may feel this strain and are likely to notice this distance quite keenly, in those increased travel fares, or reduction of route choices.

The taken for granted nature of significant trade links could be adversely affected – prices could rise in the Polish shops, choice could reduce, it could become much less viable to send those parcels there and back. This is a reminder that for all the emphasis we put on the agency of migration, post-accession movements have been happening within a particular supranational governmental regime. The vulnerability, the time-space contingency, of this ability to move and travel was not really acknowledged before the Brexit vote, but it is clear now. A focus on these secondary mobilities not only alerts us to, and perhaps prepares us for, anticipated new mobility frictions, but it also reminds us of the complex intersectional nature of migration – that the movement of people is always about social and emotional beings negotiating changing political and economic landscapes.

¹⁷ Kasja Ellegård and Bertil Vilhelmsen (2004) ‘Home as a pocket of local order: everyday activities and the friction of distance’ in *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 86(4), pp. 281–296, p. 283.

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Part 3: Brexit as seen by (representatives of) the Polish community in the UK

EU citizens' rights – two realities

Wiktor Moszczyński

As UK citizens slowly absorbed the overnight shock of the referendum result on 23 June 2016 and contemplated the extraordinary potential consequences, including an independent Scotland, uncertainty over the Irish border, the future of the economy, the fall of the pound, the triumph of nationalism, the one factor that seemed to remain stable was the fate of EU citizens in the UK. After all, most of the Leave campaigners – Farage, Gove, Johnson – had all stressed that the EU citizens who were already here would not have to depart. It was like a constant repetitive mantra: “all EU citizens are safe”. And overwhelmingly many EU citizens, whether from Western, Southern or Eastern Europe, firmly believed that. “We can stay; they need us; nobody will throw us out”. Even the sudden explosion of hate crimes against Poles and others in the three months following the Brexit referendum did not shake that feeling. Within two weeks of the referendum, on 6 July 2016, Andy Burnham, Labour MP, introduced a motion in Parliament confirming that the rights of EU citizens would be retained in full. The vote at 245 to 2 was almost unanimous in favour, and Boris Johnson also spoke eloquently in its favour.

However, the vote was not binding on the government and the then Home Secretary Theresa May made it clear that EU citizens' rights could only be guaranteed when the EU was ready to respect the existing rights of UK citizens abroad. Weeks later she was Prime Minister, Boris Johnson became Foreign Secretary and EU citizens became hostages in the diplomatic poker game between the UK government and the EU. Although some EU governments made it clear that UK citizens' rights in their countries would be respected, the EU Commission and the Council of Ministers refused to be drawn in, saying that all issues could only be discussed once the Prime Minister invoked Article 50. The tabloids laid the blame for not ensuring EU citizens' rights firmly on the EU, although the principle that they be allowed to stay remained unchallenged.

In view of that, it seemed like an opportunity for the Government to draw up a detailed plan on how EU citizens' rights could be preserved on the assumption that the EU would eventually reciprocate it for UK citizens in Europe. Opposition parties and new pressure groups

like the 3million and New Europeans urged this on the government.¹ In December 2016 forty prominent UK citizens of Polish extraction published a letter urging this, in the parliamentary house magazine. Even if some of the details of such a proposal could have been challenged or improved in the negotiations, at least the UK government could have set the agenda on this issue and could show it was not treating EU citizens as hostages or bargaining chips. After all, Brexit was a UK initiative and it was therefore the UK government's responsibility, and not that of the EU, to initiate positive reassurance to EU citizens, to British businesses, to EU governments (and not least to UK citizens abroad who were expecting whatever the UK proposed for EU citizens to be reciprocated by the EU countries) and to reduce the inflammatory atmosphere that had caused UK-EU relations to deteriorate so badly at this time. Furthermore, the issue of retaining existing EU citizens' rights was generally acceptable to the electorate in numerous opinion polls, even with those wanting to introduce more immigration control after Brexit.

Yet Theresa May, whether as Home Secretary or later as Prime Minister, did not choose that option, but continued to talk about the need first for the EU to show reciprocity, and stoked up public opinion towards the policy of a hard Brexit. As a Remainer she needed to reassure her Brexit-dominated Party and her Cabinet colleagues that she was a keen new convert to the idea of a hard Brexit and sought to unite her party around that posed stance. This was the period before the general election, when she reiterated various phrases such as "Brexit is Brexit", "red, white and blue" Brexit and "strong and stable government" as a camouflage for a lack of clear detailed policy on Brexit while she sought to ram through any negotiations without even consulting Parliament.

Theresa May had also allowed Home Office officials to broaden the 'hostile environment' which she had publicly announced in 2010 as the regime that would be applied to illegal immigrants, so that it would also cover more vulnerable EU citizens, particularly in relation to failed applicants for permanent residence. This was the period when EU citizens, from Western or Eastern Europe, found that their application for PR [permanent resident] status required details of every foreign trip over the whole period of their stay (in some cases for thirty or more

¹ For details on the 3million group, see <https://www.the3million.org.uk/>. Information about the New Europeans is available at <https://neweuropeans.net/>

years), instead of just the five year period required by the EU. The UK authorities needed full details on employment and income, and confirmation, where necessary, of having comprehensive sickness insurance (CSI), which should have been superfluous where all had access to a free NHS. If, for whatever trite reason, the application was refused, then hundreds of EU citizens would receive notices of deportation (often later withdrawn), although they had British families here and may have lived and worked here for decades. Yet all this time Theresa May assured Polish community leaders and EU governments that she wanted to safeguard the rights of Poles and other EU citizens in this country.

Following a challenge in the Supreme Court in December 2016, the Government had to acknowledge eventually that they would need to consult Parliament before starting the process of leaving the EU and that the referendum mandate on its own was not enough. On 29 March 2017, having got her vote through Parliament, she finally invoked Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty and then called a general election, in order to strengthen her majority. Ironically, she lost many seats and now had to lead a coalition government with the support of the Democratic Unionists. This made her position more precarious and therefore caused her to be more stubborn, to promise various red lines, simply to keep her coalition together.

Consequently, when the EU negotiators had made clear that EU citizens' rights was one of the three issues which needed to be resolved before negotiations could move on to issues such as trade and a possible transition period, they then published their negotiating position which included the requirement that in future all EU citizens at present in the UK should be assured of retaining the same rights, including pensions and access to the NHS, for their lifetime and that of their children, including the right not to have their families separated and the right to retain their status even if they had left the UK for a period of time. The right to stay for those with PR or who had eligibility for PR would be automatically registered and any appeal process would be supervised by the European Court of Justice. The EU proposal was not perfect as it failed to ensure the rights of UK citizens to travel and work in more than one EU country and could not guarantee voting rights for UK citizens in EU countries, but it was able to offer most of these rights on a reciprocal basis for EU and UK citizens alike.

Instead of responding to this proposition, the UK government was anxious to display that it was now a sovereign state and eventually, in June 2017, it came out with its own alternative proposal using the term settled status, which until now was the equivalent of indefinite leave to remain. It offered EU citizens who had lived and worked here for more than five years the right to stay and work in this country with their families, with entitlement to NHS treatment, most benefits and UK pension rights, while those who would have arrived here more recently before an unidentified, as yet, cut-off date would be able to apply for settled status after the requisite five years had been served. Also, the much criticized comprehensive sickness insurance (CSI) condition was now to be abolished. Mrs May described this as a generous offer and she wrote to the 3million that “our intention is to make sure that no one who has made their home in this country will have to leave, that families will be able to stay together, and that people can go on living their lives as before”. Pressure groups like the 3million and New Europeans, as well as EU governments, disagreed. For instance, it was now necessary for all those who had previously laboriously achieved PR status to reapply for the new settled status, families could not be guaranteed to stay together if still abroad after the unnamed cut-off date or if the family member was a non-EU citizen, and the provision of the status as well as its interpretation would be subject to Immigration Rules. Nor was it clear how up to three million EU citizens were to be registered over a period of two years (i.e. some four thousand a day), with all subjected to criminal records checks, when the PR registration service had already completely collapsed.

Furthermore, away from the reality of optimistic declarations by ministers and officials, there was still a second reality where more than five thousand EU citizens had already been deported against their will, where Polish and other vulnerable EU citizens, mostly East Europeans, were being detained for indeterminate periods, sometimes more than a year, in detention centres, following decisions by Home Office officials, where equally vulnerable EU citizens were initially being denied free NHS treatment and chased by court bailiffs for unpaid NHS bills, employers and landlords were starting to discriminate against EU citizens and home loans were being denied to EU citizens. Consequently, EU commissioners made clear over the six rounds of negotiation that the UK offer was nowhere near good enough.

And slowly over those six rounds of negotiations between June and November 2017 the process of extracting more reasonable concessions was like pulling teeth from a divided and disorientated UK Cabinet. Thus low and intermittent income for self-employed would no longer become a criterion for refusal. The cost of renewing settled status for those already registered for PR would be free of charge and require only evidence of residence or lack of criminal record. UK judges could hear appeals based on EU law. Immigration Rules would no longer apply and special status criteria would be based directly on the terms of the final Withdrawal Agreement. Future family members, including future children, would now be covered by settled status. Past criminality where sentence was completed would no longer be a bar to settled status.

However, up to and until December many issues remained unresolved as the Cabinet battled internally over supposed red lines such as European Court jurisdiction, child benefit paid to children still abroad, and the right for all EU families to unite after the Brexit deadline, even though British citizens had no such rights. The cut-off date was now fixed on the same day as Brexit, i.e. at 29 March 2019. Every concession followed intense lobbying by pressure groups and renewed meetings on improved systems. Also, the Home Office consulted local communities, and specifically the Polish community, at conferences in London, Birmingham and Edinburgh, where it was made clear that the previous Home Office culture of creating a ‘hostile environment’ would be changed, that settled status would be merely swapped for PR status and that local organisations could assist in testing pilot schemes for a new simplified online system for registration.

Of course, the rollercoaster negotiations in the first week of December, finalising the issues of the financial settlement and the Irish border, may have left the European citizens issue on the side-lines, but some key final agreements were made here too which were published in a Joint Statement by the EU and UK negotiators. Following that publication, the current position on EU rights was presented by the Home Office as follows:

EU citizens who arrive here by 29 March 2019, and have been continuously and lawfully living here for 5 years, would be able to stay indefinitely by getting settled status, so they will be free to live here, work or study, have access to public funds and services, including

healthcare and pensions, and go on to apply for UK citizenship. If they have not been here for 5 years they can apply for a temporary residence permit to work off that period until they reach the five year threshold and then apply for settled status. Close family members and dependents already here could also apply for settled status, while those who arrive later, while still in that relationship, would also be allowed to stay. This includes spouses, registered partners, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren and persons in a durable relationship. Grounds for refusal would only be those quoted in the mutually agreed Withdrawal Agreement, i.e. a residency and criminality check. CSI will no longer be a criterion for refusing settled status but could still be invoked in relation to students or self-sufficient EU citizens seeking access to a free health service.

The Home Office promise that they will apply a more user-friendly application system for settled status, where some of the information will already have been obtained from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs or the Department of Work and Pensions and missing documents or mistaken responses could still be rectified without rejection. Applicants will be required to provide an identity document with a recent photo and to declare any criminal convictions. For existing PR holders, the application will be free of charge, for others it will be the equivalent to the cost of applying for a passport. Applications could start in 2018 before Brexit and need to be completed within two years. Successful applicants will receive a new settled status document. All applicants can stay in the UK until their status is approved or rejected. If EU citizens had already obtained indefinite leave to remain earlier they need not make any further applications, but could also apply for a biometric residence permit if they wish or swap their status for the slightly superior settled status free of charge.

If an EU citizen arrives here after 29 March 2019 but during the two year transition period that person would still initially be allowed to live, work and study here, but many of the rules are still subject to negotiation in phase two of the negotiations in 2018. For all those arriving after the end of the transition period, their status will be subject to Immigration rules to be decided by parliament after the publication of the Independent Migration Advisory Committee report in July 2018.

What the current Home Office guidelines do not make clear, just as Mrs May made no mention of it in her speech at the 8 December 2017 morning press conference in Brussels, is that "the competence of

the Court of Justice of the European Union should be preserved with regard to the consistent interpretation and application of the citizens' rights set out in the Withdrawal Agreement." This means that over the next eight years the UK tribunals should be able to ask the European Court for interpretation of rights which may still seem unclear. The decision to make such a referral lies within the competence of the UK court or tribunal.

There are further details in the Joint Agreement of the EU and UK negotiators which are not mentioned in the Home Office summary. This agreement also covers EU workers who live in one state and commute daily to another state. Any decision on granting settled status should always give the benefit of the doubt to the applicant, whereas currently it is always in the hands of the Home Office official. Also, persons who absented themselves from the UK after acquiring permanent residence do not lose their residency rights unless they fail to return in five years. The European Health Insurance card continues to function. There is to be no discrimination in jobs or health care provision for EU citizens. A Withdrawal Agreement and Implementation Bill will be introduced into the UK parliament to implement all that has been included in the Withdrawal Agreement, including all chapters on citizens' rights. Significantly, the Joint Report refers only to 'Special Status', not 'settled status', and similar wording appears in the EU Commission's Report to the Council of Ministers.

Also, a number of issues are still to be resolved in the Second Phase of the negotiations. These include the rights of nearest relatives to join EU citizens in the UK who were not related at time of departure, voting rights in local elections, mutual recognition of academic and professional qualifications, and the method of monitoring the application and implementation of citizens' rights by an independent national authority which can receive appeals from EU citizens.

Just as the ultimate arbiter of the financial negotiations was the European Commission, and for the Irish border agreement it was the Irish government, the ultimate arbiter on citizens' rights is the European Parliament. It is possible that on 13 December 2017 the European Parliament may exercise its displeasure on several issues with regard to the Joint Report which will be presented in the coming week to the Council of Ministers.

Firstly, the European Parliament wanted the registration to cover confirmation of existing rights, rather than an application for these

same rights. This is still not clear from the final document although the universal introduction of criminal checks suggests that these will indeed be fresh applications, even if only described as a ‘swap’. Also, they had urged that future family rights for those not yet in a relationship should be assured as well, and that the European Court of Justice should have a more active and a permanent jurisdiction rather than just on the current temporary passive basis. The 3 million were also pushing for these issues, along with a more permanent supervisory role for the European Court of Justice, but these would be difficult to implement now. However, it would be advisable for the Home Office to change the name of settled status, as it could be misleading for citizens, police and legal bodies alike to have a separate meaning for settled status for EU citizens and for non-EU citizens, and would undermine the bespoke nature of the offered status for EU citizens. It would still be preferable to refer to some kind of UK version of permanent residence which could more easily be reciprocated in the EU for UK citizens.

While many may feel satisfied with the current agreement, it has to be remembered that the alternative reality is still in existence. While the Home Office is promising to change its culture in time for Brexit, it is still not changing its current culture. Recent suicides and attempted suicides by EU citizens facing deportation – either at home or in detention centres – is high. Current procedures with regard to expulsions of EU citizens should be in accordance with EU Directive 2004/38/EC, which refers only to the deportation of those who are a serious current threat to society or to security. Yet Poles who have families here have been deported for minor crimes past and present such as drunkenness or cheating on a tachograph, regardless of whether they have family here with children. *The Guardian* has reported how Polish fathers have been arrested and deported for a past crime in Poland after they complained to the police about being harassed and intimidated by neighbours or employers. There is considerable hostility still to East Europeans in job centres, local government offices, health trusts and police stations in provincial Britain, where at any excuse Poles have been told to consider returning to their own country. If there is this much uncertainty and hostility now while the UK is still a member of the EU, how much worse might it get after Brexit? Without supervision by the European Court of Justice, what is to prevent a future hostile government from repealing the Withdrawal Agreement and Implementation Act?

For those reasons it is still wise to consider retaining active and permanent monitoring by a European body with clout, like the European Parliament, as whatever is agreed on paper may still not give sufficient guarantees to Polish and other citizens and their families about the future.

Brexit concerns as seen by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain and how they can be addressed

Włodzimierz Mier-Jędrzejowicz

Introduction

The Federation of Poles in Great Britain, CIO is an umbrella organisation for sixty-two Polish organisations in Great Britain. These are a wide variety of organisations. Some are organisations of Poles who found themselves in Britain during World War II or even earlier, and now of their descendants; some of their members have become inculcated into British society to the extent that they agreed with British sentiments in favour of leaving the EU. Some organisations represent Poles who arrived after Poland joined the EU, and most of their members did not have the right to vote in the referendum. Other member organisations, indeed most of them, have a mixture of members including those who have been in Britain for decades, those who arrived here at the time of Solidarity, and more recent arrivals, whose members had a mixture of opinions about the referendum. The Federation therefore felt it could not support one viewpoint or the other, but simply urged those Poles who could to take part in the referendum to do so.

Our neutrality may be one reason why we have not been approached with many requests for specific actions by member organisations since the referendum. Most of our experience has been of individual cases, and from our presence at meetings and events concerning Brexit. It is these that I shall rely on most for this presentation.

Let me first point out that the Federation publishes a booklet, *How to Live and Work in Great Britain*. This is now in its seventh edition and we had been considering a follow-up publication on the rights and responsibilities of Polish citizens living in Great Britain. However, following the Brexit vote, I wonder if we need to follow *How to Live and Work in Great Britain* with *How to Leave or Stay in Great Britain*. As I shall say later, the problem is that we do not have enough information.

Problems

As those of us present here today are well aware, problems began on the day after the referendum, with attacks on Poles and Polish organisations, fortunately mostly verbal attacks, slogans, leaflets and items in the media. These were followed closely by statements suggesting Poles should “go home”, which were particularly unpleasant when they occurred in schools. This has died down to an extent and has been replaced by worries about whether families and businesses should indeed “go back” to Poland or move to Poland. The worst problem appears to be that Poles who have not adopted UK citizenship do not know what their status will be after Brexit. Some have received letters demanding that they leave at once – it later became clear that these were an ‘administrative error’, but they hardly helped people stay calm about their future status. The statement agreed on Friday last week appeared to clear this up to a large extent. It included a clear undertaking that EU citizens who have obtained the right of residence by that time will be able to convert this to a new right of residence with a minimum of trouble and without paying for it.

Unfortunately, within a few days it became clear that the firm undertakings will only become real when a complete agreement has been accepted. That means people still do not know where they stand on this matter, and their uncertainty remains. The only people who do know their status are those Poles who have UK citizenship – there is no suggestion that their UK citizenship may be revoked and we do not see any chance of that happening.

What can central government do?

Given the current level of uncertainty, it would be very helpful if the UK government could in some way reassure EU citizens in the UK of what they can expect at Brexit, regardless of the nature of that Brexit – hard, soft or intermediate. Mrs May did try to provide such reassurance early on, but the UK government claims this was not possible because the EU would not accept any such separate statement, insisting this would have to be part of the negotiations. Equally, the EU claims that it is the UK’s fault that no such undertakings have been made.

We would welcome, in particular, a statement of intent by the UK government, concerning EU citizens in the UK at present, and also those who will wish to travel to the UK after Brexit:

1. That citizens with dual nationality – of the UK and of a EU country – will not have their UK citizenship put in any doubt.
2. That EU citizens who have obtained right of residence in the UK will continue to have this recognised. When and if it becomes necessary to convert this to a new post-Brexit version that this will not be onerous or costly, which the current agreement already promises, but we know it will only be certain if a negotiated Brexit agreement is reached. The agreement also states that UK authorities will reserve the right to carry out criminal checks on people who re-apply for right of residence – but these should have been carried out already at the original application for right of residence – they should only be necessary if there is a suspicion that the person involved has been involved in criminality after receiving the original right of residence.
3. A general statement concerning the government's intentions on future treatment of EU citizens – whether and how they will be able to apply for UK citizenship or right of residence, how families will be treated, and how visitors from EU countries will have to apply to come to Britain – will visas be needed, or letters of invitation?
4. A general statement of intent towards businesses – that the UK will continue to support trade and businesses in both directions – in particular that businesses which already trade will not have significant additional burdens of paperwork or taxes placed on them.

What can local authorities do?

Some local authorities provide help and advice on matters such as residency and housing to Poles and all EU citizens who need such help and advice. Indeed some local authorities have a significant number of

Polish employees and understand the problems well. Other local authorities should take a lead from them. For example, local authorities that have Polish employees working on different matters could arrange for those employees to be available for some time in the week to interact with Poles who have questions and concerns on housing and residency, but also relating to health, employment or setting up a business. Having said all this, we must recognise that local authorities have financial constraints on how much they can help, so aid in the form of providing advice is generally the most effective way to use limited resources.

The nature of Brexit

We currently hear of “soft Brexit” and “hard Brexit”. The former seems to mean a negotiated Brexit with terms favourable to both the UK and the EU. The latter appears to mean a very difficult Brexit, or Brexit with no agreed deal at all. Presumably, something in between is most likely – a deal but with some points that leave each side unhappy. To Poles in the UK, that would seem the best we can hope for; possibly hard on the outside and soft on the inside. May I suggest calling this a “marshmallow Brexit”? Like a chocolate marshmallow – a thin hard coating on the outside, but soft and sticky on the inside? And wrapped in red and white – the Polish national colours!

Let me express the hope, on behalf of the Federation of Poles and its member organisations, that today’s conference, and the work of Poles in the UK and in Poland, together with our British friends, will contribute to such a Brexit. Before then, let us hope and – where possible – urge that the negotiations in 2018 will soon lead to greater clarity on what Poles and all EU citizens in Britain will be able to expect in 2019.

The impact of Brexit on inclusion and integration of Poles in the UK

Barbara Drozdowicz

Poles are the largest group of non-British nationals currently residing in the UK, according to the Office of National Statistics.¹ They are considered to be hard-working, family-orientated people, who generally integrate well and have rapidly become an important part of British society. The Polish settlement pattern in Britain is distinctive – Poles have settled throughout the country – from hyper-diverse cities to towns and small villages. There is nothing a Pole can't do and very little he/she doesn't. At first glance, Brexit means nothing to this community – it is well skilled in finding its way into the hearts and minds of the wider British society.

And yet the story is not so simple. The East European Resource Centre (hereafter: EERC) has been supporting Poles since 1984 in all aspects of their settlement and integration. From legal advice and skills training to seeking to influence policy, the EERC has been devoted to making sure that the most disadvantaged and impoverished of our fellow expats have access to the British system and are treated as equals by their neighbours, colleagues and decision-makers.

The activities of the EERC are much needed. Approximately 20% of the Polish population fails to integrate.² These people can be best defined as affected by social and economic exclusion. They also lack effective political voice and representation. This chapter looks at how Brexit may impact on the integration prospects of the most disadvantaged within the Polish community, and suggests some recommendations to address the starker situations of exclusion.

¹ Data released by the Office of National Statistics in November 2017 indicated that there were one million Poles resident in the United Kingdom. Office of National Statistics 'Table D: Population resident in the United Kingdom, excluding some residents in communal establishments, by individual nationality (L to Z)'. (Released November 2017) Available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationalityunderlyingdatasheets>

² Based on statistics regarding the uptake of working and child tax credits and on the EERC's own statistics drawn from casework analysis and dedicated research, most notably EERC (2013) *Eastern Europeans in London*. Available at: <http://www.eerc.org.uk/>

Let's start with work. Even though Poles are remarkably economically active, with approximately 90% of them in employment, self-employment or running their own small businesses³, this work does not always pay good money. The average hourly pay for men is £9.34, compared with the British average of £14.37, and £8.40 for women, compared to the British average of £11.71. These figures raise another, darker question. If around 80% of Poles are doing 'okay', how many Poles earn below the national living wage to arrive at these averages?

Exploitation of low-earning Poles has been rampant since the 2004 accession and has hardly reduced over the subsequent years. Brexit makes it harder due to three key factors. First, uncertainties about the future of workers' immigration status encourage employers to withdraw job offers. We found evidence of this in every outreach meeting we organised in 2017 (over 400 people attended). Second, our employment casework indicates that Brexit has given rogue employers confidence: workers report a rapid worsening of working conditions. This manifests itself through the withholding of wages, sick pay and holiday pay, and/or the outright change of work status to deprive workers of employment benefits. Third, Brexit has created conditions in which the expression of xenophobic views has become increasingly tolerated. Many Polish workers' lives have been made truly miserable through hate incidents and deepening discrimination. This affects their sense of security and belonging.

Work pays money that pays for housing. And this is where the impact on the most vulnerable Poles can be seen in full. Many Polish families live in squalid conditions, in beds in sheds and even hot-bedding (renting a bed for hours in shifts). The phenomenon of late middle aged people and the elderly sharing multiple-occupancy households doesn't surprise anyone anymore. Heating is limited due to fuel poverty, and one kitchen and a bathroom shared for years by four to eight adults is a norm. Cash deals and lack of tenancy agreements are common. This standard of living affects both mental and physical health. Those, in turn, affect people's ability to understand, and to engage with and navigate, the British system.

³ Rienzo, C. (2017) *Characteristics and Outcomes of Migrants in the UK Labour Market*, Migration Observatory, Oxford University, (23 March 2017). Available at: <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Briefing-Characteristics-and-Outcomes-of-Migrants-in-the-UK-Labour-Market-1.pdf>

Access to the system, especially social welfare and housing, is fundamental for many a Polish household. According to data gathered in the three years to December 2017, 87% of all users of EERC advice and casework services have an income below £10,000 a year. Of these, approximately 40% earn less than £500 a month. This money is not sufficient to pay for housing, decent food, travel and many other standard goods we take for granted. Additional income to pay for housing and other needs, drawn through Housing Benefit and tax credits, is therefore critically important for many Poles.

The welfare reform of 2014 introduced strict right to reside and habitual residency tests that made it more difficult for welfare applicants to access welfare support. Many Poles failed to provide evidence that they qualify for support. The reasons for this failure to provide evidence include the exploitative nature of their work, their engagement in cash-in-hand work, their uncertain right to reside (for example, victims of trafficking or stay-at-home unmarried partners) and a simple lack of awareness of the legal and administrative systems. This, coupled with low or no English skills, are the most significant barriers to navigating the British support systems.

These are also the two most significant barriers to accessing the formal labour market. Tackling them would solve many of the inclusion and integration problems that the most disadvantaged Poles face. How does it work? Immigrants with limited access to the formal labour market have to seek work in the informal economy which, almost by definition, pays less and offers much less secure conditions, often in breach of health and safety regulations. As the money is less, immigrants work more hours which has an adverse impact on their social and family lives, their ability to seek training, and their ability to seek better work.

Less money means worse living conditions, often alongside similar groups. This translates into a narrowing of social networks and an inability to establish meaningful connections with the local community. Again, physical and mental health are undermined. All this, coupled with an increased sense of threat and hate incidents, heavily impact on the sense of being welcome and belonging. These are not conditions supportive to integration.

Brexit adds one more element to this vortex: uncertainty in regards to one's immigration status. Our observations indicate that the most disadvantaged Poles are in a form of immigration denial. As a

majority of them entered the UK after the Polish accession to the EU, immigration status boiled down to the passport or ID card held. This is going to change. And the change continues to be uncertain regardless of the support of the Home Office to a simplified application process that would disregard income tests and other significant hurdles (most notably the requirement of owning Comprehensive Sickness Insurance for EU nationals who are economically inactive). Systematic criminality checks are going to be another deterrent for many excluded Poles from accessing the new EEA+ settlement scheme. There are fears of being deported for minor offences or even traffic fines. But the reality seems to suggest that there is no other way but to register. Neglecting this requirement will probably result in becoming an undocumented migrant. This is a criminal offence and will make those undocumented liable for immediate deportation.

The situation in which thousands of Poles suddenly become unregulated migrants on the day of Brexit (possibly as soon as the end of March 2019) must be avoided at all costs. It would not only push hard working people outside the whole legal and regulated British system, but it would create conditions ripe for even more exploitation and exclusion. So, what needs to be done to mitigate the risk?

We, the EERC, believe there are a number of actions that have to be taken between NOW and the end of the Brexit implementation period. The most necessary actions are:

- Better, improved integration mechanisms co-funded by national and local governments that focus on English-language training and employability support for the most excluded and at risk Poles.
- Access to specialist information and advice services expert in the EU nationals' eligibility for support and health systems, and which are culturally and linguistically appropriate to support those who are currently excluded due to their poor English and low self-confidence as a result of being portrayed as a 'poor Polish immigrant'.
- A coordinated information campaign and access to specialist immigration advice and services to support Poles in accessing the new immigration regime.
- The roll-out of a coordinated effort to tackle the scourge of unregulated, illegal immigration advice provided by greedy rogue

individuals feeding on confusion and uncertainties, and leading to bad counsel, inappropriate applications, extortionate fees, and problems with all future dealings with the Immigration and Visas department of the Home Office

- The implementation of an intensive, nationwide outreach programme to the most disadvantaged Poles to enable them to use the services and opportunities listed above.

The responsibility for delivering these actions rests with us – organisations run by and for the Polish diaspora. We are the ones who can effectively reach out to the most disadvantaged. But we share this responsibility with the local, regional and national governments in whose best interest it is to support our efforts financially, logistically and in terms of communications. After all, it is the welfare and wellbeing of British residents that is at stake.

Brexit doesn't have to mean a downward spiral of deprivation, isolation and disadvantage. But we must act now and carry on until our community feels safe, secure and welcome, and the sense of belonging is rebuilt and translates into engagement with local communities and the broad British society.

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationalityunderlyingdatasheets>

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Implications of Brexit for Polish Business in the United Kingdom and Abroad

Katarzyna Bogusławska

Statistics relating to the number of Poles in the UK provide different data. Depending on the source, estimates range from 800,000 to over a million. Similarly, there is a range of data relating to the number of Polish company owners. One source suggests that in 2014, 40,000 Poles were company directors and over 65,000 were self employed. That would certainly show an entrepreneurial vein in the nation, with every tenth Pole in the UK having a business.

The contribution of Poles towards the British economy has been praised by various British organisations so it is not surprising that Polish businesses in the UK are trying to actively evaluate the situation and get ready for Brexit as well as they can. While Brexit has fuelled uncertainty in the UK, by preparing ahead of the final withdrawal, entrepreneurs and their businesses can better mitigate the impact of the changes ahead.

Brexit will create a number of problems for business people, not only for Polish entrepreneurs in the UK, but for other European businesses in the UK and in their native countries. Brexit will impact on businesses that have any foreign element, which in the era of globalisation means that it will affect almost every business. As a service to our clients, lawyers at Carter Lemon Camerons LLP ensure that they stay up-to-date and ready to implement any new solutions for their business clients. With this in mind we have designed an informative tool allowing business owners to carry out their own review of their Brexit-related needs.

Although at the moment information about the possible shape of Brexit is limited, which makes planning incredibly difficult, nevertheless, we have identified a number of areas which we advise our clients to audit and properly analyse in order to best prepare themselves for the potential changes ahead. We advise that they should create and review a plan for the continued delivery of their company's services. This should include an analysis of certain aspects of a given business and answer the following questions:

- Analysing the existing supplier relations
- Will Brexit impact on product and transport costs?

- Will taxes and excise duties be introduced?
- How are the products transported? Will they be affected by delays at the borders? Are goods perishable and therefore may not be transportable as a result?
- Will new trading structures have to be established?
- Will new partners and products have to be found locally?
- Or will the business have to relocate? And how will the relocation of key employees be carried out? How will new accommodation be found and secured and how will existing leases be terminated?

This plan should be updated on a regular basis and reviewed as and when the situation changes. Professional advice from lawyers and accountants should be sought throughout this process. When analysing the business aspect, entrepreneurs should consider their contractual relationships and decide whether their business would benefit from a Brexit clause. We recommend incorporating them into new contracts if transactions involve foreign or cross-border elements. Such a clause should give parties the right to withdraw from the contract or renegotiate their business arrangements if a trigger event such as, for instance, fluctuation in currency or the unavailability of a product occur, thereby making the contract financially unattractive or impossible to perform. Without such a provision in an existing contract, it is unlikely that the other side would agree to its variation.

Business owners should also consider their debtors' list and take steps to recover debts. At the moment European countries benefit from a simplified procedure of debt recovery. If a debt is admitted to, they can seek payment via a European Payment Order and, when the debt is denied and is lower than €5,000, business owners can make use of the European Small Claims procedure. These procedures allow for debt recovery from one European State to another. After Brexit a judgement obtained in a domestic court will not be transferred and new proceedings will have to be started in another country. For this reason it makes sense to ensure that existing debts are pursued without further delay.

Immigration is a very important aspect of this analysis. A businessperson should ask themselves the following questions: What is the entrepreneur's immigration status? What is the immigration status of their employees?

Until now, European workers exercising their right of free movement and work have not given these questions much thought. They have to start considering them more seriously. Business owners need to think about themselves and their workforce. Our advice is to apply for naturalisation, if a person is so entitled and fulfils the necessary requirements such as: is over 18, of good character, has lived in the UK sufficiently long and intends to continue to do so, has met the knowledge of English and life in the UK requirements. If a person does not yet fulfil all the above requirements but has lived in the UK for 5 years, they should at least apply for a residence permit as after Brexit the right to unrestricted work may not be guaranteed.

A week before our conference the UK government announced its plans for changes to immigration law and unveiled the proposals for ‘settled person status’. The Agreement on rights for EU citizens and their families reached with the European Union states that:

- a. People who, by 29 March 2019, have been continuously and lawfully living here for 5 years will be able to apply to stay indefinitely by getting ‘settled status’. That means they will be free to live here, have access to public funds and services and go on to apply for British citizenship.
- b. People who arrive by 29 March 2019, but won’t have been living here lawfully for 5 years when we leave the EU, will be able to apply to stay until they have reached the 5-year threshold. They can then also apply for settled status.
- c. Family members who are living with, or join, EU citizens in the UK by 29 March 2019 will also be able to apply for settled status, usually after 5 years in the UK.
- d. Close family members (spouses, civil and unmarried partners, dependent children and grandchildren, and dependent parents and grandparents) will be able to join EU citizens after exit, where the relationship existed on 29 March 2019.

Although the accompanying published information suggests that the future applications will be simpler and quicker, we remain sceptical. We simply cannot imagine that they will now suddenly be processed in

a more effective and efficient manner. It is a client's decision whether to make an application now or wait for the changes, we however believe that any uncertainty can be detrimental to a business.

At the moment there are several options for European Economic Area (EEA) nationals and their family members, and they can currently submit the following applications:

- registration certificate applications
- permanent residence applications
- naturalisation (British citizenship) applications
- EEA family permits
- EEA residence card

We also advise our clients on business immigration and visa options for foreign investors and entrepreneurs. The situation for businesses based outside the UK is uncertain and we should all ensure we are prepared for the coming changes. Our expertise covers business immigration options for international and UK based companies, small and medium businesses and individual investors and entrepreneurs. This is an unprecedented situation and its potential impact on businesses should not be played down.

Brexit and Polish children in the UK

Adriana Górká

From a psychological point of view, Brexit may be seen as a failure of human resources management in organisation at the state level. The Brexit referendum and its result created much unease among the broad Polish community in Britain. It is still unclear what arrangements will be in place when the UK leaves the EU, and the lack of clarity continues to generate concern among adults and children within the Polish community in Britain.

The Polish Educational Society records that in 2017 32,336 Polish children attended British schools in London alone.¹ Around 100,000 Polish children attend school in the UK. Much of this number is due to the ‘Polish baby boom’. Data from the Office for National Statistics indicate that in 2015 Polish-born mothers were the most fecund group in England and Wales. They gave birth to 22,928 children.² Children of Polish parent(s) experience what the British adult world creates for them. At the moment, there is a great deal of scope to develop a good, responsible, long-term social strategy for Polish children in the UK.

Recent political changes in the European Union will have an impact on Poles in Britain. Many Poles who live and work in the UK do so as EU citizens. Since the Brexit referendum Poles in Britain have been asking ‘what is next?’ At the moment, there is some fear, including fear of the unknown. It remains unclear what will happen after 29 March 2019.³ Any decision that Poles in Britain make in the short term – whether to stay in the UK or to go somewhere else, including Poland – will be based on limited information. Such decisions will have profound effects on Polish families, including children. For most people, making substantial changes to one’s life is not easy and only a few people may relish making such changes.

Usually it is not easy, for many of us, to get out of our comfort zone. Almost all of us prefer to choose what we are used to and what already works for us. But it is important, in this uncertain time of

¹ Polish Educational Society internal database (Accessed: 13.10.2017)

² Office for National Statistics website:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/parentscountryofbirthenglandandwales/2015> (Accessed: 13.10.2017)

³ British Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/status-of-eu-nationals-in-the-uk-what-you-need-to-know> (Accessed: 13.10.2017)

Brexit, to make the right decision – whether to leave or not. Many Poles in the UK will definitely choose to return to Poland. But the question is, what will they find there? Will they find a decent job and salary? How will children deal with the Polish education system? Furthermore, are we, adults who have lived in a different country and in a different culture for years, ready for the contemporary Polish reality and the general quality of life in Poland?

The group of friends our children are growing up with constitutes their known world of friendships. Brexit may change this in various ways. Friendships can be sustained despite distance and time. Polish children who move to Poland may be spatially distant from their British friends but, with technology, they do not necessarily have to be cut off from them. Social media, mobile messaging applications and phone or video calls can be used sustain friendships. But developing new friendships in Poland will take time, in the same way as it did when Polish children moved to the UK. Let's not forget how much effort and sacrifice it costs. It is important to think about this issue in order to develop strategies to limit the possible stress that families, and children in particular, may face if they leave the UK.

Those Poles who move to Poland may find that they would like to return to the UK after a few months or years (if that remains a possibility) as a result of lower wages in Poland or diminishing savings. Those Poles who live alone, or without family in Britain, have a lower number of considerations to take into account when they think about their future. In contrast, parents take into account how moving will impact on their children's life experience and their children's future, when making a decision.

Children are usually quite likely to settle down in a new place, but parents should guard against making dramatic changes to their children's social and education environment too often. Constant changes of schools and friends can affect childrens' social and educational development. It can contribute to low self-esteem now, and undermine the ability to co-create local community life, or even to build long-lasting relationships in the future as well.

Any decision Poles make, in relation to Brexit, will be significant and impact on their children. It is important that Polish parents in Britain fully evaluate what is the best course for them and their children. There is much hard thinking facing Polish families in the UK between now and 2019.

Part 4: A view from parliament

European Citizens

Baroness Sally Hamwee

“Brexit is like a marshmallow.” This was the comparison being drawn by the speaker when I arrived at The Polish University Abroad conference in December. “Hard on the outside, but then you find a soft centre.” Well, perhaps – a marshmallow tastes to me sweet, then over-sweet, then sickly. Brexit is not to my taste either. (Poles, please forgive me – I have experience only of British marshmallows.)

I was asked recently by a young man what the issues were at the time of the UK’s 1975 referendum on whether or not we should remain in the European Community. He was struck by how different the current issues for discussion are from my explanation of how important it was that there should be no more war in Europe: economics as against that keenly felt ambition. I was struck, in turn, by his remembering a little of his grandparents who had gone through the Second World War. The generations who will be most affected by the UK leaving the EU have often heard no first-hand accounts of that war, in which the role of the Poles might well have featured. And “the Troubles” in Ireland is an episode in history. The gut reactions, the emotions surrounding Brexit, are not uniform.

I think my own emotions about Brexit and about the position of EU citizens in the UK and of UK citizens elsewhere in Europe stem in part from my country’s government not representing me. That’s not new. The term ‘hostile environment’ is horrible, but it is not just sanctioned, it is actively promoted by our government. It is one thing to seek to establish a controlled immigration system, but quite another to set up a system which is widely perceived as xenophobic. It is also in my view very detrimental to the UK, which should be trying to build its reputation as open-minded, open-hearted and welcoming of migrants, for hard economic as well as simple human reasons. (“Migrant” is not a dirty word. I don’t believe it is inappropriate to put it that way, given that this was a point made by another speaker at the conference, with considerable experience of working with members of the East European communities who are not among the high finance high earners; perceptions, how life is experienced, are important. And while I’m on terminology, “the brightest and the best”, of whom the government often speaks approvingly, is so offensive – and best at what?) We have so much to gain by being welcoming.

EU Citizens living in the UK were told that there would be no change in their position. This is patently not the case. They will have to make an application for “settled” status, something which many of the people affected, even if they trust the Home Office, will find difficult to do. Enforcement of our immigration system has been outsourced to landlords, employers and the banks. I do not know what research there is that this drives some immigrants underground where they may easily be exploited, but this must be a worry. Will everyone entitled to status actually apply?

It will not be an automatic, seamless process, but unless you make the application what is automatic is that your presence will become illegal. I appreciate that, given we don’t know who is in the UK, and how long they’ve been here, there is a need for confirmation of claims that are made, but the Home Office’s reputation for accuracy is not the best. (A solicitor has just written to me: “I know they have terrible trouble keeping up with data requests at the Home Office – but the volume of requests is a consequence of HO inefficiencies and downright misinformation (at least, as presented to the tribunals – let alone to us practitioners....)”. They are clearly already suffering from a considerable workload; ironically the rumour (it may be an urban myth) is of the large number of EU citizens who will have to be engaged to process applications.

The relevant Immigration Rules may be difficult to penetrate – as if we don’t already have quite enough Rules. They will be subject to change, and the more complicated, the more likely that there will be errors. It really should not be necessary for individuals to hire lawyers to exercise your rights, a matter on which I feel strongly because of, not in spite of, being a lawyer myself.

I do not want to add to the sense of uncertainty and unease that many of our fellow EU citizens feel, but settled status does not deal with the aggregation of pensions, healthcare or benefits from EU countries. It provides no reciprocity with British citizens in Europe. It does not ensure that professional qualifications can be recognised. It does not protect the right to be self-employed. The fact that settled status will be a part of the immigration system in itself makes the point.

A lack of confidence in the Home Office, evidenced by letters to EU nationals warning of deportation, rates of successful appeals against decisions and so on, is widespread. The impact of Brexit on individuals is not confined to the obvious Brexit legislation: I have recently been

involved with the Data Protection Bill, which is now starting its passage through the Commons. Much of the Bill is concerned with protecting the rights of individuals to access and control data about themselves, not least to ensure that it is accurate. However, most of the protections do not apply to personal data processed for “the maintenance of effective immigration control, or the investigation or detection of activities that would undermine the maintenance of effective immigration control”.

The “exemptions” seem likely to have a considerable impact, and the terminology of the basis of the exemptions is so wide as to give the Home Office considerable scope for refusing access by a data subject. This will substantially hinder the work of solicitors acting for individuals making applications to the Home Office / UKVI or resisting HO orders. The Information Commissioner herself says, “If the exemption is applied, individuals will not be able to access their personal data to identify any factual inaccuracies and it will mean that the system lacks transparency and is fundamentally unfair.”

Brexit is about borders and markets and trade and lots more, but above all it is about people. Settled status means existing EU citizens’ rights would retrospectively be removed, including rights to bring in close family members. The UK has a restrictive approach to family union / reunion. I am not advocating that the rules should be more relaxed for EU nationals living in the UK than for UK citizens, but that they should be more relaxed for both groups. Many families in our global world are international, not a fact that our government seems to acknowledge.

The negotiations on EU citizens’ rights should have been ringfenced, as the 3million and British in Europe argued. The report of December 2017 of the negotiators of the European Union and the UK Government on progress in phase 1 of the Brexit negotiations was a progress report of the parties’ common understanding. “Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.” The argument of the 3million, of British in Europe, and of many, many individuals that the position of EU citizens in our country and of British citizens in Europe should be quite separate from negotiations on all the other aspects of the UK leaving the EU still holds good.

Appendix: Conference Programme (16 December 2017)

Brexit and Polonia: Challenges facing the Polish Community during the process of Britain leaving the European Union

Registration 10.00

10.20-10.30 Welcome / introduction

Chair: Michael Fleming (PUNO)

10.30-11.30 The socio-cultural contours of Brexit

Part 1a. Framing the debate: Current scholarship

Chair: Michael Fleming (PUNO)

Dennis Novy (Warwick University)

Who voted for Brexit? A comprehensive district-level analysis
Alexandra Bulat (SSEES UCL)

'The brightest and the best', us, and the rest: Framing EU migration in the 2016 EU referendum campaign

Agata Błaszczyk (The Polish University Abroad)

History of Poles in Britain before 2004

11.30-12.00 Tea/Coffee

12.00 - 13.15

Part 1b Brexit in relation to Britain's Polish community

Chair: Wojtek Rappak (PUNO)

Kathy Burrell (University of Liverpool)

Brexit Mobilities: Anticipating a New Polish Mobility Regime in the UK

Sara Young (UCL Institute of Education, University College London)

Experiences of Polish-born adolescents in Britain during the run-up to Brexit

Magdalena Łużniak-Piecha (Department of Psychology University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw), Grażyna Czubińska (INS, The Polish University Abroad, London)

Britain's Poles after the Brexit vote. "Should we stay or should we go?"

13.15-14.15 Lunch

14.15-15.30**Part 2 Brexit as seen by (representatives of) the Polish community in the UK****Chair:** Magdalena Łużniak-Piecha (PUNO)

Włodzimierz Mier-Jędrzejowicz, Federation of Poles in Great Britain

Brexit concerns as seen by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain
Barbara Drozdowicz, East European Resource Centre

Impact of Brexit on inclusion and integration of Poles in the UK

Katarzyna Bogusławska (Carter Lemon Camerons LLP.)

Brexit: Implications for Polish Businesses

Adriana Górką (PUNO)

Brexit and Polish children in the UK

15.30-16.00 Tea/Coffee**16.00-17.00****Part 3 – Roundtable/ Q and A:** The challenges and responsibility of government and the media

Wojtek Rappak – PUNO

Andy Slaughter – Member of Parliament for Hammersmith (Labour Party).

Wiktor Moszczyński – Union of Polish Writers

Sally Hamwee – Liberal Democrat Lords spokesperson for Home Affairs and Immigration

17.00 End of Conference

Index

- 3million group, xii, 5, 122, 124, 128
- Aaronovitch, David, 11
- Acculturation, 4, 84, 85, 87, 102, 103
- Alternative für Deutschland*, 14, 65
- Anders, Władysław, 46, 47, 56
- Article 50, 121, 123
- Austerity, 31
- Banks, Aaron, 37, 44
- Błaszczyk, Agata, ix, 4, 45, 150
- Bogusławska, Katarzyna, vi, ix, 6, 139, 151
- British citizenship, 6, 48, 56, 141, 142
- Bulat, Alexandra, ix, 3, 15, 17, 35, 150
- Burnham, Andy, 121
- Burrell, Kathy, ix, 4, 5, 57, 105, 108, 109, 150
- Callaghan, James, 10
- Cameron, David, 7, 12, 37, 44, 89
- Committee for the Education of Poles, 48, 49, 55
- Conservative Party, 29, 65, 79
- Corbyn, Jeremy, 90
- Council of Ministers, 121, 127
- Czubińska, Grażyna, vii, x, 4, 83, 150
- Davis, David, xiii, 14, 21
- Democratic Unionist Party, 1
- Drozdowicz, Barbara, x, 2, 6, 134, 151
- East European Resource Centre, x, 6, 134, 151
- Education, 3, 4, 30, 47, 49, 54, 92, 93, 98, 99, 144
- Ephemera, 3, 15, 35
- EU referendum, 4, 7, 10, 12, 17, 27, 28, 29, 35, 37, 38, 39, 42, 44, 150
- European Aviation Safety Agency, 5
- European Common Aviation Area, 5, 109
- European Court of Justice, 114, 123, 128
- European Parliament, 29, 31, 33, 127, 129
- Farage, Nigel, 9, 15, 21, 23, 35, 36, 44, 76, 79, 121
- Federation of Poles in Great Britain, xii, 5, 55, 66, 80, 130, 151
- Fleming, Michael, 1
- Front National*, 14

- Golińska, Agnieszka, x, 4, 83
 Górką, Adriana, xi, 6, 143, 151
 Gove, Michael, 7, 121
- Hamwee, Sally, vii, xi, 2, 3, 6, 147, 151
 Hate crimes, 5, 15, 17, 18, 121
 Home Office, 1
 Hostile environment, 1, 5, 16, 18, 105, 108, 122, 125, 147
 Hypermobility, 106
- Immigration, 1, 2, 6, 11, 16, 31, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 45, 48, 65, 67, 85, 88, 90, 91, 101, 122, 126, 140, 142, 147, 148, 149
 Informal economy, 136
- Johnson, Boris, 7, 39, 121
- Kulczyk, Justyna, xi, 4, 83
- Labour Party, xiii, 29, 90, 151
 Le Pen, Marine, 65
 Leave campaign, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 68, 74, 75, 76, 89, 90, 92, 121, 130
 Leveson Report, 65
 Liberal Democrats, 12
 Łużniak-Piecha, Magdalena, xi, 4, 83, 86, 150, 151
- Major, John, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 21, 48
 May, Theresa, 1, 9, 12, 14, 21, 46, 47, 55, 64, 65, 69, 74, 121, 122, 124, 126, 131, 133
 Mier-Jędrzejowicz, Włodzimierz, vi, xii, 5, 17, 130, 151
 Moszczyński, Wiktor, xii, 5, 65, 80, 151
- NHS, 40, 41, 93, 101, 123, 124
 Novy, Dennis, iv, xii, 3, 14, 27, 33, 34, 150
- O'Brien, James, 35
 Ost, David, 15, 22
- Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act, 12, 22
 Patel, Priti, 41
 Polish adolescents, 4, 17, 54
 Polish children, 6, 17, 50, 53, 55, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 75, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 107, 143, 144, 151
 Polish Resettlement Act 1947, 48
 Polish Resettlement Corps, 47
 Prentis, Dave, 15
 Project Fear, 15
- Raczyński, Edward, 46
 Referenda, 7, 8

- Relative Acculturation Extended Model, 4, 84, 87, 103
- Remain campaign, 3, 9, 12, 21, 27, 32, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 68, 89, 90
- Rogue employers, 135
- Scottish Devolution Referendum, 10, 12
- Second World War, 4, 45, 48, 56, 68, 147
- Secondary mobilities, 105, 106, 114, 115
- Slaughter, Andy, vii, xiii, 151
- Social anger, 15
- Switzerland, 13
- Trump, Donald, 14, 65
- UKIP, 9, 29, 31, 33, 37, 41, 43, 65, 76, 82
- Violence, 17, 18, 91
- Work conditions, 135
- Yalta Conference, 45
- YouGov, 13
- Young, Sara, xiii, 4, 17, 63

In its key message for political decision-makers this edited volume is timely, crucial, but most of all straightforward. The message is simple: Brexit is not just about macro-political shifts, legal earthquakes and the forging of future global alliances. Brexit is about real people, leading real ordinary lives that are about to be severely disrupted. Millions of people in the United Kingdom – migrants, non-migrants, British and EU citizens – are going to have to adapt to new social and economic conditions. Among them, a large group of Polish citizens who have their own concerns about what the new, post-Brexit Britain will look like. The majority of them call this country their home. It will be up to British and European politicians to make sure this home is a pleasant one. This book is a must-read for anyone seriously committed to this task.

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The publication provides the reader with a thorough sociological and legal analysis based on solid empirical material. It truly captures the essence of the right to withdraw from the EU on the example of Brexit, which can be described in one word – uncertainty.

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