

# Return migrants inclusion and employment.

## The case of return migration from the UK to Poland

### Research context:

- **RESEARCH CONTEXT** (secondary data):
- Approximately 2 million Poles have emigrated since the EU enlargement in 2004 (700 thousand to the UK)
- 63% of them under 30 years old having little or no experience on the labour market
- Polish migrants are better educated than the total Polish population (67,1 % of them have at least secondary education, compared to 48,2% among adequate group in Poland)
- At the same time (around 2000) the process of precarisation of work in Poland intensifies (Trappmann 2010)

#### RETURN MIGRANTS

- Approximately 300 thousand long-term migrants have returned to Poland between 2002 and 2011 (ca. 73 thousand of them returned from the UK) (GUS 2013)
- 'Mixed evidence' with regard to the situation of Polish returnees in the labour market
- Higher probability of unemployment (Anacka and Fihel 2013)
- Higher self-employment rate (Bieñkowska et al. 2010)
- High level of remigration (circular migration or the last chance given to Poland) (GUS 2013)

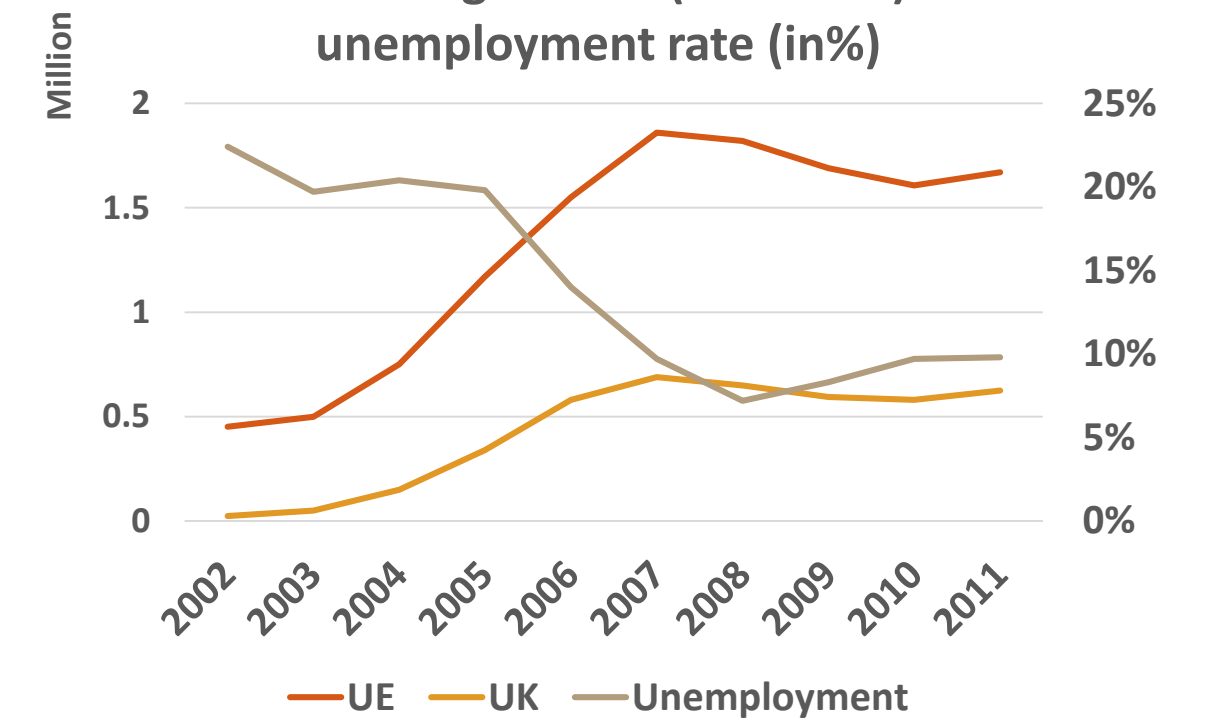
#### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:

- Critical Social Realism (Archer 2007) – possible solution for overcoming agency/structure problem, present in the majority of the previous research on return migration (Bakewell 2010)
- Labour Market Inclusion – understood as an opportunity to access all attached to full time employment rights and securities (Standing 2010)

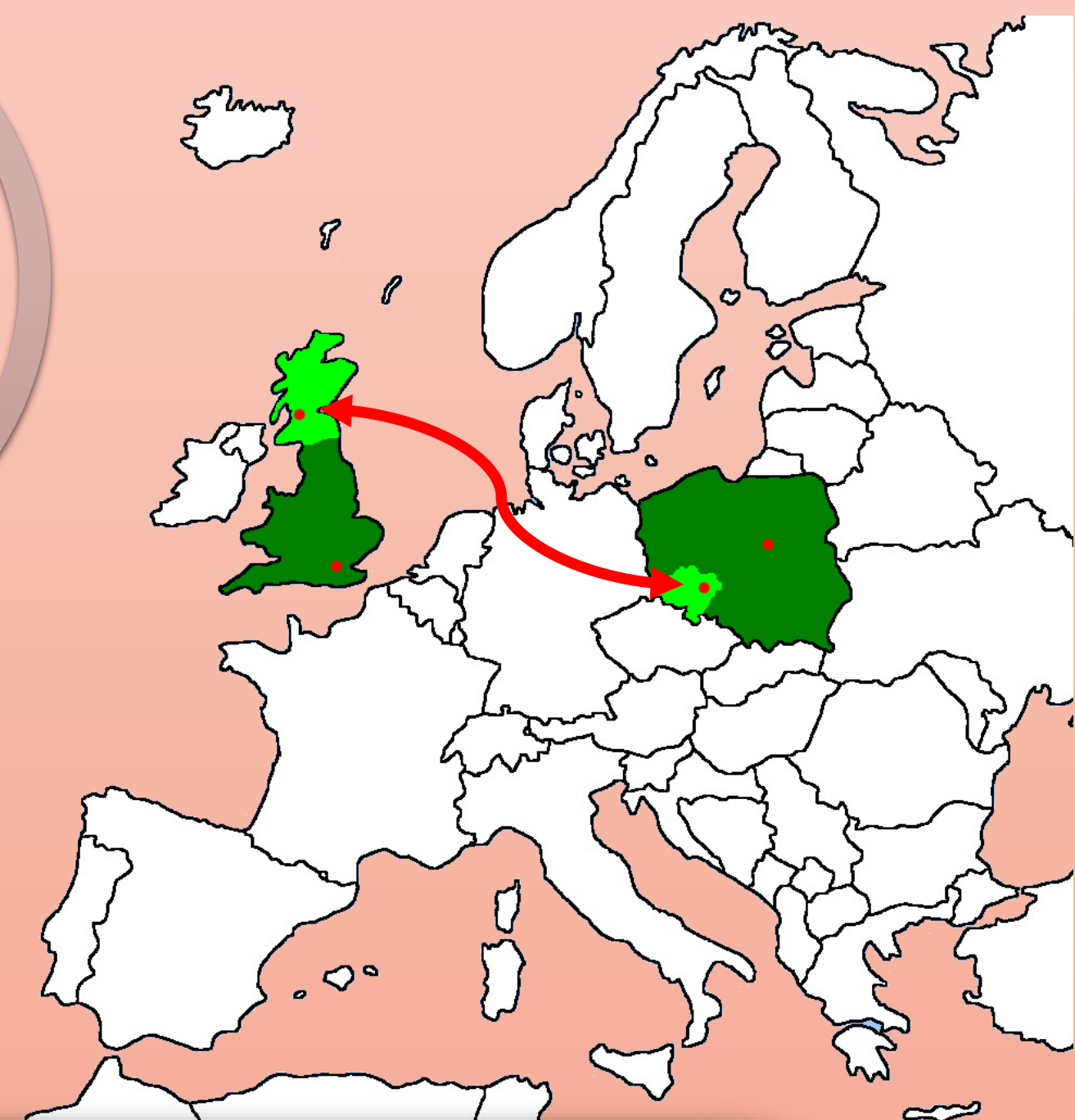
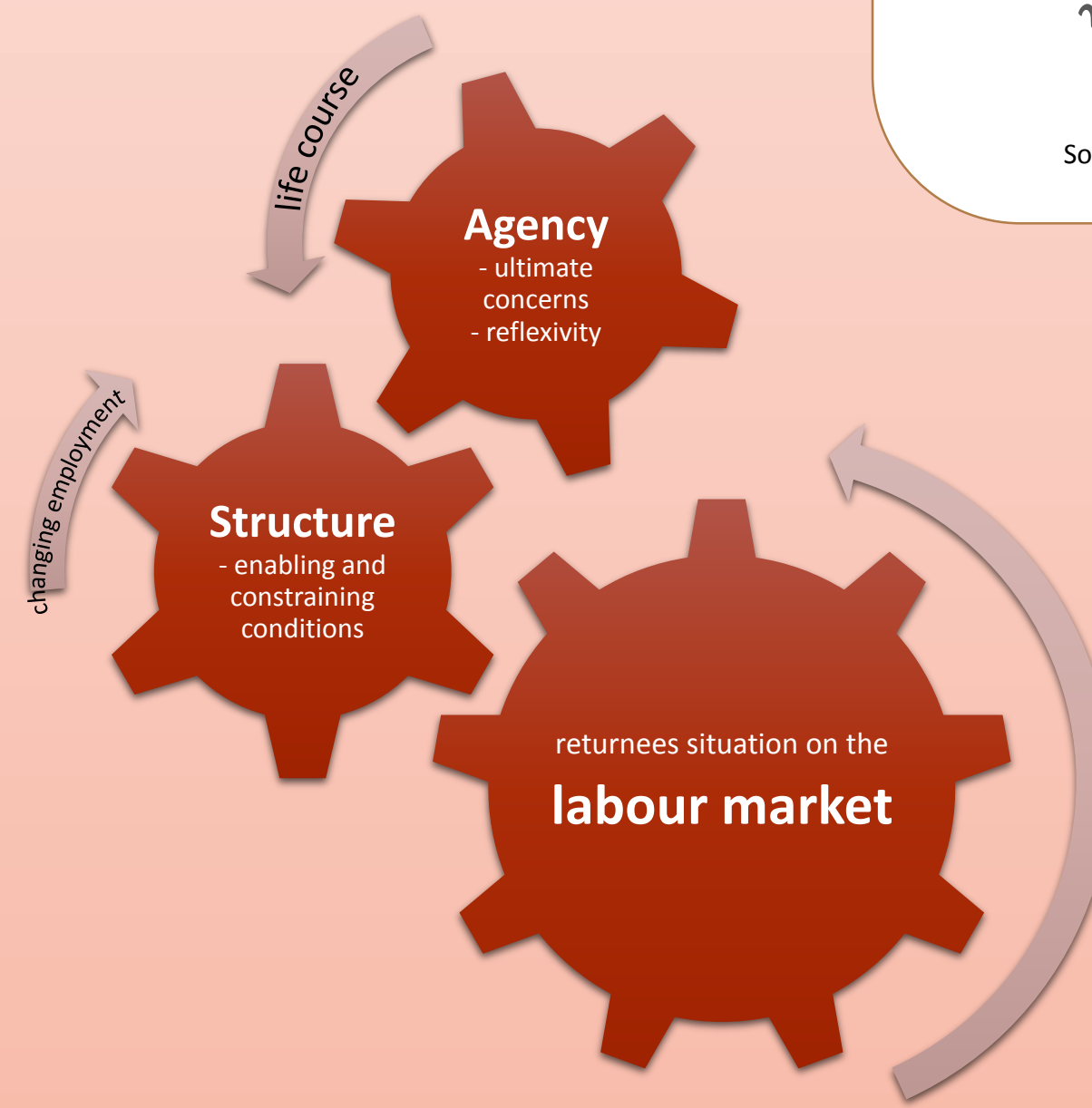
#### MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What are the conditions and processes of successful and unsuccessful inclusion of returnees on the home country labour market.
- How the changes in return migrants biographies and life projects interplay with the ongoing changes of employment pattern in Poland (especially with precarisation of work)

### Poles living abroad (in million) & unemployment rate (in%)



Source: Polish National Census of Population and Housing 2011 & LFS



### Methodological framework:

#### ✓ Methodes:

- Biographical Narrative Interviews (Schütze 1984) in framework of realist biographies
- Secondary Data Analysis (i.a. LFS, national census, WRS,)
- Experts Interviews

#### ✓ Sample:

- 40 Biographical Narrative Interviews (untill November 2014, 22 interviews were conducted: 12 women, 10 men, both with return (10) and re-migrants (12); mainly from two regions Lower Silesia (Poland) and Scotland (UK) as well as two capital cities Warsaw and London
- snowball sampling, mailing and via Internet forum for migrants

#### ✓ Data Analysis:

- Step 1. Grounded Theory Methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1967) -> open and selective coding
- Step 2. Biographical Analysis (Schütze 1984)

**Realist Biographies** - "Our basic supposition is that biographical methods allow us to probe in an epistemically objective way how real people act out an ontologically subjective social world. (...) We want to know how things happen at the level of what real people think and do." (Mrozowski, Turk, and Domecka 2013, 16-17)

### Initial findings:

So far from the data the four tentative types of return are emerging:

- ❖ 1) **Return as an Investment** - carefully planned return considered as a step in a career, generally preceded by the finding job from abroad completed with full labour market inclusion.
- ❖ 2) **Return as a Test** - frequent among migrants with no previous job experience in Poland and among migrants who after working a few years abroad, noted some disadvantages of living there and who also believe that the situation in Poland has changed. Often linked with the „risk management” and the „just in case” transnational maintenance both personal and institutional. When the test failed, this type of return often ends with re-migration.
- ❖ 3) **Return as a Refuge** – results from spontaneous decision after changes in personal (e.g. breakup, pregnancy, legal problems) or working (e.g. job-loss) life. Because the return is not well prepared, it might end with the problems with the labour market integration (Cassarino 2004). The LM outcome depends on the individual structural position and the type of work experience gathered abroad.
- ❖ 4) **Return for Non-instrumental Reasons/Values** – return in order to acquire, restore or maintain the non-materialistic values (e.g. unity of family, formal education, care of elderly parents, prestige). It is often combined with the modification of the hierarchy of values, migration is perceived as an enlightening experience, making “more clear” what is one’s ultimate concern. In this case work is of secondary importance and is often treated as purely instrumental.

### Further research questions:

#### What are returnees answers towards exposed by the migration experience lack of the work related securities?

- How the process of the normalisation of the „abnormal” occurs? - (re)construction of subjectivity
- What are the resistance/coping strategies and under what biographical and structural conditions does it take the form of individual or collective actions?
- What is the impact of the post-transformation discourse of the „self made man” (Dunn 2004, Buchowski 2008, Sowa 2013) on the emergence of the mobile labour force from the semi-peripheral Poland. What role in this process plays the dismantling of the socialist „welfare state” and privatisation understood in terms of the dispossession of the commons.

### Who?



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### Selected dissemination and related publications:

- 13-19 July 2014, Yokohama (Japan) – XVIII ISA World Congress of Sociology: paper "Job Is Not Everything, the Case of Return Migration from the UK to Poland in the Wake of the 2008 Economic Crisis" (RC31 Roundtable, Migration Studies)

- 13-15 August 2014, Copenhagen (Denmark) - 17th Nordic Migration Conference  
Presentation of the paper: "Regular abroad but irregular at home? Post-accession return migrants inclusion and exclusion on the labour market: the case of return migration from the UK to Poland"

- 3-6 September 2014, Glasgow (UK) - ECPR General Conference  
paper: "Return labour migrants. The case of return migration from the UK to Poland."

- Mrozowski, Adam, Krasowska, Agata, Karolak, Mateusz (accepted and forthcoming in early 2015) "«Stop the junk contracts!» Young workers and trade union mobilization against precarious employment in Poland" in Hodder and Kretsos (eds.) Trade Unions and Young People: A Global View, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.