

# TRANSFAM

*Doing family in transnational context.  
Demographic choices, welfare adaptations, school  
integration and every-day life of Polish families living  
in Polish-Norwegian transnationality*

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# Agenda



- PART 1: General background of TRANSFAM project
  - *Consortium*
  - *Methodological approach*
  - *TRANSFAM Work Packages*
  - *Project Objectives*
  - *Outputs & Outcomes*
- PART 2: Preliminary findings relevant to gender equality and broader gendered processes and issues from Transfam's Work Package 2
  - *Gender and Families/Wider Kin*
  - *Gender and Couples*
  - *Gender and Children*



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# TRANSFAM

- Project title: *Doing family in transnational context. Demographic choices, welfare adaptations, school integration and every-day life of Polish families living in Polish-Norwegian transnationality*
- Consortium:
  - Jagiellonian University (Cracow) – Project Promoter
  - Agderforskning (Kristiansand)
  - Centre of International Relations (Warsaw)
  - NOVA - Norwegian Social Research, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences
- Duration of the project: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Project budget/funding: 3 618 529 PLN

# Methods and approach

## 1. Main assumptions:

- Migration and social integration have to be regarded as embedded in and interrelated with biographical processes
- Migration, migratory decisions or settlement choices, lives of migrants families and their social integration do not exist in isolation, so a systematic evaluation needs to consider the social and other mechanisms and structures

## 2. Integrated methodological approach:

- Numerous information types and sources, as well as multiple analytical and data collection tools
- A transnational context as a primary analytical framework, broadened and supplemented with input from family studies and conceptualizations of social capital
- A mixed-methods research
- Key strengths - interdependency, collaborative efforts and advancements through data-sharing

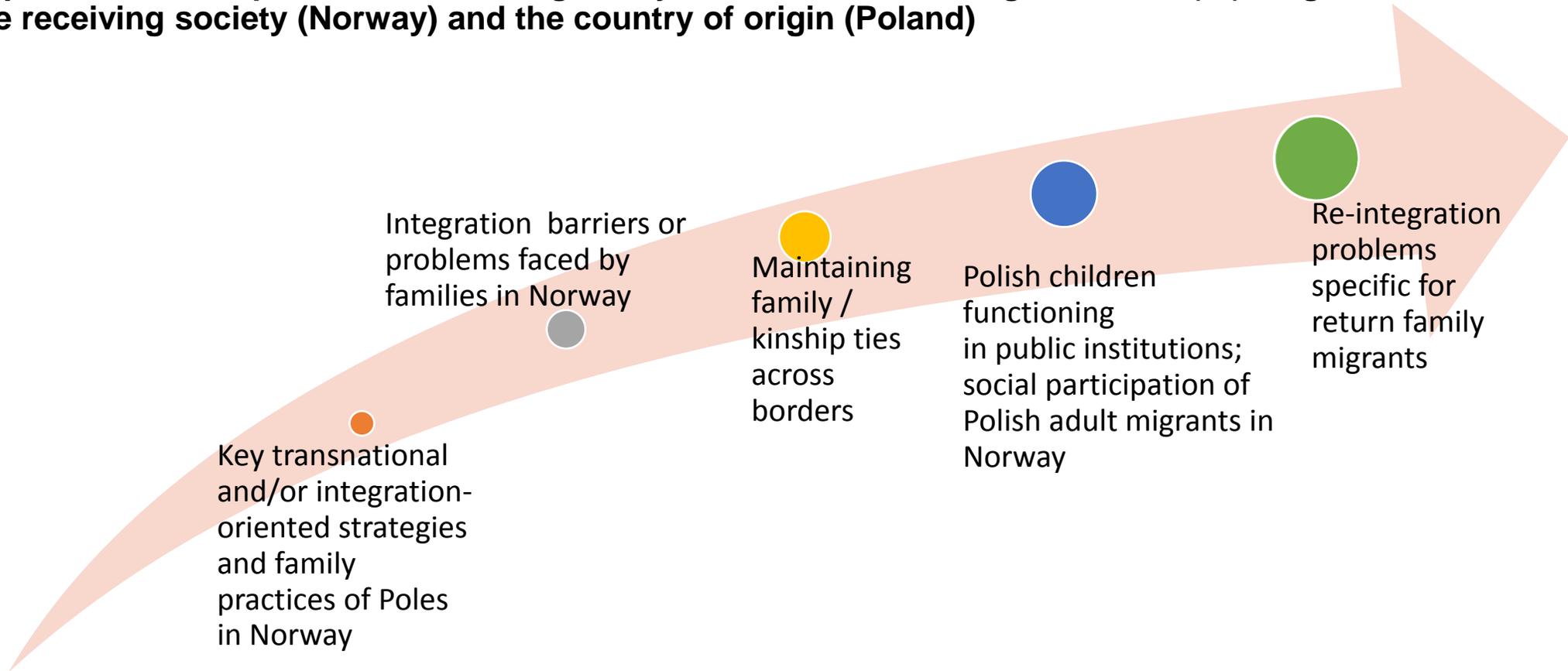
# WPs within TRANSFAM

- WP1 **Background Report**, Prof Krystyna Iglicka (CIR) – statistical data review on Poland-Norway migration patterns and demographic trends;
- WP2 **Migrant families in Norway / structure of power relations and negotiating values and norms in transnational families**, Magdalena Ślusarczyk PhD (JU) – qualitative research in Oslo area, 32 biographic/semi-structured interviews, focus on parenting practices;
- WP3 **Social capital among Polish immigrant families in Norway**, Dr. Eugene Guribye (Agder) – qualitative study, an ethnography with focus on social capital networks and institutional and informal contexts of social participation;
- WP4 **Parenthood in a migrant life course perspective**, Lihong Huang, PhD (NOVA) – a quantitative component, a survey of 400 households (200 in Norway, 200 in Poland).
- WP5 **Children's experience of growing up transnationally**, Prof. Krystyna Slany (JU) – a qualitative study, 50 children interviews and 20 expert interviews in Oslo area.
- WP6 **Settlement choices in Norway**, Katarzyna Gmaj PhD (CIR) - spatial patterns, a component bridging qualitative and quantitative.
- WP7 **Integration and re-integration of Polish children in school**, Randi Wærdahl, PhD (Agder), qualitative research, case studies, intercultural education focus.

# Project objectives



Exploration of the processes of “doing family” in the context of migration and (re)integration, both within the receiving society (Norway) and the country of origin (Poland)



*This project is funded from Norway Grants in the Polish-Norwegian Research Programme operated by the National Centre for Research and Development*

# Outputs & Outcomes



## Outputs & Short-term goals:

- Publication and dissemination of:
  - Recommendation Reports and Briefs for policymakers in Norway and in Poland
  - A number of thematic working papers (one completed at present)
  - Academic journal publications (including Special Issue volume), an edited collection book, a doctoral dissertation
- Events:
  - A workshop for social workers (in Norway)
  - A pilot-programme of workshops concerning inter-cultural education (in Poland)
  - Four projects workshops (one happened in Feb 2014)
  - Two academic conferences
- Other:
  - Ongoing maintenance of project's online presence through a dedicated website and social media (ongoing)
  - Development of easy-access resources for migrants

## Long-term outcomes:

- Strengthened visibility of the Polish-Norwegian family migration flow
- The subject successively put on the map of academic and policy-relevant inquiry
- Facilitation of diaspora- and family-policy revisions and implementations affecting bilateral partnerships
- Propositions of family-oriented solutions that are gender-sensitive, and, moreover, intersectional (regarding age, class, gender, etc.), particularly vital in Poland
- Fostering and initiation of the broader debates on children in migration, as well as systemic intercultural education in Poland



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# TRANSFAM WP2

## Preliminary Findings on Gender Equality

### Migrant families in Norway /structure of power relations and negotiating values and norms in transnational families

Jagiellonian University  
Magdalena Slusarczyk, Paula Pustulka

# WP 2 Theoretical Framework and Approach



- **Relational perspective, focus on the everyday and general reflections**
  - **British Family Studies**
  - **Feminist Critiques of Families, Motherhood & Parenting, Feminist Mothering**
  - **Gendered migration/ Feminist Migration Studies**
- Timeline: fieldwork in Norway completed in February and March 2014;
- **32 interviews** with Polish families in Norway were conducted ;
- **A combination of biographic & semi-structured interviewing, visual tools (life-trajectories, networks)**



# WP2 Respondents

- Deliberate participants' recruitment: targeted diversity
- Direct and indirect recruitment strategies
- Respondents: 10 couples, 2 men, 20 women
- Marital status: 26 married, 3 informal, 3 divorced
- Length of stay abroad: from 6 months to over 20 years
- Ethnicity: 5 mixed couples, 27 PL-PL
- Age: 29-53
- Place of origin – various (from small villages to Warsaw)
- Residence: 10 in Oslo, 20 in the area of 200km radius, including remote areas, one interviewee still lives in PL
- Occupational diversity (e.g. unemployed, businessmen, corporate expats, skilled and manual workers)
- Social class: 4 working class, 4 upper class, rest – middle class
- Five families with children both in PL and NOR at the time of the interview
- Transnational phase in most cases
  - Dominant pattern of primary male-migration in the Norwegian case
  - 4 examples of maternal separation
- Children aged from few months to early adulthood (23)
- Families with 1 to 5 children, median - 2



# Key Questions on Gender & Gender Equality

- **Families:**

- An intersection of gender and caring in the transnational setting (childcare and elderly/ kin left behind)

- **Couples:**

- Everyday practices
- Meanings of motherhood vs fatherhood
- A division of labour in the household and beyond with rationale
- Changes (if any) to the marital dyad and its dynamics (evaluation of partnership pre- and post-migration)

- **Children:**

- Differences in raising boys and girls
- Contact with gender-mainstreaming in Norway

# FINDINGS (1) Gender & Wider Kin



## •Inter-generational gendered perspective

- Care chains : maternal obligations extend to grandmothers
- Care for those left behind: female task practically (organization), somewhat relegated to other kin members but always FEMALE;

[In a family with 5 children where wife's mother arrives in Norway after every grandchild is born and for several months a year at various occasions...] „With Ela [daughter] birth started too fast, one day, ready, before mother came, she had tickets for next days [...] Somehow I managed, but, well, it is like Beata said – she is, you know, fulfilled by being at home, and so and so, like her [talks about wife and mother-in-law]. So now mum [in-law] arrived, so she helps Beata, and I have to admit that I do not, I cannot do laundry, really, maybe once in a blue moon, very rarely and if she is here then **never**. [...] Ela [2 year old] knows better, she knows those things better than I do – passes me pieces of clothing and she knows this is dad's, this is Dominik's and this is Darek's, this Ela's ” [brothers who are mich older do not know  
/WP2\_5\_KiM32i30\_P/

# FINDINGS (2): Gender & Couples

- **Progress in the division of labour and childcare responsibilities**
  - **Generally couples talk about equality**
  - **Adopt some ideas of gender balance in family practices**
  - **Participating fathers but custodial care is a maternal domain**
  - **Work-life balance and migration: better conditions + lack of familial interference**
- **Incomplete transition**
  - **Re-traditionalization**
  - **Global marriage markets**

- “Here this is good, why guys work so much [at home] is because that families do not differentiate between boys and girls [...] Because why would they? That’s why boys are taught by their mothers [...] that they should help their wives, just like he helped his mother, he will help his wife [...] And [in Poland] – no, there a boy is [untouchable... In Poland] it still is like that, no? He goes to work. Although we work as well, so those times are over. I understand in the past – unpaid domestic work 24/7 but at least, let’s say – women would not work. But now we do and have a second shift. That is not okay! And here they don’t do it [in Norway]! – no differences, here the *Redstocking* got the emancipation job done. It is very much pushed here, sometimes even too much for me [...] There is a big group of men working as nursery assistants, nurses, [in Poland] it was always a ‘woman’s job’ – here there are many men” /WP2\_3\_K53\_I (Norway)/
- “I think he wanted a traditional wife who cooks and cleans”

# FINDINGS (3): Gender & Children

- Socialization patterns affected by **gender equality ideals of the Norwegian society**
- Some feminist/empowerment ideals for raising boys and girls (male emotionality, female strength);
- However, expectations and patterns may still vary and reflect patriarchal norms;

„She is really not very princess-like, she is really rather tough [but she is the youngest, and the only girl- spoiled, and she does those things - assists her brothers, brings them shoes, cares – they never do this” /WP2\_K36\_P/

“Here girls can assist in church, at the mass, they can play football, they have access to everything, so there is more and more girls, together with structure, it leads to the fact that girls are becoming engineers, study engineering [...But the army, that’s horrible]” /Wp2\_4\_KM41i42\_I/



Thank you for your attention!

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