

Entrepreneurial strategies as a response to discrimination: Experience of Ukrainian women in Poland from the intersectional perspective

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Abstract

The article aims to examine the experience of female immigrant entrepreneurs from Ukraine who reside in Poland. Ukrainians constitute the biggest immigrant minority in the country and thus they are a symbol of the emergent Polish multiculturalism. However, being an immigrant and a woman may lead to the accumulation of obstacles in the process of integration with the host society. The barriers have various origins: some of them emerge in the host country, while others result from gender stereotypes in the sending communities. The intersectional perspective is used in order to examine a variety of marginalisation practices, which may appear in different dimensions of social life: activity on the labour market, family life, stereotypes and attitudes of the receiving society. The outcomes of the intersecting statuses may be even more discriminating than the results of each of these social statuses separately. The context of the life stage is also essential in examining social barriers experienced by the group under study: young mothers, older uneducated women and foreigners in the early phases of being abroad are under particularly strong threat of discrimination. The analysis reveals that female migrants actively strategize to counteract marginalisation, most notably by self-employment and setting up family firms.

KEYWORDS: labour market integration, immigrant entrepreneurship, Ukrainians in Poland

Introduction

Ethnic minority groups are not homogeneous and the categories particularly prone to discriminating practices may be inaccurately represented, overlooked or mistakenly identified with mainstream migrants. In-depth research is required to examine the patterns of inclusion or marginalisation of specific subgroups within immigrant communities. Intersectionality offers useful theoretical tools in such analyses and therefore it gains increasing attention in migration studies. Intersectionality examines the relations of power and

their dynamics in situations in which various dimensions of social belonging (cultural, economic, ethnic) interplay with each other and create a set of specific structural limitations to individual actions. The intersectional perspective was first used to examine the experience of black women in the United States (Crenshaw 1993) and it became broadly used to study the experience of other underprivileged groups. It is particularly useful to study the problems of “minorities within minorities”. The approach focuses on the crossings of various statuses that potentially lead to discrimination: such accumulation of discriminatory social statuses is more dangerous than a single discriminatory status and may lead to marginalising practices, which cannot be ‘captured wholly by looking at each single dimension of separately’ (Crenshaw 1991: 124). Social disadvantage on any two aspects is different than on any other two; therefore studies should focus on capturing the complexity of interrelationships of these dimensions (Weber 1998). This approach also points to the increased vulnerability of specific social groups, including females, children, disabled persons, migrants and ethnic minorities. Vulnerability is defined as the state of being exposed to, discriminatory practices and marginalisation, or being particularly sensitive to the consequences of such practices (cf. OHCHR 2017). In other words, discrimination not only happens more often in the case of members of vulnerable groups, but it may also have more serious consequences. Intersectionality involves research within groups which may be marginalised because of multiple factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, or class.

Patricia H. Collins (2000) coined the term “matrix of domination” to describe how intersecting oppressions in the sphere of gender, class, ethnicity are structured. According to her typology, practices in the structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal domains of power are shaping the primary forms of disadvantage. These domains are interrelated in producing oppression, but each of them serves a specific purpose. The structural domain (eg. legal norms) organizes disadvantage and maltreatment, while the disciplinary domain (eg. bureaucratic hierarchies and techniques of surveillance, administrative practices) manages it. The hegemonic domain (public discourse, including school curricula, mass media) justifies abuse. The interpersonal domain (interactions) affects daily lived experience and the individual consciousness which emerges in this process (Collins 2000). While this typology reveals the normative forces behind the possible exploitation, it does not refer to individual’s spheres of life, in which the potential abuse may take place.

This article aims to use the intersectional perspective to examine various roles and social statuses, which affect the activities of female immigrant entrepreneurs. In what ways may their statuses constitute an obstacle and a resource for their activities in the host country? How do the strategies of self-employment play a role in counteracting vulnerability and diverse discriminatory practices? The two social statuses, which may potentially affect discrimination and abuse in the case of this group, are gender and immigrant status. In the experience of women entrepreneurs of immigrant origin, being a foreigner as well as being a woman may shape the patterns of social and cultural alienation. These interrelated conditions further lead to the emergence of various forms of discrimination, which appear in the labour market and private life. The text specifies three dimensions in

which intersecting statuses may lead to diverse marginalising outcomes. In each of these three aspects, the intersecting social positions of an immigrant and a woman result in discriminatory situations, which cannot be reduced to the effects of solely the role of gender or foreigner status. The first dimension is the labour market presence and economic activities. The second dimension is family relations and defining gender roles in the private sphere. The third dimension is the process of stereotyping taking place in the host society. The distinction between the three factors allows one to examine diversity of experience of discrimination in the various spheres of social life. It may be useful to understand the complexities of interaction between various social roles in each dimension of social reality. The exploration of the three aspects allows one to have a close look at the areas where the process of immigrant integration happens, and where the obstacles that immigrants experience may hinder social cohesion. Examining various dimensions of marginalisation demonstrates how intersecting statuses, and also intersecting spheres of social life create barriers in immigrant incorporation.

It should be stressed, however, that the political awareness of the phenomenon of female migration has been growing. The necessity to address the problems of migrant women is acknowledged in recent international legal acts and policy declarations. In 2006, the International Labour Organization (ILO) issued a list of principles and guidelines within the Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (ILO 2006). The document emphasized that the states should ensure that their labour migration policies are gender-sensitive and properly address the specific risks, hardships and abuses faced by women. Moreover, in 2011 the ILO Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers entered into force and highlighted the vulnerability of female migrants who take up domestic work, which “continues to be undervalued and invisible”. The issue of female migration also appears in the context of the European Union. In the resolution of September 7, 2010 (EP 2010) on the social integration of women belonging to ethnic minority groups, the European Parliament underlined that EU states should guarantee ‘the protection of victims of multiple discrimination, among whom ethnic minority women represent a big group, by adding explicit clauses and binding regulations on multiple discrimination to the legal system.’ In February 2014, the European Parliament adopted another resolution, which concerned undocumented women migrants in the EU. In the document, the Parliament called on the member states i.a. to take the necessary actions to prevent the proliferation of prostitution and forced labour among migrating females, and to develop awareness campaigns educating undocumented female migrants about their rights. It also encouraged the EU states to ‘provide special training on gender issues to officials dealing with undocumented women migrants, and to refrain from requiring schools to report attending children of undocumented migrants’ (EP 2014). While the majority of these documents focuses on the problems of marginalized segments and categories of migrants, researchers and policymakers pay less attention to the highly skilled females (Kofman 2000); even though they tend to be perceived as more independent and resourceful, they may also be a group vulnerable to multiple discrimination.

Research methods

Qualitative orientation allows understanding the individual experience and subjective meanings behind certain practices and events. A micro-perspective may be particularly beneficial in studying discrimination, because it emphasises the role of individual resources and biographical context in interpreting and counteracting unjust social practices. The research presented in this article was conducted between 2014 and 2017 in Poland among migrant entrepreneurs from Ukraine. Heterogeneity sampling was used to capture variety of biographical experiences of respondents, differentiation of their occupational trajectories and their diverse demographic characteristics, i.a. in terms of age, city and region of origin. While Ukrainian migrants to Poland traditionally come from western Ukraine, the new “post-crisis” wave of migrants consists of individuals both from the western and eastern part of the country, and this heterogeneity (in case of post-2014 migrants) was also visible in the sample. Moreover, although most Ukrainians live in Polish big cities and agglomerations (especially the capital), an attempt was made to include also immigrants residing in other regions of Poland. In total, in-depth interviews with 51 respondents were conducted: 31 males and 20 females¹. The analysis below focuses on the 20 narratives of female immigrants who are, or used to be, self-employed in Poland.

The study included both one-person firms as well as business owners who employed workers (on a temporary or permanent basis). The border between these two types of enterprises is sometimes blurry: for example, some firms hire employees only short-term, others (while being officially one-person businesses) obtain frequent assistance from other individuals, for example family members. The research was conducted in various regions of Poland, most of the women (13 individuals) lived in Warsaw, which is the city with the largest Ukrainian population in Poland. Other female respondents resided in cities such as Cracow, Wrocław, Bydgoszcz, Toruń, or small towns such as Biłgoraj. The majority of them (11 women) had a university education, and one was enrolled at a Polish university when the interview took place. At the time of the interviews, all respondents resided in Poland legally, either as naturalised citizens or on the basis of legal statuses such as permanent residence permit, temporary residence permit and long-term EU residence permit. However, some of them had experience of unregistered residence in the past. The languages of research were Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian; all quotes presented in the text are translations.

Distinctiveness of experience of Ukrainian migrant women in Poland

Since the fall of the Soviet Union emigration from Ukraine has been increasing. In 2006, Frank Duvell referred to Ukraine as “Europe’s Mexico” to describe the intensity of emigration processes. Bastian Vollmer (2016) observes that migration from Ukraine in the “post-1991 era” takes very diversified forms: there is labour migration, of both registered and irregular character, ethnic migration and repatriation, circular mobility and shuttle

¹ The research results, including some threads developed in this article, were presented in the book: *Przedsiębiorcy ukraińscy w Polsce. Struktura i sprawstwo w procesie osiedlenia* (Andrejuk 2017).

migration of cross-border commuters. There are also internal flows within Ukraine, mainly from rural to urban areas (Vollmer 2016: 36), and after the military conflict from the eastern to the western part of the country. In certain decades or periods after 1991 different forms of mobility dominated, depending, for example, on the visa regime between Ukraine and receiving states. In the 1990s, small scale traders from Ukraine in Poland – often coming from borderland regions – were among the pioneers of capitalism, developing new traditions of market exchange in post-communist Central Europe; nevertheless, their activities such as smuggling were often illegal or lacked proper legal protection (Wallace, Bedzir, Chmouliar 1997). In the 2010s, the worsening economic situation, as well as the recent military conflict with Russia reinforced the mobility of Ukrainians, leading to growing migrant population in countries of Central Europe (Poland, Czech Republic), and Southern Europe (Portugal, Italy). According to the Eurostat statistics, Ukrainians receive the highest number of first residence permits among all third country nationals in the EU (Eurostat 2015).

Poland hosts the largest migrant population from Ukraine in Europe (Eurostat 2015). This phenomenon can be attributed to the geographic proximity of the neighbouring states, but also the cultural proximity and similarity of languages, which makes participation in the labour market and integration with the host society easier. While in recent years the policies have been introduced which facilitate the admission of migrants from post-Soviet states, there are no gender-specific policies or legal acts which would focus on the problems of the labour market inclusion of immigrant women or which would address the uniqueness of their situation. Ukrainians migrating to Poland are most frequently labour migrants (Chmielewska, Dobroczek, Puzyrkiewicz 2016). There is also an increasing number of Ukrainian students enrolling at Polish universities (Gierko 2015; Popowska 2016; Leśniak 2016). Economic migration often takes the form of short-term and circular mobility; many of such Ukrainians are employed in temporary and seasonal jobs in agriculture (Górny, Kindler 2016; Górny 2017; Górny, Kaczmarczyk 2018). Moreover, in 2008 a law was introduced in Poland (PP 2007), which allows ethnic Poles from post-Soviet states come to their ancestors' homeland. They can obtain a right of permanent residence immediately after crossing the border, without fulfilling any further conditions related to the length of residence. Since the requirements of proving one's Polish origins are rather liberal, many Ukrainians apply for the Card of the Pole and come there within the repatriation scheme.

The available official data can only serve to estimate the actual number of Ukrainians in Poland. The number of individuals who possess residency statuses (permanent residence, long-term EU residents, the right of temporary residence, EU family members, refugee status and auxiliary forms of protection) can be identified precisely basing upon the statistical data. As of 2016, these categories encompass 103,457 Ukrainians living in Poland. Yet, the most numerous category currently are immigrants coming on the basis of the employer's declaration of intent to employ a foreigner (*oświadczenie o zamiarze powierzenia pracy cudzoziemcowi*). This system was first introduced in 2006 as a temporary solution, but turned out to be permanent and remains one of the key elements of the Polish migration policy. It was the subject to several amendments and it currently attracts

the greatest number of Ukrainians.² The system encompasses citizens of six post-Soviet countries: apart from Ukraine, it is directed to workers from Belarus, Armenia, Russia, Moldova, Georgia. Ukrainians constitute the most numerous group of foreigners coming within this system. Over 1,2 million declarations for Ukrainian citizens were issued solely in 2016 (more than 437 thousand for women). However, the system of declarations can also be interpreted as a mechanism within the “structural domain” which legitimises limited opportunities on the labour market: foreigners who lose their jobs acquired as in the *oświadczenie* are obliged to leave the host country. The number of migrants who actually come to work in Poland on the basis of declarations is unknown. Individuals possessing *oświadczenie* do not need a residency permit. Each individual may have even several declarations. Moreover, not every individual who possesses a declaration may, in fact, want to use it and work in Poland.

One distinct matter is the gender structure in migrant communities in Poland and other host states. Women migrants constitute a significant share of the Ukrainian diaspora worldwide. Researchers emphasise the process of the feminization of migration, indicating that in some countries such as Italy women are more than a half of the Ukrainian migrant population (Montefusco 2008; Marchetti, Venturini 2014; Fedyuk 2016). Migrant workers concentrate in specific “female” sectors, such as domestic care, in which duties are frequently performed in the grey zone. As described in the case of Ukrainian women in Poland, it is often connected with the risk of irregularity and temporariness, lack of stability, and low social prestige (Kindler 2011). Moreover, the outflow of women, who are traditionally principal carers, from Ukraine leads to a “care drain” and a “care deficit” in the country of origin, where children and elderly members of families are left behind (Tolstokorova 2009; Tolstokorova 2010, 2013). Despite the fact that female labour migration helps maintain the survival and economic stability of Ukrainian households, the international mobility of women is very negatively perceived in the sending state and public discourse, which stigmatizes migrating women as prostitutes, betrayers and defectors (Solari 2014; Keryk 2004).

The official statistics indicate that the recent migration streams from Ukraine to Poland are not as “feminized” as in the case of Ukrainian labour migration to other European countries. Nevertheless, the profile of an average female migrant is distinct and specific which validates the need for separate conceptual and empirical exploration of female migration. In the most numerous categories (right of temporary residence and residence based upon employer’s declaration of intent to employ a foreigner) women constitute below 40% of all migrants. The share of women among migrants with more long-term statuses is higher. Females are circa 47% of Ukrainians who obtained a right of permanent residence (*karta stałego pobytu*) in 2016. In case of another permanent status (long-term EU residents) even more Ukrainian women than Ukrainian men were registered in 2016. Women radically dominate in the category of acquisition of the right of residence of a family member of an EU citizen, which suggests that inter-ethnic marriage

² Starting from 2018, the system operates parallel to the system of permits for seasonal employment, which are required by the EU law (EUR-LEX 2014).

with EU nationals may be a more significant trend among Ukrainian women than among Ukrainian men. These varying patterns of gender share in specific migrant categories suggest that female mobility is unique and different from male migration.

Table 1: Ukrainians in Poland – share of male and female migrants who acquired temporary or permanent residency status in 2016 (UDCS 2016; MRPIPS 2016)

Status acquired	Males	Females	Ukrainians total	Foreigners total
Right of permanent residence	3143	2777 (46,9%)	5920 (100%)	9042
Long-term EU resident	284	325 (53,4%)	609 (100%)	1864
Residence of a family member of EU citizen	14	45 (76,3%)	59 (100%)	235
Right of temporary residence	35181	22072 (38,6%)	57253 (100%)	86616
Employer’s declaration of intent to employ a foreigner	825044	437801 (34,7%)	1262845 (100%)	1314127

Self-employment is increasingly popular in the Ukrainian community in Poland. Although the official statistics do not reveal the gender of entrepreneurs, the available data indicate the rise of migrants’ firms in the recent decade. It is mostly because of the growth of Ukrainian population, but also due to the liberalization of legal provisions concerning business activities in general and immigrant’s access to entrepreneurship in particular (Andrejuk 2017). The narratives of female entrepreneurs about their migration experience and professional trajectory in Poland reveal variety of practices of discrimination and marginalisation, which cannot be attributed solely to their immigrant status or solely to their gender.

Intersecting statuses and the labour market experience: Precarity of working conditions

Immigrant self-employment is often explained as a strategy of combating discrimination on the labour market, overcoming limited opportunities of satisfactory earnings and blocked professional advancement in the host country (i.a. OECD 2010; Aliaga-Isla, Rialp 2013). It was also confirmed in the case of Ukrainian respondents under study, for whom establishing of own firms is a way to enter the sector adequate to their qualifications or escape unjust labour conditions in their branch. Within the sphere of regular (wage) employment, even highly qualified migrants tend to concentrate in less ambitious, “secondary” segments of the labour market, which means that they are often forced to take up positions below their qualifications. In the case of female Ukrainians, these processes lead to concentration in the branches of the market, which are traditionally associated with women’s work (cleaning, caregiving). Research in Poland demonstrates that Ukrainian women concentrate in specific sectors of the labour market, such as domestic care and agriculture (Chmielewska, Dobroczyk, Puzyńkiewicz 2016). Another popular sector observed in the sample is cosmetology. Apart from performing low-skilled work

in underpaid sectors, Ukrainians are the immigrant group that is most frequently found working without the necessary work permit and being subject to various violations of work safety during official state control visits (Polish Labour Inspectorate 2016: 97).

The origins and background of Ukrainian women's self-employment often originate from the previous negative experiences on the Polish labour market. The accumulation of social roles, which may contribute to marginalisation, also causes increasing social acceptance for discriminating practices, bullying or mobbing. Employers seem to treat such individuals with less respect for their rights, abusing their position of power, for example by violating labour rights and forcing the arrangements which are advantageous for them (unregistered work, exceeding working hours, avoiding payment of social welfare contributions). However some illegal activities, while extorted by supervisors, also cause discriminated and exploited foreigners to avoid public institutions and legal measures in fear of being expelled from the country. In the story summarised below, the respondent decided to seek legal help from the official institutions. However, at the same time her opponent used the authority of these institutions in order to intimidate the immigrant; it was suggested that seeking help from the state by the Ukrainian would also mean for her being punished because of unregistered work. This can serve as an example of how the organisation of the "disciplinary domain" may reduce the chances of fair treatment for migrant workers.

When she called me, she always said, 'what are you thinking, you are a newcomer here. I am Polish and you know, if you oppose me, I will find witnesses.' Because she did not pay my salary. She did not pay my money and she issued an employment certificate that I was fired, because I did not perform my duties properly. Which was not true. I went to a lawyer, I went to the labour inspectorate and they told me to go to the court, we went to the court. I talked to a lawyer. First, we wrote a letter to her. I said, maybe we can send a letter and maybe she will think it over and change the certificate. She did not do that. She called me and she said 'what are you thinking?' She said 'I can even find witnesses that will confirm that you performed unregistered work, additional jobs, and it will be you who has problems, not me.' You know, I just resigned to it. I was so tormented that I went to the hospital, for rehabilitation (Woman, cosmetic salon, Warsaw).

The intersecting statuses of a woman and an immigrant are not the only aspects, which may lead to discrimination. Another factor diminishing opportunities on the labour market is the age of female migrants. Since the 1990s migration from Ukraine to Poland has concerned mainly young individuals, but the demographic profile of migrants changed after the military conflict in Ukraine. International mobility is increasingly taken up by older people, who escape from the war and the associated escalation of the economic crisis. The solution to the problem of difficult economic integration of such migrants is the establishment of their own firms. It is also a reflection of responsibility for the family, because other family members (spouse, adult children) frequently find employment in such immigrant businesses. The migration research so far has emphasised the role of

female migrants in providing income for “transnational households”, which consist of migrants and family members left behind (Haidinger 2008). However, the narratives collected during research expose yet another strategy: family migration and ensuring work in the host country for other family members:

I just knew that because of my age, education and experience, I will not be able to work for someone. My husband is a masseur, my sister is a make-up artist, and my daughter is a tattooist. So I thought that it would be good to open the salon here just like the one I had in Ukraine (Woman, cosmetic salon, Cracow).

In such narratives, self-employment and setting up one’s own business is a tool for empowerment, gaining economic independence and a sense of control over occupational trajectory. While channels of professional advancement for migrants may be limited in the case of regular employment, entrepreneurial activities give them the opportunity for occupational development or at least providing financial stability for the family.

Inequality in access to labour market opportunities stems from a set of interrelated factors. Individuals who belong simultaneously to various underprivileged groups may experience multiple barriers in employment, which cannot be limited by instruments aimed at the activation of solely one of these categories. In such cases, setting up one’s own firm is a tactic of eluding the cumulative discrimination resulting from being a woman and an immigrant. Moreover, individuals from certain segments of the population may also be threatened by increasing risk of marginalisation on various stages of their lives, when the obstacles are growing. That refers to immigrants, especially with weak knowledge of the host country’s official language; women, especially with small children; the elderly, especially those who have relatively low levels of education.

Intersecting statuses and family obligations: Traditional and non-traditional gender roles

The interviews demonstrate that the gender roles of men and women are less diversified when respondents do not have children. This was revealed, for example, in the narrative below about motivations of migration to Poland. The interviewee states that the decision of a young couple to be internationally mobile was made without careful planning, her background was a romantic desire for adventure. The narrative emphasises that such mode of operation was possible because the respondent is not yet a mother:

We just took the risk, it was a spontaneous decision, we just wanted to do that. We would have regretted it if we had not gone. We do not have children yet... why not try? (Woman, Warsaw, gastronomy sector).

In the biographical accounts of mothers, in contrast, there is an undeniable thread of prudence and responsibility (also financial) for a child. Some narratives of mothers working from home also indicate that the strategy of self-employment was chosen due to the flexibility of this form of economic activity, opportunity to modify hours of work and combine it with motherhood. However, not all respondents praised self-employment

as an “easier” form of work, emphasising the necessity of freelancers to take up multiple obligations and simultaneous earning activities. In the narrative below, the cultural role of immigrant-mother is portrayed in its duality. It means being a primary caregiver and at the same time primary breadwinner. The figure of the father is invisible in the whole interview. The effective realisation of both of these cultural scripts is difficult, or even impossible, which leads to the sense of remorse:

Take into account the language barrier; take into account adaptation with the society. Take into account time devoted at my family’s expense. Surely my daughter is not grateful and at the age of almost 19 in a little while she will always remind me of that time spent with the nanny. When one had to work on a daily basis, on a contract, on two contracts, make money in the education [sector] or languages because one had to provide for one’s home and the family. Surely Poles have . . . Surely there were times where I worked until 4 pm in the office in the export firm and after 4 pm until 6 pm I had classes at [language school] and sometimes until 9 pm I had tutoring at home. So nobody will tell me that Poles are miserable and unhappy, because he is not unhappy, he just does not want to work, unfortunately (Woman, Bydgoszcz).

Another interesting thread, which the respondent expressed in the quote above, reveals the mechanism of constructing opinions about the native workers by immigrants. It is required from immigrants, and especially from migrant women, to be particularly hard working, patient and consequent in building their position on the host labour market. Therefore, immigrants quite bitterly and harshly evaluate any demonstrations of the lack of resourcefulness in the host society (‘[a Pole] is not unhappy, he just does not want to work’) as insufficiency of effort.

Analysis of the intersecting statuses of female immigrants demonstrates that the women combine the traditional gender roles (mothers who are primary caregivers) and the roles, which in the conservative approaches to a family are ascribed to men (primary breadwinners). The legitimacy of such attribution of tasks within a family seems to be confirmed through the practices, which Collins described as “interpersonal domain” (everyday interactions), and the “hegemonic domain” (public discourse). The respondents notice the difficulty of the simultaneous performance of both roles, but they do not protest or neglect the necessity of taking each of these obligations. Both types of social roles appear to be internalized, they are perceived as necessary elements of the biography of female Ukrainians abroad.

Intersecting statuses and stereotyping in the home/host societies: The sexualization of Ukrainian women

The process of labelling foreigners also occurs in the interpersonal domain and hegemonic domain. Both in the public (media) discourse and on the micro-level of daily interactions, certain typecasts and categories are developed to describe the fast developing community of Ukrainians in Poland. Some stereotypes about immigrants and attitudes towards foreigners are gender-neutral, for example, the image of immigrants taking jobs

from the natives or the positive stereotype about newcomers as particularly diligent workers. A relatively new and recurring media topic is that of immigrant workers drastically exploited by unfair employers.

However, other images are gender-specific: especially sexualisation of immigrant women, who are portrayed as promiscuous and/or involved in sex work. The stereotype is duplicated and intensified by media releases where female foreigners are presented in a sexualized manner. The (in)famous example of such practice was a popular radio programme, in which two talk show hosts made insulting comments about female immigrants working in the domestic sector in Poland. The scandal, which happened in 2012, led to a fine imposed on the radio station by the National Broadcasting Council (*Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji*).

In the narratives of the respondents, this stereotype appears as a display of symbolic violence within the interpersonal domain. An example of such representation is a narrative below, the author of which is a labour immigrant, who came to Poland as a teenage girl. During her work in the Polish labour market she engaged areas typical for Ukrainian women, such as childcare and cosmetic services. Her statement indicates that she experienced the stereotype of immigrant-prostitute since the early days of her residence in Poland. At the end of the quoted narrative the respondent starts speaking about herself in the third person, externalising her own feelings in order to achieve emotional distance. This reflects the power of the accusations on woman's wellbeing and sense of alienation:

I had so many cases when it comes to guys. Because everybody says, thinks, especially guys, that when one is from Ukraine, then one surely has this job. Either works in a brothel or is a prostitute, let's be honest. Just like this, it was established like this, but it is not true. And I had many cases, such interesting things, that I just thought ... oh my God, I am not like this, why does everyone perceive me like this and only because I am from Ukraine. It was a hard, hard time, and now it happens sporadically but it still does, and I try to ... I try to interpret it somehow, I am not that sensitive any more as I used to be. Because sometimes one just came back home and wanted to cry, because one is far from home (Woman, cosmetics salon, Warsaw).

The respondent specifies that stigmatising practices and accusations of being a prostitute appeared more frequently at the beginning of her residence in the receiving country. As the time went by, she obtained proficiency in the language and a secure legal status, which resulted in more significant embeddedness in a new place; she was less frequently perceived as an alien. The narrative suggests that certain factors may reduce discriminatory potential resulting from intersecting statuses of a woman and an immigrant. These elements include better integration, knowledge of the host population's language, higher economic and professional status (which were obtained after the respondent graduated from a Polish school with a BA and established her own firm). The choice of self-employment may also be a strategy for reducing the risk of practices based on sexualising stereotypes and images. Self-employment leads to more occupational independence and strengthening self-esteem.

Perceptions of discrimination on the basis of gender are contextual and contingent upon earlier experiences. Female migrants frequently formulate their opinions in this respect by making comparisons between the sending and receiving countries. Situations, which could be interpreted by some women as a form of mobbing, are evaluated more softly, through the prism of more prevalent stereotypes and sexist practices in Ukraine. In this context the experience of international mobility may be understood as emancipation from the environment where gender constitutes a serious restraint to women's occupational activities. This opportunity appears especially in the cases of immigration to urban settings, where cultural norms and customs are less conservative: they put more emphasis on equality of genders, and women's rights to self-realisation. The example is a situation described below; the interviewee focuses on the positive element of the story (message of her boss) and not on the negative element (sexist remarks by the business partner):

I remember those times when I worked... and I came with my boss to the fair in Kiev, there was a representative of a firm from Gliwice [Polish town], and he says 'Your girls are very beautiful, there must be booty grabbing at the desk.' And my boss says, 'You know, there is a desk between my employee and me, and there is no possibility of booty grabbing.' So, in the east, it is still customary that almost every secretary will be a boss's lover. And in Poland, fortunately, it is not like that, it never happened to me, and I am glad because of that. A woman is more independent here, she can develop her business entirely on her own (Woman, Bydgoszcz).

The narratives prove that gender issues play an important role in constructing stereotypes about immigrants, and specifically about Ukrainian women. Although there are other important points of references which shape the image of Ukrainians in Poland (for example historical conflicts between the two nations, such as Volhynia massacre during the Second World War), clichés which relate to gender appear to be increasingly important in creating conventional perceptions and categorisations. However, for the women who experienced an even more sexist culture of work (in the post-Soviet country) before having migrated, such clichés seem to be less disturbing.

Discussion: How discriminating practices translate into types of entrepreneurial strategies

The research demonstrated that the intersecting statuses of female immigrants from Ukraine lead to different forms of obstacles in the integration process. Both actual discriminatory practices as well as anticipated discrimination may initiate and shape certain reactive strategies of migrants. Their vulnerability has various origins: in some cases it is connected with the host state, in the other it results from immigrants' culture and attitudes of the co-ethnics. The marginalising outcomes of intersecting gender roles and immigrant status are presented in the table below.

Table 2: Entrepreneurial strategies and dimensions of social life affected by the intersecting statuses of female immigrants

Consequences of intersection between gender / immigrant status / (age / family status)	Risk of hindering integration and social cohesion	Self-employment strategy	Positive outcomes of self-employment
Limited possibilities of employment, reducing work opportunities to feminised low-paid sectors	Deactivation on the labour market, lack of professional advancement, work below qualifications and brain waste	Self-realisation strategy	Increase in agency, opportunity to gain control over one's occupational career, professional independence.
Defining the role of immigrant women as primary caregivers and breadwinners	Deactivation on the labour market, worsening position of female immigrant workforce in comparison to men	"Family defender" strategy	Providing work for family members, stabilising and legalising their residence abroad. Flexibility of working hours enabling parallel childcare
Sexualising images of immigrant women, accusations of sex work as a form of symbolic violence	Hostility and discrimination in various areas of social life, limited participation in social networks of host society, enhancing sense of cultural alienation in both states: sending and receiving one, limiting personal aspirations	"Survivor" strategy	self-reliance, internalisation of a cultural paradigm of gender equality, escape from practices of abuse, sexualisation, mobbing (strategy may encompass both migration and self-employment in the host country).

The research results allow introducing a typology of the most common strategies of counteracting discrimination connected with intersecting statuses. The self-realisation strategy is an individualistic one. It is a consequence of internal motivations (aspirations for occupational advancement, lack of satisfaction with the labour market position) and external circumstances (unfair employers, structural obstacles in the process of labour market inclusion). The "family defender" strategy is collectivist, a woman acts first and foremost as a member of a household, she provides employment for other adult individuals in the family or she chooses self-employment as the best way to combine work and childcare. The "survivor" strategy is individualistic; it is a result of previously experienced discrimination against females either in the sending or the receiving country, for example sexual harassment in the workplace. Some female immigrants may combine several entrepreneurial strategies. Moreover, in some cases - particularly business ventures, which have been operating for a long time – a specific strategy may be substituted by another strategy because of the changing environmental or personal circumstances,

such as starting a family. It is worth noting that the majority of respondents in the sample resided in big Polish cities, which might have also determined their strategies through the exposure to liberal gender norms and patterns of women's empowerment (equality at work, acceptance for working mothers).

The three dimensions under study: labour market activities, family sphere and attitudes of the host society are interrelated and discrimination in each of these areas increases the risk of abuse in other areas. Negative stereotypes of female foreigners constitute an obstacle in achieving satisfactory position on the labour market, but at the same time low-skilled jobs and threat of migrant unemployment may strengthen stereotypes and the hostility of both groups (immigrant and native) towards each other. The cultural role of Ukrainian mothers as primary caregivers restricts the chances on the labour market, and at the same time professional development is interpreted as a barrier in fulfilling childcare duties. Moreover performing jobs in the host country is sometimes hindered by the sexualized perceptions of Ukrainian women. The context of the life stage is also very important in examining discrimination of female immigrants from the intersectional perspective. Narratives about the experience of being a self-employed woman often focused on the issue of motherhood and concerns about child(ren). Narratives about experiences related to the immigrants status referred mostly to the problems of uncertain legal status, weak knowledge of the host language and culture – the factors which are much more frequent on the early stages of staying abroad.

As the table shows, there are also positive aspects of the phenomenon under study. The intersecting statuses of female immigrants lead to a problematic and unstable situation on the labour market, but at the same time Ukrainian women have a strong sense of responsibility for their families and their wellbeing, which leads to the establishment and development of family firms in the host country. Overcoming the difficulties in the integration process through self-employment also contradicts prevailing stereotypes about immigrants, such as the image of foreigners taking jobs from native workers (the migrants under study create new jobs through their own businesses). Numerous respondents in the sample, who achieved success as entrepreneurs, contributed not only to the improvement of the image of Ukrainian immigrants, but also to a more positive image of females as resourceful, responsible and efficient business owners.

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Povzetek

Namen članka je preučiti izkušnje priseljenjskih podjetnikov iz Ukrajine, ki prebivajo na Poljskem. Ukrajinci predstavljajo največjo priseljenjsko manjšino v državi in so zato simbol nastajajočega poljskega multikulturalizma. Če si priseljenec in še ženska to lahko privede do vrste ovir v procesu vključevanja v družbo gostiteljico. Ovire imajo različni izvor: nekatere izhajajo iz v države gostiteljice, druge pa iz spolnih stereotipov v izvorni državi. Interseksijska perspektiva se uporablja za preučevanje različnih praks marginalizacije, ki se lahko pojavijo v različnih dimenzijah družbenega življenja: dejavnosti na trgu dela, družinskega življenja, stereotipov in odnosov gostiteljske družbe. Rezultati presečnih statusov so lahko še bolj diskriminirajoči od rezultatov vsakega od teh socialnih statusov posebej. Kontekst življenjske faze je prav tako bistvenega pomena pri preučevanju socialnih ovir, ki jih doživlja preučevana skupina: mlade matere, starejše neizobražene ženske in tujci v zgodnjih fazah bivanja v tujini so še posebej izpostavljeni diskriminaciji. Analiza razkriva, da migrantke dejavno načrtujejo strategijo za preprečevanje marginalizacije, predvsem s samozaposlitvijo in ustanavljanjem družinskih podjetij.

Ključne besede: vključevanje na trg dela, priseljenjsko podjetništvo, Ukrajinci na Poljskem

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