

## Gender differences in Polish citizen's attitudes towards immigration to the UK

Anna Kuwik

Bahman Baluch

Middlesex University

### Abstract

The present study examined gender differences in attitudes towards immigration of Polish citizens to the UK. Participants: 60 men (mean age =26.21, SD=2.51) and 60 women (mean age=26.15, SD=3.73) participated in the investigation. A 30 item questionnaire was administered to the participants and subjected to the Principle Component Analysis. Factor analysis showed 3 strong factors which were labeled as "domestic preference", "lifestyle patterns" and "social participation". The results of statistical analysis showed that Polish women have more preference for the Polish lifestyle than Polish men. However, results of regression analysis showed that as well as gender other significant predictors affecting attitudes towards living in the UK are the length of stay and level of education. Implications of the findings are discussed.

Keywords: Polish migrants, immigration, gender differences, social participation, domestic preference, lifestyle patterns.

There has been extensive research on ethnicity, identity and immigration (see e.g. Phinney, Horenczyk, & Vedder, 2001). However, in view of recent expansion of the European Union (EU) the subject of immigration within the EU, and in particular Polish citizens interest in living in the UK is a subject of growing research (see Billson & Fluehr-Lobban, 2005; Kay & Miles, 1992). What do recent Polish immigrants think about living or settling in the UK? Are there any specific factors such as gender, age, length of stay in the UK, level of education and language competency that may affect attitudes of Polish immigrants towards staying in the UK or returning to Poland? These are the issues explored in the present research.

## Background

Polish immigration dates back over half a century with the immigration of 150,000 Polish soldiers and displaced persons to the United Kingdom where Polish government-in-exile was quartering after the Second World War (Sword, 1996). Following this period it was the fall of Communism in Poland which allowed Polish citizens to travel to the Western European countries through visa/entry schemes and, more recently, the accession of Poland to the European Union that opened up a new wave of immigration (Grabowska-Lusińska & Okólski, 2008). Statistics suggest that almost 30 percent of Polish migrants were working in the UK before Poland officially entered the European Union in 2004 (Garapich, 2007). The general profile of Polish immigrants suggests that the UK attracts mainly young and well-educated Poles. Almost 60 percent of Polish immigrants are male. Indeed the proportion of females migrating from Poland to the UK is lower compared to the proportion of female migrants from other European countries (Central Statistics Office, 2008; Fihel & Kaczmarczyk, 2009; Kaczmarczyk & Okólski, 2008).

## Gender and immigration

Gender relations in Poland are strongly related to the patriarchal culture and the Catholic Church's influence on understanding of female and male roles in the society. In the context of those two streams, Polish society expects women to be first and foremost good mothers and wives who should demonstrate rather passive attitudes in following their individual goals (Coyle, 2007; Platek, 2004, Zajicek & Calasanti, 1998; Wejnert & Djumabaeva, 2005). Siara (2009) conducted research on Polish immigrants' perceptions of gender relations in the UK. According to the results, the general tendency amongst males is to express negative attitudes towards inter-ethnic relationships between Polish females and males of different nationalities, religions or races. Polish men tend to perceive Polish women in the UK as being too liberal in terms of actively expressing their sexual needs, and criticize them for being interested in financial aspects of getting into relationships with foreigners (Siara, 2009). At the same time, Polish men declare their readiness to get involved in serious relationships with Polish females staying in Poland. As the answer to men's accusations, Polish females argue against the patriarchal perception of gender roles and underline the limited choice of Polish men in the UK, categorizing them into four types: the frail students, the tracksuits, the manual workers, and the skaters smoking marihuana (Siara, 2009). A minority of male respondents and many females call together for gender equality and liberation from subordinate gender roles. In another study, Polish immigrants were asked for their response to having their child

get into a relationship with someone of a different skin colour, to investigate the need for ethnic homogeneity (Eade, Drinkwater, & Garapich, 2006). Half of the respondents declared they would not have a problem with this kind of relationship, however 38 percent were more reluctant to accept this kind of situation and 12 percent were not sure. Outcomes regarding differences in responses depending on sex were not included in the source. Coyle (2007) underlines in her work that there exists a strong need for securing gender equality amongst the Polish female population in the EU and Poland due to the high levels of discrimination they face in the labour market. In view of the constraints that the Polish society, culture and gender roles exert, It would be expected that there is a significant difference in attitudes of men and women towards immigration to the UK. Thus the following research was conducted to identify potential gender differences in attitudes towards staying in the UK and other variables that could also impact attitudes namely length of stay, marital status, language competency and level of education (Duvander, 2001; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Wiking, Johansson, & Sundquist, 2004).

## Research questions

The main aim of the present study is to compare Polish men's and women's attitudes towards immigration in the UK. The materials used for characterizing attitudes of both selected groups will mainly concentrate on aspects of everyday life with a strong emphasis on Lifestyle Pattern, social participation and domestic conditions. Knowledge of general attitudes towards living in the UK enable one to understand the social position of Polish men and women in the immigrant population and their interactions.

## Method

### Participants

A total of 120 Polish immigrants took part in the present study. Sixty of the randomly selected adults (30 male and 30 female) mean age 27.35 years ( $SD = 2.23$ ) were classified as staying in London for a minimum period of 1.5 years, and longer. The sixty respondents were matched on the length of stay in the United Kingdom with another group consisting equally of sixty Polish immigrants (30 male and 30 female) mean age 25.01 years ( $SD = 3.53$ ) who have been living in London for less than 1.5 years. Kępińska (2006) reports that 77 per cent of Polish migrants in 2005 and 66 per cent of Polish migrants in 2006 stayed in the United Kingdom for a short period

between two and eleven months suggesting that the Polish migration is based rather on short-term immigration to the United Kingdom.

### Materials

The research tool, the Attitude Questionnaire, which was used to investigate the research problem, was developed by the first author. Questionnaire items were written in English as the language skills appeared to be an important factor affecting the access to available networks and the expectation was that all participants are reasonably fluent in English (Ryan, Sales, & Tilki, 2009; Salaff & Greve, 2004). Items were responded to on a scale from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree to Strongly Disagree. In order to establish reliability and validity of the questionnaire Principal Components Analysis followed by Cronbach's Alpha, were conducted on the completed questionnaire (see Stage 1).

### Procedure

The study was conducted within the Polish communities in London and Polish organizations (Polish Psychologists Club and Polish Professionals in London). Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the head representatives of the above mentioned institutions. Each participant received a sheet providing information about the subject of the research and instructions on how to participate in the research. The information sheet included a paragraph about the voluntary nature of their participation and the statement that the research proposal was approved by The Universities Ethics Committee. A consent letter, as well as an information sheet, was presented to all the participants before completing the questionnaire. Each participant was approached individually for their participation and each session lasted no longer than 20 minutes.

### Stage 1- Developing and validating an attitudes towards immigration to the UK for Polish Citizens scale

Principle Components Analysis was conducted on the collected data and a three-factor solution was identified with Eigenvalues greater than one. The first factor with Eigenvalue = 5.30, accounted for 17 % of the variance and consisted of 13 items, the second factor with Eigenvalue = 3.42, accounted for 11% of the variance and consisted of 8 items, the third factor with Eigenvalue = 2.41, accounted for 8 % of the variance and consisted of 8 items (see table 1).

<b>Domestic Preference</b>	Loading	<b>Lifestyle Patterns</b>	Loading	<b>Social Participation</b>	Loading
I would rather have a serious illness dealt with in Poland than in the UK.	0.76	I think that conditions in the UK hospitals are better than in Poland.	-0.63	I eat outside the home more often in the UK than when I was in Poland.	0.70
I think that standards of accommodation are better in Poland than in the UK.	0.73	I often buy drugs in pharmacies based in the UK.	0.58	I spend more money on my own enjoyment in the UK than while I was living in Poland.	0.61
I would feel safer having members of my family treated by Polish medical staff.	0.71	If I had to take a blood test I would rather do it in Poland than in the UK.	0.56	I go to church more often in Poland than when I am in the UK.	-0.53
I would prefer to buy a house in Poland rather than in the UK.	0.67	I prefer to have British social benefits than Polish.	-0.56	I do not find any significant differences in standards of medical treatment between Polish and British health care systems.	0.46
I would like my children to attend British schools and have an English education.	-0.67	My closest friends in the UK are usually Polish.	0.51	Since having been in the UK I feel that health care here is not as good as I previously believed.	0.41
I would like to spend my retirement in Poland rather than in the UK.	0.63	I buy more items only for myself while I am in the UK than when I am in Poland.	-0.49	I am more financially secure in the UK than in Poland.	0.38
I would like to have British citizenship in the future.	-0.60	I spend more time out of my home in the UK than when I was living in Poland.	-0.41	I feel that I am a more social person in the UK than I am in Poland.	0.31
If the cost of private health care is the same in Poland as in the UK, I would rather choose British health care.	-0.58	I sometimes feel I am discriminated against in the UK for being Polish.	0.36	I was more involved in a sporting activity while I was in Poland than I am in the UK.	0.31
I have more friends in Poland than in the UK.	0.51				
I feel that communication with Polish people is more	0.49				

intimate and pleasant for me than with other nationalities living in the UK.					
I watch more Polish TV than UK programmes.	0.48				
I would feel uncomfortable describing my ailments in English to a UK doctor.	0.45				

Table 1. Questionnaire items for the 3 factors with the corresponding factor loadings

Factor 1 was labeled as “domestic preference”. An example of the item “I would prefer to buy a house in Poland rather than in the UK”. The higher the score on this factor the stronger preference for British domestic standards (Cronbach's alpha .854).

Factor 2 was labeled as “lifestyle patterns”. An example of the item “My closest friends in the UK are usually Polish”. The higher the score on this factor the more Polish immigrants underline their attachment to Polish lifestyle conditions (Cronbach's alpha .653).

Factor 3 was labeled as “social participation”. An example of the item “I eat outside the home more often in the UK than when I was in Poland”. The higher the score on this factor the more intensive engagement in social life while staying in Poland (Cronbach's alpha .597) (see Table 1 for a complete list of items in each section of the questionnaire).

It must be noted that the questionnaire was constructed as such that some statements had a positive statement towards aspects of British immigration e.g. “I would like to have British citizenship in the future” and some had a positive statement to living in Poland e.g. “I would like to spend my retirement in Poland rather than in the UK”. Because the same rating scale ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree to Strongly Disagree was used through out the questionnaire it was necessary to reverse items for each factor as appropriate. For this reason in Factor 1 a higher score indicates British preferences, but for factors 2 and 3, a higher score indicates Polish preferences.

## Stage 2 - Results

The mean ratings, together with corresponding standard deviations according to variables in the present study, are shown in tables 2.1 to 2.5.

Variables		Lifestyle Patterns Mean SD	Domestic Preference Mean SD	Social Participation Mean SD
Gender	Female	2.72 .25	2.20 .51	2.43 .32
	Male	2.50 .40	2.18 .37	2.23 .27

Table 2.1. Mean and corresponding standard deviations for the 3 factors and in relation to gender in the present study.

As can be seen table 2.1, Polish female immigrants demonstrated the preference of Polish lifestyle and they maintain a more socially active role in Poland. In contrast Polish males are more interested in the British way of living and have more preference for engagement into social life while living in the UK.

A 2 Gender by 3 Factors (Lifestyle Patterns, Domestic Preference and Social Participation) mixed factorial Anova was conducted on the data.

Gender differences showed a significant effect for lifestyle with  $F(1, 118) = 13.32$ ,  $MSE = 0.116$ ,  $p < .00001$  and for social participation with  $F(1, 118) = 12.76$ ,  $MSE = 1.17$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . However there was no significant main effect for domestic preference with  $F(1, 118) = .02$ ,  $MSE = 0.201$ ,  $p = 0.86$ .

Variables		Lifestyle Patterns Mean SD	Domestic Preference Mean SD	Social Participation Mean SD
Marital Status	Single	2.60 .36	2.21 .45	2.34 .34
	Married	2.51 .35	2.26 .50	2.33 .36
	Informal	2.65 .35	2.15 .41	2.32 .28

Table 2.2. Mean and corresponding standard deviations for the 3 factors and in relation to Marital Status in the present study.

As can be seen table 2.2, Polish lifestyle patterns, as well as domestic preference, are most desired by immigrants in informal relationships. Married couples are more interested in British domestic standards than those who are single or in informal relationships.

A 3 Marital status by 3 Factors (Lifestyle Patterns, Domestic Preference and Social Participation) mixed factorial Anova was conducted on the data.

Marital status showed no significant main effect for lifestyle with  $F(2, 117) = 0.9$ ,  $MSE = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.46$ , social participation with  $F(2, 117) = 0.08$ ,  $MSE = 0.1$ ,  $p = 0.9$  and for domestic preference with  $F(2, 117) = .4$ ,  $MSE = 0.2$ ,  $p = 0.66$ .

Variables		Lifestyle Patterns		Domestic Preference		Social Participation	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Length of Stay in the UK	> 1.5 years	2.45	.36	2.49	.35	2.35	.34
	< 1.5 years	2.77	.26	1.89	.29	2.31	.29

Table 2.3. Mean and corresponding standard deviations for the 3 factors and in relation to Length of Stay in the UK in the present study.

As can be seen in table 2.3, immigrants living in the UK for a period shorter than one and a half years' stay are more attached to Polish lifestyle patterns than those who have been living in the UK for a longer period. The latter seem to appreciate more British domestic conditions. At the same time those living longer in the UK seemed to have engaged more in social activities in Poland than immigrants with a shorter period of stay.

A 2 Length of Stay by 3 Factors (Lifestyle Patterns, Domestic Preference and Social Participation) mixed factorial Anova was conducted on the data.

Length of Stay showed a significant effect for lifestyle with  $F(1, 118) = 30.45$ ,  $MSE = 0.103$ ,  $p < .00001$  and for domestic preference with  $F(1, 118) = 98.9$ ,  $MSE = 1.102$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ . However there was no significant main effect for social participation with  $F(1, 118) = .109$ ,  $MSE = 0.28$ ,  $p = 0.59$ .

Variables		Lifestyle Patterns		Domestic Preference		Social Participation	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Language Competency	Certificated	2.59	.38	2.30	.48	2.39	.36
	Undocumented	2.62	.33	2.10	.39	2.28	.26

Table 2.4. Mean and corresponding standard deviations to the 3 factors and in relation to Language Competency in the present study.



As can be seen in table 2.4, immigrants with undocumented language competency demonstrate similar attitudes to those who have been staying less than one and a half years in the UK.

A 2 Language competency by 3 Factors (Lifestyle Patterns, Domestic Preference and Social Participation) mixed factorial Anova was conducted on the data.

Language competency showed a significant effect for social participation with  $F(1, 118) = 3.75$ ,  $MSE = 0.09$ ,  $p < .05$  and for domestic preference with  $F(1, 118) = 5.99$ ,  $MSE = 0.191$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . However there was no significant main effect for lifestyle with  $F(1, 118) = .203$ ,  $MSE = 0.026$ ,  $p = 0.65$ .

Variables		Lifestyle Patterns Mean SD	Domestic Preference Mean SD	Social Participation Mean SD
Level of Education	Secondary	2.42 .33	2.22 .43	2.29 .27
	University	2.67 .34	2.18 .45	2.34 .33

Table 2.5. Mean and corresponding standard deviations for the 3 factors and in relation to Level of Education in the present study.

As can be seen in table 2.5, immigrants with a university education seem to be more interested in Polish lifestyle and British domestic standards than those who graduated from secondary schools.

A 2 Level of Education by 3 Factors (Lifestyle Patterns, Social Participation and Domestic Preference) mixed factorial Anova was conducted on the data.

Level of Education showed a significant effect for lifestyle with  $F(1, 118) = 11.3$ ,  $MSE = 0.118$ ,  $p < .000$ , however there were no main effects and for social participation with  $F(1, 118) = .51$ ,  $MSE = 0.052$ ,  $p = 0.47$  and domestic preference with  $F(1, 118) = 0.202$ ,  $MSE = 0.041$ ,  $p = 0.65$ .

### Correlational analysis

Using Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis between age and "domestic preference", "lifestyle patterns", and "social participation" showed a significant negative correlation with lifestyle  $r = -0.26$ ,  $p < 0.004$  implying that older participants

prefer more the UK lifestyle patterns and significant positive correlation with domestic preference with  $r = 0.21$ ,  $p < 0.019$  implying older participants have more domestic preference to living in the UK.

### Standard multiple regression analyses

To identify which of the variables studied above is the strongest predictor to attitudes towards immigration to the UK, three standard multiple regression analyses were conducted on the data using the 3 factors namely; Lifestyle Patterns, Domestic Preference and Social Participation as the dependent variables. Gender, marital status, age, education, length of stay in the UK and language competency were considered as the independent variables.

*Domestic preference-* The results of standard multiple regression with domestic preference as the dependent variable showed an overall  $R = 0.684$ ,  $R\text{ Square} = 0.43$ ,  $P < 0.00001$ .  $F(6, 113) = 16.55$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . With other variables held constant, the length of stay is the most significant variable affecting domestic preferences with Beta coefficient showing  $-0.598$  significant at  $p < 0.001$  respectively (see table 3.1). The longer the Polish immigrants stay in the UK the more their preference for Polish domestic standards change into preference for British living conditions.

<b>Variable</b>	Un-standardised Beta coefficients	Standardised Beta coefficients	T value	P value
Gender	.011	.012	.167	.867
Age	-.005	-.037	-.500	.618
Length of stay in the UK	-.598	-.673	-8.742	.000
Marital Status	-.019	-.059	-.824	.411
Level of Education	.006	.006	.073	.942
Language Competency	.070	.079	1.021	.310

Table 3.1. Results of Standard Multiple Regression for Domestic Preference as the dependent variable in relation to Gender, Age, Length of stay in the UK, Marital Status, Level of Education and Language Competency.

*Lifestyle-* The results of standard multiple regression with lifestyle as the dependent variable showed an overall  $R = 0.598$ ,  $R\text{ Square} = 0.32$ ,  $P < 0.00001$ .  $F(6, 113) = 10.48$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ . With other variables held constant, gender, length of stay and education being the most significant variables affecting lifestyle with Beta coefficient showing

0.202, 0.265, and 0.192 significant at  $p < 0.001$  respectively (see table 3.2). The longer the person is in the UK the more they appreciate the British lifestyle. Polish women are more interested in their national lifestyle, while men demonstrate preference for the British lifestyle. Based on education, secondary school graduates choose more the British lifestyle, whilst university graduates are more attached to the Polish style.

Variable	Un-standardised Beta coefficients	Standardised Beta coefficients	T value	P value
Gender	.202	.283	3.638	.000
Age	-.013	-.111	-1.363	.175
Length of stay in the UK	.265	.372	4.402	.000
Marital Status	-.006	-.024	-.310	.757
Level of Education	.192	.231	2.681	.008
Language Competency	-.062	-.087	-1.022	.309

Table 3.2. Results of Standard Multiple Regression for Lifestyle Pattern as the dependent variable in relation to Gender, Age, Length of stay in the UK, Marital Status, Level of Education and Language Competency.

*Social participation*- The results of standard multiple regression with social participation as the dependent variable showed an overall  $R = 0.351$ ,  $R$  Square = 0.07,  $P < 0.00001$ .  $F(6, 113) = 2.63$ ,  $p < 0.20$ . With other variables held constant, gender is the most significant variable affecting social participation with Beta coefficient showing 0.197 significant at  $p < 0.001$  respectively (see table 3.3). Polish women are less socially active in the UK than Polish men.

Variable	Un-standardised Beta coefficients	Standardised Beta coefficients	T value	P value
Gender	.197	.311	3.416	.001
Age	.001	.011	.119	.905
Length of stay in the UK	-.008	-.013	-.132	.895
Marital Status	-.015	-.068	-.742	.459
Level of Education	-.024	-.033	-.326	.745
Language Competency	.089	.140	1.413	.160

Table 3.3. Results of Standard Multiple Regression for Social Participation as the dependent variable in relation to Gender, Age, Length of stay in the UK, Marital Status, Level of Education and Language Competency.

## Discussion

The main aim of the present research was to identify whether there are gender differences in attitudes towards immigration to the UK. It was argued that the Polish society, culture and gender roles may have a significant impact on how Polish men and women may consider immigration to the UK. Furthermore, it was considered as an important aspect of the study to examine the impact of other variables namely; gender, marital status, age, education, length of stay in the UK and language competency in the investigation into the attitudes towards immigration to the UK. In the absence of a standardised attitude questionnaire the first stage of the study was to develop and examine for validity and reliability of an attitude questionnaire. From the Principal Components Analysis three factors emerged labeled as Domestic Preference, Lifestyle Pattern and Social Participation. In stage 2 of the study the key independent variables were subjected to statistical analysis in relation to the 3 components of the questionnaire. The main findings are as follows:

Men are more positive about British lifestyle and they tend to be more socially active than females. In contrast, Polish women are more socially active back in their home country, being more positive about the Polish style of living. Preferences for domestic patterns are not dependent on gender, but on the length of stay. Education and length of stay in the UK are other factors which influence Polish immigrants' attitudes towards staying in the UK.

A noticeable aspect of the present study is that overall the participants are in the younger age bracket, with an average age of twenty six, which indicates that the results are more specific to this population of Polish citizens. Considering that seventy two percent of the general Polish population in the UK is represented by the individuals aged between twenty and twenty nine (Central Statistics Office, 2008), it seems that most of the Polish migrants decide to come back to Poland before their thirties, which may indicate that their migration has rather a temporary status. However, the number of Polish migrants staying abroad for a period longer than two months increased from one million at the end of 2004 to over two million in 2007 (Central Statistics Office, 2008), which suggest that the post-accession migrants to the UK have started transforming the outflows trends (Galasińska & Kozłowska, 2009). Even if the average representatives of Polish population are currently in their twenties, in ten years time the average age bracket may be changed. Additionally, several studies (Drinkwater, 2008; Eade et al., 2006) suggest that Polish women think about their migration in the context of becoming independent and moving away from the parental home. It might be argued then that the female immigrants perceive migration as the beginning of their adult life and manifest a positive

attitude towards coming back to their homeland. This assumption corresponds well with the further outcomes, which suggest that the male migrants manifest a tendency to increase their participation in social life when they stay abroad longer than one and a half years, whereas the female migrants tend to limit their participation in social life (Drinkwater, 2008). Those results seem to confirm that the female migrants are more concerned with returning back to Poland, whereas Polish men's attitude towards staying in the United Kingdom seems to be more unsteady.

Additionally, some differences have been found on gender analyses of network strategies between Polish women and men. Females are more likely to perceive their networks in terms of childcare arrangements, whereas men form their networks rather through work and leisure time (Ryan et al., 2009). Those outcomes confirm that men entered a new environment more effortlessly than women, therefore they tend to stay more socially active in the UK and become more familiar with its lifestyle standards. Focusing on Polish migrants, Garapich (2008) emphasises that access to the labour market is a crucial step towards stimulating social mobility and successful integration into the UK society. However, Polish migrants search for an element of continuity between their life before migration and the current situation they are in, mostly by maintaining a commitment to Polish food and lifestyle (Rabikowska & Burell, 2009) and close ties with family and friends back in Poland (Ryan, Sales, Tilki, & Siara, 2009).

Furthermore, the results of the research suggest that education influences the attitude to lifestyle, as the Polish migrants with university degrees manifest stronger attachment to the Polish lifestyle than those who finished their education with secondary school diplomas. The results of Kaczmarczyk's (2008) in-depth survey suggest that Polish university graduates in the UK have never searched for employment in Poland. This implies that men and women perceive working in the UK as a good opportunity to begin their professional careers. However, since Polish citizens often find it difficult to reach the British labour market, they start to perceive working in their native country as more accessible (Kupiszewski, 2004). On the other hand, it might be argued that the Polish migrants who completed the secondary education are aware that the British labour market gives them a range of semi-routine and routine job opportunities, therefore their attachment to Polish lifestyle is lower as they seem to perceive their migration status as a chance for a better life. Analysis of the research sample recognizes Polish women in the UK as being better educated than men, which confirms their stronger interest in Polish lifestyle and social life. However, in general, the longer the Polish immigrants live in the UK the more they change their preferences towards British lifestyle. The cut off point of 1.5 years, as was implemented in the present study, was also seen as a significant factor in

change of attitudes (Kępińska, 2006). In the context of gender relations, it seems that Polish women in the UK are more pro-Polish orientated than men.

### Implications and limitations of the findings

The present findings have implications for research on the extent of impact that cultural and social norms may have on the immigration of men and women. In particular its relationship with domestic preferences, lifestyle pattern and social participation. Indeed one important finding is the significant gender differences in attitudes towards immigration by Polish nationals with greater interest of women to return to Poland and men to stay in their newly adopted country. Whether similar results may be found amongst other Eastern European countries that recently joined the EU (such as Hungary) could be the subject of follow up research.

The noticeable limitation of the study is its reliance on a quantitative measure in assessing attitudes. While examining the statistical differences in responses given to attitude questionnaires is of interest, equally important are the reasons given for such responses. It would be an ideal complementary follow up study to engage in research of a qualitative methodology to explore the reasons for Polish men and women for wanting to remain in the UK or to return to Poland.

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#### About the Authors:

Anna Kuwik, recent graduate of MA in Psychology and MSc in Applied Psychology. The first degree accomplished at Maria Curie-Skłodowska in Poland. Additionally completed a supplementary specialisation in *Social Communication Psychology*. Graduated from Middlesex University with a degree in Applied Psychology. The final research project related to her research interests including psychological aspects of immigration, the humanistic approach to psychology and health promotion.

E-mail: [aniakxk@o2.pl](mailto:aniakxk@o2.pl)

Bahman Baluch, MA, PhD, CPsychol, AFBPsS, CSci

Reader in Experimental Psychology and author of over 60 refereed publications, conference presentations and book chapters. His research interests include cognitive processes of reading, psychological aspects of infertility and organ donation.

Address for correspondance: Bahman Baluch, School of Health and Social Sciences, Middlesex University, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BT

E-mail: [Bahman1@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:Bahman1@mdx.ac.uk)