

On the move: Transnational family practices among Polish parents working and caring for children in Norway

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Abstract

The paper draws on interviews with Polish parents of young children who have paid employment in Norway. Although settled in Norway, the majority still retain many ties with their homeland, and are on the move between the two countries, both physically and emotionally, comparing their life in Norway to Poland, enjoying services and entitlements from the Norwegian state as well as drawing on resources in Poland, such as informal care by grandmothers. The paper will discuss the different transformations and changes that this group of transnational working parents is part of and how their transnational family practices may lead to changes in their country of immigration as well as their country of emigration.

Keywords: care, housing, transnational family practices, parenting

Introduction

The paper draws on qualitative interviews with Polish parents of young children who have settled in Norway and are in paid employment. The study is part of an ongoing Polish-Norwegian research project, the Effect² study, funded by Norway Grants. Mobilities have emerged as an important topic in the study as the Polish work migrants interviewed are mobile in several forms, including geographically and socially. Although settled in Norway, the majority still retains many ties with their homeland. They are on the move between the two countries, both physically and emotionally, comparing their life in Norway to that in Poland and enjoying services and entitlements from the Norwegian state as well as drawing on resources in Poland, such as informal care by grandmothers. In addition, they invest in houses in Poland, thereby contributing to an opposite resource flow.

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² The study is part of a cooperative research project between Norwegian Social Research (NOVA), Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Policy and Social Research (POLICY), and the Institute of Occupational Medicine, Lodz, Poland, funded by the Polish–Norwegian Research Programme under the Norway Grants funding scheme.

Polish immigration has become a major research topic in Norway and other European countries due to the rapid influx of Polish migrants in other European countries after the EU accession in 2004 (Bell & Erdal, 2015; Friberg, 2012). Poles are now the largest group of immigrants in Norway (Statistics Norway, 2015). Having arrived within a short time span and in considerable numbers, their adaptations to the new institutional contexts and their simultaneous transnational practices are of particular interest as part of ongoing processes of globalization.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the understanding of how a variety of migrants' adaptations and negotiations of multiple institutional contexts, as well as transnational practices and resources, interact with and shape everyday life—with possible implications for the structures in case. Our intention is to link studies of everyday life to migration studies, more specifically to studies of transnational family practices. The paper starts with a brief review of the relevant literature on transnational family practices before presenting the study and an overview of the findings. We will then highlight some examples of the ways in which the life domains of paid work, care, and housing are intertwined with and interact with transnational practices and their possible impacts—in the country of immigration and the country of origin.

Transnational family practices

The concept of transnational families is well established in migration research, recognizing that migrants retain a wide variety of family ties (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002; Goulbourne, Reynolds, Solomos, & Zontini, 2010; Kilkey & Merla, 2014). We will employ the transnational family practices concept, building on the family practices approach proposed by Morgan (1996), which has been widely applied to studies of family and personal life (Edwards, 2004; Vincent & Ball, 2007), including transnational family practices (Landolt & Da, 2005). In revisiting his seminal contribution to the study of family life, Morgan (2011) discusses the continued potential of this approach, arguing that the current social order demands redefinitions and changes of kinship and family practices following migration. Pustulka (2015) draws on Morgan in her study of how new communications technologies are important in shaping new, 'weakly bounded' and relatively 'diffuse' practices among contemporary high mobility relatives (p. 101).

In revisiting the family practices concept, Morgan also addresses some of the critiques, among them, a bias towards agency at the cost of attention to structures and institutions. The authors of this paper have employed a family practices approach in our studies of work–family adaptations, while also drawing attention to the ways in which family practices are shaped within and in relation to institutional and mental structures of opportunity. A key theme in this research is how family practices are shaped by, challenge, produce, and reproduce structural divides like class and gender (Farstad & Stefansen, 2015; Stefansen & Aarseth, 2011; Stefansen & Farstad, 2010; Stefansen & Skogen, 2010).

In this chapter, we will follow the lead of Levitt and Schiller (2004) who suggest studying migration as a transnational social field that comprises simultaneous processes of integration and transnational practices (see also Erdal & Lewicki, 2016). Within this perspective, these processes are not construed as opposites, but rather both are understood as part of ways of being and belonging in the world. Bell and Erdal (2015) similarly argue that studying actual practices is not enough and highlight the need to be sensitive to latent and potential transnational practices and to pay attention to the changing nature of transnational ties over the life course. They study ways of being and doing family in the context of a transnational social field (tangible and intangible dimensions) and identify a limited but enduring migrant transnationalism among Polish migrants to Norway. They further suggest including transnational identifications alongside transnational practices in analyses of transnational family life. On the same note, Rogaly (2015) finds from studying migrant lives over the life course that moving from one country to another may not be the most important move in subjects' lives and that 'past moves within a nation-state may have greater significance to them than their moves into it' (p. 529). Taking the cue from Bell and Erdal as well as Rogaly, we will focus on the multiple moves, practices, and aspirations involved in Polish immigration to Norway.

Care arrangements are a central aspect of transnational family practices, and in this chapter we will draw on the work of Kilkey and Merla (2014), on how the care-giving arrangements of transnational families are situated within and resourced from a range of different but interlinked and partly overlapping institutional contexts. We will also employ the concept of care circulation, which broadens the idea of transnational care flows as a chain of care dyads (Baldassar & Merla, 2014a, introduction; 2014b) to the broader network of social

relationships within which care flows. This perspective points at the same time to the reciprocal and asymmetrical character of these flows.

Data and method

This paper draws on a subset of qualitative interviews that were conducted as part of a larger study on work–life balance in Poland and Norway. For the larger study, three samples of families were interviewed: Polish parents living in Poland, Polish parents who had settled in Norway, and Norwegian parents living in Norway. In this chapter, we only relate to the subset of interviews with Polish parents who live, work, and care for children in Norway. Within this group, all parents except for two were in paid employment in Norway at the time of the interview, and with one exception all parents had at least one child below school age, namely, below six in the Norwegian context.

We conducted 18 interviews³ with Polish parents of pre-school children in Norway, all of which are included in the analysis presented here. The 18 interviews include 21 families, as three of the interviews were group interviews. The other interviews were conducted with couples (eight interviews) or with individual informants (seven interviews). The informants represent a varied group in terms of education levels and occupation, ranging from highly skilled academics and semi-skilled professionals to skilled and unskilled manual workers. Each family included one to three children. The majority had one child (eleven families) or two children (seven families). While we aimed for a broad sample, we were not successful in recruiting from the more precarious parts of the labour market.⁴

The interviews were semi-structured and lasted between one and two hours. They were conducted in the participants' homes, at their work, or at a café and addressed the informants' migration story, their everyday life as working parents in Norway, and their connections to Poland—emotional as well as practical. Key themes in the interviews were work, housing, and the practices of combining work and family. Of particular focus were the respondents'

³ Through a collaborative agreement with another Norwegian Grants project, the TRANSFAM project, we were given access to four anonymous interviews with Polish families that included information on our topic of study. These interviews are part of our sample of Polish families and add to the variation in work–family adaptation, but we have not used them directly in the analysis presented here.

⁴ Although we used a number of access points, such as colleagues and our wider network, ads on webpages and social media forums for Polish migrants in Norway, church coffees, and other arenas where Polish migrants meet, as well as employed the snowballing method, recruiting participants was nevertheless a slow and time-consuming process.

use and understanding of the benefits and entitlements for working parents in Norway as well as their access to and use of transnational care resources.

The interviews were conducted by a team of four: the authors of this paper and two Polish-speaking research assistants⁵ who also assisted in the recruiting process. The team members conducted interviews alone or in varying pairs. The participants chose the language they preferred for the interview, whether Polish, Norwegian, or English. Five interviews were conducted in Polish and translated to Norwegian by the research assistants. The remaining were conducted in Norwegian or a combination of Norwegian and English. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. In addition to giving interviews, the participants filled in a short form with background information such as education, occupation, income, and organization of childcare.

General patterns in the data

The interviews were analysed systematically and by theme with the aim of identifying areas related to trajectories of migration, settling in Norway (including paid work, care, and housing), and transnational practices. Table 1 below illustrates the different trajectories of migration, paid work, care, housing, and associated transnational practices that we identified in the interviews. In the table, we list the variety of the informants' trajectories for each of these contexts and the relevant transnational practices that emerged in the interviews. Migration itself was found to involve different trajectories. For the three main institutional contexts following migration—paid work, family, and housing—we similarly identified different trajectories as well as the relevant transnational practices related to each of these contexts.

Table 1 Institutional contexts and transnational practices

Trajectories of	Trajectories in the data	Transnational practices
Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Poland, Norway – Poland, 3rd country, Norway – Poland, Norway, moved within Norway 	

⁵ Monika Kochowicz acted as an interpreter during some of the interviews and also transcribed and translated one interview. Anna Sitarz conducted four interviews, which she also transcribed and translated.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poland, Norway, 3rd country,, return to Norway - Poland, Norway, return to Poland - Poland, Norway, imagines moving in future/next generation 	
Paid work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary downward mobility, relevant work - Permanent downward mobility - Immediate relevant work - Upward mobility - Education, preparing for future upward mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subcontracting - Border work
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forming family in Poland, moving to Norway together - Forming family in Poland, moving to Norway separately/staged - Meeting in transnational space or 3rd country,, moving together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family formation in transnational space - Living apart in Norway and Poland - ‘Flying kin’, care circulation
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buying or building in Poland, selling to buy in Norway - Buying or building in Norway, selling to buy in Poland - Renting first, then buying in Norway - Buying second home in Poland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Real estate transactions in Norway and Poland to finance housing in the other country - Second homes, tourism in Poland

On the move: Geographically mobile migrants

For a considerable share of our informants, migrating from Poland to Norway was only part of their story of migration and mobility, mirroring Rogaly’s findings that moving from one country to another may not be the whole or the most important part of migrants’ stories (2015). A considerable share of our informants came to Norway after first having migrated to live and work in other European countries, and it was also rather common to move within Norway. Future mobility also appeared to be a possibility and an aspiration that came up in the interviews. Although the majority claimed to have settled in Norway for good, some

prepared to return to Poland. For instance, one couple had stayed in Norway for several years, where they were successful professionally and financially, and now they were planning to return in order to live closer to family and friends. For others, the prospect and expectation of future international mobility was raised with regard to their children.

Occupational mobility also emerged as part of the process of settling in Norway. Some had had to accept downward occupational mobility, while others experienced an upward mobility in their profession and claimed to have better careers as well as a higher standard of living compared to living in Poland. Yet others were laterally mobile, working in a different vocation than the one they were trained in.

Transnational family practices

We identified a variety of transnational family practices. Firstly, we found examples of Polish couples initially meeting in transnational spaces. Some of the interviewees had met their partner in transnational spaces such as a bus or an airport on their way to Norway or to a third country; there were also examples of couples who had met in a third country and then decided to go to Norway together. These examples reveal how migration, in terms of more young people being on the move, has created new, transnational spaces that may also be sites of coincidentally meeting a partner. These spaces between countries as spaces of importance for family practices have so far gone more or less unnoticed (see Table 1).

Another and more familiar example of transnational family practices is transnational caring practices, including ‘flying grandmothers’ who live in Poland but who come to help the family in Norway, in particular after the birth of a child, during paternity leave, or for helping the parents bridge the gap between parental leave and formal childcare. Children might also be sent to Poland to visit their grandparents during holidays as part of maintaining bonds and good relations, and possibly also as part of Polish familialism and identity construction based on Titkow’s (2007) image of Mother Pole as ‘managerial matriarch’ (as cited in Pustulka, 2014).

There were also examples of flying grandfathers who typically came to help refurbish a house in Norway. Finally, we saw one example of transnational care for relatives in Poland. In this case, the informant went to stay with her father in Poland for several months during his

hospitalization and medical treatment.

We also identified various transnational practices that involved a wider circle of family and friends, among them visiting friends and kin in Poland as guests and tourists on a regular basis; hosting friends and family from Poland during their visits to Norway; and providing informal advice to friends, family, and colleagues in Poland who considered emigration. We regard these, too, as transnational family practices, part of the communities of practice (Wenger, 1999) for learning and doing which our informants belong to.

Finally, among our informants, migration seems to have led to a particular reflexive space within which everyday life, parenting, and working are being shaped and interpreted. Through frequent revisits to Poland and visits from Polish family and friends, they are mentally and also to some extent physically leading transnational lives, being ‘doubly engaged’ here and there (Mazzucato, 2008), and they have to carve out their lives in a new landscape that involves the ties with, awareness of, and comparisons with multiple imaginary and real opportunities and alternative life paths. Mobility is present, not only as specific transnational practices but as a potentiality, as a state of mind and perceived future opportunity. Having moved, mobility as a lived reality and a potential for themselves or their children, is present in the informants’ reflections over their lives here and now as well as in their reflections about the future—particularly in some of the their reflections and planning for their children’s future. Paul is an example. He works as a consultant, is married, and has two children. He sees the opportunity of giving the children an international education as one of the advantages of living in Norway:

Then there was this huge, this diamond-thing that we got in Norway, we got . . . our children speak three languages very well, and [they] can start their professional lives with three languages. . . . I, for example, have had to learn English and it has taken many hours of my life to come to the level that gives me the opportunity to work on international projects. They get it for free by just being there. It is a very good thing [as part of] being here in Norway.

Paul’s teenage daughter attends the international school nearby, which is part of the public school system: *‘(There is) an international school that you do not have to pay for. So*

otherwise, the international school system (in Poland) is very expensive and I would not [be able to] afford to pay for it. Referring to his youngest child, who is four years old, Paul said:

We have decided that she [too] should go to international school and what we think is terrific is that she is going to speak three languages when she is seven years old or six. When she goes to international school, she will speak perfect Polish and perfect Norwegian as she does now and also perfect English after one year. (Paul, two children)

For Paul, Norway is not the final destination. Rather, the move to Norway may be seen as part of a more general orientation towards global mobility from a generational perspective, and one reason to stay in Norway is the availability of free or affordable international schools. The hopes and aspirations that Paul expresses in the quotes above of his children acquiring the necessary language skills that might give them access to the high end of the global labour market illustrate how spatial and occupational mobility over generations have become part of the imaginary landscape that he inhabits as a migrant in Norway. The majority of the informants, however, planned to send their children to the Norwegian public school, but there were also others who, like Paul, reflected on the possibilities of sending their children to an international school. We chose to present this case in order to illustrate how migration may transcend the idea of migrating and settling in a new country but may also be part of a larger move, geographically, temporally, and from a generational perspective.

We will now detail two examples from our study to elucidate the manifold ways in which processes of settling and adapting to life in Norway are intertwined with transnational practices, and the possible impact of these practices in both Norway and Poland. First we look at early childcare and the combination of Norwegian institutional support for caring with transnational caring practices. Investing in second homes in Poland is the second example of a practice that represents simultaneous processes of integration and a transnational practice.

Caring in a universal welfare state and a transnational social space

From a comparative perspective, entitlements for working parents in Norway are generous, and their universal character is part of the welfare state model that immigrants encounter. The core elements of institutional support for working parents are a long and compensated parental leave (11–13 months) that includes a quota reserved for the father (the ‘father’s

quota'), a cash-for-care scheme (for 1–2 year olds not enrolled in kindergarten), and state-subsidized kindergartens, generally of high quality. According to the Working Environment Act, working parents also have a right to paid leave to care for sick children (10–15 days per year depending on the number of children) and to work part-time. The vast majority of our informants fully embraced the full range of entitlements available to working parents in Norway and made use of the core measures that enables the dual earner–dual carer model when children are young. Our informants were very positive towards the institutional support that parents receive in Norway, which they generally considered to have had a strong influence on shaping their families and family life in Norway, including the number of children. Sylwia's comment below is typical. Sylwia is temporarily a stay-at-home mother while she is looking for a job after having moved to a new town in Norway. However, this is not a permanent adaptation, as she was employed in a service job before they moved to a new town. Sylwia belongs to the small minority among our informants who were living in a male breadwinner arrangement at the time of the interview. In Sylwia's view, living in Norway has a direct impact on major decisions in her family, such as the number of children:

I suppose, if I had been in Poland, I would have had only one child. Here, because it's so much easier to support the family, one can afford to have three or four children. Parents may be more at peace because they feel financially secure. The family in Norway has more safety—they can count on the state if something difficult happens, like serious illness, unemployment, or an accident. Parents can be more laid back because they can expect a lot from the state. One can feel safe. All (families) around here have three children. If I had become pregnant again and I had been in Poland, I would for sure have had an abortion. Here I could consider having another child. (Sylwia, married, two children)

However, in addition to making use of Norwegian entitlements and institutional support, caring practices also included transnational aspects, notably 'flying grandmothers' (Nesteruk & Marks, 2009; Reynolds & Zontini, 2006) who live in Poland but who come to help the family in Norway, in particular after the birth of a child, during paternity leave, or to help parents bridge the gap between parental leave and formal childcare. Children might also be sent to Poland to visit their grandparents during holidays when their parents had to work. Other examples of 'flying kin' (Nesteruk & Marks, 2009; Viry & Kaufmann, 2015), were grandfathers who typically came to help refurbish the family's house in Norway, as illustrated in this quote from one of the men referring to his wife's father: *'Her father came to help, he is*

an electrician and helped us with the wires.’ The gendered character of the help received from grandparents may reflect the gendered patterns in their generation.

In one family, there was an example of the opposite direction of the care flow, as the informant went to stay with her father in Poland for several months during his hospitalization and medical treatment. These examples reveal intergenerational as well as transnational care flows, and how these may work both ways, in terms of generation and direction, illustrating that care circulates among a wider network of kin, as suggested by Baldassar and Merla’s (2014a, introduction; 2014b) notion of ‘care circulation’. Our sample consists of relatively young parents, and they clearly received more care from their healthy and capable parents living in Poland than the other way round, but this might change over the life course when their parents get older and need more care (Zechner, 2008).

Although transnational elements were an important feature of care arrangements in some families, it is important to note that this was not so for everyone; there were also several parents who did not have access to such transnational resources and who had to manage all by themselves. Some saw the lack of supportive kin in Norway as a problem while others did not seem to perceive it as a disadvantage. For one family who planned to return to Poland, the prospect of getting more help from grandparents was one of the key benefits they looked forward to after returning to Poland.

In Sylwia’s case, quoted below, both her parents have spent extensive time with the family to help out with the children:

My parents help us a lot [. . .]. After both births my parents came and spent a month with us every time. They visit us at least once a year and spend about one month each time—and then they look after the child. [Lately also with refurbishing the house]. My older son also spends a few weeks with his grandparents in Poland. (Sylwia, married, two children)

In this way, grandparents become a more integrated part of the dual earner–dual carer arrangement in some Polish families, in contrast to the general dual earner–dual carer model in Norway, which uniformly relates to and is modelled on the nuclear family. Even if it is not uncommon for grandparents to help out from time to time, the key actors in the care chain in Norway are the parents and the state—as provider of parental leave and kindergartens (see

Stefansen & Farstad, 2010). The kind of extensive help from grandparents described in the case above could thus be seen as an act of reinterpretation of the standard dual earner–dual carer model in Norway. This is even more evident when the help is offered in the period of the parental leave that is reserved for the father, the ‘paternal quota’—ten weeks of the non-transferable share of parental leave that have to be taken by the father, which the family will lose if the father does not claim it. Farstad and Stefansen (2015) discuss how the father’s quota is linked to a particular metanarrative of a ‘new’ involved fatherhood. In the Nordic context, this metanarrative revolves around a construction of the father as willing and able to ‘mother’ from infancy, and it connects to what Dermott (2014) has termed ‘the dyadic turn’ (p. 137) in the understanding of family life. Emphasis has shifted from the family system as a place for care and intimacy to the relationship between individuals.⁶ In the interview sequence quoted below, from the interview with Marek and Maja (married with two children), we see how this idea is both reflected and reinterpreted. Marek works in a manual, semiskilled profession, while Maja holds an extensive university education and works in her profession.

Interviewer: [to wife] When he was on paternity leave the last time, did you go to work and he stayed home to care for the child?

Maja: Yes.

Interviewer: [to husband] Is this the idea now, too, that you should take . . . stay home and not work in that period?

Marek: It will be during the summer, next summer. [looks at Maja] Yes, last time it was winter and it was autumn and winter, September to Christmas, and Christmas holidays so I was like . . . it was fine.

Maja: That went fine.

Marek: Yes, it went well. A part of the thing was that my mother-in-law was here, too, or lived here.

Interviewer: Yes, while you were on leave?

Marek: Yes, so I was not completely alone with the child, we were . . .

Interviewer: Did she help you looking after the child, then?

Marek: Yes, yes, yes. My mother-in-law has full control.

(Marek and Maja married, two children)

⁶ See Bjørnholt (2009) for an exploration of how the idea of the father–son relationship became salient in Norwegian family research.

In the above case, both husband and wife embrace the paternal quota of parental leave, but at the same time the family gets a lot of help from both grandmothers, and one of the grandmothers stayed with the family as a rule. In this way, this family combines the available institutional support for working parents with extensive informal transnational support.

‘Flying grandmothers’ have been described as a transnational resource flow or even a care drain: in addition to benefiting from Polish immigrants’ paid work and their contribution as taxpayers, Norway also benefits from a net import of Polish care resources that facilitate and subsidize (some) Polish immigrants working in Norway (Isaksen, 2010). The support from ‘flying grandmothers’ may be seen as part of a global pattern of transnational care circulation (Baldassar & Merla, 2014a, introduction; 2014b), maintaining intergenerational ties and family bonds. It may also lead to a perpetuation of the gender division of labour as the grandmother replaces the mother during paternal leave as an act of resistance, undermining the political intent of this policy. On the other hand, the combination of formal institutional entitlements with informal help from ‘flying grandmothers’ may also be seen as part of the wide variation in the ways in which parents make use of parental leave—in particular, the paternal quota of parental leave—and the ways in which different parents fit this entitlement into their everyday lives and their ideals of parenting and doing family.

The combination of Norwegian institutional support for caring, such as paid parental leave, and transnational caring practices illustrate how processes of integration in Norwegian society are part of complex adaptations to living and working in Norway. On one hand, immigrants claim and enjoy the full range of entitlements for working parents while, on the other hand, they modify and supplement them by use of ‘flying kin’, which may result in mixed and contradictory consequences.

Second homes in Poland: Longing and belonging

The practice of buying second homes in Poland may at first glance appear to be a purely transnational practice, an expression of ‘homesickness’ and the cultivation of a Polish identity. Other studies of immigrants buying houses in their countries of origin have often focused on the role of houses in the home country and their meanings as part of identity formation (see Erdal, 2012). Buying a house in the country of origin may serve as an investment and provide income when it is rented out, and may even serve as headquarters for

returned migrants' business activities (Arhinful, 2001). We will argue, however, that this phenomenon may also be taken as an illustration of a process of simultaneous cultural integration or assimilation and transitional practices (Arhinful, 2001; Boccagni, 2011; Rabikowska, 2010; Rabikowska & Burrell, 2004; Smith & Mazzucato, 2009).

Several of our informants had bought flats in Poland for holiday purposes and, in some cases, as an investment. In the case below, we can see that the second home, in Poland, bought as an investment, took priority, and the couple, Anna and Pavel, postponed buying a house in Norway in order to afford it:

Anna: In the beginning, we rented, and then we bought a house in 2012, so now we have lived here for almost two years. We could have bought a house before, but we bought an apartment in Poland, and we bought it without taking a loan, so we just had to save a little, and it went well, so therefore . . .

Interviewer: So you still have the apartment in Poland, too?

Pavel: Actually, we'll [go there now]. It will be the first time we stay there, on vacation simply, we think to try it and then rent it out. We do not think about moving there. It is not the purpose—it will be rented out. We live here.

In Pavel and Anna's case we see that they postponed buying a house in Norway and rented a house in Norway in order to save money and buy an apartment in Poland. In their case, the second home in Poland took precedence over finding a permanent home in Norway, although they had decided to stay in Norway. They did not elaborate on the reasons why they bought it. It may be an investment, but we may also assume that it could have an emotional meaning as a material manifestation of their continued ties with Poland in the context of settling in Norway. The practice of buying second homes for various reasons and purposes in the country of origin at the same time mirrors the practices of migrants worldwide. On the other hand, it also mirrors the common practice among the Norwegian population of owning second homes, often located in rural areas. Farstad and Rye (2013) reported that the Norwegian population of approximately five million owns about 450,000 second homes. The number increases by 5000 to 6000 each year. Buying a second home for holiday purposes could thus be seen as part of adopting a Norwegian lifestyle and of Polish immigrants' cultural integration into Norwegian society. In this sense, their practices feed into an ongoing

transformation of how Norwegian families live their lives, enabled by economic prosperity over decades.

Concluding remarks

We found that Polish immigration to Norway entail a variety of migration trajectories, adaptations, and anticipations. On one hand, all the informants in our study fully embraced and predominantly made use of the full range of rights and entitlements of working parents in Norway, also embracing their underlying ideas such as mothers' paid work, equal parenting, and parental leave—including the paternal quota. On the other hand, care arrangements in Norway also drew on extra care resources from Poland in Norway. Most notably, 'flying grandmothers' in some cases subsidized working parents' wage labour in Norway by providing free supplementary care, and parents rather frequently received other help from grandparents, such as childcare during holidays.

Research on parents' use of entitlements like parental leave and the paternal quota in particular tends to focus on uptake rates or on how parental leave is allocated between mothers and fathers (see Brandth & Kvande, 2013, and Farstad, 2016 for a critique). The role of grandmothers and other 'flying kin' in this context and the ways in which transnational grandmothering might interact with the policy intentions of particular entitlements for working parents have so far received no attention.

In our view, Polish parents' adaptations of work and care, and the ways in which they combine Norwegian welfare state entitlements with transnational practices and transnational care resources, may both reinforce and challenge policies tailored to the dyadic, dual earner–dual carer model. At the same time, these practices may expand the variation of work–family adaptations in Norway.

Similarly, the negotiations of other contexts and associated transnational practices may have varying and ambiguous meanings and implications, such as the practice of buying second homes. This may be seen as a transnational practice and a way of retaining links with Poland, on the one hand, and may also be seen as an expression of adopting a Norwegian lifestyle, on the other hand, in which second homes for holiday purposes are an important feature. The impact in Norway may at the same time be part of Polish immigrants' cultural integration into

Norway—having a second home like everyone else—and of retaining ties with Poland, which might be seen by others as an impediment to integration in Norway.

All the practices we have discussed have in common that they illustrate how settling and living in Norway entail simultaneous processes of negotiating new institutional contexts and transnational practices, with complex and sometimes contradictory effects. These ongoing practices and micro-adaptations may form part of larger processes of social change. However, caution is warranted as to drawing final conclusions as to the direction of change.

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